Analysis Of Richard Iii Essay, Research Paper

Analysis of Richard III

In Richard III, Shakespeare invites us on moral holiday. The early part of

the play draws its readers to identify with Richard and thereby to participate in a

fantasy of total control of self and domination of others. We begin to be pulled

into the fantasy in the play’s opening speech, where Richard presents himself as

an enterprising, self made villain and offers an elaborate justification for this self

he renovation.

In the first scene of the play, Richard announces in a narration, his plan to

become king. Richard is truly a Machiavel. A Machiavel is “one who views

politics as amoral and that any means, however unscrupulous, can justifiably be

used to achieve power”. Richard plainly states that he is “Deformed, Unfinished,

and sent before his time” and “since he cannot prove to be a lover; he is

determined to prove a villain”. As a villain Richard must be heartless; he cannot

let his emotions interfere with his actions. He must also be intelligent and

organized; a villain must know exactly what he has to do, when he has to do it

and how he is going to do it. “A villain must also be manipulative and persuasive

so that if he is accused of a crime, or if he finds himself between a rock and a

hard place, he is able to talk his way out or convince people that he did not

commit the crimes in question. A villain must also have scapegoats to use if he

is discovered or if he is in a dangerous situation”. Richard devised a brutal

stratagem to ascend the English throne.

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Brilliantly, he executed his plan. Heartlessly, he executed family, friends,

and subjects. Richard did indeed display these characteristics and, therefore,

fulfilled his goal to ascend the throne.

One of many Richard’s brilliant schemes was to increase public support

for his own claim to the crown. Richard, aided by Buckingham, enacts shows of

devotion, kindness, religiousness and other virtues, which recommend him to the

citizenry and especially to the Lord Mayor and aldermen of London. This done,

he finally wins the mayor and the alderman over and receives the offer to “the

supreme seat, the throne majestically, the scepter office of his ancestors

themselves, the lineal glory of his royal house” . After some false persuasion by

the Duke of Buckingham, Richard finally accepts the “golden yoke of

sovereignty.” Some Critics feel that not all of Richard’s victims were innocent,

they were hypocritical and were trying to use Richard, but that is another topic.

Richard is, simply, too clever to be outwitted. As a king, Richard did not

succeed. He became overconfident, and sloppy. Richard thought that he did not

need to protect himself from enemies since they were all dead. Unaware, that

Stanley, whom he did trust, was defecting to Richmond, his bitter enemy. He

became overconfident when the war came upon him and, in the end, he failed.

As a villain Richard did succeed, he was heartless, intelligent, organized,

manipulative and persuasive. Richard did indeed display the properties of a

perfect villain and therefore fulfilled his goal to ascend the throne. Without these

resources Richard would not have a chance at the throne.

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“Richard III paper “. Planet Paper. Jun. 2001.

\*http://www.planetpapers.com/Assets/345.html\*.

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