

STUDY GUIDES TO THOMAS MORE'S *THE HISTORY  
OF KING RICHARD III* (c. 1513)

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## MAIN CHARACTERS MENTIONED

## Kings and nobles:

King Edward IV – oldest son of Richard Duke of York

Edward, Prince of Wales, later King Edward V

Richard, Duke of York

George, Duke of Clarence – second son of Richard Duke of York

Richard, Duke of Gloucester – youngest son of Richard, Duke of

York; later King Richard III

Henry, Earl of Richmond, later King Henry VII

Henry, Duke of Buckingham

Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick – “King Maker”

Lord William Hastings – King Edward’s Chamberlain

Lord Stanley – Earl of Derby, Steward of the Household; married  
mother of Henry VII, Margaret Beaufort

Lord Thomas Vaughan – Counselor to Edward IV

## Queens and nobles:

Queen Elizabeth – wife of Edward IV; formerly Lady Grey

Lord Rivers, Sir Anthony Woodville – her brother

Lord Richard Grey – her son

Marquis of Dorset, Thomas Grey – her son

Duchess of York – mother of Edward IV, Clarence, Richard III

Elizabeth Lucy – mistress of Edward IV

Elizabeth of York – wife of Henry VII, daughter of Edward IV,  
mother of Henry VIII

## Clergy:

Cardinal Bouchier, Archbishop of Canterbury

*Sons of Edward  
IV*

*Her sons by  
Squire John  
Grey*

Archbishop of York, Thomas Rotherham

Bishop of Ely, John Morton

Bishop of London, John Russell

Doctor Shaa – brother of Mayor Shaa, doctor of divinity

Friar Penker – Provincial of Augustinian Friars

## Citizens:

Edmund Shaa – Mayor of London

Sir William Catesby – lawyer; manager of Hastings’ estates

Jane Shore – wife of William Shore; mistress of Edward IV, then of  
Lord Hastings

Sir John Markham – Chief Justice who resigned rather than illicitly  
cooperate in the case against Sir John Cook

Sir Thomas Cook – a prosperous Londoner brought to trial for  
political reasons

Thomas Fitzwilliam – Recorder of London

Sir Robert Brackenbury – Constable of the Tower

Sir James and Sir Thomas Tyrell

Sir Richard Radcliff – James Tyrell’s fellow murderer

John Dighton – James Tyrell’s housekeeper and murderer

Miles Forest – Tower guard of the young princes

## THE HISTORY OF RICHARD III

Study Outline of Thomas More's *History of King Richard III*

*Thomas More wrote English and Latin versions of The History of Richard III around 1513, but he never published either work. That he put his best efforts into composing it can be easily seen in the eloquence of his language, the many classical allusions he incorporated, and the simple fact that he wrote two different versions of it. More's History explores the nature of tyranny, but it also explores how it was possible for a tyrant to come to power in England despite the many laws and institutions that had been developed over the centuries to prevent this from happening. More's history is highly selective: excluding the background of the introduction, it covers only three months, April 9, 1483 (the death of Edward IV) to shortly after July 6 (the coronation of Richard III).*

*Because some of the passages in the Latin text are so striking, the earliest editor translated and included some of them in the authoritative 1557 edition of the English text. Those additions are noted in the text.*

1. INTRODUCTION: Background to Richard's Rise (pp. 1-11)
  - a. King Edward IV: his death, his reputation among the people, and his character (1)
  - b. Deaths of Richard of York (Edward IV and Richard III's father) and Clarence (Edward & Richard's brother) (4)
  - c. Richard III described (5)
  - d. Death of King Henry VI and Richard's role in that death (5)
  - e. Richard's strategy (6)
  - f. King Edward's death-bed speech (8)
2. RICHARD'S PLAN TO CONTROL YOUNG EDWARD V (pp. 11-16)
  - a. How Richard sets Buckingham and Hastings against the Queen

- and her party (12)
- b. How Richard "caused the Queen to be persuaded" not to provide more protection for Edward V (13)
- c. How Richard fools and arrests the Queen's relatives, Rivers and Gray and Vaughan (14)
- d. Summary: "In this way the Duke of Gloucester took upon himself the order ... of the young king" (16)

## 3. SANCTUARY AND RICHARD'S RESPONSE (pp. 16-36)

- a. Queen flees to sanctuary with the young prince (Prince Richard) (16)
- b. The Cardinal Archbishop brings the great seal to the Queen, but then sends secretly for it (17-18)
- c. Lord Hastings' role and the "persuasions" he uses to calm fears (18)
- d. How Richard persuades the officials of London, especially by the way he treats Prince Edward (20)
- e. How Richard and his men persuade the lords of his council (21-22)
  - i. Cardinal Archbishop's objections: nothing can break "liberty of that sacred sanctuary" (23)
  - ii. Buckingham's speech against the abuses of sanctuary (23)
  - iii. Lords but especially the Cardinal go to persuade the Queen to release her son (28)
    - Debate between the Cardinal and the Queen (28)

(Note the dramatic ending: "after that day they never came abroad" 36)

## 4. RICHARD EXTENDS HIS CONTROL (pp. 36-50)

- a. How Richard wins over Buckingham (36)
- b. Richard sets up a secret council (38)
- c. Catesby and his essential role (39)
- d. The famous Council of June 13 & its aftermath; strawberries ordered; Hastings executed (40)

- Warnings that had been received (43)
  - e. Narrator's interjection: "O good God, the blindness of our mortal nature. . . .When [Hastings] reckoned himself surest, he lost his life, and that within two hour after" (45)
  - f. Richard's pretense and his proclamation; public response (46)
  - g. "Digression" on Jane Shore (48)
  - h. Other "traitors" executed (50)
5. RICHARD'S NEXT STEP TO THE CROWN (pp. 50-60)
- a. Roles played of Mayor Shaa, Friar Penker, and Fr. John Shaa (51)
  - b. Background
    - i. How Edward became interested in Elizabeth Gray (53)
    - ii. Edward's rationale for marrying Elizabeth, despite opposition of his mother, Duchess of York (55)
    - iii. Warwick's angry revolt; reason for this long explanation (57)
  - c. Dr. Shaa's "performance" at Paul's Cross, denying legitimacy of Edward's children; people's response; Shaa's death (58-61)
6. FINAL STEPS TO RICHARD'S CROWNING (pp. 61-74)
- a. Buckingham's "performance" at Guildhall, denouncing Edward and praising Richard; people's response (61)
  - b. Buckingham repeats "performance" with mayor, aldermen, chief commoners of London at Richard's castle (69)
  - c. Richard's coronation at Westminster Hall (74)
 

*N.B.:* This section on Richard's "mockish election" (p. 74) includes the famous passages about "kings' games, as it were, stage plays...played upon scaffolds" (73) and Richard's speech in which he says that his "chief duty" as king is to "minister the laws" (73). Note that the Latin version of this work ends here.
7. MURDER OF THE YOUNG PRINCES (pp. 74-79)

- a. Roles of Green and Tyrell; then of Forest and Dighton (75)
    - Of what it is that "God never gave this world a more notable example" (78)
  - b. What happens to the "ministers" of this mischief (78)
8. BUCKINGHAM'S CONSPIRACY (pp. 79-84)

STUDY QUESTIONS – THOMAS MORE'S *RICHARD III**Introduction (pp. 1-11)*

1. Read closely paragraphs 2-5 describing Edward. At first view, the description seems highly favorable. What expressions could be taken ironically, however? How could these expressions serve to undercut this positive view?

2. In the next few paragraphs describing Richard, about what is the narrator certain? Why does he focus on Richard's brothers and father? What is the "sure ground for the foundation of all [Richard's] building"?

3. More then devotes two full pages (pp. 8-10) to Edward's death-bed speech. Why is this speech so important? How does it relate to the history as a whole?

*Part 2 – Richard's Plan to Control Young Edward V (pp. 11-16)*

1. Summarize the narrator's account of Richard's overall strategy to get control over young Edward V.

2. How is this strategy put into effect in regard to Queen Elizabeth? and in regard to her relatives?

*Part 3 – Sanctuary and Richard's Response (pp. 16-36)*

1. What role does Lord Hastings play in what unfolds?

2. The narrator wonders whether it was destiny or folly whereby "the lamb was given to the wolf to keep" (p. 20). Does the narration point to one of these alternatives rather than the other? How so?

3. After Queen Elizabeth strongly and clearly articulates the many reasons whereby her son should have protection of sanctuary, why does she finally give him up? Was this a prudent decision? Would you have done the same in her situation? Why? Does the narrator give any indication of his own judgment on this issue? What leads you to think so?

4. Compare the Archbishop of York's actions with the Cardinal's (pp. 17ff and pp. 22ff). Compare both with Bishop Morton's actions (pp. 81-84 and book one of *Utopia*). What are the differences or similarities between these characters' actions?

*Part 4 – Richard Extends His Control (pp. 36-50)*

1. How does Richard win Buckingham to his side?

2. What is the importance of Catesby's role in what transpires? Does he play any significant role in what comes later or is this his only decisive function? What is his profession or office at this time?

3. Why spend so much space on the warnings ignored by Hastings?

4. Why the long digression on Jane Shore? Does she represent some segment or aspect of English society? What is her relation to the commoners? to the nobles? to the royalty? to the clergy?

*Parts 5 and 6 – Richard's Next Steps to the Crown (pp. 50-74)*

1. Why give so much background information on King Edward's marriage?

2. Are we to admire or criticize the commoners' silence in responding to Dr. Shaa's "performance" here and to the "stage plays" in part 6?

Why do you say so?

3. How effective is the rhetoric of Dr. Shaa in part 5 as compared to the rhetoric of Buckingham or of Richard in part 6?

*Part 7 – Murder of the Young Princes (pp. 74-79)*

1. How certain is the narrator in regard to how the princes were murdered?

2. What is emphasized in this account? What is the main point the narrator wishes to make?

*Part 8 – Buckingham's Conspiracy (pp. 79-84)*

1. What leads Buckingham to turn on Richard III?

2. What view do we get of Bishop Morton? Is this view consistent with or opposed to his actions in book one of *Utopia*?

3. Why end a history in this way? Granted, most say the history is unfinished, but taking the work as it is, what is the rhetorical or literary effect of such an ending?

*Overall*

According to More's account, how is it that tyrant Richard was able to come to power, despite all the laws and customs that existed in England to prevent such a rise?

#### RHETORICAL FIGURES IN *THE HISTORY OF RICHARD III*

Erasmus describes the style of Sir Thomas More as tending more “to Isocratic rhythm and logical subtlety than to the outpouring river of Ciceronian eloquence,” and Erasmus goes on to point out that one can “recognize a poet even in [More's] prose for in his youth he spent much time writing poetry.”<sup>1</sup> To understand why Erasmus thought More's prose style like poetry and full of pleasing rhythm and logical subtlety, a careful reader will want to pay attention to the figures More uses. Recognizing the figures and reflecting upon their use not only reveals where More employs powerful rhetoric, but also demonstrates the sometimes questionable purposes for which his characters use it.

Here the figures are divided according to their major appeals to *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*.

I. MAJOR FIGURES RELATED TO *ETHOS* (i.e., to the character of the speaker):

*Anamnesis*: “Calling to memory past matters.” “Anamnesis helps to establish ethos, since it conveys the idea that the speaker is knowledgeable of the received wisdom from the past.”<sup>2</sup>

–Shaa and Buckingham both quote scripture in their speeches (pp. 58, 66).

–In the Latin version of this history, More uses key terms from Roman history, alluding to their institutions of self-government in a revealing manner (e.g., pp. 69, 71).

*Litotes*: “The moderator.”<sup>3</sup> “Deliberate understatement, especially when expressing a thought by denying its opposite.” Cicero in *Ad Herennium* presents “litotes as a means of expressing modesty (downplaying one's accomplishments) in order to gain the audience's favor

1. See Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, *Ciceronianus*, trans., Izorn Scott, (NY: Columbia U, 1908), p. 104.

2. Unless otherwise noted, the definitions and explanations are taken from Dr. Gideon Burton's website, <http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/>. This website is a helpful introduction to rhetoric.

3. Alternative names for the figure in English come from George Puttenham, and are listed in quotation marks before the definition. All citations of Puttenham are from George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie*. A Facsimile Reproduction, intro Baxter Hathaway, (Kent, Ohio: State University Press, 1970). The original was published in 1589.

(establishing *ethos*.)” Most commonly, this “figure may be used to dispraise another with less offense or to speak well of oneself with greater modesty”<sup>1</sup> or to indicate disagreement without giving great offense. At times, all three uses may be instances of ironic expression.

*To Dispraise Another with Less Offense:*

–“good men might, as I think, without sin somewhat less regard it than they do” (24.16-18).

–“as though no man mistrusted the matter, which of truth no man believed” (46.12-13).

*To Praise Another with Greater Modesty:*

–“taunting without displeasure, and not without play” (49.15-16).

–“and thanks be to God they got not good, nor you none harm thereby” (45.7-8).

*To Disagree with Less Offense:*

–“Yet will I not say nay” (25.2).

–“No man denies” (29.30).

–“And then said he to the Queen he *nothing doubted* but that those lords of her honorable kin . . . should, upon the matter examined, do well enough” (31.1-4).

*Martyria:* Confirms a question by one’s own experience.<sup>2</sup> Joseph writes that this figure acts like proof in that it provides testimony, or the “character of witnesses,” which carries the “force of argument.”<sup>3</sup> More uses this figure in the voice of his narrator in order to lend credibility to his history.

–“However, this I have by credible information learned . . .” (6.14-15).

–“But in the meantime, for this present matter, I shall rehearse you the sorrowful end of those babes, not after every way that I have heard, but after that way I have heard by such men, and by such means, as I think it were hard but it should be true” (75.8-11).

1. See Sister Miriam Joseph, *Shakespeare’s Use of the Arts of Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), p. 323.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

## II. MAJOR FIGURES RELATED TO *PATHOS* (i.e., to the passions):

*Apostrophe:* “Turning away from; the turn tale.” “Turning one’s speech from one audience to another. Most often, apostrophe occurs when one addresses oneself to an abstraction, to an inanimate object, or to the absent, usually with emotion.”

–“O good God, the blindness of our mortal nature” (45.19).

*Bathos:* “an unintended and excessive sinking from the lofty into the absurd or ridiculous just at the climactic point where true pathos and grandiloquence are called for.”<sup>1</sup>

–“But the people were so far from crying ‘King Richard’ that they stood as they had been turned to stone, for wonder of this shameful sermon. After which once ended, the preacher got himself home and never after dared look out for shame” (60.22-25).

–“When the Duke has spoken, expecting that the people (whom he hoped that the Mayor had framed before) should after this proposition have cried, ‘King Richard! King Richard!’ – all was hushed and mute, and not one answered thereunto. Wherewith the Duke was marvelously abashed” (67.9-13).

*Climax:* “Mounting by degrees through linked words or phrases, usually of increasing weight and in parallel construction.”<sup>2</sup> As in the examples below, climax can be used to heighten emotion.

–“For men use, if they have an evil turn, to write it in marble; and whosoever does us a good turn, we write it in dust, which is not worst proved by her, for at this day she begs of many at this day living, that at this day had begged if she had not been” (50.15-19).

– “For Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, by nature their uncle, by office their protector, to their father beholden, to themselves by oath and allegiance bound, all the bands broken that bind man and man together, without any respect of God or the world, unnatu-

1. *The Longman Dictionary of Poetic Terms*, 1989, p. 31.

2. See Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, entry on “climax.”

rally contrived to bereave them, not only of their dignity, but also their lives” (3.26-30).

*Enargia*: “Generic term for a group of figures aiming at vivid, lively description.”

– “[H]e returned into the chamber among them, all changed with a wonderful sour, angry countenance, knitting the brows, frowning and frothing and gnawing on his lips...” (40.27-29).

– “For upon this page’s words King Richard arose (for this communication had he sitting on the stool, and appropriate court for such council) and came into the bedchambers” (76.18-20).

– “After which time the Prince never tied his laces, nor took care of himself, but with that young babe, his brother, lingered in thought and heaviness . . .” (77.9-11).

– “King Richard himself, as you shall hereafter hear, slain in the field, hacked and hewed of his enemies hands, dragged on horse-back dead, his hair spitefully torn and tugged like a cur dog” (78.29-79.1).

*Other types of enargia*:

*Effictio*: “portrayal,” which consists “in representing and depicting in words clearly enough for recognition of the bodily form of some person . . . This figure is not only serviceable, if you should wish to designate some person, but also graceful.”<sup>1</sup>

– “Richard, the third son, of whom we now treat, was in wit and courage equal with either of them [his brothers], in body and prowess far under them both: little of stature, ill featured of limbs, crooked-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favored in appearance, and such as in the case of lords called warlike, in other men called otherwise” (5.1-6).

*Notatio*: “character delineation,” which lies in “describing a person’s character by the definite signs which, like distinctive marks, are at-

1. *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, trans. H. Caplan (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1954), IV.XLIX.63.

tributes of that character . . .”; in so doing, *notatio* describes “the qualities proper to each man’s character.”<sup>1</sup> More often uses this figure in conjunction with praising or blaming the person being described.

*To praise*:

– “Yet she [Jane Shore] delighted not men so much in her beauty as in her pleasant behavior. For a proper wit had she, and could both read well and write, merry in company, read and quick of answer, neither mute nor full of babble, sometimes taunting without displeasure, and not without play” (49.12-16).

– He [Edward IV] was a goodly personage, and very princely to behold: of heart, courageous; politic in counsel; in adversity nothing abashed; in prosperity, rather joyful than proud; in peace, just and merciful; in war, sharp and fierce; in the field, bold and hardy, and nevertheless, no further than wisdom would, adventurous” (2.9-13).

*To blame*:

– “Thus ended this honorable man [Hastings], a good knight and a gentle one, of great authority with his prince, of living somewhat dissolute, plain and open to his enemy, and secret to his friend, easy to beguile, as he that of good heart and courage forestudied no perils; a loving man and passing well beloved; very faithful and trusty enough, trusting too much” (45.21-26).

*Protrope*: “A call to action, often by using threats or promises.”

– “Dear friends we come to move you to that thing which perchance we not so greatly needed, but that the lords of this realm and the commons of other parts might have sufficed, except that we such love bear you and so much set by you that we would not gladly do without you that thing in which to be partners is your well-being and honor, which, as it seems, either you see not or weigh not” (68.13-19).

1. *Ibid.*, IV.L.



### III. MAJOR FIGURES RELATED TO *LOGOS* (i.e., to logic or reasoning):

*Antithesis*: “Juxtaposition of contrasting words or ideas (often, although not always, in parallel structure).” Aristotle thought that the effect of antithesis could be heightened by parallel clauses. He writes: “Such a form of speech is satisfying, because the significance of contrasted ideas is easily felt, especially when they are thus put side by side, and also because it has the effect of a logical argument; it is by putting two opposing conclusions side by side that you prove one of them false” (1410a19ff).<sup>1</sup>

– “[H]e got for himself *unsteadfast friendship*...and ...*steadfast hatred*” (5.18-20).

– “For it suffices not that *all* you *love* them, if *each* of you *hates* the other” (8.13-14).

– “[H]er great shame won her much praise among those that were more *amorous* of her *body* than *curious* of her *soul*” (48.11-13).

– “*outwardly friendly* where he *inwardly hated*, not omitting *to kiss* whom he thought *to kill*” (5.21-23) [plus alliteration]

– “[S]he rather *kindled* his desire than *quenched* it (54.1-2) [plus alliteration].

*Antithesis heightened by rhyme*:

– “[F]rom that time forward was there never so *undevout* a king who dared that sacred place *to violate*, or so *holy* a bishop that dared presume *to consecrate*” (23.7-9).

– “[S]he not very *fervently loved* for whom she *never longed*” (48.21-22) [plus alliteration].

*Aporia*: “the doubtful;” “Deliberating with oneself as though in doubt over some matter; asking oneself (or rhetorically asking one’s hearers) what is the best or appropriate way to approach something.” More often uses *aporia* as a form of irony.

– “whether [the clergy] said it for his pleasure or as they thought”

1. All citations of Aristotle are from *Aristotle’s Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts, in *The Rhetoric and Poetics of Aristotle* (NY: The Modern Library, 1954). Hereafter, cited as AR followed by section and line reference.

(27.11-12)

– “[Y]et was [King Edward] in many things ruled by the Queen’s faction more than stood either with his honor or our profit, or to the advantage of any man else, except only the immoderate advancement of the Queen’s family, which group either sorer thirsted after their own well being, or our woe, *it were hard I suppose to guess*” (11.27-12.1).

– “*This is my mind in this matter for this time, except any of your lordships anything perceive to the contrary*. For never shall I by God’s grace so wed myself to mine own will, but that I shall be ready to change it upon your better advice” (22.15-19).

*Dialysis*: “the dismemberer.” “To spell out alternatives, or to present either-or arguments that lead to a conclusion.”

– “were it for the respect of his honor, or that she should by presence of so many perceived that this errand was not one man’s mind, *or* were it for that the Protector intended not in this matter to trust any one man alone, *or* else, if she were determined to keep him, ... – immediately, despite her mind, to take him (28.11-17)

– “*either* because she was content with the deed itself well done, *or* because she delighted to be sued unto and to show what she was able to do with the King, *or* because wanton and wealthy women be not always covetous” (50.1-4)

– “Tell him it is plain witchcraft to believe in such dreams, which, *if* they were tokens of things to come, why thinks he not that we might be as likely to make them true by our going *if* we were caught and brought back (as friends fail those who flee), for *then* had the boar a cause likely to slash us with his tusks, as folk that fled for some falsehood; wherefore, *either* is there no peril, nor none there is indeed; *or if* any be, it is rather in going than abiding. And *if* we much fall in peril one way or other, *yet* had I rather that men

should see it were by other men's falsehood than think it were *either* our own fault *or* faint heart" (43.19-28).

–“Now then, *if* she refuse in the deliverance of him, to follow the counsel of them whose wisdom she knows, whose truth she well trusts, **it is easy to perceive** that perversity hinders her, and not fear. But go to, *suppose* that she fear (as who may let here to fear her own shadow), the more she fears to deliver him, the more ought we fear to leave him in her hands. For *if* she casts such found doubts that she fear his hurt, **then** she will fear that he shall be fetched thence. For she will soon think that if men were set (which God forbid) upon so great a mischief, the sanctuary would little impede them, for good men might, as I think, without sin somewhat less regard it than they do.” (24.8-18)

*Irony*: a “dry mock.” “Speaking in such a way as to imply the contrary of what one says, often for the purpose of derision, mockery, or jest.” More was particularly well known for a form of irony that Thomas Wilson classifies as “praising the unworthy.”<sup>1</sup>

*Praising the unworthy*:

–“But he [Richard] allowed not, as I have heard, the burying in so vile a corner [of the princes he ordered killed], say that he would have them buried in a better place because they were a king's sons.

*Lo, the honorable nature of a king*” (78.3-6).

–And for this cause, (*as a goodly continent prince, clean and faultless of himself, sent out of heaven into this vicious world for the amendment of men's manners*), [Richard] caused the Bishop of London to put [Jane Shore] to open penance” (48.2-5).

–“The other two [concubines of Edward] were somewhat greater personages, and, *despite their humility*, remained content to be nameless and to forego the praise of their qualities” (49.21-23).

–“[T]hat every man much marveled that heard him, and thought

1. All citations of Wilson are from Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric (1560)*, ed Peter E. Medine, (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).

that they never had in their lives heard so evil a tale *so well told*” (67.21-23). [plus antithesis]

*Other forms of irony*:

–Richard's statement to the Council: “For never shall I by God's grace so wed myself to mine own will, but that I shall be ready to change it upon your better advice” (22.17-19).

–Richard's habitually being called “Protector” (See esp. pp. 36, 37, 40, 51).

–Richard's insistence that “it was the chiefest duty of a king to minister the laws” (p. 73.24-26) after repeatedly manipulating the laws and focusing his attention to “win ... specially the lawyers” to his side (73.27-29; 39.10ff)

*Metaphor*: Asserting identity between two things that are unlike. Aristotle writes that the key to good use of metaphor is that the objects identified correspond well to the things signified. He writes: “It is like having to ask ourselves what dress will suit an old man; certainly not the crimson cloak that suits a young man.”<sup>1</sup> Aristotle thought that we are fond of metaphors because “we all naturally find it agreeable to get hold of new ideas easily,” and it is from metaphors especially “that we can best get hold of something fresh.”<sup>2</sup> Metaphors, then, teach us quickly and with pleasure.

–“a pestilent serpent is ambition” (9.16).

–Referring to the prince and Richard the Protector: “the lamb was given to the wolf” (20.16-17)

–“And so they said that these matters be kings' games, as it were, stage plays, and for the most part played upon scaffolds” (73.15-17).

*Oxymoron*: “Placing two ordinarily opposing terms adjacent to one another. A compressed paradox” – as in Milton's “darkness visible.”  
–“holiest harlot” (49.19)

1. AR, 1405a12-15.

2. AR, 1410b10-15.

**Parable:** Teaching a moral by means of telling a story.

–Morton tells of a lion that proclaimed no “horned beast” should abide in the wood; afterwards, the boar flees, believing the order applies to him. A fox rebukes the boar: “Thou may abide well enough; the lion meant not thee, for it is no horn that is on your head.” The boar replies: “No, marry . . . That know I well enough. But what if he call it a horn? Where am I then?” (See 84.2-12). Morton’s moral, of course, is that the king possesses dangerous power.

**Paradox:** “A statement that is self-contradictory on the surface, yet seems to evoke a truth nonetheless.”

–“taking counsel of his desire” (54.12)

**Praecisio:** Wilson calls this “a stop, or half telling of a tale”; he then explains: “A stop is when we break off our tale before we have told it.” More depicts Cardinal Morton using this figure to heighten Buckingham’s curiosity. This is one of the “figures of silence.”

–“ ‘And as for the late Protector and now King . . .’ And even there he left off, saying that he had already meddled too much with the world. . . . Then longed the Duke sore to hear what he would have sad because he ended with the King and there so suddenly stopped” (83.14-20).

**Pun:** To play upon various meanings of the same word. Joseph describes a pun as a figure of ambiguity – deliberately used by the speaker or poet – that demonstrates wit and art. She writes that puns “depend for their effect on the intellectual alertness necessary to perceive the ambiguity.”<sup>1</sup> When More plays with the different senses of a word’s meaning, he does not think of it as merely word play, but

1. Joseph, *Shakespeare’s Use of the Arts of Language*, p. 165. Writing on Shakespeare’s rhetoric, Joseph provides an excellent gloss for More’s use of puns as well: “To play upon the various meanings of a word represented an intellectual exercise, a witty analysis commended and relished by Aristotle, practiced by Plato and by the great dramatists of Greece, esteemed and used by Cicero, employed by medieval and Renaissance preachers in their sermons, regarded as a rhetorical ornament by the Elizabethans, but frequently despised as false or degenerate wit from the eighteenth century to the present day” *Ibid.*, p. 164.

as wit used for a particular rhetorical effect. The following four figures illustrate different kinds of puns in More’s *Richard III*.

1) **Antanacsis:** Repetition of a word in a different sense.

–“Here is a gay goodly *cast*, foul *cast* away for haste” (47.19-20).

–“[T]here is none of her *kin* the less loved for that they be her *kin*, but for their own evil deserving. And nevertheless, if we loved neither her nor her *kin*, yet were there no cause to think that we should hate the King’s noble brother, to whose Grace we ourself be of *kin*” (23.25-29).

–“*Great* variance has there long been between you, not always for *great* causes” (8.29-30).

–“[B]ut under an easy name of ‘benevolence and *good will*’ the commissioners so much of every man took, as no man would with his *good will* have given – as though the name of ‘benevolence’ had signified that every man should pay, not what he himself of his *good will* pleases to grant, but what the King of his *good will* please to take (62.1-6).

–“Keep one safe and *both* be sure, and nothing for them *both* more perilous than to be *both* in one place” (35.17-18).

2) **Onomatopoeia:** “Using or inventing a word whose sound imitates that which it names.”

–“the sound of a swarm of bees” (68.23-24)

3) **Polyptoton:** “Repetition of a word derived from the same root.”<sup>1</sup> Often More combines this figure with antanacsis to repeat words in both different forms and senses.

–“[S]he would never have showed such *kindness* to him, to let him so *kindly* get her with child” (57.8-9).

–“that no one thing in many days before got him either more *hearts* or more *hearty* favor” (3.13-14)

–“were he *faulty* or were he *faultless*” (4.27-28)

–“very faithful and *trusty* enough, *trusting* too much” (45.26)

1. Edward P.J. Corbett and Robert J. Connors, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, fourth edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) p. 395; hereafter, cited as “Corbett and Connors.” Puttenham calls this figure the “tranlacer” because “ye turn and tranlace a word into many sundry shapes as the Tailor doth his garment.”

– “[A]s they were great *states* of birth, so were they great and *stately* of stomach” (4.16-17).

4) *Syllepsis*: When a single word that governs or modifies two or more others must be understood differently with respect to each of those words. Syllepsis occurs in a combination of grammatical parallelism and semantic incongruity, often with a witty or comical effect.

– “Doctor Shaa by his sermon *lost* his *honesty* and soon after his *life*” (52.4).

*Simile*: Asserting a likeness between two unlike things.

– “[Y]et much part of the common people were therewith very well satisfied, and said it were *like* giving alms to hang them” (20.3-4).

– “*as* though God and Saint Peter were the patrons of ungracious living” (25.26-27)

– “but all was as still *as* midnight” (67.25-26).

#### IV. MAJOR FIGURES OF REPETITION

“Repetition is a major rhetorical strategy for producing emphasis, clarity, amplification, or emotional effect.” (Notice that repetition can be used to support logos or pathos.)

*Alliteration*: Repetition of an initial consonant sound. Puttenham calls this “the figure of like letter,” which may “notably affect the ear.”

– “if *d*ivision and *d*issension of their friends had not unarmed them and left them *d*estitute, and the execrable *d*esire of sovereignty provoked to their *d*estruction, who, if either kind or kindness had held place, must needs have been their chief *d*efense” (3.22-26).

– “*f*alsehood of their *f*eigned *f*riends” (58.5-6)

– “you have *l*ong time *l*acked and sore *l*onged for” (61.15-16)

[Note the pun on “long.”]

*Anaphora*: Where the same word begins a series of clauses or verses. Puttenham writes of anaphora that it occurs “when we make one word begin, and as they are wont to say, lead the dance to many verses in suite.”

– “[*T*]*here* they build, *there* they spend and bid their creditors go whistle them” (25.29-30).

*Antimetabole*: Repetition of words in reverse grammatical order and successive clauses. So John F. Kennedy said: “Ask not what *your country* can do for *you*, but what *you* can do for *your country*.” See also Antithesis and Parallelism.

– “Faithful *you* be that *know I* well, and *I know* well *you* be wise” (35.22-23).

– “[*S*]*he begs* of many at *this day* living, that at *this day* had *begged* if *she* had not been” (50.18-19)

– “[*B*]*e it as well* as it *will*, it *will* never be so *well* as we have seen *it*” (17.13-14).

*Antistrophe*: “Repetition of a closing word or words at the end of several (usually successive) clauses, sentences, or verses.”<sup>1</sup>

– “By which, the less while I expect to live with *you*, the more deeply am I moved to care in what case I leave *you*, for such as I leave *you*, such be my children like to find *you*” (8.7-9).

*Assonance*: Repetition of vowel-sound similarity.

– “The *broth*er has been the *broth*er’s bane” (35.14).

– “that butcherly *o*ffice to some *o*ther than his *o*wn *o*rn *o*ther” (5.30-31).

*Parallelism*: Corbett and Connors define parallelism as the “similarity of structure in a pair of series or related words, phrases, or clauses.”<sup>2</sup> More uses it in conjunction with other figures often. See Antithesis, which is a form of parallelism.

1. See Lanham’s entry for “antistrophe” in Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

2. Corbett and Connors, *Classical Rhetoric*, p. 381.

– “[W]here the King took displeasure, *she* [Jane Shore] *would* mitigate and appease his mind; where men were out of favor, *she would* bring them in his grace; for many who had highly offended, *she obtained* pardon; of great forfeitures *she got* men remission” (49.27-30)

– “I neither am so unwise to mistrust your wits, nor so suspicious to mistrust your truths” (35.4-5).

– “I beseech you for the trust that his father put in you ever, and for trust that I put in you now, that as far as you think that I fear too much, be you well aware that to fear not as far too little” (35.26-28).

– “And yet therein she said was more honesty than honor in this marriage, forasmuch as there is *between no merchant and his own maid* so great difference, as *between the King and this widow*” (54.30-55.2)

#### V. GENERAL RHETORICAL TERMS

*Parts of Rhetoric:* More would have been familiar with the five parts of rhetoric that are discoveries of Roman oratory, and, in particular, with the work of Cicero and Quintilian. 1) Invention is the finding of arguments. 2) Arrangement is the order of a speech's parts. 3) Style in the Renaissance often concerned the figures that the orator might employ, but more generally it should be considered by three classifications – low, middle, and high. More might have known from his study of Cicero or Augustine that the low style was for teaching, the middle for delighting, and the high for moving an audience.<sup>1</sup> 4) Memory refers to the various devices orators used to remember their speeches. 5) Delivery encompassed such things as the speaker's gesticulations, use of voice, and even when to show passions such as anger when speaking.<sup>2</sup>

*Arrangement:* The second of the five parts of rhetoric, that having to do with ordering the whole discourse. The arrangement of the

1. For elaboration, see Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*, Bk. 4, 34-35.

2. See Cicero's *De Partitione Oratoria*, trans. H. Rackham, (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992) 1.1.5-1.8.27; and see Lanham, *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, pp. 174-178. See also Corbett and Connors, who provide a good introduction to this and other elements of classical rhetoric, pp. 15-26.

discourse typically follows Cicero's paradigm: 1) exordium (catches the audiences' attention); 2) narration (sets forth the facts of the case); 3) division (sets forth points agreed upon by both sides and points to be contested); 4) confirmation (sets forth the arguments that support one's case); 5) refutation (refutes opponents arguments); 5) peroration (sums up and stirs audience).<sup>1</sup>

– Buckingham's speech at the Guildhall serves as an abridged example: exordium (61.11-19); narration (61.20-65.1); division (65.2-15); proof (65.16-66.24); peroration (66.25-67.8). Of note, Buckingham fails to include “refutation.” In other words, he never presents arguments against Richard, not even to rebut them later.

1. See *Rhetoric Ad Herennium*, trans. H. Caplan, 1.3.4.