

DYNASTY AND DIVISION: THE DEPICTION OF KING AND KINGDOM IN
JOHN HARDYNG'S *CHRONICLE*

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Abstract

Composed during a period of increased dynastic awareness and political tension, John Hardyng's late fifteenth-century *Chronicle* survives in two versions. Previous scholars have labelled the first version a 'Lancastrian' account of history, written with little purpose other than to elicit financial reward and advocate the conquest of Scotland; the second is regarded as a 'Yorkist' revision. This article assesses Hardyng's representation of the kings and their kingdom, with particular emphasis on the depiction of division within the realm; it demonstrates that Hardyng's portrayal of Henry VI in the first version, and his use of commonplace imagery and themes, are conscientiously crafted to facilitate a wider-ranging political focus and concern with late medieval affairs than previously accepted. Conversely, comparable examples from the second version show that it is not exclusively concerned with fortifying the Yorkist dynasty, but that it promotes the same call for peace and good governance as the first version.

Throughout his life, John Hardyng (1378-c.1465), had many guises: soldier, esquire, spy, forger, chronicler, cartographer. By the time of his death, he had lived through the reigns of five kings; fought in some of the most famous battles of the period, both at home and abroad; worked as a spy and forger in Scotland for Henry V; retired to an Augustinian priory; and written two versions of a verse chronicle. The first version was presented to the last of the Lancastrian kings, Henry VI, in 1457, and is preserved in a single manuscript. The second, shorter, version was originally dedicated to Richard, duke of York, but the revision was incomplete at the time of the duke's death in December 1460 so Hardyng re-dedicated the text to his son, the first of the Yorkist monarchs, Edward IV. This later version evidently enjoyed greater popularity than the original, and survives in twelve complete manuscripts, three fragments and two sixteenth-century prints.¹

Hardyng did not begin his career as a writer, but as a squire in the household of Sir Henry 'Hotspur' Percy (1364-1403), son of Henry Percy, first earl of Northumberland (1342-1408).² The importance of the Percies in the political affairs of this period have been discussed at length by scholars, and it should suffice to say that for thirteen years, from the age of twelve to twenty-five, Hardyng was attached to the household of one of the greatest and most

influential families in the country. Later, he was lucky, or astute enough, to remain unscathed by the decline of Percy fortunes, and sometime after the death of Hotspur in 1403 he passed into the service of Sir Robert Umfraville (c.1362-1437). Under Umfraville Hardyng fought in Scotland and France for Henry V, and was appointed sub-constable of Warkworth Castle, Northumberland, and constable of Kyme Castle, Lincolnshire.³ In 1418 he was allegedly commissioned by Henry V to undertake a covert mission into Scotland to procure documents relating to English sovereignty, and obtain geographical information about the terrain. He returned to England after 'thre yere and halfe' (Lansdowne 204, f. 3r), having obtained the evidence requested by the King, and in recompense for his service to the crown was apparently promised Geddington Manor in Northamptonshire; this pledge was to haunt him for the rest of his life, for it was not until July 1440 and November 1457 that he received remuneration for his reconnaissance in the form of two annuities granted by Henry VI.⁴ It is during this period that Hardyng began compiling the first version of his *Chronicle* at the Augustinian priory at South Kyme, where he spent his remaining years as a corrodarian following the death of Umfraville. Critics have therefore tended to attribute the composition of the first version to strictly avaricious motivations on Hardyng's part or to a supposed desire to promote a 'policy of Scottish conquest, which had become an obsession with him' (Kingsford 1912: 466-67).⁵

In 1996 Felicity Riddy made an important contribution to our understanding of the *Chronicle* by highlighting the political circumstances surrounding the composition and production of the second version; nonetheless, the first version has remained largely ignored. Closer analysis of Hardyng's depiction of the reigning monarch and his kingdom, however, reveals that the *Chronicle* has a greater authorial anxiety and concern with late fifteenth-century affairs than has previously been accredited. In particular, the representations of the king and kingdom in both versions are conscientiously crafted in keeping with other fifteenth-century polemic discourses to highlight the politically unstable nature of England in the late 1450s and early 1460s; it is this aspect that I intend to discuss here.⁶

Although not in the same category as the classically structured 'Mirrors for Princes', or *speculum principis*, Hardyng undoubtedly views both recensions of his *Chronicle* within this tradition; the reigns of past monarchs provide a series of *exempla* of good and bad governance that the king and the nobility of the realm may absorb at their leisure, and by which, Hardyng hopes, they will aspire to emulate the virtuous, and avoid the immoral.⁷ This is expounded throughout the *Chronicle* in frequent authorial interjections highlighting the vices or virtues of a specific monarch; the most explicit expressions of this are found in the prologues and epilogues:

Consyder nowe, moste gracious souereyn lorde,
In this tretyse how long your auncetry
In welthe and hele regned of high recorde
That keped pese and law contynuly ...

Consyder als, in this symple tretyse,
How kynges kept nayther law, ne pese,
Went sone away in many dyuers wyse

(Lansdowne 204, f. 222r)⁸

As one would expect, some of the monarchs featured highlight the rudimentary qualities that a great sovereign should, or should not, possess, focussing on individual aspects of character, such as temperance, fortitude, greed, or complacency. Other exemplary reigns provide a twofold commentary on how a ruler's personal attributes affect the public sphere. All of the *exempla* are, nonetheless, given cohesion by Hardyng's omnipresent exploration of kingship and division. These thematic components and the way in which they are shown to impact upon the kingdom in a particularly positive or negative way, either through a superlative king who attains temporary unity within his realm, or through a particularly deplorable king who sanctions, or causes, civil war, form the basis of Hardyng's overall vision of history as a continual flux between unity and disunity, prosperity and disaster. The way in which the two versions use such exemplary models of behaviour is of specific interest with regards to the different depictions of Hardyng's patrons.

The first version of the *Chronicle* correlates Henry VI and Edward III. Attention is drawn to the fact that both kings ascended the throne at an early age, and were therefore in need of guidance from wiser governors, and both inherited the dual monarchy of England and France.⁹ An address to Henry VI in the epilogue subtly reminds the reader of the problems that can arise from a reign beginning with a minority, whilst recalling the notable governors who protected the country during Henry's minority:

Consyder als, most souereyn lorde and prynce,
In these cronycles that hath bene redde or seyne
Was neuer no prynce of Bretayns hole provynce
So yonge as ye were wan ye gan to reyne

(Lansdowne 204, f. 222v)

Hardyng equates the minority of a young king with the potential to do good or bad. The inadequacies of Edward III's early reign are attributed to the bad counsel of his mother, Queen Isabella, and her lover, Roger Mortimer, implying that a monarch can only be an effective ruler if he avoids the self-serving advice offered by unsuitable counsellors and instead upholds the common weal of his country.¹⁰ Conversely, the *Chronicle* highlights the inequities of Richard II's reign: another sovereign who began his reign with a

minority. Hardyng depicts the king in stark contrast to England's designated saviour, Henry Bolingbroke, portraying the future Henry IV as a shepherd who united the scattered flock, that is to say the king's subjects, and brought them back to their pasture:¹¹

Thurgh all the londe, as I can now compile,
The scatred floke to thare pastur that while
Thus brought he home agayn with grete plesance
To all the reme than thurgh his gouernaunce.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 202r)

Hardyng ascribes Bolingbroke's coup to God's will, and cites examples of Richard's bad governance to justify why the common people, governors and magnates of the realm, collectively referred to as 'England', deposed the king. In evoking the image of Bolingbroke as the proverbial good shepherd Hardyng highlights the common medieval perception of the divine right of kingship and follows the example of early fifteenth-century chroniclers, such as John Gower and Thomas Walsingham, by portraying Richard's downfall as providential.¹² Two selections of verse from Gower's *Cronica Tripertita* are reproduced in marginal glosses to reiterate this idea, the first at the beginning of the narrative dealing with Richard's reign and the Peasants' Revolt, the second occurring beside the account of his death in the reign of Henry IV:

Principio regis oritur transgressio legis,
Quo fortuna cadit et humus retrograda vadit.
Quomodo surrexit populus quem non bene rexit,
Tempus adhuc plangit super hoc, quod cronica tangit.
Stultorum vile cepit consilium iuuenile
Et sectam senium decreuit esse reiectam.
Tunc accusare quosdam presumpsit auare,
Vnde catalorum gazas spoliaret eorum.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 196v)

O speculum mundi, quod debet in aure refundi,
Ex quo prouisum sapiens acuat sibi visum;
Cum male viuentes Deus odit in orbe regentes,
Est qui peccator non esse potest dominator;
Ricardo teste, finis probat hoc manifeste.
Sic diffinita fecit regina sors stabilita,
Regis vt est vita cronica stabat ita.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 204r)

Aside from the fact that the extracts are strategically placed at the beginning and end of Richard's career to highlight the cyclic nature of fortune, they also emphasise the theme of the world, and its past history, as a mirror in whose

reflection wise men may see examples of good and evil.¹³ Both of these themes were of course medieval commonplaces, particularly in literature taking the *speculum principis* form. Therefore, when Henry VI is depicted, metaphorically, as a shepherd at the end of the first version, the implication is that as the anointed sovereign, he has the ability to bring peace and stability to late medieval England. Hardyng states that Henry is the only man in the realm with the power to unite and govern the three parts of Britain, symbolically described as a scattered herd. Two of the parts, England and Wales, are already united, whilst the third, Scotland, remains defiantly divided from England.¹⁴ In order to reunite the land, the *Chronicle* suggests that, like Edward III, Henry VI must take responsibility for, and avoid, the bad counsel of the influential members of the community of England who currently oppress the common weal and pursue their own personal profit; only then will he be able to turn to the problem of subjugating the dissident Scots.

Interestingly, the dependency of territorial expansion on internal peace within a kingdom, as suggested by the image of the king uniting the divided flock, also occurs in the aforementioned narrative of Richard II's reign in the first version. The rebellion in England is juxtaposed in the same stanza as Richard's attempt to further his territorial power with the conquest of Ireland. Hardyng suggests that Richard would have succeeded in subjugating the Irish if the English people had been united behind him:

Than went he to Irelande with grete powere ...
 For whiche he thought thaim fully to conquere,
 And so he had, if Englonde had bene trewe,
 That chaunged sone and toke a purpose newe.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 201v)

Any attempt by a king to further his territorial acquisitions is shown to be beneficial only when his subjects are united behind his campaign and his current realm is in order. Hereby, the concept of a prosperous kingdom, for Hardyng, becomes synonymous with the contentment of the king's subjects *and* the king's ability to judge when territorial expansion is conducive to the common weal. Again, this is inherent in Hardyng's final warning to Henry VI to uphold the peace and chastise those who break it on peril of incurring God's wrath and loosing his kingdom:¹⁵

Wharfor to yow, moste souereyn prynce and lorde,
 It sytteth wele that poynte to execute
 The comon wele and verry hool concorde,
 That none ouerrenne your comons, ne rebute,
 And kepe your lawe as it is constytute,
 And chastyse hem that market-dassechers bene

In euery shir that now of new er sene.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 221v)

Wythstonde, gode lorde, begynnyng of debate,
 And chastyse well also the ryotours
 That in eche shire bene now consociate
 Agayn youre pese, and all thair maynetenours.
 For treuly els wyll fall the fayrest flours
 Of your coroune and noble monarchy,
 Whiche God defende and kepe through his mercy ...

Bot iff your reme stonde hole in vnyte
 Conserued wele in pese and equyte ...

Than may ye wele and saufly with baner
 Ryde into Fraunce or Scotlonde for your right,
 Whils your rereward in Englund stondyth clere
 (Lansdowne 204, f. 222r-v)

Although the *Chronicle* celebrates the attempts of Edward III and Henry V to regain England's lost colonies, Hardyng acknowledges that it was not their fate to provide lasting peace between England and her neighbours. The condemnation of the current lack of justice in the epilogue echoes the author's diatribe on lawlessness in Hardyng's lamentation for Henry V, during which solutions to contemporary difficulties with France are offered, implying that Henry VI could fulfil the prophetic destiny coveted by his forefathers (see Lansdowne 204, ff. 215v-17v). Although the English had lost dominion over most of their French territories by 1450, Hardyng remains surprisingly optimistic; after admiring Henry V's military prowess and just governance, he calls attention to the current problems at home caused by over mighty magnates who abuse their position within society. Having already prescribed sovereign intervention in previous interjections, he highlights another method of controlling and limiting the influence of oppressors of the common weal: without offending or legally chastising them, Henry VI can dispose of the troublesome magnates by sending them to France to uphold English hegemony over Normandy:

And at the leeste ye may sende hem ouer se
 To kepe your right in Fraunce and Normandy,
 Thair hiegh corage to spende and iolyte
 In sauynge of your noble regaly;
 For better is ther thair manly vyctory
 Than her eche day with grete malyolence
 Make neyghbours werr with myghty violence.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 217r)

Some of Hardyng's contemporaries overtly criticise Henry's government for adopting a peace policy with France, but Hardyng adopts a subtler approach. By calling attention to the problem of maintaining the French territories Hardyng links the reigns of Edward III, Henry V and Henry VI. Having already presented Edward III as the 'first ... of Englysshe nacioun' to hold a title to the throne of France (Lansdowne 204, f. 195v), and Henry V as the almighty conqueror of that realm, the connection between Henry VI, the only king to be crowned as sovereign of both realms, and his ancestors becomes implicit and his duty to defend his title essential.¹⁶

Having determined what Henry VI needs to do in order to be recorded by future chroniclers as an example of good kingship, Hardyng offers further suggestions of how this may be achieved. Again, this is done by means of commonplace imagery to invite comparisons between the king and his illustrious father. In both the prologue and the epilogue, the image of sickness is evoked and the king is depicted as Hardyng's physician:¹⁷

Who hath an hurte and wille it nought diskure
And to his leche can nought his sore compleyne,
In wo euermore withouten any cure
Alle helpes forth he muste comporte his peyne ...

Wherfore to 3ow, as prince moste excellent,
I me compleyne, as resoun techeth me

(Lansdowne 204, f. 3r)

The image of sickness is further underscored by Hardyng's autobiographical account of the secret mission he undertook for Henry V. As the son and heir of Henry V, Henry VI is the only person who can bring respite to the author, and heal his financial incapacity by acknowledging his services under the late king and honouring the reward he promised to Hardyng. The chronicler stresses that, although he successfully accomplished his mission, obtaining the documents cost an extravagant amount of money, and that he received an incurable wound, which at the time of writing, almost four decades later, still kept him awake at night:

Whiche euydence ...
Foure hundre mark and fyfty ful assised
Cost me treuly for 3oure fadir sake,
With incurable mayme that maketh me wake.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 4r)

The wound becomes a metaphor for the financial and physical hardship Hardyng incurred in the service of his country. It serves as a reminder to Henry VI that he inherited not only the English throne but an obligation to fulfil the

expectations and needs of the English people, represented here by Hardyng's lack of reward, and his financial and physical suffering.

If the use of the sickness imagery ended here, one would be inclined to assume that perhaps Hardyng was just writing for selfish purposes, and using a popular conceit to dress up his petition; however, the author recycles the sickness metaphor time and again throughout the *Chronicle*, finally applying it to the state of England in the epilogue. He notes that the failure of the authorities to maintain order and justice in the shires has produced many unhealed sores on the body of England, and that eventually, if the king does not begin to resolve the minor injustices occurring in his kingdom, the culmination of minor unhealed wounds will erupt into a large scab that even Henry, as the kingdom's physician, will be unable to heal:

Bot thus I drede ...
 Of suche riottes shall ryse a more mescheve,
 And through the sores vneheled wyll brede a skabbe
 So grete that may noght bene restreynt in breue.
 Wharfore, gode lorde, iff ye wyll gyffe me leue,
 I wolde say thus vnto your excellence,
 Withstonde the first mysreule and violence.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 222r)

This statement is given greater impact as it follows Hardyng's poignant eulogy for Sir Robert Umfraville, his former patron, whose kind words, we are informed, always 'medycyned' (Lansdowne 204, f. 221r) the hearts of the common people, whilst he himself 'was neuer 3yt infecte' with vice (Lansdowne 204, f. 220v).¹⁸ By ascribing the sickness metaphor, previously associated with Henry V and Henry VI, to a member of the nobility Hardyng reiterates the influence that they have over the fortunes of England; thus, suggesting a link between king, subjects and kingdom, that anticipates the final climatic image: the disfigured and wounded body of England.

Like the king, the magnates are depicted throughout the *Chronicle* as exemplary models of good and bad behaviour. Again, this is an integral theme of the *Chronicle*, which recurs throughout the narrative wherever Hardyng interjects to address the king. Interestingly, the lords of England are almost always addressed at the same time as the king, or their contribution towards the stable governance of the realm is acknowledged, suggesting, perhaps, that Hardyng envisaged his *Chronicle* circulating, albeit within limited circles, amongst the nobility.

The relationship between the king and his magnates, and the kingdom and its subjects, is therefore depicted as that of healer and patient. In effect Hardyng's initial financial sickness, resulting from an alleged lack of reward, becomes a microcosm of society; dispensing justice to individual subjects is shown to be just as important as, and indeed the first step towards, dispensing

justice to the whole of England. If the king (and his councillors) can recognise the injustice done to the chronicler, in the form of his outstanding reward, he will be able to recognise, and begin to resolve, the injustices rife in England, which Hardyng details so pointedly throughout the *Chronicle*.

Conversely, when the king and his nobles are corrupt and self-serving, or when the relationship between them fails to be an amicable one, the kingdom becomes unstable and divided. In his account of the Percy rebellion in 1403 Hardyng uses a popular image of the time, the ship of state, to illustrate the disruptive influence the rebellion had on the country.¹⁹

From thens forthwarde the kynge and he wer straunge,
And ayther had of thaym grete hete till other,
And lyke to turne in kalendes of a chaunge,
And ay in doute as shippe withouten rothere

(Lansdowne 204, f. 205v)

The image of a rudderless ship evokes a sense of inevitable trouble; such a ship is destined to drift onto the rocks. Likewise, the 'kalendes of a chaunge', borrowed in this instance from Chaucer's tragic *Troilus and Criseyde*, signify the inexorable passage of time and a sense of fate: conflict between a powerful lord and the king is destined to result in trouble.²⁰

A direct address to Henry VI and the nobility in the reign of King Cloten provides a further example of the *Chronicle's* ubiquitous pursuit of this theme by demonstrating how minor injustices can grow into full-scale civil war if the lords fail to help the king maintain law and order. Hardyng describes the horrors of the 'Fourty wyntyre duryng the barons werre' during which the 'pore men that afore wer desolate' rise up and overthrow the nobility (Lansdowne 204, f. 26r). The failure of the barons to resolve their differences and uphold one king allows reprobates and social upstarts to obtain power: 'And grew a lorde byfor that was a page' (Lansdowne 204, f. 26r). Hardyng concludes his condemnation by asking 'What is a kynge withouten lawe or pese / Within his reame suffyciently conserued?' (Lansdowne 204, f. 26r). The similarity between the *Chronicle's* depiction of this conflict with Jack Cade's rebellion in 1450 and other localised outbreaks of violence in Lincolnshire and East Anglia in the 1440s and 1450s is striking.²¹ The chronicler may not have felt it prudent to mention Cade by name when presenting his work to the king in 1457, but the second version reveals that he had the Kentish rebellion in mind when compiling his verses. The majority of the stanzas describing Cloten's turbulent reign in the revised text are identical, or almost identical, to the account in Lansdowne 204, with one salient exception: the final line of the stanza asking 'What is a king withouten lawe and peese?' is altered from 'Iff that it be in suche a iupart' (Lansdowne 204, f. 26r) to 'As traytour Cade made such a iupart' (Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 24r; Ellis 1812: 59). An address to York

follows, in addition to the original conclusion belonging to the first version, asking the 'lordes that ben of high astate' to:

Kepe wele þe lawe and pees with gouernaunce,
 Lesse youre subgittes you hurte and depreciate,
 Whiche ben as able with wrongful ordynaunce
 To reigne as he and haue as grete puissaunce;
 If lawe and pees be leide and vnitee
 The floures er loste of alle youre souerainte.

(Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 24r; Ellis 1812: 59-60)

Comparable warnings about localised uprisings by 'beggars blode' also occur in the account of King Bassyan. Here Hardyng's attack on the king's failure to uphold justice is even more specific, and accusations relating to the contemporary state of Britain are levied at the present-day lords and barons in Hardyng's audience:

Ye lordes that suffre the law and pese mysledde
 In euery shire whare so 3e dwellynge bene,
 Whar ye pore men ouersette se or mysbedde,
 Ye shuld thaym helpe, and socour, and sustene,
 And chastyse thaym that trespasours so bene;
 Why ys a lorde sette in so hiegh degre
 Bot to mayntene vndyr hym the comonte?

Bot o ye lordes fro this ful foule ye erre ...
 Wharfore ye lordes the pryncyple ay withstonde,
 Lesse beggars blode dryue you out of your londe.

(Lansdowne 204, ff. 43v-44r)

Hardyng's main point here is that the king and his magnates are placed above the commoners to protect and help them. If united in their desire to uphold the common weal, they can prevent the civil divisions that in England's past history have torn the country apart.

It is significant that Hardyng does not make his most direct and challenging remark of 'Withstonde the first mysreule and violence' (Lansdowne 204, f. 222r) until the end of the *Chronicle*. Having provided examples of how internal divisions and civil wars in England have ruined the kingdom, Hardyng has proved past events to be of consequence to fifteenth-century society.²² Fourteen stanzas of the epilogue are used to make dangerously critical observations of the state of civil discord in the shires under Henry VI's rule. Again some interesting imagery is used to emphasise Hardyng's point. He compares the law under Henry's governance to a pair of Welshman's breeches that are fitted to the shape of the individual's leg. In other words, English men are subverting and adjusting the law in order to suit their own needs:

The lawe is lyke vnto a Walshmannes hose
To eche mannes legge that shapen is and mete;
So mayntenours subuerte it and transpose,
Thurgh myght it is full low layde vndyre fete,
And mayntnanse vp instede of law complete,
All, if lawe wolde, thyng were by right reuersed,
For mayntenours it may nocht bene rehersed.

(Lansdowne 204, f. 222r)²³

Whether Hardyng truly believed that Henry would act, or take heed to these warnings is difficult to determine. What is clear, however, is that in the England depicted by Hardyng, influencing the people who had the king's confidence seems to be just as productive as trying to influence the king himself. The root of political conflict in England in the late 1450s, as depicted in the first version of Hardyng's *Chronicle*, results not from a dynastic struggle for the crown, but from the over mighty and corrupt governance of local officials and nobles. Other texts originating from the period before Richard, duke of York, pressed his claim for the throne support this assumption.²⁴ Ending the first version in 1437 may be due to Hardyng's use of the *Brut*, but it also leaves the reign of Henry VI open, almost like a blank page on which anything may be written. Henry may complete his reign by following in his father's footsteps or, Hardyng suggests, he can be remembered as an ineffectual ruler who allowed his kingdom to be overcome by the internal conflicts and injustice witnessed in the reigns of earlier kings in the *Chronicle* such as Richard II. It is unfortunate for Henry that he came to be remembered as the latter, but, nevertheless, Hardyng's work shows that even in 1457 his subjects still entertained the belief that the king could turn the fortunes of England around.

In the second version, revised for Richard, duke of York, and his son Edward IV, the dynastic rivalry between Lancaster and York is presented as merely another example of division within the kingdom. Hardyng opens the history with a genealogical prologue recounting York's descent from Edward III, and several prose passages, in Latin and English, are appended to the work concerning Henry IV's usurpation to make the *Chronicle* more appropriate to his new patrons. Most of the material in these sections consists of the contrived Yorkist propaganda in circulation around 1460, but at moments when one would expect the *Chronicle* to adopt a partisan tone, like the London *Chronicles* of this period or continuations of the *Brut*, the text reveals little concern with the dynastic issue, often retaining the same viewpoint as the original version.²⁵ The new prose passages lament the deposition of Richard II, and the verses contain no hint of the saintly characteristics given to Bolingbroke in the first version; but for all this, Richard's deposition is still ascribed to his bad governance, and Henry IV acquires the throne as a result of abusing the power available to him as a magnate, not from a superior dynastic

claim. The reference to the restoration of the usurped dynasty in the epilogue is not followed by exaltation but with the same warning inherent in the first version, that kingship is bestowed, and removed, by divine providence (Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 178v; Ellis 1812: 410). This echoes Hardyng's sentiments in the prologue, where he instructs Richard, duke of York, to remain mindful of the fact that Henry Percy, with his own legitimate descent from Edward III, could have inherited the throne if God so deemed:

Trete wele Percy, of Marches lync decended,
 Remembryng ...
 How, by processe of tyme and destanye,
 Youre right might alle ben his, as nowe is youre,
 Thorough Goddes might maketh, and successours.

(Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 6v; Ellis 1812: 18-19)

Likewise, instead of omitting the stanzas addressed to Henry VI concerning the ruinous state of the kingdom, as one might expect from a revision dedicated to the new Yorkist dynasty, Hardyng reworks his observations and warnings about the state of the kingdom to suit the new monarch. Analogous warnings to those in the first version occur in the equivalent sections, but Hardyng edits his diatribes into more palatable addresses to York. He asks him, for example, to consider the 'ful lamentable' case of King Bassyan and think especially about the treacherous 'barons' whose hearts were 'englaymed' by the usurper Carauce 'with golde ... and by his language swete, / Semyng like treuthe' (Arch. Selden B. 10, ff. 38v-39r; Ellis 1812: 93). The sickness imagery so prominent in the first version is employed again as Carauce's gifts are said to 'infecte' the nobility and King Bassayn is eventually slain by him (Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 39r; Ellis 1812: 93). The concluding stanza advises York to be 'þe chief iustice' in his realm in a similar, but milder, manner to the author's earlier petitions to Henry VI:

Good lord, whan ye ben set wele vnder croun,
 With traitours and misruled riotours
 Dispense right so with alle suche absolucioun
 And let hem seke none oþer correctours,
 But mayntene þan youre lawes gouernours,
 And ouer althing be ye þe chief iustice
 To kepe þe peas þat no fals do you supprise.

(Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 39r; Ellis 1812: 94)

Although the greatness of Henry V is toned down, his successful campaigns in France are used to highlight how civil war leaves a country open to invasion from her enemies; references to Rome and Carthage in another address to York, after the reign of Cadwallader, serve as further examples of great realms, which have fallen through internal division:²⁶

In Fraunce as fille ful grete diuisioun
Thorough whiche þe fifte Henry, kyng of Englonde,
Ouerode þerre lond by grete prouisioun,
And conquered hem, þey might nat him withstond.
Alle þeire citees were yold in to his hand
For cause of þeire cruel dissencioun
Among hem silf, susteynde by contencoun;

Rome, Cartage, and many oþer citees,
And many remes, as clerkes haue specified,
Haue ben subuerte, and eke many cuntrees,
By diuisioun among hem fortified,
Where vnite and loue wele edified
Might hem haue saued, in al prosperite,
From al manere hurte and al aduersite.

(Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 78v; Ellis 1812: 180)

Other imagery from the first version is reworked in the epilogue which places greater emphasis on the image of the king as the good shepherd. Hardyng's advises Edward IV to pardon the men who still support Henry VI, and who gave up their freedom and estates to follow him into exile in Scotland:

O rightwis prince, bringe the scatrid men
To thaire pasture forsakyn and forlore ...
Concidir how God hath youe set therfore
At ouer the flok to seke scatrid shepe,
And ley hem in youre folde surerly to slepe.

(Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 179v; Ellis 1812: 412)

The word 'slepe' is particularly striking here, as it implies that only Edward IV can bring rest and relief to the 'forlore' flock.

Perhaps the most incredible feature of the second version is that instead of condemning Henry VI, and the men who fled to Scotland with him, Hardyng asks Edward to show mercy to them, to bring Henry home from Scotland and to restore him to his natural inheritance, the duchy of Lancaster:

Graunt Henry grace with all his owne lyuelode,
The duchie hool of Lancastre his right,
Nought as it is but as of worthihode.
First Duke Henry had the noble knight
At his last day, þat was of mikil might

(Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 179r; Ellis 1812: 411)

This, he promises, will appease Henry and reconcile him to Edward; it will also pacify Henry's supporters, who in seeing Henry reconciled with Edward will become Edward's loyal subjects; additionally, England's enemies, the Scots

and the French, will be unable to exploit the divisions that the dynastic dispute has caused within England. Loyal and contented subjects are once again shown to be the key to maintaining a unified and prosperous country. Moreover, new stanzas are added to remind Edward IV, poignantly, of the harsh realities of war: the great expense to the king and the kingdom, and the terrible loss of life entailed. Internal peace within Britain is more desirable than foreign conquest. Therefore Hardyng requests only the recovery of Henry VI and the subjugation of the Scots:

I had it [Scotland] leuer than Fraunce and Normandie
 And all youre rightes that are beyonde þe se;
 For ye may kepe it euermore ful sikerlie
 Within youreself and drede noon enmytie.
 And othir londes without men, golde, or fee
 Ye may not longe reioise, as hath be tolde,
 For lighter be thay to wyn than holde

 Youre auncetres haue had beyond the se
 Diuers londes and lost hem all agayne;
 Sore goten, sone lost, what vailleth suche rialte
 But labore and cost, grete losse of men and payne?
 For ay before, with treson, or with trayne
 And want of golde, was lost within a yere
 That we had goot in ten, as doth apere.

(Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 198v; Ellis 1812: 422)

In spite of the different ways in which Hardyng uses the reigns of previous monarchs to reflect upon the current sovereign, or heir apparent, the depiction of the king and his kingdom in the *Chronicle* is intrinsically the same in both versions. Kingship is divinely appointed, and the earthly monarch has a responsibility to take care of his subjects, administer justice, and heal the divisions within his realm. The kingdom is portrayed as both a physical landscape, comprising territories that can be mapped out and measured, won and lost, and an imagined community, comprising all English subjects living under the king's jurisdiction. The king, his subjects and his kingdom are inextricably linked; united, and devoted to the common weal, they are strong and prosperous; divided and self-serving, they are weak and susceptible to invasion from enemies.

The fact that Hardyng revised the *Chronicle* for the house of York is interesting rather than detrimental to his reputation, for it offers a unique insight into a brief, but important, epoch in the late fifteenth century when the political bias of historical writing shifted from works in favour of one royal dynasty to another. Although the second version of the *Chronicle* is more prudent about presenting the heir apparent, and later the new king, as the legitimate ruler of

England and its colonies, the primary concern of the work is not one of dynastic legitimacy and dominion, but of the common weal of England and the English people; both versions embody elements of political concern particular to the moment of their composition, but fundamentally the anxieties they share about the future well-being of the kingdom are common in the majority of late medieval historical works in England, particularly those produced in the fifteenth century.²⁷

Ultimately the forms of division represented in the *Chronicle*, whether it is dynastic struggle, Hardyng's personal alienation from the king through lack of reward, or the question of Scottish independence, are all used to demonstrate how division within a kingdom, particularly late fifteenth-century England, is unprofitable for both the king and his people. After living, fighting, spying and surviving through eighty-seven years of domestic and foreign wars, John Hardyng saw fit to offer up his observations and hopes for England's future, and to attempt to kindle similar aspirations for peace, justice and public well-being in the hearts of those who read his *Chronicle* who had the power to make a difference.

Notes

1. The first version survives in London, British Library MS Lansdowne 204, and remains unedited; however, James Simpson and I are currently preparing an edition. The second version of the *Chronicle* is only accessible in Henry Ellis's edition (1812). Extant manuscripts include: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Arch. Selden B. 10; Ashmole 34; Douce 345; Douce 378; London, British Library, Harley 661; Egerton 1992; Glasgow Hunterian Library, Hunter 400 (v. 2. 20); Tokyo, Takamiya 6; Princeton University Garrett 142; University of Illinois 83; Harvard University 1054; and New York, Pierpont Morgan Bühler 5. Fragments may be found in British Library, Harley 293; Harley 3730; and London College of Arms 2. M. 16. Richard Grafton's two printed versions were published in January 1543 (*Short Title Catalogue*, numbers 12766.7 and 12767). The relationship between the two versions, Hardyng's life and social milieu, and the connections between the manuscripts have been explored in my thesis (Peeverley 2004); the manuscripts of the second version are also discussed in Edwards (1987). My own research has shown that the printed version of the *Chronicle* used by Ellis for his edition probably derives from a group of manuscripts furthest from Hardyng's original archetype; for this reason I have provided all quotations belonging to the second version from the nearest manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden B. 10, with references to the relevant pages of Ellis's edition in brackets. This matter is discussed further in my thesis. For a comprehensive bibliography of articles concerning Hardyng and his *Chronicle* see Kennedy (1989a: 2836-45). Recent studies focused mainly, or entirely, on Hardyng following the publication of Kennedy's bibliography include: Kennedy (1989b), Riddy (1991a, 1991b and 1996), Withrington (1991), Harker (1996), Hiatt (1999a and 1999b), Moll (1999).

2. See MS Arch. Selden B. 10, ff. 190r and 192r (Ellis 1812: 351, 353). For the Percies, see Bean (1959), Weiss (1976), McNiven (1980), and Rose (2002).
3. The Umfraville family played an important role in Northumbrian society and its politics, and were connected by marriage to several notable families including the Percies and Nevilles. For further discussion of Hardyng's career under Umfraville, see Peverley (2004).
4. If Hardyng is to be believed, he presented Henry V with his documents at Bois de Vincennes and was promised the manor just before the king died in 1422. The extent to which Henry V was responsible for sending Hardyng to Scotland remains unclear. Details of the mission are given throughout the *Chronicle*, most notably in the prologue to the first version; see Lansdowne 204, ff. 3r-4r, and Arch Selden B.10, f. 129r (Ellis 1812: 292). The annuities granted by Henry VI are recorded in *Calendar of Patent Rolls: Henry VI, 1436-1441*, pp. 431, m. 15 (15 July 1440), *Calendar of Patent Rolls: Henry VI, 1452-61*, p. 393, m. 8 (18 November 1457) and *Calendar of Close Rolls: Henry, 1454-61*, p. 235, m. 28 (18 November 1457). Although several complications arose with the 1440 annuity of £ 10, the Pipe Rolls for the period 1440 to 1466 record its payment, but contain no reference to the £ 20 annuity granted in 1457 out of the Lincolnshire county revenues; for further discussion of Hardyng's mission, Henry V's involvement and the annuities, see Peverley (2004).
5. For Hardyng's association with Kyme, see Riddy (1996) and Peverley (2004). Kingsford (1912: 474) was the first to suggest that Hardyng began his composition in the 1440s and 50s.
6. Aspects of this paper are developed at greater length in my thesis.
7. Scholarship concerning the 'Mirrors for Princes' tradition in fourteenth and fifteenth-century English literature is plentiful; see, for example, Scattergood (1971: 274-97), Green (1980), Kekewich (1987), Lawton (1987), Scanlon (1990), Pearsall (1994). For the popularity of 'Mirrors' in the late fifteenth-century, see Sutton and Visser-Fuchs (1997).
8. Identical stanzas also occur in the second version of the *Chronicle*, in which Hardyng takes particular care to present himself as the perfect guide for future kings and 'yong knights' (see, for example, Arch. Selden B. 10, ff. 5r-5v, 12r, 179v, 180r; Ellis 1812: 16, 32, 412-13). This is undoubtedly due to an increased anxiety on his part to justify the status of the new heir apparent, Richard, duke of York; for further discussion, see Peverley (2004).
9. See Lansdowne 204, ff. 185r, 186r, 195v, 217v, 219v, 222v. Aside from the examples given here, the beautiful illuminated pedigree of France occurring between the reigns of Richard II and Edward III in the first version of the *Chronicle* (Lansdowne 204, f. 196r) similarly serves to reiterate Henry VI's relationship to Edward III by illustrating their common ancestry and inheritance. The second version retains an extended form of the pedigree to highlight York's descent from the same illustrious line, but it simultaneously serves to emphasise his claim to the English throne.

10. For Hardyng's condemnation of Isabella and Mortimer, see Lansdowne 204, f. 186r-187r, and Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 139v-141r (Ellis 1812: 316-19). Similar comments may be found in the *Brut* (Brie 1906: 257, 261-62) and Knighton's *Chronicle* (Lumby 1889: 447-53).
11. The concept of the Good Shepherd is a common motif in medieval literature, and the depiction of Henry IV as England's saviour is particularly common in texts produced in the wake of the Lancastrian ascendancy; see, for example, Gower's *Cronica Tripertita* and Thomas Walsingham's *Annales Ricardi Secundi et Henrici Quarti*. The perception of the king as a Christ figure is likewise common in medieval literature; see, for example, Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes* (ll. 2409-13, 2521-22), Gower's *Vox Clamantis* (VI, ll. 580-600), and *The Crowned King* (ll. 137-44). Hardyng may have derived this image from Gower, or from analogous representations of Bolingbroke's virtuous nature in sources textually similar to his own narrative, such as the *Eulogium Continuation* and the *English Chronicle*. Bolingbroke's association with the Good Shepherd is removed from the second version. The concept that a kingdom divided amongst itself brings desolation to its inhabitants is Biblical (Matthew 12: 25; Mark 3: 24; Luke 11: 17), and occurs frequently in medieval polemic literature.
12. Compare also *Richard the Redeless* III, ll. 351-70. For further discussion on Hardyng's providential view of history see Kelly (1970) and Peverley (2004).
13. The verses are added in the margins beside the main narrative, in a different hand from that of the main text, which may, or may not, belong to Hardyng. I have discussed this matter further in my thesis. For Gower's *Cronica Tripertita*, see Macaulay (1902). Of the extant manuscripts of the *Cronica*, the verses in Lansdowne 204 correspond most closely to the reading in Glasgow University MS Hunter 59 (T. 2. 17).
14. Lansdowne 204, f. 230v. Comparable verses occur in Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 180r-80v (Ellis 1812: 413-14).
15. Similar sentiments occur throughout both versions of the *Chronicle*, see, for example, the treatment of Henry IV's Scottish campaign in the second version, during which the king takes both wardens of the Marches with him, leaving Bamburghshire unprotected; defenceless, the borders are raided by Scots (Arch. Selden B. 10, f. 157r; Ellis 1812: 358). This viewpoint is analogous with that in other fifteenth-century texts of a political nature such as *Mum and the Soothsegger* (ll. 1457-68), *The Crowned King* (ll. 51-55) and Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes* (ll. 2514-22).
16. Criticism of Henry's French policy was often levied at William De La Pole, earl of Suffolk; for further discussion and examples see Kingsford (1913), Scattergood (1971) and Gransden (1982).
17. Sickness imagery is a common motif in medieval literature; see, for example, the Harley Lyrics, in which the narrator cites his beloved as his physician (Davies 1963: 59-63); compare Hardyng's conceit with that in Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* (I, iv), Chaucer's

- Troilus and Criseyde* (I, 857-58), Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes* (ll. 260-66). In polemic discourse, the idea of a sick or wounded body is often associated with the commonplace image of the 'body politic'; see, for example, Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes* (ll. 3928-34), Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* (II, ll. 827-903), *Richard the Redeless* (II, ll. 62-66), and Gower's *Vox Clamantis* (VI, ll. 497-98). For further discussion of the body politic, see Scattergood (1971: 268-70, 292) and Delany (1998).
18. Compare also Hardyng's criticism of the perjury committed by the Duke of Burgundy and James I, King of Scotland (Lansdowne 204, f. 219v), in which their hearts are described as 'faynte and seke'.
 19. For a discussion of the Ship of State image in medieval texts, see Owst (1961: 67-76) and Haines (1975: 145, 149-51). For examples in contemporary poetry, see Gower's *Vox Clamantis* (I, ll. 1593-2078), *Richard the Redeless* (IV, ll. 71-82), Robbins (1959: 102-06, 191-93), and Scattergood (1971: 180).
 20. See *Troilus and Criseyde* (V, ll. 1632, 1634). For Hardyng's other borrowings from Chaucer see Edwards (1984: 156, and 1988: 12-13) and Peverley (2004).
 21. For difficulties in these regions see Virgoe (1973) and Griffiths (1998).
 22. See, for example, Hardyng's comments on the civil conflict in Lansdowne 204, ff. 102v, 162r.
 23. The image here is traditional and is used to convey the idea of malleability; Welshmen were apparently renowned for turning their hose inside out instead of washing them. John Skelton later uses the same image in his poems 'Collyn Clout' (ll. 778-79) and 'Garlande or Chapelet of Laurell' (ll. 1238-39). I would like to express my gratitude to Professor John Scattergood for this information.
 24. See, for example, John Metham's *Amoryus and Cleopes* (ll. 2104-09), in which the author wonders whether the lack of knightly deeds among contemporary men is due to current civil disturbances or lack of skill (Craig 1916: 77); John Capgrave's *Liber De Illustribus Henricis* (Hingeston 1858: 134); and Whethamstede's *Register* (Riley 1872-73: I, 248-49).
 25. For further information on propaganda in this period see Scattergood (1971), Allan (1979, 1981), Ross (1981), Richmond (1992), Delany (1996, 1998). The fifteenth-century *London Chronicles* and *Brut* continuations are discussed in Kingsford (1905, and 1913: 71-139), Gransden (1982: 220-48), and McLaren (2002).
 26. Hoccleve makes similar comments in his *Regement of Princes* (ll. 5230-50, 5286-5341).
 27. Gransden (1982) addresses the concerns and themes of historical works throughout this period.

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