

Analyzing A Text.

Robert Penn Warren “ All the King’s Men”.

R. P. Warren is one of the major American writers, who has made outstanding contribution to American letters in the field of education, criticism, poetry and novel.

“ All the King’s Men” is based on the actual career of H. Long, the Louisiana dictator and governor. Its protagonist Willie Stark is not a fictional replica of H. Long, of course. It is a story of the rise and fall of politically challenged man in the South. This story takes place around in the 1930s.

The plot of the novel formally centres round the political dictator who fights his way from farm boy to power-mad political boss.

In Chapter Five the situation is the following: W. Stark, who is going to run for the U.S. senatorship, is seeking for a way of neutralizing his political enemy. A man who can persuade Mac Murfee not to use the blackmail evidence against Willie is Judge Irwin, who, by the way, has a stainless reputation.

Willie Stark asks Jack Burden to provide him with the evidence against the Judge. “ There is always something”, he says, “ man is conceived in sin and born in corruption and he passeth from the stink of the didie to the stench of the shroud. There is always something.”

The chorus character in “ All the King’s men “ is Jack Burden. Jack is the link between the reader and the story. He is whom we see the story through. He is really a nice person, who works hard. He is a loyal friend and very helpful worker. He is ready to “dig up the dead cat, to excavate the maggot from the cheese, to locate the canker in the rose, to find the deceased fly among the raisins in the rice pudding”. He is struggling to understand who he is and what he believes in. He is ready to help, to do his best. He works not for money as he says: “ If I wanted money, I could think of easier ways to make it than I make it with you”. He adds: “ I don’t know why I work for you, but it’s not because I love you. And not for money.” Jack probably wouldn’t be considered the main character, but he is the main character’s “right hand” man.

So, Willie Stark is the main character. He was able to blackmail enemies and make a huge series of different reforms. So he orders Jack to “ dig up dirt” on Judge Irwin. “ there is always something,” he says and we understand that he asked different people and not even once to find something about his opponents. And he was a success there evidently. That’s why he was sure that Jack would find something bad about the Judge. Maybe he even knew that there was some relations between Jack’s mother and the Judge.

One of the central motifs of the novel is original sin or natural sin. To achieve something people sin sometimes. An important theme in the novel is reputation, I think. Being a politician W.

Stark was in the public most of the time and he was greatly concerned with how the people see him. He wanted the people to have no knowledge of his wrong deeds and immoral decisions.

The Title of the story is an ironical allusion to the well-known nursery about Humpty Dumpty.

The title helps to grasp the main idea of the text at once. W. Stark (a king) and his men are described in the story. It is difficult to “sit on the wall” and not to fall.

After having read the text I can say that this book portrays the life of the 30s very truthfully. But not only. Nowadays, during the election companies, there are many articles in the newspapers about the politicians who are ready to blackmail their opponents. I am sure if W. Stark and the other politicians had Truth in their Hearts they would not be power hungry, greedy, dishonest as they are. I think people can change.