



The Philosopher's English King

Leon Harold Craig

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This book on Shakespeare's Henriad studies the tetralogy as a work of political thought. Leon Craig, author of two previous volumes on Shakespeare's political thought, argues that the four plays present Shakespeare's teaching on the question of who has the right to rule, one of the perennial questions of political philosophy. Offering original interpretations of each of the plays, Craig discusses divine right in Richard II, political upheaval and disputed rule in Henry IV Parts 1 and 2, and just rule in Henry V. In addition Craig shows how the four plays constitute one narrative -- starting in Richard II and concluding in Henry V -- telling the story of the making of a legitimate ruler, England's most famous warrior king, Henry V. The Philosopher's English King provides a meticulous account of Shakespeare's philosophy of legitimate rule, contributing to the burgeoning scholarship on Shakespeare as a political thinker and showing yet again that the poet deserves to be placed among the ranks of such political philosophers as Plato, Machiavelli, and Hobbes. Leon Craig is professor emeritus of political science at the University of Alberta.

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