



## How important is rule by law in the England of this *History*?

- Richard is crowned “in the court of the King’s Bench,” arguing that ministering the laws is the king’s chief duty (133/34-41) and then sets out to win over “specially the lawyers” of England (133/44-45). Why do so? Are these not meaningless pageants, “kings’ games ... played upon scaffolds” (133/27-29)?

## How strong are the legal processes in this England?

We see some semblance of them in some cases, e.g. Clarence and Jane Shore (101/13, 121/33-45), but not others (122/85).

## What is the status of the “lawful process” of sanctuary (112/5, 113/89)?

- Buckingham claims that the “only ground and cause” of sanctuary is when “a man is by lawful means in peril” (111/39-40). Does that criterion apply in the Queen’s and young prince’s case? What other case(s) does the *History of King Richard III* give to support or undermine this claim?
- The Queen invokes the laws of man, the nation, and God. Why do they prove powerless? (114)
- If you were the Queen’s legal counsel, what would you recommend? Would you support her decision to give up the prince (115)? Why or why not? Why does she decide to do so? What led to the lamb’s being freely given to the wolf (108/48)?

## Why do England’s laws, legal processes, and customs fail to prevent Richard’s rise to “tyranny”?

- On tyranny, note the description of Richard as a wolf preying on the innocent (108/48; cp. epigram 115).
- See the Queen’s comment that no tyrant yet dared to break sanctuary (113/79).
- Consider that the narrator calls Richard’s action “traitorous tyranny” (135/62), and that he calls Richard a tyrant twice as well (136/85, 137/36).
- How does Richard get away with his “unlawful harms” (111/32) and “lawless enterprises” (122/74, 85)?

## Who make laws in England, according to this *History*?

- Parliament is presented as having authority to select and depose monarchs (100/69-74), yet the citizens are also presented as “electing” the monarch (130/32, 132/76, 133/65). Note that in the Latin version, at *CW* 2: 6/14, the narrator reports that the English Parliament has “highest and absolute power” (*summa atque absoluta potestas*) among the English.
- How do these apparently conflicting views compare with those presented by More elsewhere – such as epigrams 19, 121, 198? Does this *History* suggest which view might hold sway in the England of this time?
- What does the *History*’s plot as a whole reveal as leading to Richard’s “mockish election” (133/65)?
- In the Latin version, Richard says “the right and enjoyment and ownership” (*ius vero fructumque ac proprietatem*) of England and France are “all yours, and public property, without any doubt” (*omnem vestrum, haud dubie publicam*) – hence the need for election (*CW* 2: 80/11-13). The Latin version also regularly describes England as a *respublica*, where the English version has “kingdom”; it has Richard arguing for a skilled pilot (*perito gubernatore*) to rescue the *respublica* of England (*CW* 2: 78/16). How are we to take these claims, coming from deceitful Richard?
- What is the overall state of England, according to the narrator (116/34-36)? Does the *History* as a whole point to the underlying causes? or to solutions?

## What roles do other citizens play in the *History*? What is the state of liberty in England?

- King Edward IV, on his death bed, says he would have chosen to be a private citizen (*privato*, *CW* 2: 13/4) if he had foreseen the consequences of his ambition. How is “citizen” used throughout this work?
- What role does the narrator say Hastings played in this state of affairs (107-8, 116-20)? What role does lawyer Catesby play (117)? What role does the Recorder play as the “mouth of the city” (130/69)? (The Latin version explains the function of this officer: a legal expert required by law to be present at any city decision. See *CW* 2: 75). What roles are played by the Archbishop/Lord Chancellor (106-8) and the Cardinal/Archbishop on the Star Council (109-15) – both serving as legal officers and judges?
- Why mention Chief Judge Markham who resigns rather than do a king’s illegal bidding (118/24-27)?
- What roles do Fr. Penker and Fr. Shaa play? What allows them to slander as they do (123, 126-27)?
- How important are the laws and institutions about marriage? The many pages on this topic are notable. King Edward IV even claims that he would not be king if he could not have “mine own liberty in choice of my own marriage” (125/41-43).
- How is “liberty” understood in this *History*, invoked as it is a dozen times?