

Can an unmerciful pig be a great king?

Stanley Ezrol comments on Shakespeare's 'King Henry V': a new contribution to the debate which began in these pages with two reviews of a film version.

"Nor should [the West] eschew imposing revengeful and punitive peace. It is time the Third World was taught a lesson that won't be forgotten for a generation. Such ruthlessness would not militate against justice in the Middle East. It would be an essential condition of justice; and, most important, an essential condition of a stable, civilized, and prosperous world."—Peregrine Worsthorne, *Sunday Telegraph*, Feb. 3, 1991.

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown.
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above the sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.

—Portia on the Quality of Mercy, from *The Merchant of Venice*, IV; i, 188.

By Jove, I am not covetous for gold, . . .
But if it be a sin to covet honour
I am the most offending soul alive.

—Henry V before the massacre at Agincourt, from *Henry V*, IV; iii, 23.

Now that the British imperialists and their American lackeys have embarked on a genocidal and self-defeating campaign of conquest in the Middle East, we ought to reexamine Shakespeare's great play *Henry the Fifth*, which portrayed the high point of England's conquests in the course of the fratricidal hundred years war with France, which is the main subject of Shakespeare's "history plays." Properly used, this play, and the entire series, is a powerful weapon against those who have perversely employed its speeches out of context, and mangled productions of the plays, to serve the propaganda purposes of British jingos. It is an examination, from the standpoint of Christian morality, of the questions: What is the purpose of a nation? What are the responsibilities of a sovereign? How is a nation's posterity affected by the acceptance or rejection of its sovereign responsibilities?

The common Anglo-American opinion regarding *Henry V*, is that Shakespeare's account is entirely consistent with the accepted English historiography which holds that the juvenile delinquent, Prince Hal, portrayed in the *Henry IV* plays, transformed himself upon the death of his father, into the greatest of English kings—a self-sacrificing Christian leader who inspires a numerically inferior force of English, Welsh, Scotch, and Irish troops at Agincourt to overwhelming victory against the French. The famous "We happy few" speech in which Henry rallies his forces to battle, is a mainstay of the British jingos' repertoire.

This standard view, as reported in Hall's *Chronicle* (London, 1809, following the 1548 and 1550 editions) was, "This kyng, this man was he, whiche (according to the olde Prouerbe) declared and shewed that honors ought to change maners, for incontinent after that he was stalled in the siege royall, and had receiued the crowne and scepter of the famous and fortunate region, determined with hymself to put on the shape of a new man, and to vse another sorte of liuying, turnyng insolencie and wildnes into grauitie and sobernes, and wauer-ying vice into constant vertue." The preface to *Henry V* in the "New Cambridge Edition" of Shakespeare's works (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1942), asserts, ". . . Shakespeare had planned, while writing the immediately preceding histories, the ultimate development of Henry into the heroic figure of the ideal English king. The completion of his regeneration is explicitly announced by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the first scene of the present play. Henry is no longer exhibited as a master of sparkling repartee, but stress is laid on his judgment and his piety."

Proponents of this view point to this deathbed hope expressed by Henry V's father and predecessor on the throne that young Henry would be able to end the constant civil war which had marked the preceding history of England:

. . . God knows, my son,
By what by-paths and indirect crook'd ways
I met this crown . . .
. . . It seem'd in me
But as an honour snatch'd with boist'rous hand, . . .
Which daily grew to quarrel and to bloodshed,
Wounding supposed peace . . .
For all my reign hath been but as a scene

Acting that argument, and now my death
Changes the mode; for what in me was purchas'd
Falls upon thee in a more fairer sort;
So thou the garland wear'st successively, . . .

What they ignore, dismiss, or fail to understand, is that although in this speech Shakespeare indicates a possible way out of the downward spiral of bloodshed which has marked England, he also indicates the "argument" which his son's reign will act out, as he continues:

Yet, though thou stand'st more sure than I could do
Thou art not firm enough, since griefs are green;
. . . Therefore, my Harry,
Be it thy course to busy giddy minds
With foreign quarrels, that action, hence borne out,
May waste the memory of the former days.
How I came by the crown, O God forgive;
And grant it may with thee in true peace live!

Is Henry IV's death bed prayer answered favorably by God? How does the universal court of history judge this proposed strategy?

Like all classical art, Shakespeare's *Henry V* is not didactic. Ideas are not simply declared. The play was composed to excite within the mind of each member of the audience, the recreation of ideas concerning the purpose of a nation and its sovereign. In order for this to work, you must view the play prepared with an attention span, and an insistence on the intelligibility of cause and effect relationships. Without asking consistently, "What has caused this effect? What will this effect cause? What would I do in this situation if I were King?" in light of your memory of the entirety of the play, as well as with some view of the nature of man and society, you will simply "experience" the play as a sensual or emotional event in the way modern soap operas and movies are meant to be experienced. No understanding will be gained, but another "experience" may be added to your "life list." One who experiences the play without the kind of reflection indicated may come away thinking, "Yes, Henry changed, he showed great inspirational leadership. He's much more inspiring than George Bush," but he will have missed Shakespeare's play entirely. Through the use of a "Chorus" in the prologue to the play, Shakespeare warns the viewer of his responsibility to leave his brain in gear, "For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings."

What is a nation?

The first major question raised in the play is, by what right may two nations be joined? May a sovereign of one nation claim the right, based on some formal legal claim, to marry another nation? What is the result of an attempt by a sovereign to subjugate a nation by force? Shakespeare was in the Erasmian tradition which held with Dante's view, that

a nation must be built on the basis of a shared language culture. If the functioning of a nation requires some shared deliberation and agreement on the most profound questions confronting its people, those people must be able to communicate using a shared language which has the capability of communicating profound ideas. In *Henry V*, Shakespeare deals with this question humorously, through the attempts of the various Welsh, Scotch, Irish, and English who make up Henry's forces to communicate with each other, and more seriously in his portrayal of the relationship between Henry and his conquered bride, Princess Katharine of France, who becomes Henry's Queen in fulfillment of treaty demands.

Katharine's mother, Isabella, makes clear that the portrayal of the marriage of Henry and Katharine is an image of the attempted union of England and France in her marriage blessing: "God, the best maker of all marriages, Combine your hearts in one, your realms in one!"

Katharine is first introduced in her comical attempt to learn English from her nurse, after she has been offered to Henry by her father as part of a peace proposal, which Henry rejects. She next appears after the military defeat of France. Henry demands to be left alone with Katharine and her nurse, insisting that peace depends on France's capitulation to his terms, of which Katharine is the "capital demand." Viewing Henry's adolescent attempt at seduction, and hearing Katharine's awkward response in a broken mixture of French and English, any but the most hardened believers in the importance of physical attraction must ask, "How could a marriage between these two possibly work?" In fact, Henry's seduction attempt falls flat, although it is often portrayed differently. Her first objection is, "Is it possible dat I should love de enemy of France?" Her concluding position is, "Dat is as it shall please de *roi mon père*." The scene between the two ends with Henry forcibly kissing her on the mouth. Although this is often played as if Katharine yields to the magic of Henry's kiss, in Shakespeare's play, Henry tells the Duke of Burgundy, who has been openly working to bring about his king's capitulation to Henry's demands, "I cannot so conjure up the spirit of love in her, that he will appear in his true likeness." There follows a lewd discussion between Henry and Burgundy at Katharine's expense, in the course of which Henry entreats Burgundy to "teach your cousin to consent winking," and Burgundy agrees.

The play does not indicate how the forced union between Henry and Katharine developed, but the union between France and England was dissolved by a people's revolution against the occupying forces and their allies including the House of Burgundy, which resulted in the creation of France as a modern nation state under the great Louis XI. That story, incidentally, is touched on in Friedrich Schiller's *Maid of Orleans*, which he apparently conceived as his sequel to Shakespeare's *Henry V*. The internal civil strife which had marked Henry IV's reign, burst out with renewed fury after Henry V's death in the 30 years' War of the Roses. Has

Shakespeare's prayer of "true peace" for England yet been fulfilled?

The quality of mercy

The crucial quality of national policy which Shakespeare examines in *Henry V*, is the principle of mercy. Dozens of times throughout the play, in the midst of war, the question is asked, "Will you show mercy?" This is the same idea Shakespeare dealt with in the theater of common law in his earlier play *The Merchant of Venice*. Keep in mind Portia's famous speech on the quality of mercy which heads this essay as you view or read *Henry V*, and it will greatly highlight your understanding of the later play. What is mercy? Is it simply refraining from harming those who deserve punishment? Is it doing what good you are capable of doing? Is it a proper goal of national policy? Will a leader who shows no mercy win success for his nation? Will one who is merciful dissipate his nation's strength?

In the composition of his study of these questions as they pertain to Henry's launching of and conduct of his bloody war of conquest against France, Shakespeare presents a number of minor events in the war, which can be appreciated quite differently, depending on whether they are viewed as isolated occurrences, or as images in the small which illuminate the larger issues of the play. The first of these is the uncovering of an assassination plot against Henry perpetrated by three of his dearest friends. Henry answers their plea for mercy:

God quit you in his mercy! Hear your sentence.
You have conspir'd against our royal person,
Join'd with an enemy proclaim'd, and from his coffers
Receiv'd the golden earnest of our death;
Wherein you would have sold your king to slaughter,
His princes and his peers to servitude,
His subjects to oppression and contempt,
And his whole kingdom into desolation . . .
Get you therefore hence,
Poor miserable wretches, to your death,
The taste whereof God of his mercy give
You patience to endure, and true repentance
Of all your deaf offences!

The unreflecting soap-opera addict, upon hearing Henry's pronouncement, probably thinks something like, "He's a righteous dude. They had it coming." If you aren't familiar with Shakespeare's play, the history of the Hundred Years' War, the desperate situation of England at the point the play was first performed in 1599, or the situation George Bush has placed us in today, you may have had a similar, if more literate response. But consider the question, "How does Henry himself stand with respect to the bill of indictment he has pronounced against his would-be assassins?"

Desolation is exactly where the kingdom already was

long before the assassination plot. *Henry V* opens with a scene which ought to seem eerily familiar in this year of our Lord, 1991. The Archbishop of Canterbury and a colleague are discussing how they can defeat an attempt to balance the king's unmanageable budget deficit by seizing half of the Church's property. The Archbishop explains his solution:

For I have made an offer to his
Majesty, Upon our spiritual convocation
And in regard of causes now in hand,
Which I have open'd to his Grace at large,
As touching France, to give a greater sum
Than ever at one time the clergy yet
Did to his predecessors part withal.

What the Archbishop "open'd to his Grace," was a quasi-legal argument favoring the conquest and subjugation of France. Although the British jingos seem to accept without question England's right to invade France, this is clearly not Shakespeare's view, as the repeated raising of this question indicates. Remember that in *The Merchant of Venice*, the key issue was whether Shylock could properly enforce a contract to extract a pound of flesh from the debtor Antonio. In *Henry V*, all of France becomes Henry's "pound of flesh," which he insists on having at whatever human cost. Does he have a right to it?

Did the war, whatever its justice, improve England's situation? *Henry V* is actually a sequel to Shakespeare's earlier *Henry VI* plays, so the reader might already know that despite the apparent conquest of France won through the massacre at Agincourt, Henry's war doesn't actually end well. *Henry VI* opens at Henry V's funeral with the report that France is lost. The messenger who brought the news was asked, "What treachery was us'd?" against England and answered:

No treachery, but want of men and money.
Amongst the soldiers this is muttered,
That here you maintain several factions,
And whilst a field should be dispatch'd and fought
You are disputing of your generals.
One would have ling'ring wars with little cost;
Another would fly swift, but wanteth wings;
A third thinks, without expense at all,
By guileful fair words peace may be obtain'd.
Awake, awake, English nobility!
Let not sloth dim your honours new-begot.
Cropp'd are the flower-de-luces in your arms;
Of England's coat one half is cut away.

Shakespeare portrays these events as occurring at Henry V's funeral, rather than several years later when they occurred historically, to emphasize that it was *Henry's* policies, and not the mistakes of his successors, which directly caused

the loss of all the "honor" which Henry had apparently won for England.

The question, "Do the assassination plotters deserve to hang?" which had appeared to be of immediate importance at first, disappears into insignificance once the incident is viewed in context as a means of provoking reflection on the larger questions of why England was crushed at the point of its greatest apparent strength.

The second illustrative incident is the hanging of Henry's childhood friend and fellow thief, Barthol, for looting in France. The standard recitation is that Henry's failure to spare Barthol from the noose illustrates that he has matured and placed his responsibility as king to maintain discipline amongst his troops and prevent the mistreatment of the people of France above his youthful affections. Again, that seems to make sense, as long as you view this incident in isolation. The specific crime Barthol is hanged for is stealing a Christian medallion, called a "pax," from a Church. Does Barthol deserve to hang for robbing a church of its "pax," which is the Latin word for "peace?" If so, what of Henry? What of England? How did the play open? What was Henry trying to do which caused the Archbishop to propose the war? What did the war do? But shouldn't Henry prevent his troops from abusing the people of France? Consider Henry's reasoning in the hanging of Barthol in light of the memory of his ultimatum to the town of Harfleur:

How yet resolves the governor of the town?
This is the latest parley we will admit;
Therefore to our best mercy give yourselves,
Or like to men proud of destruction
Defy us to our worst; for, as I am a soldier,
A name that in my thoughts becomes me best,
If I begin the batt'ry once again,
I will not leave the half-achieved Harfleur
Till in her ashes she lies buried.
The gates of mercy shall be all shut up,
And the flesh'd soldier, rough and hard of heart,
In liberty of bloody hand shall range
With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass
Your fresh fair virgins and your flow'ring infants.
What is it then to me, if impious War,
Array'd in flames like to be the prince of fiends,
Do with his smirch'd complexion all fell feats
Enlink'd to waste and desolation?
What is't to me, when you yourselves are cause,
If your pure maidens fall into the hand
of hot and forcing violation?
What rein can hold licentious wickedness
When down the hill he holds his fierce career?

For those who lived through George Bush's ultimata to the nation of Iraq through the fall and winter of 1990, Henry's protestation of innocence, "What is't to me, when you your-

selves are cause?" has a familiar ring. Keep it in mind, as we consider the play further.

The moral responsibility of a sovereign

The standard view that this play illustrates Henry's transformation from an irresponsible juvenile to a great leader of a great nation, is pronounced by the Archbishop and his co-conspirator in plotting the fratricidal war against France for the purpose of saving the Church's treasury. They observe:

Cant: The King is full of grace and fair regard.

Ely: And a true lover of the holy Church.

Cant: The course of his youth promis'd it not.

The breath no sooner left his father's body,

But that his wildness, mortifi'd in him,

Seem'd to die too; . . .

Never was such a sudden scholar made;

Never came reformation in a flood

With such a heady currence, scouring faults:

Nor never Hydra-headed wilfulness

So soon did lose his seat, and all at once,

As in this King.

Aside from the remarks of these two stalwarts of the Church, and Henry's own repeated affirmations of his own Christianity, what does the play have to say about "born again" Henry's acceptance of moral responsibility for his actions? In the play, the key questions come to fruition in the course of the long night preceding the massacre at Agincourt. The standard view is that here Henry comes into his own.

Unable to sleep before the battle, Henry disguises himself as a common soldier and goes out amongst his men, who raise the question of responsibility directly, after Henry, in disguise, asserts, ". . . Methinks I could not die anywhere so contented as in the King's company, his cause being just and his quarrel honourable." One soldier argues, "That's more than we know," and a second asserts, "Ay, or more than we should seek after; for we know enough if we know we are the King's subjects. If his cause be wrong, our obedience to the King wipes the crime of it out of us," to which the first adds, "But if the cause be not good, the King himself hath a heavy reckoning to make, when all those legs and arms and heads, chopp'd off in a battle, shall join together at the latter day and cry all, 'We died at such a place'; some swearing, some crying for a surgeon, some upon their wives left poor behind them, some upon the debts they owe, some upon their children rawly left."

To this, Henry replies, "The King is not bound to answer the particular endings of his soldiers, . . . Every subject's duty is the King's; but every subject's soul is his own."

He correctly disavows responsibility for the private sins of his soldiers and points out that each subject is responsible for his own soul and his own conduct, but evades entirely the question of his own responsibility for unleashing bloody war.

After the others leave, Henry delivers a soliloquy which is pointed to as evidence of Henry's maturation as a king:

. . . I am a king that find thee, and I know
'Tis not the balm, the sceptre, and the ball
The sword, the mace, the crown imperial,
The intertissued robe of gold and pearl,
The farced title running 'fore the King,
The throne he sits on, nor the tide of pomp
That beats upon the high shore of this world,—
No, not all these, thrice-gorgeous
Ceremony, Not all these, laid in bed majestical,
Can sleep so soundly as the wretched slave,
Who with a body fill'd and vacant mind
Gets him to rest, cramm'd with distressful bread,
Never sees horrid night, the child of hell,
But like a lackey from the rise to set
Sweats in the eye of Phoebus, and all night
Sleeps in Elysium; next day after dawn,
Doth rise and help Hyperion to his horse,
And follows so the ever-running year
With profitable labour to his grave:
And, but for ceremony, such a wretch,
Winding up days with toil and nights with sleep,
Had the fore-hand and vantage of a king.
The slave, a member of the country's peace,
Enjoys it, but in gross brain little wots
What watch the King keeps to maintain the peace,
Whose hours the peasant best advantages.

It's hard to disagree with Henry's belittling of Ceremony and Pomp, but what is his view of the substance of statesmanship? Other than the ludicrous claim he makes to maintaining the peace, he has nothing to say about the responsibilities of a king. Compare this soliloquy with Portia's "Quality of Mercy" speech. She likewise belittles the sceptre and the crown, but adds:

But mercy is above the sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.

Has Henry seasoned justice with mercy? He just insisted that each of his subjects is morally responsible for his own actions, but what responsibility has he accepted on his own behalf? Remember the ultimatum to Harfleur, "What is't to me, when you yourselves are cause?" Think back to the opening of the play. When the Archbishop presented his law brief on behalf of war, Henry warned:

And God forbid, my dear and faithful lord,
That you should fashion, wrest, or bow your reading,

Or nicely charge your understanding soul
With opening titles miscreate, whose right
Suits not in native colours with the truth;
For God doth know how many now in health
Shall drop their blood in aprobation
Of what your reverence shall incite us to.
Therefore take heed how you impawn our person,
How you awake our sleeping sword of war.
We charge you, in the name of God, take heed;
For never two such kingdoms did contend
Without much fall of blood, whose guiltless drops
Are every one a woe, a sore complaint
'Gainst him whose wrong gives edge unto the swords
That makes such waste in brief mortality.

This is not an altogether bad statement of the responsibility you have, before embarking on war, to consider the horror you are about to unleash, and consider whether that horror is justified by the cause for which the war is launched. Henry is fully aware of the horror being unleashed, but has he accepted responsibility for his policies, or does he insist, like George Bush, that he is merely the victim of circumstances created by others? The Archbishop, each common soldier, the King of France, the Dauphin, the governor of Harfleur, each and all are held by Henry to be guilty of this war. What about Henry?

Think back even further, to the first introduction of Henry as the young Prince Hal in *Henry IV, Part I*. Within seconds of Hal's arrival on the stage, his friend, and apparent mentor, the gluttonous, lustful, thieving Sir John Falstaff, addresses the prince, "And, I prithee, sweet wag, when thou art a king, as, God save thy Grace,—Majesty I should say, for grace thou wilt have none." Review Falstaff's forecast in light of Portia's distinction between Majesty and the grace of Mercy. Henry has achieved Majesty, has he achieved Grace? Has he become an instrument of that authority which is "above the sceptred sway?"

The "climax" of the play, and the most glowing moment for British jingo propagandist purposes, occurs just before the battle begins. Recalling his father's deathbed prayer that he be forgiven the sin of assassinating his predecessor, Richard II, Henry prays, but not to God the Creator, as Christians know Him:

O God of battles! steel my soldiers' hearts
Possess them not with fear . . .
O, not to-day, think not upon the fault
My father made in compassing the crown!

This is shortly followed by Henry's famous "St. Crispin Day," oration to his troops. What the jingos tend to forget is the significance of the question from one of Henry's officers which sets the stage for Henry's shining moment. The question, "O that we now had here but one ten thousand of those

men in England that do no work to-day!" is a grim reminder of the mass unemployment at home which Henry's war attempts to cover over, a situation that an American of today would not have trouble imagining. Henry's "We happy few" speech in reply is pointed to by the soap nuts as his crowning moment. He apparently succeeds in mobilizing his troops, but on what basis? Was this speech Shakespeare's vicious parody of the empty-headed jingos who now so love to quote it? Henry lets the truth out about his own character:

By Jove, I am not covetous for gold, . . .
But if it be a sin to covet honour
I am the most offending soul alive.

Is it a sin to covet honor? The jingos obviously don't think so. Henry goes on to rally his troops without so much as a hint that they might be fighting in a worthy cause. He holds out the promise of fame and honor which will accrue to those who survive, and charges that those who don't fight that day will "hold their manhoods cheap." I imagine Shakespeare quietly chuckling to this day every time some British jingo piously declares, "I am the most offending soul alive." Henry's personality flaw, the fact that his apparent maturation was driven by his craving after honor, fame, glory, and high regard, was revealed in Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part I*, where the delinquent prince pledges in a soliloquy:

Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That when he please again to be himself
Being wanted, he may be more wond'ring at
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists . . .
And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glitt'ring o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
I'll so offend, to make offence a skill,
Redeeming time when men think least I will.

In case you forget to ask the right questions in the course of the play, Shakespeare has a tendency to try to tickle you under the chin as a reminder. One of the emotional high points of the play occurs when Henry orders the throats of all French prisoners to be slit, when he determines the French are still fighting. Following Henry's issuance of this order, it is discovered that the young pages guarding the English camp have all been murdered by the French. Just as the questions arise in the mind of the viewer, "What sort of king is this? What horrors are befalling in this war?" the following exchange in dialect occurs between an English and a Welsh soldier:

Gower: Besides, they have burned and carried away all

that was in the King's tent; wherefore the King, most worthily, hath caus'd every soldier to cut his prisoner's throat. O, 'tis a gallant king!

Fluellen: Ay, he was born at Monmouth, Captain Gower. What call you the town's name where Alexander the Pig was born!

Gower: Alexander the Great.

Fluellen: Why, I pray you, is not pig great? The pig, or the great, or the mighty, or the huge, or the magnanimous, are all one reckonings, save the phrase is a little variations.

Fluellen goes on to attack Henry for having, upon his coronation, turned his back on his fat friend, Falstaff, who certainly was a great pig. The issue then was whether Henry would permit Falstaff and his fellow thieves free rein, or whether he would be a responsible king. At that point Henry reached, perhaps, the height of his own moral attainments. He spurned Falstaff, but promised to revive their association should Falstaff mend his ways. He had just declared the subordination of the king to law in a speech to the Chief Justice who had imprisoned him as a Prince, and pledged:

. . . The tide of blood in me
Hath proudly flow'd in vanity till now:
Now doth it turn and ebb back to the sea,
Where it shall mingle with the state of floods
And flow henceforth in formal majesty. . . .
Our coronation done, we will accite,
As I before rememb'ring, all our state;
And, God consigning to my good intents,
No prince nor peer shall have just cause to say,
God shorten Harry's happy life one day!

Was Henry's promise to be a great king fulfilled? Or was he a great pig? Or a great pig of a king? He bowed to the letter of the law, and invaded France. How did he stand with regard to God's law? Whose actions caused more evil, Henry's or Falstaff's? Decide, just as you must decide about George Bush, but don't decide on the basis of some nice sounding speeches. Reflect on the responsibility of a nation, and the responsibilities individuals have for the quality of mercy of their nations. The English at Agincourt were able to kill 10,000 Frenchmen while suffering fewer than thirty fatalities. France surrendered, and gave Henry the King's daughter in marriage. Their son Henry VI united the two kingdoms under one crown, with the result, a few short years after Henry's death, as told by the chorus in the epilogue to *Henry V*:

That they lost France and made his England bleed.

Those who would use merciless wars of conquest to "solve" the economic problems they have brought on their nation should take heed.