

A Shakespeare Dialogue
**ACTING ON
THE STAGE OF
HISTORY**



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The Art of Classical Thinking: A Look At Shakespeare's 'Legend' Plays

by Terry Jones

So, to all of you who think you know all about Shakespeare's 'Legend' plays, listen up: I think you don't know the difference between tragedy and soap opera!

I say this, because today's audiences can't tell the difference between soap opera, pornography, and melodrama, especially the way that Shakespeare is performed, usually catering to the tastes of the sponsors and financial underwriters of the productions. But even without these so-called sponsors, most directors, actors, and the-

ater groups gloss right over the most essential element of these works of art; namely, the use of what is properly called the "subjective"—i.e., being able to recognize, and hence transform, the hidden axiomatic assumptions in the thinking of those who inhabit a historically specific society. So that, in any circumstance, you can locate from a universal standpoint the decision-making that leads to the demise of the nation or society, as well as detect the fibers embedded in the culture that doom it in history.

Scenes from a Schiller Institute amateur production of "King Lear," directed by Terry Jones, August 2000. Clockwise from left: King Lear with the Fool; the blinded Duke of Gloucester, led by his disguised son Edgar; the Earl of Kent, Edgar, and Lear mourn the dead Cordelia.

This is the qualitative ingredient that Shakespeare added to these legends—such as *Othello*, *King Lear*, or *Macbeth*—which had been around for hundreds of years. These plays were not the same stories, once the Bard got hold of them. Because now, you had not only some of the most profound observations ever made concerning the human mind, but explorations of the principles of statecraft, and demonstrations of the faulty thinking, wrong conclusions, and evil, that are introduced by lack of that statecraft.

This is exactly what the story of *King Lear* is all about. Shakespeare adds this quality of *the subjective* to the Lear story, through which those in the audience, viewing the play, are enabled to see into the minds of the leaders and non-leaders of a culture on the pathway to doom. Because, even though Lear is eighty or so years old, he has the mentality of a Baby Boomer. He's not concerned with his posterity; he's not concerned about his nation-state; he is only concerned with his property, and how to turn it over to his three daughters, whom he barely knows. All that he knows, all that he wishes to do, is to have a good time; to turn over the day-to-day operations of the state, so that he and his hundred knights can travel around England and party. Have a good time. Sounds like a Boomer to me.

You know, in today's world, so very often you hear the "F-word" mentioned, all the time. The "F-word" is an acronym for the "right of the king to fornicate." That's where the word came from, at least in a well-known folk etymology. And I'm sure, given the fact of what Lear wanted to do, he just wanted to "F—" his life away. What he had left of it. He wanted to have a good time.

Lear never, for one moment, thought of building and training secondary leadership, not that he was a great leader himself. And what haunts him, what comes back to destroy him, is his own rashness, which you hear his daughters speak of right from the beginning. He never thought about anything, except his feelings. And to the end of the play, he never gets it. He never figures it out. He only turns into a hardened, wretched misogynist at the end. He never gets it.

In recent writings, Lyndon LaRouche has agreed with the assessment that, as Shakespeare portrays him, Lear was deranged from the outset. The so-called professional school of Shakespeare interpretation, i.e., the "grammarians," take offense at this notion. They choose to see Lear as a desperate old man, needing support toward the end of his reign. By taking that position, they actually shift the whole intent of what Shakespeare had in mind: namely, to portray a dysfunctional, neurotic family, in control of a nation believed by them to be their own personal property, with the cultural values of avarice and

capriciousness abundantly present.

Shakespeare takes this process of the subjective another step forward, by introducing a very powerful subplot, right from the outset. The Duke of Gloucester and his sons introduce ironies concerning the failure to meet responsibility and to recognize truth, or the humanity of another human being. This happens with Edmund, Gloucester's bastard son, who probably, in a certain sense, is the most truthful character in the whole play. He knows what he wants, and is going to show that he's the best bastard ever found on the face of the Earth. As to Lear's daughters, most professionals would have you distinguish between the elder daughters, Goneril and Regan, and the younger one, the pure Cordelia.

I'm very tough on this question of Cordelia. "What shall Cordelia say? Love and be silent." Nonsense. Especially, when you know dangerous and evil things are afoot. When you're growing up in these aristocratic ruling families, there are always plots and subplots among siblings, rivalry among siblings. The question of accession to the throne was always present, and if you were not wise, you did not survive. So, what actually dooms Cordelia, is her extreme naiveté.

The point I'm making is, that there isn't a redeeming character in the whole play. Shakespeare makes a point of posing these ironies at the outset of the action, so that you, the audience, will have an insight into exactly the ingredients for the tragic catastrophe about to be unfolded before your eyes.

The Earl of Kent, who opens the play in discussion with Gloucester, doesn't have any redeeming character either, even though he's usually portrayed as being someone very noble. Kent does have substantial insights, is very shrewd at times, and so forth; *but*, it's this question of Man. He does not consider himself to be a human being! He sees his life, his mortal life, as being a mere appendage of Lear. Thus, at the end of the play, when the responsibility is placed upon him to jointly run the state with Edgar, he says, "I have a journey shortly to go . . . My master calls me, I must not say no," or words to that effect. In my direction of this play, I had the character Kent immediately plunge a dagger into his heart, upon saying this, because Lear is dead, and therefore, *Kent's* biological life has ended, too. He has to follow Lear into the afterlife. Hardly what you would call a Philosopher King.

"Do you smell a fault?" Gloucester asks Kent, upon hearing the circumstances of Edmund's birth, to which Kent can see none. Kent is showing you an example of what *not* to be. It's a wonderful play. Wonderful, from the standpoint of giving you insight into what we see, not only in the setting of the play, but what we all see around

us in everyday life. How many times do you see people lying, ducking and hiding from responsibility? “Oh, that’s not my job. Get somebody else.” It’s this shirking of responsibility, which we see all the time, in so many areas, and in so many ways; that’s why we’re living in a tragedy today.

We Baby Boomers did master one thing—how to become bigger criminals and bigger cowards than even the World War II generation that gave up and moved to the suburbs, and had us. We mastered that. The drugs didn’t hurt either, for those who got into them. But that’s the curvature: cowardice, lying, and duplicity.

Dante Alighieri, in the *Commedia*, reserves a place in the Eighth Circle of Hell for the flatterers—not murders, not rapists, but flatterers. That this is a higher offense to humankind. But this is exactly what Lear wanted; only flattery from his daughters would give each one a third of England’s land-mass. Kent wisely chose to confront Lear on the question of rashness, in relinquishing these territories, but to no avail:

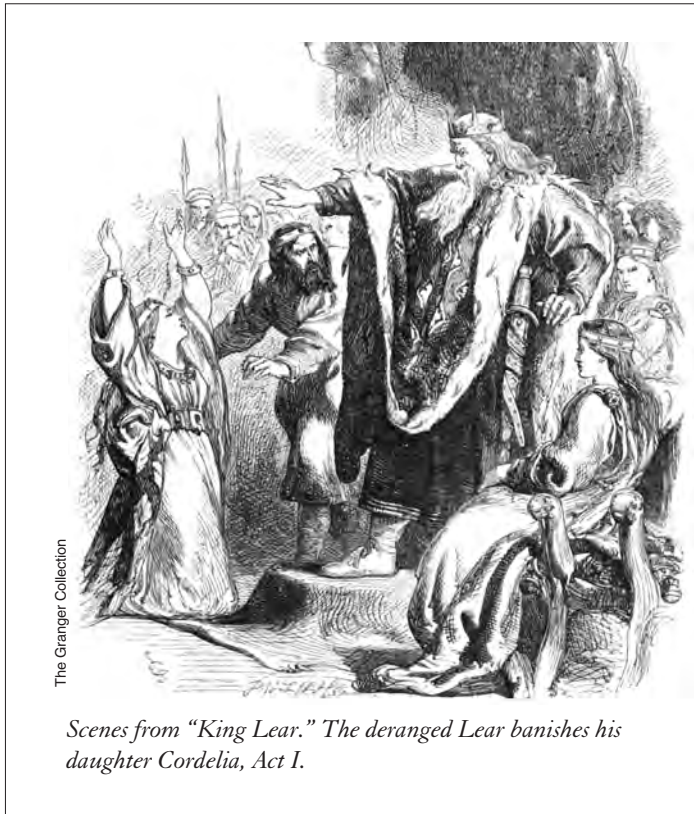
... Be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man?
Think’st thou that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honor’s bound,
When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom;
And in thy best consideration check

This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgement,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness.

In typical Baby Boomer fashion, Lear decides to end the argument, by threatening Kent’s life, and then, subsequently, banishing him altogether. This represents classic denial on Lear’s part: an hysterical unwillingness to face reality, not unlike what we see emanating from today’s White House. It is owing to this hollowness, that many battles throughout mankind’s history were fought, and many cultures and nations ruined.

Returning to Shakespeare’s *Lear*, you see from the very first lines that several things are already afoot, as far as the seeds of the tragedy.

Number one: You see that Gloucester, from the very beginning, is so wrapped up in his macho ego, that he does not see that there’s another human being, namely, his son Edmund, standing in front of him. When he introduces Edmund to Kent, the only idea he has of this person, is that every time he looks at him, his son reminds him of a good time he had with his mother. So, because he’s blinded to Edmund’s humanity, or potential humanity, he is literally blinded later in the play. And this act sets loose an evil, on the part of Edmund, that will wreak havoc throughout, and is a



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Scenes from “King Lear.” The deranged Lear banishes his daughter Cordelia, Act I.



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In typical Romantic fashion, Cordelia is portrayed in this illustration as an innocent, soap-opera figure, rather than as a part of the kingdom’s most powerful family.

teeming subplot within the play.

Number two: The fact that all Lear wanted in the opening ceremony of court, was to be “kissed up to,” as we say in current-day English. That was the only thing that Lear wanted and needed to hear from his daughters. And his two eldest daughters really knew how to do it. Again, this neurosis of lying, this propitiation.

So, the basis for real tragedy—lack of thought, lack of human cognition—is set full round, right from the beginning.

Number three: In the same opening scene, the King of France, one of Cordelia’s suitors, shows up, and witnesses this neurotic, dysfunctional ruling family-life being displayed in public, and in his mind, he knows that he has to make a commitment to be ready to wage war, because of the instability of his neighbors. In the actual history of Europe, there were tensions between France and England over disputed territories for centuries, of course; the scene epitomizes this. Shakespeare maps it out, from the standpoint of precisely the neurosis in Lear that sets the whole process in motion.

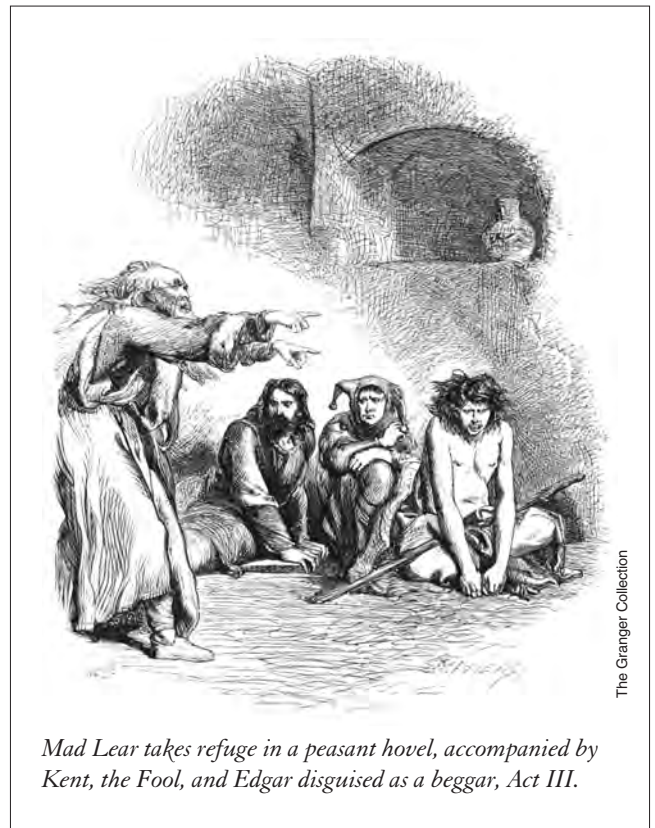
This quality of Classical drama, borrowing from actual periods of history, would later be perfected by the great Friedrich Schiller, who wrote complete historical treatises—*The History of the Revolt of the United Netherlands against Spanish Rule*, *The History of The Thirty Years’ War*—as well as by such American writers as Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, and Edgar Allan Poe. And these modern-day Classical writers drew heavily upon the Classical Greek writers, Homer, Plato, Aeschylus, and others, who had dealt with the same philosophical and moral matters in that earlier age.

Inalienable Rights

The question of the *Inalienable Rights of Man*, so beautifully depicted by Friedrich Schiller in his drama *William Tell*, comes up dramatically in *Lear*.

In Act III, Scene 7, Gloucester pays dearly for his folly and locker-room jocularly toward his bastard son, by being blinded by the Duke of Cornwall, husband of Lear’s daughter Regan. Shakespeare shows Gloucester, bound in a chair, being interrogated by Cornwall and Regan in his own castle. As the first of Gloucester’s eyes is gouged out, one of Cornwall’s servants raises arms against the Duke, not caring about the consequences, because he is *morally* compelled to do so. He is morally outraged, and has to act. It is his *Inalienable Right*.

This is a beautiful metaphor, introduced within a flurry of tension-packed activity. No matter how unpopular



Mad Lear takes refuge in a peasant hovel, accompanied by Kent, the Fool, and Edgar disguised as a beggar, Act III.

it will be, the servant has to act. And Shakespeare has Regan, being the kind of person she is—a liar, a cheat—proceed to add to her odious list of credentials, by driving a sword into the servant’s back, thereby extinguishing that *Right* immediately. But, nonetheless, it’s there to see. And it creates a lot of tension in the audience. It’s the play’s first murder, and it occurs right in front of the audience. Suddenly, there’s very noticeable tension. People realize that they are not being “entertained”; that this is something they can all *understand*. Shakespeare was not for the academic fops. The audience knows that they see it all the time: How many times do we see people murdered before us, behind us, beside us, and yet we do *nothing*?

The play proceeds very quickly from there; the writing demands the tempo accelerate from that point on. It’s like an inverted cone, with a conical apex, or density of action, with subplots and intrigues resulting in murders, hangings, and death. In the final scenes, nearly *everyone* dies. They all die, except for Edgar, Gloucester’s legitimate son, who never would take responsibility for ruling or leading. And, guess what? He’s the only one left in the kingdom, so he *has* to rule—with an invading army on its way. The King of France isn’t even with his army. He’s so sure of the outcome, he leaves it up to one of his commanders.

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On the Sublime: Subjective Thinking in Classical Culture

We in the LaRouche movement hear it all the time. We are constantly besieged with inquiries into the method of thinking of Lyndon LaRouche. “How does he do it?” “How does he stay happy—does he ever get any pleasure out of life?”

To those who ask such questions, this brief interlude is dedicated to giving you a bit of an insight into the methodology of Classical thinking.

Steeped in the method of Socrates, and involved at the highest level with the greatest minds ever to grace the planet’s history, Lyndon LaRouche goes through his days understanding what most people do not even perceive as existing: namely, what is known philosophically and scientifically as the *Complex Domain*.¹

One of the back stairways into accessing this *Complex Domain*, is to understand the *subjective state of mind*. What I mean by the subjective state of mind, is when you know yourself to be an actor on the stage of world history. No longer are you a passive recipient of things as they are; you have become an agent of change, of progress. This creates a new moral imperative and standard of Truth.



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Scenes from “Othello.” Othello and Desdemona, Act II:
A love based on cognitive aspirations.

All great Classical writers, such as Peter Abelard, Thomas More, Marlowe, and Shakespeare, relied heavily on using the subjective to elevate the reader’s consciousness for solving problems, or having an insight into how to solve problems.

What I’ve done, as a director of several of Shakespeare’s Legend Plays, is merely to employ this subjective insight, in my reading of the plays. I have not altered, aborted, or distorted any of the great Bard’s writing, but with this understanding, one gets an absolutely clear picture of how to wage war against the mediocrity, and corruption, and lying, that eventually destroy any society.

There is a price to pay, however, in using this subjective state of mind; specifically, that “all bets are off,” when trying to fit yourself inside the lying framework of how most people operate in today’s society, and, for the most part, most of history. Setting this standard, as LaRouche does, creates a lonely pathway; but, as he has often urged us: Stand for the Truth; ’t’will out, ’t’will out.

At this moment in history, LaRouche is a beacon to the world, because of this very question of standing for the Truth and never wavering. It is only natural that the LaRouche movement should be involved in great Classical works like Shakespeare or Schiller, because these great writers sought the same pathway of truth-seeking. That’s why they were immersed in the tradition of Plato, Socrates, and Classical Greece.

When we rise to aspire to the Sublime, we know, then, that we can in fact access the Complex Domain, and that matters of the Sublime, or Beauty, no longer seem “like Greek to us.” So, let us now go back, and take some moments to look at some of the details of these Legend Plays, and the many levels of paradox and irony they place before us, to see how one of the great masters of the Sublime, William Shakespeare, dealt with just these matters.

* * *

Shakespeare’s *Othello*

This play, developed by Shakespeare in 1606, or so, was, again, a well-known story, going back about 150 years before Shakespeare, most notably to the Italian writer Cinthio. Shakespeare introduces us to the mind of Venice through the personage of Iago, a 28-year-old punk, who is already at work, at the opening of the play. Iago is manipulating a fellow Venetian romantic, Roderigo, who’s particularly prone to fantasies about the Magnifico’s daughter Desdemona.

You see how Shakespeare launches into the subjective state of mind, by offering some ostensible excuses for Iago’s consternation at Othello, but then the audience (reader) is forced to ask itself, Why is this Iago

going to such great lengths, against the general, Othello, just because he's been passed over for an officer's post, when he himself reports that his past military exploits deserve an even greater post, perhaps even a fellow generalship?

From the opening scenes of the play, Shakespeare introduces the profound philosophical hatred of mankind that lies behind and promulgates racial hatred, justifying human slavery, immediately through the personage of Iago, but which was entirely what Venice at this time represented. Roderigo, fantasy-ridden as he is, has no problem with the proposal to lynch Othello, even though Othello is essential to Venice's military security. One can easily see that Venice, as a city-state, doesn't reflect the best in mankind. Duplicity, intelligence, and intrigue are its guiding principles.

Shakespeare identifies the true history of Venice: its manipulation of the whole of Europe for centuries, from the Crusades forward; its control of finance, armaments, and armies, through intelligence and intrigue.

So situating the legend of Othello in such a horrific environment: Doesn't this spell tragedy from the outset? The stage is set for Shakespeare's use of the subjective. The evil within Iago, and even Roderigo, is obvious and apparent; the racist rage within the Magnifico Brabantio, probably more powerfully positioned than the Doge himself, is also obvious and clearly manipulated. But, who is ultimately responsible for this rage?

First off, Desdemona, raised with the customs and

sentiments of Venice, *ultimately* had the responsibility to deal cognitively with this situation. It couldn't be just a matter of feelings. Because she loved Othello, she had a duty to use her considerable political and economic influence to secure a safer environment, even if that entailed passage to the New World with her husband.

Secondly, the method in which she runs off in the night, protected by nothing but a gondolier, adds further flames to the fire. In Venice, this was the ultimate "booty call." No one hears the word "marriage," until Othello is forced to stand before this very same Venetian Senate and state in fact that he married Desdemona.

But, the *most* cardinal of sins occurs, as Shakespeare writes it, when Desdemona is summoned before the Senate that same night. There, the Venetian Senate is told that the union between Othello and Desdemona isn't based merely on carnal desires gone wild, but that, in fact, it arose from Othello's aspiring to be human, i.e., *cognitive*:

OTHELLO. Let her have your voices.
 Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore beg it not,
 To please the palate of my appetite:
 Nor to comply with heat—the young affects
 In me defunct—and proper satisfaction;
But to be free and bounteous to her mind:
 And heaven defend your good souls, that you think
 I will your serious and great business scant
 For she is with me. [*Emphasis added.*]

What?! One of the most highly educated and trained minds of Venice; the one and only child of the great Magnifico; the first cousin and intimate friend of prominent Lodovico, spokesman for the Doge and the Senate as well; a person ostensibly privy to some of the most sensitive intelligence floating around in Venice, what?! The Moor Othello having "bounty" to these ideas, these capabilities? Never!! No one is allowed to be "free"—i.e., human—in Venice. *How dare he?*

The Venetian Senate is assured that they have the situation under control, as Shakespeare tells



Venice, depicted in these Seventeenth-century illustrations as a place of duplicity and intrigue. The gala masquerades reflected the political reality of oligarchical evil.



Desdemona, with her father and Othello. She refuses to face the grave threat her marriage poses to Othello and herself, Act I.

it, by having Othello announce before them, shortly thereafter:

My life upon her faith! Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee:
I prithee, let thy wife attend on her;
And bring them after in the best advantage.

But, to whose best advantage? Othello is merely naively trusting towards Iago; but what says Desdemona? The question that should be raised, is: Were you in Desdemona's position, coming from such a prestigious parentage, and having made such a controversial choice in marriage, would not your antennae be up and operating, regarding *everyone* in Venice that you have personal dealings with? *Especially in Venice?*

Desdemona may be the intellectual equal of the men around her, but she cannot translate her love for Othello into political action. She is a victim of Venetian Aristoteleanism, unable to unite her emotions with reason.

Poisonous Friendship

In Act III, Scene 3, Shakespeare has you witness the truly venomous mind of Iago, as he skillfully works a gradual, seeping gossip/brainwashing campaign against gullible Othello, and calls upon you, the audience, to be his witness.

Othello just doesn't understand that it's against the law to be human in Venice. More than the obvious racial tension, it's this question of human cognition. This brainwashing lights the keg that explodes all of Cyprus, along with the lives of Othello, Desdemona, Iago's wife Emelia,

and Iago himself. Iago has no problem with taking the life of Cassio, who actually is caught in the cross-fire of Iago's hatred of man's divinity:

IAGO. He [Cassio] hath a daily beauty in his life
That makes me ugly; and besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him; there stand I in
much peril;
No, he must die. Be't so. I hear him coming.

The basic structure of the play is similar to *King Lear*, in that Shakespeare front-loads the plot and subplots at the beginning, with an extended sequence of transformative scenes in Act III, leading downhill into a rushing, "train wreck" kind of explosion of disaster in the finale. Except, in *Othello*, the author introduces another consideration, through the personage of Emelia, wife of Iago.

Shakespeare goes to some lengths to develop the personality and character of Emelia, and for good reason. Emelia is quite advanced mentally for her time and station in life; and even though she is married to a psychotic, she has a solid personal grounding. The problem that Shakespeare brings out through Emelia, is that she is a victim of Venetian culture; when a society strips away from you all actual human qualities, what is there that's left?

Venice has always been known for its masked balls, or carnivals, Mardi Gras, what have you. Here, Venetians, as well as visitors, could "let their hair down," or party, in quite lewd fashion, and no one would be the wiser, because all were masked. It's a concept that continues to today. Witness the recent Hollywood "blockbuster," *Eyes*



Underlying Iago's malicious brainwashing of Othello, is a profound philosophical hatred of mankind, Act III.

Wide Shut, the last film made by the violence-prone, recently deceased producer Stanley Kubrick. Well, it's all anonymous, isn't it? This was Venice, the place to know all and be all, to everyone and everything.

The problem with Emelia is, that she is love-starved; erotically obsessed. Even though she knows the terrible faults of her husband, because of the *eros* within her, she craves him all the more. This is not the first time that any of us have seen or witnessed this within a relationship; especially when there's an overdose of romanticism involved. Shakespeare develops this in detail, to provide another insight for the making of tragedy: *romance and eroticism block reason and creativity*. Emelia comes just short of exposing her husband's authorship of the entire plot against Desdemona, but makes a fatal error, by choosing to back off, and "please his [Iago's] fantasy."

Emelia's character is also used to establish a sense of equality between the sexes (although, as with Venice, we know the old adage, "two wrongs don't make a right"), but she is differentiated from Desdemona. Emelia has an abundance of what we call today, "street smarts"; in other words, she usually can read a person's mind, behind the face. Lacking Desdemona's advanced education, she relies on this ability to "read" what people are really thinking. But, as Shakespeare writes it, Emelia is overcome by her own personal corruption (her neurotic need for the psychotic Iago, as well as her shameless inclination to achieve power and position by any means). Thus, she never acknowledges her own direct, active role in sealing the fate of Desdemona, and

persists in indicting Othello for *his* foolish, and deadly, actions.

So, Shakespeare grinds the message in hard: Venice is not the place to seek friends, nor even, for the most part, human beings.

Shakespeare also takes on again, from a different standpoint, through the character of Roderigo, Venice's trivializing of human existence. In Act V, Scene 1, Roderigo states:

I have no great devotion to the deed;
And yet he hath given me satisfying reasons:
'Tis but a man gone. Forth, my sword: he dies.
[*Emphasis added.*]

And, ultimately, who dies, but Roderigo himself—who had actually thought his own life to be unimportant.

So the play ends, like *Hamlet*, with nearly all the main characters dead, owing to confusion over the question of Man, and the question of statecraft: What it ought to be, as opposed to what it was in Venice.

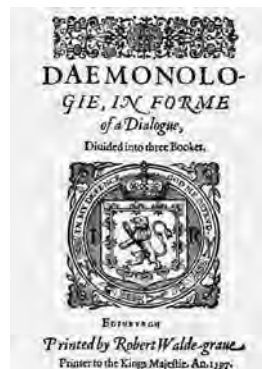
The Tragedy of Macbeth

This play, the shortest of the Legend Plays, makes up for its brevity by its sheer intensity. It comes at you like a runaway train on the way to its wreckage.

Macbeth depicts the bloody, naked pathway of the accession to power, in disregard of the responsibilities of governing. As is stated in the opening scenes, the throne of Scotland is considered to be the personal property of the king, which along with its territories was to be indulged



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Scenes from "Macbeth." **Left:** Macbeth and Banquo encounter three witches, who prophecy Macbeth's future kingship, Act I. The play celebrated the ascension to the throne of King James I (right), a descendant of Banquo; James authored a popular text on the subject of witchcraft (center).

in by the monarch and his royal family.

The reigning king, Duncan, is an idiotic “family-values” buffoon, full of bragadocio and “well done, worthy cousin” platitudes, having no sense of statecraft. He hasn’t a clue as to what his “cousins” are really up to, regarding their own ambitions.

His fatal journey to the castle of Macbeth, without any real security precautions, reveals a naiveté, not only in regard to his distant cousin Macbeth, but especially in regard to the homicidal capabilities of the female mind—Lady Macbeth. All Lady Macbeth has to do, is put on her “Leona Helmsley” public smile, to fool this king, after she has already shown her true psychotic nature to the audience, and gone through an entire satanic incantation to seal the deed.

Paralleling his contemporary Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*, the way Shakespeare uses this legend—meaning the belief in magic and incantations, superstitions, and so forth—sets the basis on which the frailties and fears within the mind of even a cold-blooded killer are exposed. Lady Macbeth believes, with deep conviction, that mental illness should accompany leadership. Any consideration of the common good would send Lady Macbeth into a murderous conniption.

The Weird Sisters, Hecate, and apparitions, hold sway, because of the absence of science and statecraft in the thinking of the Scottish leadership—a powerful and dangerous position taken by Shakespeare, given that England’s then-current King James I (formerly James VI of Scotland) was a self-proclaimed believer in, and expert on, witchcraft, having authored a widely circulated manual for witch-hunting. Act II, Scene 4, the exchange between Ross and the Old Man, shifts the idea of superstition and mysticism further, in that the whole country may judge the circumstances of the state, through the actions of animals, or signs of nature only. Something had gone terribly wrong with the state of Scotland, as well as Denmark.

Macbeth seems to be protected from anyone or anything that would get in his way as he takes state power. What he doesn’t see, is that it is only once he achieves this “golden round,” that his real troubles begin. As Lyndon LaRouche sometimes reminds us: Be careful of what you ask for; you might just get it.

That is why, at the end of the play, Malcolm, the son of King Duncan, for all his pretended virtues, adapts the identical axiomatic assumptions and culture of his father, and Shakespeare lets it end there, unresolved. Perhaps Shakespeare was reflecting on the unresolved political situation of James I’s ascendancy to the throne of Eng-



Lady Macbeth and Macbeth, now King, greet Banquo, Act III. The bloody Lady believes that mental illness should accompany political leadership.

land. We who are actors on the stage of history today, can certainly appreciate the possibilities, and dangers, of being midway in a fight over the outcome of an as-yet unresolved crisis.

In Summary

I would encourage you, when looking at the work of William Shakespeare, to take a close look at these Legend Plays, not forgetting the most famous one, the *Tragedy of Hamlet*. You will find some of the most profound philosophical, moral, and polemical ironies ever written in the English language, a language created in large measure by Shakespeare himself. These ironies are probably the reason why, even during his lifetime, Shakespeare was increasingly ostracized, leaving London for Stratford, where he died in 1616.

It took a youth movement, based in Germany and led by young writers and scholars such as Moses Mendelssohn, Gotthold Lessing, J.G. Herder, and others, to revive Shakespeare’s work almost 200 years after his death, and bring his poetry and plays alive once more.

William Shakespeare surely stands on the pathway of true humanist genius, and, like Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., we have an obligation to fight for this genius to continue for many centuries and millennia to come.

1. See Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., “Science for Teachers: Visualizing the Complex Domain,” *Executive Intelligence Review*, July 11, 2003 (Vol. 30, No. 27).