

Université de Montréal

Variations on Charisma: Shakespeare's Saintly, Villain, and Lustful Leaders

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Résumé de synthèse

Variations on Charisma: Shakespeare's Saintly, Villain, and Lustful Leaders est une étude des mécanismes du leadership charismatique dans *Henry V*, *Richard III* et *Antoine et Cléopâtre* de William Shakespeare, respectivement. Le mémoire explore certains outils, tels que la rhétorique, l'ironie et resignification, qui permettent aux dirigeants de gagner l'amour des disciples, la reconnaissance, et même la crainte. Cette thèse ne traitera pas avec l'essence du charisme en tant que telle, mais plutôt avec les techniques de leadership charismatique.

Dans le premier chapitre, j'ai étudié le caractère du roi Harry dans trois différents aspects: en tant que chef militaire, en tant que chef spirituel, et comme un leader politique. Parmi les techniques de leadership charismatique qui déploie Henry V de gagner l'amour de ses disciples et de dévouement est rhétorique. La capacité de livrer le discours à droite dans la conjoncture à droite et à convaincre les adeptes, même dans les moments de difficultés formes sa force clé comme une figure centrale dans la pièce.

Le deuxième chapitre traite du leadership charismatique Richard III, qui est évaluée sur le plan éthique parce qu'elle est acquise grâce à assassiner. J'ai essayé d'examiner les relations possibles qui pourraient exister entre le charisme et l'agence moral. Dans ce chapitre, j'ai soulevé des questions sur la mesure dans laquelle le charisme est d'ordre éthique et comment un chef de file, qui usurpes alimentation via assassiner, est charismatique. Une technique qui renforce le leadership charismatique de Richard est l'ironie. Richard III déploie l'ironie de gagner la complicité du public.

Dans le troisième chapitre, l'accent est mis sur le caractère de Cléopâtre. La question soulevée dans le chapitre concerne la relation entre le charisme et la lutte pour une identité féminine orientale. La politique sexuelle de Cléopâtre est également au cœur de mon étude, car il est revu et de nouveaux sens de Shakespeare d'une manière qui souligne les qualités charismatiques de Cléopâtre.

Mots clés: le charisme, la rhétorique, l'agence morale, resignification, William Shakespeare

Abstract

Variations on Charisma: Shakespeare's Saintly, Villain, and Lustful Leaders is an investigation of the mechanisms of charismatic leadership in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, *Richard III*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* respectively. It explores certain tools, such as rhetoric, irony, and resignification, which allow the leaders to gain the followers' love, recognition, and even awe. This thesis will not deal with the essence of charisma as such but rather with the techniques of charismatic leadership.

In the first chapter, I have studied the character of King Harry in three different aspects: as a military leader, as a spiritual leader, and as a political leader. Among the techniques of charismatic leadership which Henry V deploys to gain his followers' love and devotion is rhetoric. The ability to deliver the right discourse in the right conjuncture and to persuade the followers even in the moments of hardship forms his key strength as a central figure in the play.

The second chapter deals with Richard III's charismatic leadership which is assessed ethically because it is gained through murder. I have tried to examine the possible relations that might exist between charisma and moral agency. In this chapter, I have raised questions about the extent to which charisma is ethical and how a leader, who usurpes power via murder, is charismatic. One technique which reinforces Richard's charismatic leadership is irony. Richard III deploys irony to gain the audience's complicity.

In the third chapter, the focus is on the character of Cleopatra. The question raised in the chapter concerns the relationship between charisma and the struggle for

an oriental feminine identity. Cleopatra's sexual politics is also at the heart of my study because it is revisited and resignified by Shakespeare in a way that highlights Cleopatra's charismatic qualities.

Key words: charisma, rhetoric, moral agency, resignification, William
Shakespeare

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for my mother and my father

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Introduction:

Charisma: A Critical Overview

As much as the concept of charisma is opaque, it merits further scrutiny. In *Oxford English Dictionary*, the definition of charisma is very brief and exclusively linked to theology in its first meaning. It focuses on prophets and spiritual leaders who inspire their disciples with devotion. In its second and last meaning, the definition is drawn from Max Weber's *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, where the concept of charisma is tightly linked to leadership with a special focus on devotion and is part of a general reflection on the types of legitimate authority. According to Weber, there are three "pure types of legitimate authority" (328). The first type is called "legal authority" and is based on "rational grounds" whereby the people accept to abide by the rules and the norms set to organize social life of the whole group or society. The second type of legitimate authority is called "traditional authority" which glorifies traditions and maintains them as the source from which to derive power. The third and last type of legitimate authority is called "charismatic authority" which inspires the people or the group of followers with devotion due to the leader's exceptional qualities. Charismatic authority is quite different from both legal and traditional authorities because it is quintessentially revolutionary. It is prone to routine and does not accord much attention to the pettiest details of everyday life. Moreover, it repudiates the past in all its aspects and tends to ascend the immediate circumstances.

The concept of charisma, however, remains unclear for some critics—mainly Edward Shils, Irvine Schiffer, and Arthur Schweitzer. While Shils tries to redefine

charisma and to introduce awe as a novel tool to inspire society instead of devotion, Schweitzer exhaustively listed the possible varieties of charisma in modern times. Schiffer tries to focus on the psychoanalytic aspect of charisma in modern mass society. Albeit focused on modern mass society, this criticism of Weber in particular and revision of charisma in general will be helpful to enlarge the scope of study of charisma in relation to Shakespeare's characters. Though all of these writers admit that charisma is relevant not only in politics but also in arts and science, their major focus remains on modern political figures that influenced the world during the 20th century. None of them has dealt with the representation of charismatic political figures in works of art, notably on the stage.

While Shils and Schweitzer try to redefine the concept of charisma, other critics, such as Rustow, focus on the techniques of charismatic authority to attract the people or the group of followers. However, the three of them reproach Weber for having not provided a clear-cut statement of the nature of charisma. Is it a trait or a perception, or a combination of both? Dankwart asks throughout his essay. Schweitzer is looking for "the specific factual referents" that allow the followers to discern, in a tangible way, the charismatic qualities in a leader (*The Age of Charisma*, 31). Shils provides a revisionist post-Weberian definition of charisma. He labels it as "awe-arousing centrality" in an attempt to demystify Weber's unsatisfying definition. It is clear that the three critics attempt to look for a tangible fact to explain in quasi-scientific way this term. To further demystify charisma, but at the same time to

render it visible, Rustow focuses on the tools and techniques which might be used to qualify a leader as charismatic. He argues that “communication becomes the leader’s chief resource” (“The Study of Leadership”, 24). In addition to communication, Rustow postulates that dualities in the leader’s attitudes such as ‘detachment and involvement’ and ‘innovation and perception of ongoing change’ offer a flexibility in the leader’s dealing with versatile issues and provide a large scale of appreciation on the part of the followers.

The focus in the thesis will be precisely on the techniques the charismatic characters under study deploy to gain their fellows’ and the audience’s fascination. Cicero’s three duties of an orator—to prove, to please, and to sway—apply perfectly well to Henry V, Cleoptra, and Richard III respectively. To persuade the English people that the war he wages against France is righteous, Henry V has to prove this on the front by keeping unmediated contact with the soldiers. Cleopatra’s duty to please arises from her struggle to weaken the Romans’ attempt to suppress her love. Richard III sways through his ironies to seize power and to gain the audience’s fascination. The three characters deploy different techniques of charismatic leadership but the aim is common: the search for love and recognition.

It is true that the term “charisma” is not found in any of Shakespeare’s works. However, the concept was not unknown for him. In the plays under study, there are some terms which are reiterated throughout and might substitute charisma. Among these terms I mention especially “charm” which is used by the Chorus in the prologue

to Act 2 of *Henry V* (2. 0) and is more generously reiterated throughout *Antony and Cleopatra*. In *Richard III*, however, there is no specific term that might substitute charisma, but the meaning is still present in Richard's seduction of Lady Anne and the audience. The seducer, the manipulator, and the dissembler are but variations of Richard's ambivalently charismatic character. Charisma, I argue, stems from the character's willingness to be distinguished on the stage. Moreover, the character has to acquire the techniques of influence to warrant the audience's continuous attention, sympathy, and, ultimately, love. I chose *Henry V*, *Richard III*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* for several reasons. First, I tried to study different plays: a history play, a tragedy, and a Roman play. Then, I looked for female leaders as well as male ones to see how sexual identity is particularly questioned when the leader is a woman. Furthermore, the three characters under study are public figures, which raises the question of publicity: i. e. the relationship between the theater as a public space and the political scene, on the one hand, and the relationship between what is supposed to be private for a leader and what can be public, on the other hand.

As a public space, the theater differs from the political scene in terms of the perception of the leader. In the playhouse, the audience is faced with a poetic representation of a leader and has access to their frailty, wrath, and even villainy. In politics, the leader's diverse psychological outbursts are rationalized while they are highlighted on the stage. Henry V, Richard III, and Cleopatra are representations of Shakespeare's poetic and theatrical perception of charismatic leadership. Their

charismata, though different in each play, stem mainly from Shakespeare's poetic perception of their characters and from their own performance on the stage. In this thesis, the focus will be on the varieties, the mechanisms, and the ethical and aesthetic validity of charisma with regard to Henry V, Richard III, and Cleopatra.

In the first chapter, I will try to examine Henry V's speeches which reveal his ability to persuade his followers to continue the war on the front. The rhetorical and the pragmatic values of these speeches highlight King Harry's polyvalent leadership. Not only is he a political and a military leader, he is also a spiritual guide. Henry V's charisma is mainly revealed in his saintly qualities. The hard time of war makes Henry V at the center of events in England. The English people seems to forget or rather to forgive his recklessness in the past. This centrality is strongly stressed by the Chorus in the very opening of the play. In praise of imagination, the Chorus starts the Prologue with a lexical field of ascendancy, which sets Harry as a unique and central figure apart:

Then should the warlike Harry, like himself,
Assume the port of Mars, and at his heels,
Leashed in like hounds, should famine, sword, and fire
Crouch for employment. (Prologue, 5-8)

Perception of Henry V as a charismatic leader is set from the very beginning of the play. After the Chorus, it is now the Archbishop of Canterbury who enumerates Harry's versatile qualities in eloquence and pragmatic reasoning (1. 1. 39-60).

Recognition of the leader's qualities, which is an essential element to validate the legitimacy of his charisma, is stressed. The special conjuncture of war against France,

on the one hand, and expectation of a Scottish threat, on the other hand, generates an atmosphere of pressure intermingled with enthusiasm and latent fear. It is this general malaise which allows for a harmonious proximity between the king and the people. Henry V's successful leadership stems from a shared need between him and his followers to accomplish an ideal by getting rid of the rebels and seizing the throne in France. In an essay entitled "The Study of Leadership," Dankwart Rustow argues that "successful leadership...rests on a latent congruence between the psychic needs of the leader and the social needs of the followers" (*ibid*, 23). Henry V has indeed psychic needs which must be satisfied by waging war on France. The apparent reason urging the king to claim the French throne is his proclaimed legitimacy by lineage proved by the Archbishop of Cambridge and the Bishop of Ely in an attempt to suspend a bill depriving the Church of England of its authority and wealth. However, the French prince's provocative package of tennis balls—meant to insult Henry V—instigates action and makes war not only more urgent than ever but also much more justified. Thus, the king's war on France is not only a lineal claim to a throne but also a psychological need to avenge his own integrity. At this point, the leader's psychological need to take revenge on the insulting French prince, the Clergy's need to keep power and financial authority for the Church of England, and the English people's need for order and reassurance from a Scottish threat meet to contribute to Henry V's successful leadership which will be revealed on the front. As a military leader, King Harry proves closer to the soldiers on the breach.

This unmediated relationship between the leader and his followers is another feature of charismatic leadership. “The charismatic leader,” Rustow postulates, “makes a direct personal appeal to large numbers of followers. The non-charismatic leader shifts part of his burden to his lieutenants and associates” (*ibid*, 8). Henry V’s multiple speeches, his rambling disguised amongst the soldiers on the camp (4. 1), and his punishment of the traitors—Grey, Scrope, and Cambridge—publicly (2. 2.) reveal his mastery of the techniques of charismatic leadership, notably communication. His ability to persuade his followers and to negotiate with his enemies draws him closer to the people’s hearts to the point that he becomes a spiritual guide. The recurrent reference to St George as the protector of the soldiers, King Harry’s prayer on the front (3. 4), the symbolic victory on the day of Crispin Crispian (4. 7), and the self-denying dedication of that victory to God (5. 0) are all facets of Henry V’s inspiring charismatic authority which derives its validity from higher spiritual powers and from the disciples’ recognition and faithfulness.

The second chapter tries to raise the following questions: Is a leader with charisma always and necessarily an ethical person? Does charisma always entail good behavior? and Can a villain be charismatic? In *Richard III*, it seems hard to study the techniques of charismatic authority without dealing with moral agency because authority itself is seized via murderous plots, which are free of any ethical consideration. However, what is considered as usurpation of power for the majority of the characters in the play, it is considered as a justified search for social and

political recognition for Richard III. In this case, any attempt to pin the concept of charisma in a determinate definition seems futile because it risks falling into judgement. However, charisma can be approached with regard to the different techniques the leader deploys to gain the people's or the audience's trust to carry out his actions. In the play, Shakespeare presents the audience with a character embodying Richard III that is closer to a monster than to a human being: a crooked body plotting to murder any person who stands in his way to the throne. Shakespeare excelled in making the portrait of Richard III as physically and morally imperfect as possible to meet theatrical needs for catharsis. Richard III is perfect in his imperfection. In *Charisma: A Psychoanalytic Look at Mass Society*, Irvine Schiffer studies the political life of a number of twentieth-century charismatic leaders from a psychoanalytic vantage. As much as this study involves leaders of modern democracies, it also sheds light on dictators who marked the twentieth century, paradoxically, by their brutality. Their charisma is called "charisma of imperfection" where "a candidate blessed with some more minor blemish or stigma...carries an extra dimension in vital imagery, one capable of capturing a people's imagination" (29-30). In the play, Richard III is haunted by a stigma—his physical deformity—which generates horror and repulsion among his fellow characters, even his mother. This general expression of disgust makes him a central figure whose shape attracts attention. Moreover, Schiffer argues that "a leader with charisma is of necessity perceived as someone, not only to a degree foreign, but to a degree *subtly* defective"

(29). Richard's defectiveness is what constitutes his charisma. He manages to move from the margin to occupy the center of power and affection. Being the cause of his social and political marginalization, his deformed body instigates him to usurp power and to capture Lady Anne's love. Throughout the play, he manages to draw his fellow characters' attention to him. Shakespeare equipped him with tools to maintain his charisma. He is given a theatrical advantage to justify his murderous plots from the very beginning of the play in the form of a soliloquy that sets a confidential link based on trust and complicity between him and the audience. Another tool that grants Richard's centrality in comparison with the rest of the characters is irony. Permeating his speeches, irony serves as a tool to ridicule the characters facing him on the stage and, by the same token, to draw more attention to him. He shows an unmatched mastery of language, which makes of him a "charismatic demagogue" in Arthur Schweitzer's terms. In *The Age of Charisma*, he states that the charismatic demagogue "is constantly in danger of becoming an actor by playing upon the emotions of his listeners" (36). Richard III, however, surmounts that 'danger' and deploys his talent and energy to play with words and to manipulate his fellow characters' emotions and destiny.

In the third chapter, I will try to study the character of Cleopatra as a charismatic oriental female leader whose sexual identity is subjectivated and, then, resignified through poetic language. Cleopatra's resistance against the Roman injurious interpellations forms the landmark of her ultimate emancipation from the

Roman chain of signification. For this purpose, I will rely on Judith Butler's theory of subjection, resistance, and resignification to trace Cleopatra's emancipatory process. Moreover, the theory of publicity proves relevant because it will be helpful to highlight the public-private tension in the play. The demarcating line between what is private and what is public in Egypt is utterly blurred, which instigates the Romans' furious anger. This blur, I argue, is a deliberate challenge of the Roman attempt to impose order on the Egyptian sphere. This perseverant resistance is one of Cleopatra's charismatic qualities. Her charisma takes the form of emancipation from the Roman generals' injurious interpellation which pins her identity as a woman and as a leader to that of a 'strumpet'. Her love affair with Mark Antony creates a breach within the Roman clan. The latter's reaction oscillates between fascination, expressed mainly by Enobarbus, and outrageous criticism by Octavius Caesar. This breach is deployed as a foil to weaken the effect of the injurious interpellations and to further highlight Cleopatra's charismatic presence in the play. The barge scene (2. 2) is an instance of resignification where Cleopatra's identity is reconciled again with that of a leader and that of an oriental beauty. In this scene, Antony is deliberately marginalised on the sidelines of Cleopatra's public parade. The contrast between the Roman and the Egyptian public spheres—one characterised by order; the other characterised by disorder, chaotic temporality, and the blur between what is supposed to be private and what is public—constitutes one of Cleopatra's charismatically revolutionary features which generates Octavius Caesar's outrage.

The rituals in the play are another instance of Cleopatra's charismatic aura. In addition to the public parade, where Cleopatra's pomp enchants the attendees, the death scene turns into a performance of a sacred ritual. In the death scene (5. 2), Cleopatra cares about some details, such as the robe and the crown, which are of crucial importance for her to perform the death ritual. In "Charisma, Order, and Status," Edward Shils argues that "[t]he ritual surrounding the highest office, even in republics, the awe before the palace where the ruler sits...testify to the ways in which high 'secular' authority draws to itself from those who exercise it and from those who are its objects, the disposition to attribute charisma" (205). It is the aura of the rituals which adds to the leader's charismatic presence in the public sphere. Cleopatra's opting for death instead of surrender to the Roman rule generates awe within the Romans themselves. Caesar in particular pays her tribute—as a queen and as a lover—and commands to spare her body a burial proper for a Roman soldier, which announces her ultimate triumph.

Edward Shils proposes awe as a substitute for Weber's devotion as a "charismatic disposition" (*ibid*, 203). Awe, as a mixed feeling of wonder and reverence, stems not only from the rituals held around the charismatic leader but also from the latter's ability to impose and maintain order. The mutual need for order constitutes, according to Shils, the quintessential basis for a congruous relationship between a group of individuals and a charismatic leader reverently recognized as such. He writes: "The solution lies in the construction or discovery of order. The need

for order and the fascination of disorder persist, and the charismatic propensity is a function of the need for order” (*ibid*, 203). In the three plays under study, “the need for order and the fascination of disorder” interweave and ultimately produce a fascinating state of infinite glory. In *Henry V*, war and hardship reign throughout, but at the end it is the victory scene which shows King Harry at his best. Richard III’s revolt to usurp power is in itself an attempt to impose a new, though short-lived, order and to maintain it. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, the question of order is at the heart of the discord between the Roman and the Egyptian conceptions of public sphere. The rule of disorder in the Egyptian public sphere is a response to the Roman excessive worship of order.

Chapter One:

The Mechanisms of Charisma: Rhetoric and Performance in

Henry V

According to *OED*, charisma has only two meanings. The first meaning is derived from theology whereby charisma is defined as “a free gift or favour specially vouchsafed by God; a grace, a talent”. It is linked to theology because its contingent appearance depends on what is ungraspable and higher than worldly considerations such as economy or *realpolitik*. The second meaning is mainly based on Max Weber’s definition of charisma in *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. He defines it as “a term...applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional power or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader”(358-9). Charisma, thus, is strictly linked to leadership because it has to do with influence cast upon a group of people—be it a band of followers or an audience. The origin of this influence may be a gift of grace from Heaven or a talent fostered via strategies and techniques such as rhetoric and stage performance. In this chapter, I will examine the charismatic influence of King Henry V upon his followers, on the one hand, and on the audience or the theatergoers, on the other hand. To persuade and, ultimately, to make his followers believe his speeches, Henry V relies on rhetoric as a strategy of influence. As a character on the stage, and in order to gain the audience’s sympathy, he has to undertake a convincingly moving performance. Thus, the statesman’s speeches need to be coupled with the player’s equally persuading

performance. To inspire devotion and enthusiasm, which is the essential feature of charisma that Max Weber discussed in *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, the leader takes hold of two control apparatuses—the army and religion—in addition to the obvious political one. Henry V's charismatic character, thus, will be studied in three different, though interrelated, realms: the military, the spiritual, and the political realm in order to show the different mechanisms of influence on the fellow characters and the audience.

Since action in the play takes place outside the ordinary realm of the court and, more specifically, in moments of hardship on the front, charisma seems to be crucial. Max Weber postulates that charisma is “a typical anti-economic force” (362). It occurs outside the realm of the ordinary court where there is neither hierarchy, nor appointment, nor advancement. King Henry V's charisma, thus, is derived from his enthusiastic commitment to war and his disdain of pomp which are manifested through two mechanisms of influence: rhetoric and stage performance.

In his work on rhetoric, Aristotle defines it as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (*The Complete Works*, 2155). Persuasion, in this respect, implies that rhetoric is a mode of communication that requires an addresser to move, delight, and persuade and an addressee to be moved, delighted, and persuaded. Rhetoric and poetry—in the generally modern sense of literature—share the same objectives: to move, delight, and persuade. Renaissance literature, in this respect, remained faithful to the ancient views of literature and

rhetoric as intertwining arts. Among these ancient views which advocated the congruity of the two arts is Cicero's "affective triad" whereby the orator's as well as the writer's aims are the same: to teach (*docere*), to delight (*delectare*), and to move (*movere*). Commenting on Cicero's "affective triad," Brian Vickers, in *English Renaissance Literary Criticism*, postulates that the modern attempt to conceive of rhetoric and early modern literary works as incompatible, far-fetched forms of art has proven to be a failure to understand or willingness to do away with classical notions such as imitation, moving and delighting an audience, and choice of the appropriate language. He carries on his argument and writes:

In the Renaissance, as in other periods, works of art were never seen as autotelic, self-ending, having no intention of working or changing the readers' perception of reality or history. For both writer and reader literature was a mode of communication using persuasion and proof, addressed to the intellect and to the emotions, existing as a force for good or evil. (10)

Thus, Shakespeare's use of rhetoric in *Henry V* is not an exercise in proof and persuasion that some logicians or philosophers do. It is rather at the core of the artistic creation of a poetics of speech composition in drama, which involves the choice of both the appropriate language for poetry and the suitable plot for action. This poetics of speech composition takes into consideration not only the available means of poetic ornament but also the strategies of moving the audience's emotions and appealing to their intellect. Among the Renaissance writers who stressed the importance of poetry as an effective means of persuasion is Sir Philip Sidney. In *The Defence of Poesie*, Sidney argues that "he [the poet] giveth a perfect picture...so as he

coupleth the general notion with the particular example. A perfect picture I say, for he yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul so much as that other doth" (351). For Sidney, the supremacy of the poet arises from the quality of 'feigning', which the orator lacks. It is the poet's power of imagination that casts an influence on the reader/audience. This intertwining of poetry and rhetoric is manifested in Henry V's speeches, most of which are in verse and contain a series of arguments aiming at persuading not only the fellow characters but also the audience.

As a military leader, Henry V breaks with the tradition which usually sets the king at the back, mainly within the court, and another person than the king is selected as a leader of the royal army. Hardly do we find in history a king who leads the army and experiences horror and hardship on the front. The speeches he delivers on the front are highly rhetorical because they aim to instruct the soldiers and to persuade them to continue fighting an apparently lost war. His "once-more-unto-the-breach" famous speech (3. 1. 1-37) reveals not only his charismatic military leadership but also the influence of his oratorical talent. In this speech, notions of class and hierarchy are undermined through the rhetoric of compassion and unity against the French enemy. Starting from the first line, King Henry V addresses his soldiers as "dear friends". Later in the speech, he calls them "noble English" (17) and "yeomen" (25). The discrepancy between a dear friend of the king's, a noble man, and a yeoman is quite conspicuous

in such a class-conscious society as feudal England but Henry V makes these interpellations almost interchangeable in the speech. The rhetoric of endearment and equality during war time makes the soldiers not only fight fiercely but also believe that they are all equal. Moreover, it seems to be logical in a context outside the ordinary realm of the court—the locus of hierarchy and rigorous formality. Using the rhetoric of endearment and equality is but a strategy to put the soldiers in a certain frame of mind that urges them to act accordingly. This constitutes the second mode of persuasion which Aristotle developed in his work on rhetoric. It is about “putting the audience in a certain frame of mind” (*The Complete Works*, 2155). As an orator, Henry V puts the soldiers in an atmosphere where everyone is equal. Though this general mood creates the illusion of a rankless army, it helps generate enthusiasm among soldiers to fight as though they were all knights of noble breeding. In line 27 of the speech, Henry V uses the clause “which I doubt not” as an injunction, which makes it a highly ironic undertone of what precedes and follows it. Though it is an assertive clause, it makes the reader wonder whether the king really means what he says. By asserting that all the soldiers are of legitimate breeding and that no one of them is “so mean and base,” King Henry carries on his speech as if he knew every single soldier, which is not probable. To keep the soldiers in the same frame of mind, he reminds them once again in line five that they are in a context of war which requires fierce nature and harsh conduct. The speech is fraught with tropes and characterized by a reiterative pattern manifested mainly in the successive series of

commands that the leader sets for his soldiers to enact (“imitate”, “stiffen”, “conjure up”, “disguise”, “lend”, “set”, “stretch”, “hold”, “bend up”, “attest”, “be copy”, “teach”, “show”, “follow”, and “cry”). Anaphora is deployed through the reiteration of “then” (lines 6 and 9), “now” (lines 15, 22, and 24), and “let” (lines 10, 11, and 27), which represent the axes of the speech in the sense that they frame or guide the soldiers’ actions. These commands are actions in themselves since the soldiers are in the battlefield in Harfleur. As Andrew Gurr points out in a footnote in the Cambridge edition of *Henry V*: “It should be noted that this army is in retreat. Henry exhorts them to return to the assault” (125). In this respect, Austin’s notion of “performativity” is worth revisiting. In *How to Do Things with Words*, J. L. Austin introduces “the descriptive fallacy” arguing that language use is not only “constative”, where utterances are assessed in terms of liability, but also “performative” whereby the statements are actions being or to be shortly performed. Once uttered, these statements become part of a situation where action is required or is taking place. The performative utterances, thus, are speech-acts where saying is tightly linked to doing; or rather, saying is doing. Henry V’s commands, thus, are actions in themselves because they have an “illocutionary force”—statements being uttered by the king and performed by the soldiers—and acquire a short-lived validity during that limited span of the performance. The “illocutionary force” of Henry V’s commands is derived not only from their very nature as speech acts but also from his charismatic influence as a military leader. The speech has a special impact on the soldiers because it touches

upon complex issues such as honor (lines 22, 23, and 28-30). King Henry deliberately invokes the issue of honor because he knows that it will be an instigator for action and cause the soldiers to return to the battlefield.

Henry V gives a sacred dimension to the war he wages against France. On the front, he is not only a military leader but also a spiritual one. Since the beginning of the play, we have seen him surrounded by men of the Church. The war cannot even break out unless the Bishops of Canterbury and Ely consent to its legitimacy. It is as though the war were legitimized by God since it has been agreed upon by His 'representatives' on Earth. In addition to being equals, the "band of brothers" consists also of a spiritual leader and his disciples who fight together for God's sake. The rhetoric of compassion permeates the whole play. King Henry addresses his soldiers as "dear friends" (3. 1. 1), as "dear countrymen" (2. 2. 184), and as "band of brothers" (4. 3. 60). Warfare is usually based on mere facts related mainly to awareness of the capacities of the local force and the comparison between it and the enemy's force. It relies also on cunning strategies of assault and defense. This does not seem to exist in *Henry V*. The king is quite aware that the forces he is leading are getting weaker and weaker but he, nevertheless, continues urging them to fight fiercely. Moreover, there is no concrete strategy being enacted but prayer and reliance on God's almighty instead (4. 1. 263-79). In the play, Henry V's army seems to be fighting against Fate rather than against France. The king's preaching to endure

pain and adversity makes one think for a while that he and his followers form a congregation of hermits instead of a military leader and soldiers. According to him,

'Tis good for men to love their present pains.
 Upon example so the spirit is eased,
 And when the mind is quickened, out of doubt
 The organs, though defunct and dead before,
 Break up their drowsy grave and newly move
 With casted slough and fresh legerity. (4. 1. 18-23)

There is a clear emphasis on the opposition between body and spirit but, at the same time, the complicity between both of them. His speech takes a proverbial dimension since it draws on the general and orthodox dichotomy of body/spirit. However, Henry V opts for the spiritual at the expense of the physical; or, at least, when the physical ceases to be functional in war time. For a distracted and a completely worn out army, spiritual preaching remains the only solution to prevent any revolutionary reaction and to re-inspire enthusiasm. Using an expression like “drowsy grave” (22) at the end of the speech has a terrifying impact upon the soldiers. It is a double-edged phrase since it does not only mean fatigue and weariness but also death, the ultimate end of a weak and indefensible army. Alarming an army that death is looming ahead urges them to fight for life.

King Henry V's military and spiritual leadership are two instances of what Max Weber calls “pure charisma”. According to him, “pure charisma is specifically foreign to economic considerations. Whenever it appears, it constitutes a ‘call’ in the most emphatic sense of the word, a ‘mission’ or a ‘spiritual duty. In the pure type, it disdains and repudiates economic exploitation of the gifts of grace as a source of

income" (362). Henry's charismatic authority may be considered as pure because it occurs outside the realm of the court where he usually enjoys the regal prerogatives. Pure charisma "disdains and repudiates economic exploitation of the gifts of grace" and thus Henry V disdains pomp and superficial manifestation of worldly luxury. The Chorus's comment is quite revealing:

Even in moments of national victory,
 You may imagine him upon Blackheath,
 Where that his lords desire him to have borne
 His bruised helmet and his bended sword
 Before him through the city. He forbids it,
 Being free from vainness and self-glorious pride,
 Giving full trophy, signal and ostent
 Quite from himself to God. (5. 0. 16-22)

King Henry V's modesty and reluctance to embrace outward pomp is not a figment of Shakespeare's imagination. Even Holinshed reported the king's prohibition of any superfluous feasting of England's victory over France. He is rather reported to have performed holy rites instead (Gurr 198, n. 19). In a long soliloquy (4. 1. 203-57) he places himself outside of royal ceremony. He brings to the surface philosophical questions such as what is private and what is public? For him, being a public figure, the king is deprived of what private people enjoy—"infinite heart's ease" (209). Similarly, private people are deprived of what public figures enjoy—"ceremony" (212). However, King Henry V envies the privates for what they enjoy: sleep, health, and a mind at ease; in short, psychological stability which neither fame nor wealth can match or be substituted with. It is true that a soliloquy is meant to be a character's private meditation which the fellow characters cannot have access to;

however, by the fact that it is delivered in a playhouse, it becomes subject to public meditation since the audience, through their presence, become involved in a public meditation on a given issue. The importance of rhetoric in the public sphere like the playhouse is that it paves the way for the playwright to raise and question issues through the voice of his characters and to share such inquiries with the audience. It also urges the audience to think about and, ultimately, debate such issues as privacy and publicity. In this respect theatergoing becomes a form of public making where political, ethical, and social issues are negotiated through the intertwining of rhetoric and poetry. This public sphere—the playhouse—becomes a parallel form of public making that equals the political sphere. Michael Bristol goes further and claims that “because of its capacity to create and sustain a briefly intensified social life, the theater is festive and political as well as literary” (*Carnival and Theater*, 3). He postulates that the late Elizabethan and Jacobean theater had not only a delighting purpose but also a strong political agency that was subversive and even threatening to the political sphere of that time. In this respect, *Henry V*, where rhetoric is coupled with poetic imagination, acquires a social agency through its direct confrontation with the audience.

As a political leader, Henry V is more attentive and prudent. This is revealed through his two deceitful speeches (2. 2. 20-24) and (2. 2. 51-9), the Chorus’s comment at the beginning of act 4 (4. 0.28-47), and his ironic play with words (4. 1. 86-118). King Henry V delivers the two deceitful speeches in an attempt to unveil

Scroop's, Cambridge's, and Gray's complicity with the French against England. To reveal their treason, he ironically and repeatedly uses expressions of endearment such as "your too much love and care for me" (2. 2. 51) and "Cambridge, Scroop, and Gray, in their dear care/ And tender preservation of our person" (2. 2. 57-8). Henry V's "cheerful semblance and sweet majesty" (4. 0. 40) is but a means to raise the weary soldiers' spirits. Not only does Henry V's prudence cause controversy among his fellow characters, especially the French leaders, but it has also caused debate among critics. In the play, the recognition of Henry as a charismatic vigilant leader is not subject to total consensus among the French leaders. While Dauphin, the French prince, sees in Henry only the image of the "vain, giddy, shallow, humorous youth" (2. 4. 28), Constable, the General of the French army, is aware of the changes that Henry has undergone since his coronation as a king. He warns Dauphin against his misunderstanding saying:

Oh peace, Prince Dauphin,
 You are too much mistaken in this king.
 Question your grace, the late ambassadors,
 With that great state he heard their embassy,
 How well supplied with noble counselors,
 How modest in exception, and withal
 How terrible in constant resolution,
 And you shall find his vanities, forespent,
 Were but the outside of the Roman Brutus,
 Covering discretion with a coat of folly,
 As gardeners do with ordure hide those roots
 That shall first spring and be most delicate. (2. 4. 29-40)

Constable's speech is a praise of King Henry's leadership more than a correction of Prince Dauphin's misunderstanding. It is an implied recognition of Henry's charismatic

leadership through the anaphoric use of the exclamatory sentences initiated with “how,” and the deployment of the metaphor of greatness and exception throughout the speech: “great state,” “well supplied,” “noble,” “modest in exception,” “terrible in constant resolution,” and “most delicate”. The discrepancy between the two French views paves the way for a critical controversy that shaped Shakespearean criticism in the twentieth century. With the rise of new historicism, the orthodox views of English history plays as ideologically conforming forms of representation has proven to be a critical misunderstanding of the latent subversive force that governs these plays. Among these orthodox views is Christopher Pye’s understanding of *Henry V* as “an epic constrained by the stage, a play whose proper place is the stage; a celebration of the ideal monarch, the embodiment of Machiavellian *realpolitik*; a representation without ambivalence, whose significations are determinately “one-eyed,” a play whose ambiguities are irreducible” (*The Regal Phantasm*, 13). On the opposite edge of the spectrum comes Stephen Greenblatt’s ‘subversive’ view of the play. In an article entitled “Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and its Subversion, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*,” Greenblatt states that: “We are constantly reminded that Hal is a ‘jugler,’ a conniving hypocrite, and that the power he both serves and comes to embody is glorified usurpation and theft; yet at the same time, we are drawn to the celebration of both the prince and his power” (444). The discrepancy between Pye’s and Greenblatt’s views is huge. The first vantage point blindly glorifies the play and the political power it presents whereas the second point of view totally undermines

that glory with a 'bitter' recognition of the charismatic influence it casts upon the readers/audience. Pye's comment on *Henry V* does not take into consideration the past of the protagonist while Greenblatt's argument 'harps' on that reckless youth. The controversy among the characters as well as between the critics is but an implied recognition of the mysteriously puzzling character of King Henry V. That mystery is charismatic because it attracts the others' attention and arouses controversy among them. If a character gains total consensus among the fellow characters and among critics, he/she goes unnoticed because there is nothing exceptional that might be subject of debate, wonder, or criticism. In *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, Max Weber stresses the crucial character of charisma and states that "it is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma" (359). Charisma is also about exception and, in this respect, King Henry V is an exception in Shakespeare's plays because of that development and almost fairy change his character undergoes from *1 Henry IV* up to *Henry V*. It is that willingness to change for the best that paves the way for a charismatic leader to inspire not only his disciples but also the early modern audience.

Chapter Two:

The Boar¹ is Wooing the Audience: Richard III's Charisma of Imperfection and its Moral Agency

¹ The boar refers to Richard III's heraldic symbol.

Advocating the idea that Richard III is a charismatic character requires an in-depth inquiry into the politics of influence, the audience's reception of Richard's charisma², and the moral agency of charisma. Richard's charisma stems from his ability not only to manipulate his fellow characters but also to move the audience to admiration and sympathy paradoxically by his persistence in killing. Albeit charismatic, this influence is to be ethically assessed because it is a result of Richard's determinacy to be a villain, his persistence in killing any rival to the throne, and his ultimate consistency in accomplishing a cycle of murderous plots willingly set and wittily performed. In the play, there are key scenes, such as the wooing scene (1, 2), the coronation scene (4, 2), and the dream scene (5, 3), where Richard III deploys linguistic techniques of influence fluctuating between the soft register in the first, the religiously tinged register in the second, and the guilt-ridden, though short-lived, register in the third key scene. The centrality of Richard III—as a lonely character against almost all his fellow characters—presupposes the existence of more than one audience. In addition to the theatergoers, Richard's fellow characters act as an audience at some point in the play: for instance, the three citizens in Act 2, Scene 3 and the female triads in different acts and scenes such as (2, 2), (4, 1), and (4, 4). The

² In this chapter, the focus will be on Richard III the character not the historical figure. Shakespeare's characterization of Richard III does not totally conform to the historical depictions of the real Richard III. It exceeds mere mimetic reproduction and faces the audience with a deformed monster endowed with legendary evil.

audiences' responses to Richard's character vary between fear, utter loathing, and sympathy intermingled with cautious admiration³.

Richard III is an influential protagonist who is morally judged as an evil manipulator, tempter, and seducer. These qualifiers—manipulator, tempter, and seducer—are influence terms with which not all characters are endowed. They require special competences in rhetoric and performance. In this respect, Richard III is well equipped with these properties which help orient power relations with his fellow characters, on the one hand, and with the audience, on the other hand.

Among the techniques frequently used by Richard to convince his fellow characters and, ultimately, the audience is irony. It permeates the whole play as Richard eloquently puts it: "I moralise two meanings in one word" (3.1.83). It is this paradox which creates not only the unity of the play but also an affective complicity between Richard III and the vigilant audience against the rest of characters. "This overall system of paradox," A. P. Rossiter writes, "is the play's unity. It is revealed as a constant displaying of inversions, or reversals of meaning: whether we consider the verbal patterns (the peripeteias or reversals of act and intention or expectation); the antithesis of false and true in the historionic character; or the constant inversions of irony" (*Critical Essays*, 143). Richard's irony appears not only in his asides; his statements are so fraught with understatements that the audience fails to recognize whether he is true to the other character(s) or true to it. The wooing scene, for

³ By "cautious admiration," I mean the audience's fascination with Richard's theatrical performance, which is coupled, nonetheless, with moral awareness of his evil actions.

instance, is very telling because Richard's standpoint is not clear because the audience does not know whether he is truly in love with Lady Anne or not. In the opening soliloquy, he conspicuously states that because he "cannot prove a lover" (1, 1, 28), he is "determined to prove a villain" (1, 1, 30). Thus, his determinacy to lead a demonic life is rather a journey in search of love and recognition caused mainly by lack of an "appropriate" body to be loved, "[n]or made to court an amorous looking-glass...rudely shaped and want love's majesty / To strut before a wanton ambling nymph" (1. 1. 15-17). In the Henry plays, Richard III was "unseen" physically, socially, and politically, and thus neglected. His presence in the public sphere was not fully noticed or even recognized. In the last scene of *3 Henry VI*, which logically precedes *Richard III*, Richard, then Duke of Gloucester, explicitly puts it: "For yet I am not look'd on in the world" (5, 7, 22) in an attempt to introduce his plots at the very beginning of *Richard III*. Albeit murderous, these plots are Richard's ultimate refuge to gain recognition independently of their moral bearing. Therefore, wooing Lady Anne may be seen in different ways. Reading it as a search for love is as valid as reading it as a stratagem to deceive Lady Anne. In the opening soliloquy, "want[ing] love's majesty" (1. 1. 16) is one of the strong reasons that push Richard III to look for love even through dissembling. This indeterminacy arouses curiosity within the audience and sometimes results into attraction to and fascination with the mystery of the character of Richard. The audience is quite aware that Richard's sarcastic attitude toward the other characters is but a witty relish of evil and an expression of superiority. However,

when the audience is cleverly invited by Richard III to be an accomplice in his ironic twists, it enjoys that complicity even though it is morally conscious of its evil nature for the simple reason that it is inciting to see an ironist—though murderer—making fun of one’s future victims. It is Richard’s excellence in addressing the audience’s intelligence which explains, in a way, his charismatic appeal independently of its moral bearing because the audience is no longer a third party attending a conflict between Richard III and his allies on one side, and the other characters on the other side. Its inability to respond to Richard’s villainy—contrary to the citizens and the female triads—makes it involved in his conspiracies through his soliloquies, asides, and witty irony because only then it gains a silent access to Richard’s mind while the other characters, though present, are being fooled, laughed at, and plotted against. Richard’s play on words, meanings, intentions, and feelings is an alluring game which charms the audience’s instinctive longing for recognition. His charisma springs from a mutual need for recognition shared with the audience. It is his ability to get the audience actively involved in the play—and within the playhouse which is usually and exclusively the realm of the actor—which generates a kind of tribute to his democratic stance toward the audience in spite of his overwhelming arrogance and tyranny toward the rest of characters. Thus, *Richard III* is, as Michael Bristol put it, one of Shakespeare’s plays that “make us care about such decision-making in a way that engages our own concern” (*Shakespeare and Moral Agency*, 5). The audience is

as morally concerned with Richard's deeds as he is in fact. It is involved in a process of ethical assessment because it forms a quintessential part of the performance.

In saying: "Thus, like the formal Vice, Iniquity, / I moralize two meanings in one word" (III, 1, 82-83), Richard III reveals in a witty but compact way his capacity to manipulate language and, thus, to move the audience. Though poetically beautiful and rhetorically persuasive, his ironic twists are a vehicle to implement his homicidal plots. Introducing *Shakespeare and Moral Agency*, Michael Bristol argues, "Raising questions about moral agency, fictional or otherwise, clearly presupposes the existence of a self. Otherwise the notion of the agent becomes unintelligible" (3). In the play, it is clear that the character of Richard III incarnates an "unfashioned" self that is working hard, through plots, to be fashioned, to be filled with affections, to be given social and psychological dimensions, and to be politically recognized. In the first soliloquy, the title character claims that he is "unfashionable" (1. 1. 22). Such a claim, according to Richard III's reasoning, legitimizes in a way his search for affective, social, and political recognition. However, setting plots to gain such recognition is ethically discredited because it exerts its power at the expense of the other characters' lives and integrity. In the first chapter of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, Stephen Greenblatt studies "More's Self-Fashioning and Self-Cancellation": his own way in fashioning his *History of Richard III*. Greenblatt writes: "But why should men submit to fantasies that will not nourish or sustain them? In part, More's answer is *power*, whose quintessential sign is the ability to impose one's

fictions upon the world: the more outrageous the fiction, the more impressive the manifestation of power” (13). Indeed, Richard III’s power is derived from his ability to manipulate his fellow characters and the audience. Though destructive, this power becomes even more spectacular with regard to his stage performance especially in the opening soliloquy, the wooing scene, the coronation scene, and the dream scene, where the audience is faced with a completely different Richard each time he appears on the stage. Respectively in each of these scenes, he is wrathful, gallant, wise, and repentant. Albeit contradictory, these terms constitute the complex unity of Richard’s character that tends towards action, thus agency. In *Shakespeare and Moral Agency*, Michael Bristol defines agency as follows: “Agency refers to a capacity for action; in the current philosophical literature the term can be used for any good-oriented behavior. It is purposeful action, distinguished from mindless activity like the erosion of beaches or the heat death of the universe” (4). Richard’s action, irrespective of its moral bearing, is indeed purposeful because it aims at seizing the throne and gaining a woman’s love—be it Lady Anne or even his niece. Aristotle’s spirit is present in Bristol’s definition of agency which envisages good as an ultimate end of any purposeful action. In Book I of *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle states that “[e]very art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and choice, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim” (*The Complete Works*, 1729). However, Bristol presents some pragmatic exceptions that meet a post-Machiavellian age. He argues that “[a]gents also have to

possess flexibility, improvisatory competences, and even the skills of dissembling in order to sustain a preferred interpretation of who they are and of where they stand” (4). Richard’s dissembling, thus, is recommended to preserve his own self-esteem in a milieu where he is disregarded.

In his book chapter entitled “The Character of Richard III,” which appeared in a collection of critical essays entitled *Readings on the Histories*, H. M. Richmond argues that Richard III is indeed a powerfully charming character in being a monster-like. He postulates that “Far from being the cause of Richard’s villainy, his deformity would, to many medieval and renaissance minds, be the symptom of it [...] He appears from his birth to be a more or less diabolical personality. That is his power—and his charm” (89). It is both his consistency from the beginning of the play until his death and his ardent determinacy which enforce this powerfully enthralling charm of his character. Moreover, in *Charisma: A Psychoanalytic Look at Mass society*, Irvine Schiffer argues that “a leader with charisma is of necessity perceived as someone, not only to a degree foreign, but to a degree *subtly* defective” (29). According to Schiffer, stigma is of necessity a blessing for the leader because it allows him/ her to attract much more attention and to mark the people’s imaginary. The critic lists a number of characteristics whereby a leader becomes charismatic. Among these characteristics, he mentions “a spice of foreignness, some subtle stigma, the calling to public service, a posture of romantic polarized action against a human adversary, an aura of social station and its associated wealth, a diffidence of sexuality, a coating of hoax, and an

allure of lifestyle innovation" (ibid, 54). Such characteristics, Schiffer argues, attract the audience because they stimulate its imaginary and awaken its suppressed tendency for domination and possession. Thus, Richard III attracts the audience because he speaks out what is suppressed. The audience identifies with Richard III who gratifies, in a way, its latent wishes. Together with Richmond, a considerable number of critics, Richard Courtney in particular, argue that Richard III is appreciated by the audience in spite of his villainy. According to Courtney, "[f]or most of the play we are on his side; we enjoy him for himself, not for religious or philosophic reasons" (*Shakespeare's World of War*, 117). It is an appreciation outside the realm of the strictly moral and the rigidly religious. It is rather an artistic appreciation which will have an end as soon as the audience leaves the playhouse. According to Courtney, relishing evil is appreciated in *Richard III* because "it is so dramatic, a play for the stage. Shakespeare does not pretend that it is lifelike. We in the playhouse recognize that we are witnessing a theatrical fiction performed by an actor "as if" he is Richard of Gloucester" (ibid, 81).

The playhouse is a public space where the negotiation of meaning takes place. In *Shakespearean Negotiations*, Greenblatt stresses the highly political and social functions of the theater in the circulation of meaning, news, and ideas. He postulates that "the theater manifestly addresses its audience as a collectivity [...] The Shakespearean theater depends upon a felt community: there is no dimming of lights, no attempt to isolate and awaken the sensibilities of each individual member of the

audience, no sense of the disappearance of the crowd" (5). In the case of *Richard III*, theater is the best public space for the circulation of meaning dealing with royal homicide, divine justice, bold incestuous desire, and with a royal historical figure because such taboos will not be taken seriously—after all it is a play—and will be cathartically received by the audience: some will sympathize, others will be delighted. The gravity of taboos will be alleviated by Richard's irony and sense of humor. This kind of public negotiation of meanings ends by the end of the play. It has no larger impact on real life as discussions in the Parliament do have. Making this representation of a historical royal figure fictitious is in a way an attempt to preserve social order because if it were presented for discussion in the Parliament, it would generate serious social unrest and call for chaos and rebellion. Rather, it belongs to another mysteriously "unreal" world wherein contingent negotiations take the life of a performance and disappear as soon as the audience leaves the playhouse. This short-lived experience of relative freedom to express one's anxiety, anger, and dreams may explain the audience's relishing pleasure in watching Richard III performing the most pervert deeds a human being may do. *Richard III* is a short-lived performance of a relatively unreal story where the audience takes its freedom to not only sympathize with an evil arrogant murderer, but also to love him. Some of the critics, who are part of the larger audience, go even further into advocating the Superman in the character of Richard III (Rossiter, *Critical Essays*, 141). It is his will to power and enthralling power to perform it on the stage which make him fascinating

for the audience. Rossiter expands on Richard's theatrical power in the following passage:

The specific interest here is the power that would be in the hands of an actor consummate enough to make (quite literally) "all the world a stage" and to work on humanity by the perfect simulation of every feeling: the appropriate delivery of every word and phrase that will serve his immediate purpose; together with the complete dissimulation of everything that might betray him (whether it be his intentions, or such obstructive feelings as compunction, pity or uncertainty of mind. (*ibid*, 140)

Rossiter's passage dwells upon the techniques of influence which the charismatic character masters to hold a firm grasp on the audience's attention. Richard III is more endowed with the talent of manipulation than an orator because the latter relies exclusively on the power of arguments and the selection of words whereas the player gives shape and adds life to the spoken words through appropriate articulations, specific gestures, and keen body movements. It is in this sense that Richard III outdoes the charismatic orator. He is a charismatic model to be appreciated for its own sake as a poetic creation and not to be followed or disgraced for any narrow political or moral reasons.

To warrant a firm hold on the audience's attention, Shakespeare makes a long soliloquy delivered by the protagonist head the opening scene. This scene is part of an unfinished stream of thought bridging the end of *3 Henry VI* with the beginning of *Richard III*. In the ending scene of *3 Henry VI*, Richard announces his rising from a neglected character to a central character in the play to follow: "For yet I am not

looked on in the world" (5. 7.22). The fellow characters' and the audience's recognition constitutes not only an instigator to Richard's action but also its aim. The opening scene in *Richard III* unusually opens up with a long soliloquy delivered by the central character himself. The opening is unconventional because first scenes usually provide an introductory contextualization where secondary characters set the background for upcoming action and introduce the audience to the general context of the play. In *Richard III*, however, most of the characters—including the central character, Richard—appeared in previous plays, especially *3 Henry VI*. The audience is assumed to know most the characters and is familiar with the general historical framework of the play. A modern audience that is not familiar with England's history and/or with all of Shakespeare's plays would find it strange to be introduced to a play with such a long soliloquy. Its first contact with the central character is intense. This intensity is strengthened by the fact that the soliloquy adds a heroic-tragic dimension to the character. Thus, sympathy is guaranteed from the very beginning of the play as if Richard III were attempting to gain allies on his side to start an outrageous war against others, on the one hand. In the very first thirteen lines of the soliloquy, a historical and dramatic umbilical cord is still connecting *Richard III* with *3 Henry VI*. In these lines, Richard refers to the peaceful and merry times that signaled the end of the contention between the two Houses of York and Lancaster: "glorious summer" (2), "victorious wreaths" (5), "merry meetings" (7), and "delightful measures" (8). The

listing of these merry events is intercepted by “But” in line fourteen. This section (14-27) is built on a reiterative pattern of sentence formation:

But I that am not shaped for sportive tricks
 Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass,
 I that am rudely stamped and want love’s majesty
 To strut before a wanton ambling nymph,
 I that am curtailed of this fair proportion,
 Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
 Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
 Into this breathing world scarce half made up,
 And that so lamely and unfashionable
 That dogs bark at me as I halt by them,
 Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
 Have no delight to pass away the time,
 Unless to see my shadow in the sun
 And descant on my own deformity. (1. 1. 14-27)

In deploying this reiterative pattern, there is a conspicuous emphasis on the “I”—an “I” that is self-conscious. Not only is Richard III conscious of his physical limits, but he also questions such limits. The reiterative pattern of “I that am” coupled with such disparaging attributes as “not shaped,” “rudely stamped,” “cheated of feature,” “deformed,” “unfinished,” “scarce half made up,” and “so lamely and unfashionable” adds a tragically heroic dimension to the character of Richard, a hero that is not only overwhelmed by supernatural power but also takes a firm stand in questioning such power. Furthermore, Richard’s egocentric self (as an individual) in this section stands in opposition to the merry rest of the kingdom implicitly referred to in the first section of the soliloquy. Richard, on the one hand, shows self-conscious bitterness with regard to his physical deformity and, on the other hand, hides an unconscious pride in being an individual against a collectivity. It is in this very section that the

charismatic dimension of Richard's character appears. His tendency to be distinguished, though full of bitterness and self-loathing, reveals a vaulting desire to turn this physical deformity into strength. In the third section of the soliloquy (28-40), Richard sets his stratagem on Clarence, which will initiate the cycle of plots and murders. This section is introduced by a form of a scientific hypothesis whose defect presupposes the advocacy of its opposite. Richard III turns predeterminism into a determined free will. Richard's power of invention appears in his ability to set plots against other characters on the spur of the moment. As there are three distinctive sections in the soliloquy, we expect three different sets of relationship towards the audience. In the first section, the audience is put in the general context of the play. In the second section, there is an attempt to arouse the audience's sympathy. The third section is quite problematic since it represents a critical moment where the audience is to decide between loathing and sympathy. The whole section addresses a negotiation of a possible complicity between Richard III and the audience. However, this critical moment seems to find an outlet since the audience's sympathy is gained at the end of the soliloquy by an unstated promise that even though Richard III is determined to undertake evil action, he is well equipped to do so: a seemingly solid reason—his deformity—and imaginative resources—his wit, power of invention and persuasion. Richard's determinacy is a reassuring promise for the audience to keep to this complicity. As if he were saying: "[I am well equipped with] plots have I laid, inductions dangerous, / By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams" (1.1.32-33). In

this respect, Richard's power of persuasion, which is an essential element to define charisma, is derived from his remarkable use of irony.

In the wooing scene, a different Richard appears on the stage. This time, the audience is faced with a physically deformed villain who is able to prove a tender eloquent lover. His charisma is derived from this power to shift from an extreme state of being to another, from a heartless murderer to a tender wooer. It is his power to manipulate language, to make it mere parroting without any performative end. Towards the end of the wooing scene, the structure of conversation changes from repartee to long speeches. Words no longer generate any action or reaction. Richard's final attempt to seduce Lady Anne takes the form of a long speech (1. 2. 156-188) wherein he presents all sorts of arguments to prove innocent of her accusations. While wooing Anne, Richard III gives no indication that he is not honest until he remains alone with the audience and discloses his insincerity in the soliloquy following the encounter with Lady Anne. Without delving into a moral trial of Richard's sincerity, his ability to shift between contending performative states is a competence in itself with which not all characters are endowed. The wooing scene is as Richard describes it "a keen encounter of [his and Lady Anne's] wits" (1.2.120). It is a highly rhetorical performance where each character does his best not only to convince the other character but also to implicitly invite the audience to take part on the side of one of them. The following is but an extract of this long repartee between Richard and Lady Anne:

RICHARD: Lady, you know no rules of charity,
Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

ANNE: Villain, thou know'st nor law of God nor man.
No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

RICHARD: But I know none, and therefore am no beast.

ANNE: Oh, wonderful, when devils tell the truth!

RICHARD: More wonderful, when angels are so angry. (1. 2. 68-74)

The rhythm is tense and swift; the cues are based on a pattern of parallelism that is proper to repartee. It is in this scene that the audience discovers the poetic side of Richard III in addition to his rhetorical competence. “The coup de théâtre by which Richard wins Anne,” Hugh Richmond writes, “establishes us also as his victims, for if intellectually we see a little deeper into him than she does, we are still prone to view his victims from his own merciless perspective, at least unconsciously. We laugh at his macabre jokes and connive in his plots by enjoying his sardonic asides and soliloquies” (*Critical Essays*, 92).

In the dream scene, Richard appears on the stage as a completely different character from that in the opening and the wooing scenes—a third facet is exposed to the audience. In this scene, Richard is tormented by a taunting nightmare; a weak feature of Richard that the audience is not accustomed to seeing on the stage since the beginning of the play. To highlight Richard’s spiritual uneasiness, Shakespeare deploys an alternating pattern between Richard’s nightmare and Richmond’s dream. This scene is highly moralizing because it does not leave the audience at liberty to

judge the characters. Shakespeare's use of parallelism between the two dreams is an overt attempt to assess the audience's sympathy and to raise their expectation to see how the guilty, haunted by nightmares, will repent. However, and contrary to the audience's expectation, Richard III does not repent. He even rebukes himself for unconsciously being startled by a dream: "Have mercy, Jesu! Soft, I did but dream. / O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me? (5.3.181-2). The dream scene is a turning point in the play as far as Richard's complicity with the audience is concerned. He is determined to ignore the torment of his conscience and the audience's expectation of his repentance comes to a halt. The playwright neglects even his death, which is mentioned just in a stage direction. As a theatrical convention, the playwright has to shed more light on Richmond as a substituting value representing ultimate good and justice and to prepare the audience for the moment of retribution. The audience's capacity for sympathy with Richard III, thus, comes to an end.

The audience, as a broad term, covers a variety of audiences in *Richard III*: the theatergoers, the three citizens in Act 2, scene 3, and the female triads in different scenes. The multiplicity of the audiences adds to the complexity of Richard's character and to the richness of its charismatic reception. While the theatergoers' response cannot be traced because of its accumulation through ages and cultures, the citizens' and the female triads' views range respectively between fear and uncertainty on the one hand, and utter hatred on the other. However, Shakespeare's attempt to present all views makes the play open for any moral or amoral

considerations. “What we see in Shakespeare’s plays,” Bristol writes, “is not a set of instructions on how to live the good life, but rather a salutary imagining of the pathos of our moral existence” (6). The way the play is written and performed makes the audience compellingly contemplate their ethical condition, but at the same time leaves them at liberty assessing Richard’s charisma. Therefore, Richard III’s charismatic imperfection is all the more relevant when appreciated as a mere artistic representation of human wrath and frailty. *Richard III* is quintessentially a touchstone to assess the demonic nature of a human being at its limits and to see how identification with evil is gratifying. It is also important to see how stigma—be it physical or psychological—can be a charismatic blessing for the leader irrespective of its moral bearing because it is presented in a theatrical way that allows for sympathy and even for identification with evil. However, the question of moral agency in the works of art remains open for scrutiny.

Chapter Three:

How to Strumpet Cleopatra with Injurious Speech⁴: Subjection, Charisma, and Politics of Resignification

⁴ The structure of the title is an imitation of J. L. Austin's famous work entitled *How to Do Things with Words* in an attempt to show in the essay how performative naming Cleopatra a "strumpet" is.

It is hard to prove Cleopatra's charismatic character without tackling the injurious speeches inflicted on her which permeate the dominating Roman discourse in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Her charisma takes the form of struggle against a socio-politically-structured network of signification that derives its imposing power from the Roman political elite. Cleopatra's subversive charismatic strategies to counterpose this process of subjectivation reside in her overwhelmingly magnificent beauty, her infinite love of Mark Antony, and her tendency to ascend "baser" political life, which all prove triumphant over affection-prone Octavius Caesar. Cleopatra has been given different titles in addition to her most obvious one: 'Queen of Egypt'. Among these titles, I cite only two: 'serpent of the Nile' and the 'strumpet'. However injurious these names may be, they refer to a subject and, therefore, constitute an identity. Irrespective of their moral bearing, these terms stress Cleopatra's excessive sexual desire, which is in itself the source of her charisma. Shakespeare's willful focus on the sexual life of such a public figure as Cleopatra stems from an artistic will to historicize the Queen's life from a poetic perspective. In this chapter, I will focus on the interpellation—"strumpet"—that is attached to Cleopatra in William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* with a special reference to Judith Butler's notions of subjection, resistance, and resignification. The study of the character of Cleopatra in relation to the other characters in the play will help bring to the surface Shakespeare's own interpretation of the metaphor of the "strumpet" and how the

latter is turned into a subject of glorification. This and kindred terms, according to Butler's theory, subject Cleopatra to a single-faceted identity—that of the sexually active female leader. Resisting this appellation, Cleopatra paradoxically rejoices in it and pushes it to excess. She thereby magnificently enthralls the Romans. Once repeated in the play, these terms resignify a different meaning each time they are mentioned anew. Shakespeare, thus, sheds light on Cleopatra's love life in a way that exalts her charm and reveals a non- or rather an anti-public aspect of charisma—that which is supposed to be the private life of a leader.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, there are two internally contending discourses within the Roman sphere: one represented by the Romans in Rome (mainly Caesar and Philo); the other represented by the Romans who happen to live in Egypt (mainly Antony and Enobarbus). These two discourses portray Cleopatra from two utterly opposite perspectives: one presents her as a whore; the other views her as an everlasting sexually attractive beauty. In this respect, it is important to examine such juxtaposition and see Shakespeare's rhetorical politics of questioning and resignifying, which corresponds to Judith Butler's process of 'subjection, resistance, and resignification' by inflicting 'injurious speech' on Cleopatra. From the very beginning of the play—lines 9 and 13—Cleopatra is reported by Philo as being a "gypsy" and a "strumpet" respectively. Although Philo does not mention Cleopatra's name, the reader is capable of realizing that the speech is about that same person. Indeed, the play opens with Philo complaining about "this dotage of [his] general's [which]/

O'erflows the measure" (1. 1. 1-2). Antony's infatuation with Cleopatra is criticized from the very beginning of the play because it is excessive from a strictly Roman military point of view. The Roman general, supposed to be sent on a military mission in Egypt, falls in love with its leader, who becomes the center of his affective devotion at the expense of the Roman Empire. However, within Philo's judgmental designation of Cleopatra, the reader will recognize the presence of two or even three different identities that refer to one person and might not be compatible: 'Cleopatra', 'gipsy', and 'strumpet'. In the reader's mind, each of these terms has a specific signification. "Cleopatra", as a historically shaped and appropriated sign, might not in any way be compatible with what such signs as "gypsy" and "strumpet" denote because each of these three terms has been separately framed by definite social and political structures of meaning. Cleopatra as a sign has generated through the ages certain imaginaries in the East as well as the West. Each sphere has inflicted so different an image that turned her into a myth around which a whole aura of imagination has been at work. Both terms, "gypsy" and "strumpet," are morally loaded because they refer to what the signified is commonly known for. As for "gypsy," it refers to the nomadic dark-skinned Egyptians who, through chronicles, were reportedly known for their witchcraft and lust. "Strumpet" is no less a moral judgment that stems from a purely seventeenth-century cultural framework based on honor and projected on an originally pagan setting. These three terms, which refer to three different subjects, cannot be exchangeable to denote one single identity.

According to Butler, “[t]he more specific identity becomes, the more totalized an identity becomes by that very specificity” (SRR, 242)⁵. At first sight, Butler’s statement seems to be contradictory, but if one tries to contextualize it with regard to Cleopatra, one finds that calling her a “strumpet” is both a reductive and productive sign. It is reductive because it tends to “quilt [a] floating signifier”, as Žižek put it in *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (87), and to charge it with moral agency that is part of an external ideologically-structured discourse—that of morality, shame, and honor. “This ‘quilting’,” Žižek writes, “performs the totalization by means of which this free floating of ideological elements is halted, fixed—that is to say, by means of which they become parts of the structured network of meaning” (*ibid*, 87). Indeed, “strumpet”, as a floating signifier, is pinned down to a narrowly-framed structure of meaning that is socially and politically determined whereby sexuality has been structured and legalized under a “civilized” institution called marriage. Any attempt to perform sexuality outside this institution will be subject to a reiterated infliction of “injurious interpellations.” In the play, there is no clear indication—a stage direction or a character’s report—that Antony and Cleopatra are married except for a speech Cleopatra delivers while dying: “Husband, I come: / Now to that name my courage prove my title!” (5. 2. 287-288). In this respect, the term “strumpet,” once uttered, becomes performative. The performativity of the term “strumpet” implies that Cleopatra undertakes the profession of a prostitute who engages in sexual activity in

⁵ SRR: all references to Judith Butler’s “Subjection, Resistance, Resignification: Between Freud and Foucault” will be in this abbreviated form.

exchange for payment. It is true that she leads an excessive sexual life with Mark Antony, but this does not mean that she is a prostitute. It is worth recalling J. L. Austin's "descriptive fallacy" whereby utterances are perceived not only as constative, but also as performative. "Utterances," he postulates, "are performed, like other actions, or take place, like other worldly events, and thus make a difference in the world" (*qtd. in Loxley, 2*)⁶. The theatrical dimension adds to the semantic complexity of the term "strumpet." It ceases to be a form of flat ink on paper. It is given a vivid theatrical and reiterated form. On the one hand, it has to be performed, to be given voice and shape on the stage. On the other hand, this metaphor of the "strumpet" is reiterated each time the performance of the play takes place. Thus, through reiterated performance, the term "strumpet" comes into being and acquires a continuously renewed feature for Cleopatra—the subject that bears it—for her fellow characters, and for the audience as an actively participating agent in the creation and perpetuation of meaning. It becomes part of the imaginary of the audiences across the ages and, thus, contributes to the evolution of the term itself. Evolution of the term means either strengthening or weakening of its implications. The heavy moral bearing of the term in the seventeenth century has been gradually alleviated or even erased during the twentieth and the twenty first centuries with the rise of the feminist movement. Perception of the character of Cleopatra, thus, changes from an era to another. It is clear that the character of Cleopatra under study

⁶ Loxley, James. *Performativity*. London & New York: Routledge, 2007.

in this chapter is a pure Shakespearean perception of an oriental, sexually alluring female leader that is perceived quite differently nowadays.

In "Subjection, Resistance, Resignification: Between Freud and Foucault," Judith Butler revisits the notion of "subjection" that Foucault used in *Discipline and Punish* from a psychoanalytic point of view. According to her, subjection does not only mean subordination and being subject *to* power, but also formation and becoming *a subject* (emphasis mine). Subject formation is necessarily and, paradoxically enough, conditioned by a process of power infliction on the body and the psyche. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Cleopatra undergoes a process of subjectivation through the power of interpellation. Her identity is rhetorically shaped by the other characters' speeches. Mark Antony's cues, for instance, are noteworthy because he is both part of the naming power inflicted on Cleopatra and subject to that very power since he is engaged in a love relationship with her, which in many ways constitutes the very cause of naming her a "strumpet". Act 3, scene 13 includes key passages where Antony shifts to the side of the Roman leaders and inflicts that furious naming power on Cleopatra. In this scene, Cleopatra receives Thidias as a messenger from Caesar. Fulfilling his courtly duty, Thidias kisses Cleopatra's hand. Infuriated with jealousy, Antony sends the messenger to be whipped and inflicts upon Cleopatra a rain of "injurious" accusations. It is worth quoting few revealing lines:

You have been a boggler ever

 I found you as a morsel cold upon
 Dead Caesar's trencher: nay, you were a fragment

Of Gneius Pompey's, besides what hotter hours,
 Unregist' red in vulgar fame, you have
 Luxuriously picked out. For I am sure,
 Though you can guess what temperance should be,
 You know not what it is. (3. 13. 110 / 116-122)

In this passage, Antony exerts the injurious power of naming on Cleopatra. He seems to undergo a discontinuity of "psychic life" (Butler, 240) whereby he fails to recognize Cleopatra's identity as his beloved. Though there is no clear citing of an injurious name as such, the whole passage may be viewed as an extended metaphor for the term "strumpet." Antony's evocation of Cleopatra's past love affairs brings to the surface the past as an essential element in the construction of the subject's identity. A subject is not only what he/she is here and now; he/she is also what he/she was or used to be there and then. What adds to the importance of the past in the play is that it is not evoked unless there is a crisis in power relations. As readers, we could never have access to Antony's private past if there were not a crisis in power relations between him and Caesar that culminates in a war by land and sea. In a summon sent to Mark Antony to join Rome, Octavius Caesar reminds him of his past hardships during war times. The passage is long to cite. Its first half is as follows:

Leave thy lascivious wassails. When thou once
 Was beaten from Modena, where thou slew'st
 Hirtius and Pansa, consuls, at thy heels
 Did famine follow, whom thou fought'st against
 (Though daintily brought up) with patience more
 Than savages could suffer. Thou didst drink
 The stale of horses and the gilded puddle
 Which beasts would cough at. Thy palate then did deign
 The roughest berry on the rudest hedge. (1. 4. 55-64)

Although Caesar enumerates Antony's past braveries, his tone is full of disdain.

Through this reminder, Caesar intends not only to injure Antony—he admits this in a parenthesis at the end of the letter saying: "(It wounds thine honor that I speak it now)" (1. 4. 69)—but also to list the hardships he faced in an attempt to recall his achievements.

Since subjection is not always fully inflicted on the subject, Butler argues that there is always a possibility for a failure in the process of subjection. There is always "a remainder" that resists or escapes the inflicting power of interpellation. That remainder becomes an instigator for a process of resignification whereby infliction reiteratively takes place, but with a slight difference. Reflecting on Foucault's notion of "subversion," Butler postulates that "the symbolic produces the possibility of its own subversions, and that these subversions are unanticipated effects of symbolic interpellations" (241). In *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Roman power of interpellation is betrayed from within. Roman leaders who are supposed to comply with the general Roman 'code of conduct' produce Shakespeare's rhetorical politics of resignification of the "strumpet." Enobarbus is Shakespeare's rhetorical instrument via which he will counterbalance the workings of interpellation inflicted upon Cleopatra by the former's fellow Romans. Enobarbus's account of Cleopatra—known as the barge scene—is one of the most renowned passages in Shakespeare's works and canonical literature in general. The passage reaches its poetic culmination when Enobarbus states that

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
 Her infinite variety: other women cloy
 The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry
 Where most she satisfies; for vilest things
 Become themselves in her, that the holy priests
 Bless her when she is riggish. (2. 2. 241-6)

There is a rhetorical emphasis on an everlasting and regenerating sexual attractiveness in Cleopatra's body. This is but another way of subverting the original term of "strumpet" which in itself acknowledges, though implicitly, Cleopatra's sexual attractiveness. It is as if Shakespeare pays poetic tribute to a subject being socially and politically subjectivated: being subject to an injurious speech and becoming a "socially constituted" subject through an injurious speech. He appropriates Cleopatra's "riggish" characteristics and resignifies them through poetic language that glorifies and turns them into qualities.

Among the qualities that Shakespeare glorified in Cleopatra is her overwhelming character, overwhelming not in the sense of dominating the stage or the cues but rather overwhelming the audience and her fellow characters by generating a strange irresistible attachment to her. In the famous barge scene, for instance, Maecenas comments on Antony's reconciliation with Octavius Caesar—after the short-lived war with Octavia and her brother has been concluded—saying: "Now Antony must leave her [Cleopatra] utterly" (2. 2. 239). Enobarbus's firm response is "Never, he will not:" (2. 2. 240). The colon at the end of the line paves the way for Enobarbus to attempt to explain or understand this attachment. He refers this mainly to Cleopatra's regenerative beauty and sexual performance. In a state of complete

bewilderment and fascination, he relates to Maecenas and Agrippa her uniqueness in being sexually active. In fact, “other women cloy / The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry / Where most she satisfies” (2. 2. 242-244). This attachment can be a sort of sympathy with, impression by, or total identification with Cleopatra: in other words, recognition of her charismatic character. Recognition on the part of the audience and the fellow characters makes attribution of charisma to Cleopatra legitimate. To legitimize this attribution, Shakespeare, via the voices of his characters, draws a sophisticated portrait of Cleopatra that makes her neither naively angelic nor cunningly devilish, a third unidentified dimension that makes her character mysteriously magnanimous. Cleopatra’s mysterious magnificence overwhelms not only the Romans who happened to live in Egypt but also the Romans who proved their uttermost hatred toward her, namely Octavius Caesar. After her death, Caesar pays her a tribute worthy of a charismatic leader: “Bravest at the last, / She leveled at our purposes, and being royal, / Took her own way” (5. 2. 333-335). However, among the Romans themselves there are those, Scarus in particular, who believe that the secret of Cleopatra’s compelling magnificence is magic.

Mystery around Cleopatra is related to magic. What is meant by magic in this specific context is not witchcraft or potion making but rather the effect generated by Cleopatra’s presence in public rituals (2. 2.) and her conspicuous influence on Mark Antony’s heart and soul. The valiant warrior, whose “goodly eyes [...] now bend, now turn / The office and devotion of their view / Upon a tawny front” (1. 1. 2-5) and

whose “captain’s heart [...] is become the bellows and the fan / To cool a gypsy’s lust” (1. 1. 6-10), turns into a tamed lover incapable of leaving his beloved. According to the Romans in the play, it is the only term which might explain Cleopatra’s compelling attraction. Realizing her spell on his soul and body, Mark Antony decides to leave “this enchanting queen” (1. 2. 129). Pompey also pays his own tribute to a queen in the guise of a witch: “But all the charms of love, / Salt Cleopatra, soften thy waned lip! / Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both” (2. 1. 20-22). Fighting against Caesar at sea and expecting an ultimate defeat, Scarus evokes Antony in a lamentable tone and qualifies him as “the noble ruin of her magic” (3. 10. 18). For the Romans, Mark Antony is as much victim of an ensorcelling amour fou as responsible for neglecting his military mission. Although the Romans denigrate magic, it remains a quintessential element that adds a mysteriously attractive dimension to Cleopatra’s charismatic character. This mysterious compelling side in her character adds power to her charisma and makes it efficiently undefeatable more than any political or military power can do.

The depiction of the Egyptian sphere in *Antony and Cleopatra* is framed within this tradition of exoticism of the East. It is the ‘Orientalist fallacy’, as Edward Said called it, which dominated an important body of Western literature deriving its legitimacy and power from the Western colonial enterprise in the East. This fallacy, blurred as it is, generated a whole metaphor of the Orient based on cultural clichés and received stereotypes. In the play, the Roman sphere is presented as the public

realm of political and military decision-making, a realm that is rigorously governed only by men and time. The Egyptian sphere, however, is presented as the private realm where pleasure, in all its forms, and women rule—a realm characterized by unruliness and disregard of time constraints. Chaotic temporality manifests itself in merry times in Egypt and is brought to the surface by Caesar’s furious comments firmly criticizing Antony who “fishes, drinks, and wastes / The lamps of the night in revel” (1. 4. 4-5). Enobarbus’s vivid description of “monstrous matter of feast” where they “did sleep day out of countenance and made the night light with drinking” (2. 2. 183-4) unveils an extravagant sphere governed by a leader whose life and actions are geared toward excess. Twice in his article entitled “*Antony and Cleopatra: A Shakespearean Adjustment*”, John Danby designates Rome as the realm of the political, but he does not define the Egyptian sphere. His silence may be viewed as an implied contrast between Egypt and Rome. If Rome is the realm of politics and order, Egypt is, implicitly by contrast, the realm of pleasure and excess. Caesar’s complaints that Antony “fishes, drinks, and wastes / The lamps of night in revel” (1. 4. 4-5), “give[s] a kingdom for a mirth” (1. 4. 18), and “reel[s] the streets at noon” (1. 4. 20) reveals that he, as a Roman leader, conceives of Antony’s time management as chaotic and his deeds as unruly and unfit for a Roman leader sent for a public mission in Egypt. In act 3, scene 13, Antony’s suggestion to “mock the midnight bell” (184) and his request to drink and take part in a banquet with the soldiers reveals his contempt for the conventionalities of time and rank. Enobarbus’s account of the

chaotic temporality he experienced is famously commented upon. In Egypt, he relates, they “did sleep day out of countenance and made the night light with drinking” (2. 2. 183-184). This comment on the lost sense of time is coupled with a lively description of the excessive extravagance in food, drink, and merriment. Such temporal chaos and extravagant merriment which characterize the Egyptian public sphere are incompatible with the quintessential premises of the public sphere in general: i.e., rigorism and order.

The Egyptian sphere is rather a counterpublic in the sense that it escapes the constraints of the public sphere and offers its lovers, Antony and Cleopatra, not only total freedom to manifest their love but also to make it transcendent. The rhetoric of transcendence is made conspicuous through poetic language that transcends historical determinacy and escapes the callous regularities of the public sphere. Indeed, it is Cleopatra who reminds the reader/ audience that “this world did equal theirs [the gods]” (4. 15.76). In *Publics and Counterpublics*, Michael Warner postulates that

It is often thought...that the public display of private matters is a debased narcissism, a collapse of decorum, expressivity gone amok, the erosion of any distinction between public and private. But in a counterpublic setting, such display often has the aim of transformation. Styles of embodiment are learned and cultivated, and the affects of shame and disgust that surround them can be tested, in some cases revalued. (62)

In this respect, Antony and Cleopatra—as lovers—constitute a counterpublic to the public sphere represented by the Roman statesmen and led by Octavius Caesar. Their

display of love is seen from a Roman point of view as shameful “dotage” that “o’erflows the measure” (1. 1. 1-2). In a “counterpublic setting” as Egypt, this display of love is celebrated in an excessive way that shuns the limits and regularities of the public sphere.

Excess is quintessentially at the heart of Cleopatra’s life in all its aspects—her appearance in the public space, her actions, and her love—which constitutes her charisma. The barge scene (2. 2) is a poetic instance that depicts the extravagant aura around such a public figure as Cleopatra. Enobarbus’s description gets the reader / audience away from the realm of the theater into the realm of the fairy tale. The throne-like barge, the gold poop, the purple perfumed sails, the silver oars, “the tune of flutes,” the cloth interwoven with gold threads, the “pretty dimpled boys,” the mermaids, and the “divers-colored fans” are but few props which adorn the Egyptian wondrous canvas. Cleopatra’s appearance in the marketplace is reported to be spectacularly eye-catching where “the city cast [h]er people out upon her” (2. 2. 219-20) and, along with Antony, “made a gap in nature” (2. 2. 224). To further highlight Cleopatra’s charismatic centrality amidst this public event, Shakespeare deliberately marginalizes Mark Antony who, “[e]nthroned I’ th’ marketplace, did sit alone, / Whistling to th’ air; which, but for vacancy, / Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too” (2. 2. 221-223). In this very scene, the whole military enterprise of ‘the third Pillar of the world’ is belittled by the wondrous aura surrounding the Queen. Indeed, Antony seems like any other commoner attending a rare show where seeing the Queen

becomes an achievement in itself. Another instance of excess in the public sphere resides in Cleopatra's absence of consideration for codes and norms by which a leading figure must abide. It is Enobarbus who relates how he saw her "[h]op forty paces through the public street; / And having lost her breath, she spoke, and panted, / That she did make defect perfection" (2. 2. 235-237). This girlish 'defect' is double-edged because as much as it disparages Cleopatra's royal rank, it defies protocols which tend to keep the leader's spontaneous affective side away from the people's eye. Excess in Cleopatra's actions is manifested rather in her reactions toward what happens. Her outbursts are unexpected and sometimes unjustified. When she learns that Antony got married to Octavia, she summons the messenger and questions him as if he were the guilty party. She even "strikes him down" twice (2. 5. 61-63) and "hales him up and down" (2. 5. 64). In this very scene, she proves so impatient that she interrupts the messenger after every line. Her impetuosity might also be understood as a sign of love and jealousy for Antony. Feeling ungratified with the messenger's report, she summons him once again. This time, she requests a detailed portrayal of Octavia (3. 3). However, at the end of the scene, Cleopatra expresses her wish to question him a third time: "I have one thing to ask him yet, good Charmian; / But 'tis no matter, thou shalt bring him to me / Where I will write" (3. 3. 48-50). These moments of uncontrollably exposed affections—hesitation, anger, jealousy, and joy—reveal Shakespeare's tendency to highlight the lover in Cleopatra rather than the political leader. Indeed, in this play, love flourishes at the expense of politics and war.

Cleopatra's readiness to "unpeople Egypt" (1. 5. 78) in order to alleviate her longing for Antony reaches the culmination of excess in her attitudes. She is blindly ready for everything, even death, to preserve that love. For Cleopatra, death is not a point of separation between her and Antony. On the contrary, it is an opportunity for an eternal meeting. Longing for an eternal life with Antony permeates the death ritual at the end of the play. Cleopatra's yearning for transcendence is another quintessential element of her charismatic character.

The rhetoric of transcendence, absoluteness, and eternity is strictly attributed to Cleopatra in the play. Her yearning for transcendence in the final scene, known as the Death Scene, is an eternal liberation from the Roman subjection. It is this final and eternal triumph which constitutes her charismatic character: her influential ability to face the Roman Empire not only as Queen of Egypt but also as a woman and a lover. The 'fire and air' speech, which precedes her death ritual, is the lover's ultimate defying discourse of the Romans' worship of politics and war:

Yare, yare, good Iras; quick: methinks I hear
 Antony call: I see him rouse himself
 To praise my noble act. I hear him mock
 The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men
 To excuse their after wrath.

 I am fire, and air; my other elements
 I give to baser life. (5. 2. 283-290)

As much as it is a scornful challenge of Octavius Caesar, this speech is a glorification of the two lovers, Antony and Cleopatra. Death becomes a token of faithfulness to Antony and a divine retribution for Caesar's "wrathful" war and politics. Cleopatra's

transcendental ideal is proper to a charismatic leader who looks for not only love but also honor and keeps her followers and audience believe in a better life.

It is true that Shakespeare contributed, poetically and rhetorically, to the unsettling of a fixed derogatory view of sexual politics and feminine sexuality, his attempt, though deemed considerable in the Western literary canon, remains insufficient. Persistence in the process of resignification is highly recommended; otherwise, the whole enterprise is at stake because such a subversive process needs an equally well-structured and elaborate network of meanings that is capable of substituting the old one and requires an overwhelming propaganda that justifies its existence. In other words, a newly founded framework of signification will replace the old one; there will be no opportunity for the subject to construct his/her own chain of signification outside the wheel of fire—power relations. However, the subject remains able to defy and influence power relations only if he/she grasps the techniques of influence which allow him/her to set a new order and to gain centrality in people's hearts.

Conclusion

The opacity of the concept of charisma is noteworthy because it allows for further research not only in sociology or psychology but also in drama, notably Shakespeare's works. Its importance resides in its uncanny relation to different Shakespearean characters irrespective of their socio-political backgrounds and premises. Shakespeare's characters—Henry V, Richard III, and Cleopatra—are so different that a possible existence of a common feature seems far-fetched. Nonetheless, there exists a common ground that quintessentially unifies these characters, which is charisma. The three characters represent what Max Weber calls "charismatic authority" as opposed to "traditional authority." The former is extraordinary and temporary. The latter is concerned with everyday life and becomes routinized because of the leader's or the followers' concern to maintain that power as long as possible. According to Weber, charismatic authority is also revolutionary in the sense that it tends to break with the past and to ascend the local in time and space.

In *Henry V*, it is the congruence of war against France and threats from Scotland which contributes to the general recognition of King Harry as a charismatic leader. This 'extraordinary' conjuncture urges the English people to unite around and support their leader. In addition to this special conjuncture, Henry V has indeed a remarkable talent in rhetoric which allows him to persuade his followers and even make them identify with his ideals. King Harry's charisma is "pure charisma" because it highlights the saintly side in the leader and makes him a spiritual leader guiding his

disciples on the way to fight a sacred war against an evil enemy, France. The metaphor of the sacred may be extended to depict England as a large temple where its guardian, King Harry, and his disciples wage a war against evil.

In *Richard III*, charisma takes another form because the mechanisms deployed to reveal it change to meet the specificity of Richard's character. Richard's charismatic authority is not "pure" because it does not have a sacred dimension. On the contrary, it is most conspicuous in his attempt to justify his murderous deeds. His twisted ironies and arrogance allow him to be at the center of the play. Moreover, his fellow characters' attempt to bring him down are deliberately sterilized and left until the end of the play to satisfy a conventional cathartic necessity for retribution. Moral agency, though critical to assess the extent to which charisma may be ethically valid, is neutralized. By neutralizing the moral agency of charisma, Shakespeare gives Richard III a voice uninterrupted from the very first scene to justify his murderous plots. This theatrical opportunity—giving Richard III a soliloquy to open the play—is a key moment introducing a series of complicities between the protagonist and the audience, which allows him to gain its trust and to start a game of ironies and dissemblance-ridden plots. It is this luring, seemingly-justified game to make fun of a number of characters and to set conflicting plots that enchants the audience and brings moral agency at a halt. Another feature of Richard's amoral charisma resides in his persistence in carrying out every plot he sets and in his perseverance in defying alone the rest of the protagonists. Unabated self-esteem and consistency in actions

throughout the play are Richard's legitimate claim to amoral charisma that subverts unabashedly what convention usually approves of aesthetically, socially, and politically.

Cleopatra's charisma is sexually oriented because her identity is pinned down to whorish attributes by the Romans. Her love of Antony is an expression of a disclosed lust that determines her predicament as much as her ascendant emancipation at the end of the play. The revolutionary character of Cleopatra's charisma resides in her struggle against the Roman power of injurious appellation. By the same token, however, the Roman harping on Cleopatra's whorish attributes helps the audience/reader discover luster in Cleopatra's charismatic character: her lustful side. Her love of Mark Antony outrages and, ultimately, bewilders the Roman generals. The barge scene (2. 2) confirms the Roman fascination with Cleopatra's public aura and sexual attractiveness. Her ultimate tendency to transcend the personally private and to make it part of the human yearning for eternal retribution signals the peak of charismatic authority. Charismatic techniques and attitudes may differ but the aim is always the same—the leader's search of love and recognition.

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