DISCOURSE PRAGMATICS AND THE CHARACTER EFFECT IN SHAKESPEARE

By

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Program in English Language and Literature
in conformity with the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Queen’s University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada
June, 2013

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Abstract

This study, contextualized within the critical debate on Shakespearean dramatic character, examines how the “character effect”—or the audience’s impression of a character’s ontological reality—is produced. Approaching character from the perspective of linguistic pragmatics, I contend that character effects are produced by the counterpoint between characters’ pragmatic use of language and the allegorical meanings that underpin characters’ utterances in a theatrical context. These allegorical meanings, which Shakespeare conveys through his characters to the audience, dialogically interact with characters’ textually or historically scripted roles and converge with their speech to create the impression that characters control language and have extra-textual lives of their own. I thus demonstrate that the interiority ascribed to character is a function of its anteriority. Following the introductory chapter, which lays out the critical history of Shakespearean character and a pragmatic methodology, each of the remaining chapters explores the particular speech habits of a complex and larger-than-life Shakespearean character who is also a self-conscious user of language. Chapter 2 examines how Falstaff’s conversational implicatures produce the character effect of his vitality. Chapter 3 looks at how Cleopatra’s performative use of report creates her sexual charisma. Chapter 4 focuses on how Henry V’s rhetorical argumentation works to create the impression of his moral ambivalence.
Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to my supervisors, Elizabeth Hanson and Marta Straznicky, two incredible scholars and truly inspirational mentors who have helped nurse this project since its inception and saw it through to completion. Without their expertise, profound insight, commitment, generosity, and guidance, this project would not be what it is. I am especially grateful for their willingness to journey with me into the depths of character and to help make sense of my half-formed thoughts, no matter how time-consuming.

For first inspiring me to think critically about Shakespearean character, I am grateful to Wes Folkerth at McGill, as well as to Paul Yachnin for opening the door to issues of dramatic and non-dramatic personhood. I am no less grateful to a gifted teacher, the late Oscar Pfaff, for introducing a young girl in sixth grade to Dickens’s colourful world of characters, which captivated her imagination and led to an enduring fascination with literary character.

Many people at Queen’s have contributed to making this a truly rewarding experience. I thank Gwynn Dujardin for her warm encouragement and enthusiastic support of my work over the years; Shelley King, Glenn Willmott, and Scott-Morgan Straker for their unstinting help with professionalization; Molly Wallace and Robert Morrison for their useful advice along the way; Kathy Goodfriend, Sherril Barr, Karen Donnelly, and Lovorka Fabek-Fischer for their kindness and administrative support; friends who have helped make Queen’s feel like a second home; and Greg, for always being by my side.

I dedicate this project to my greatest cheerleaders—my parents, Milena and Dušan, for their unconditional love and support and for inspiring me to always reach higher, push farther, and never lose sight of my goals. This is their accomplishment as much as it is mine. Volim vas.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Re-Characterizing Dramatic Shakespearean Character

In a personal letter dating from 1785, composer William Jackson remarked that, “Shakespeare’s characters have that appearance of reality which always has the effect of actual life” (qtd. in Babcock 93, italics mine). The life-likeness, realism, purported interiority, and individuality of Shakespeare’s dramatis personae—as well as Shakespeare’s “unrivalled powers of characterization” (Muir 9)—have been remarked and celebrated by critics, audiences, readers, and actors since the seventeenth century. Margaret Cavendish, defending Shakespeare against his detractors, praised the playwright as a “Natural Orator, as well as a Natural Poet” who had the wit and eloquence “to Express Naturally, to the Life” the characters he imagined: “so Well hath [Shakespeare] Express’d in his Playes all Sorts of Persons, as one would think he had been Transformed into every one of those Persons he hath Described” (Letter 123). Shakespeare’s characters, as Cavendish observes, are so vivid and true to life that it appears as if the playwright histrionically breathes life into them and “expresses” his own being through them; his dramatic persons seem to be imbued with the playwright’s essence.¹ In thus suggesting that Shakespeare’s characters have an ontological reality, Cavendish’s remark heralded the commencement of the post-Caroline tendency to psychologize or read

¹ Shakespeare, as Cavendish suggests, is inferred through his characters:

Who would not think he had been such a man as his Sir John Falstaff? and who would not think he had been Harry the Fifth? & certainly Julius Cæsar, Augustus Cæsar, and Antonius, did never Really Act their parts Better, if so Well, as he hath Described them . . . one would think that he had been Metamorphosed from a Man to a Woman, for who could Describe Cleopatra Better than he hath done, and many other Females of his own Creating . . . . (Letter 123)

In 1769, Elizabeth Montague takes up Cavendish’s observation and describes how Shakespeare embodies his characters in a way that anticipates the contemporary actor’s Stanislavskian acting style. Shakespeare, Montague claims, is an Arabian Dervish who can “throw his soul into the body of another man, and be at once possessed of his sentiments, adopt his passions, and rise to all the functions and feelings of his situation” (qtd. in Babcock 135-136).
Shakespeare’s characters if they were real people who have motives, personal histories, and extra-dramatic existences. Comments about Shakespeare as a poet of nature in the eighteenth century gradually gave way to a novelistic analysis of the nature of his characters and their inner conflicts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: in the eighteenth century, Thomas Whately asserted that Shakespeare’s characters are “masterly copies” (8) of human nature constructed by a dramatist who possessed “so deep and so extensive a knowledge of the human heart” to which “[n]o other dramatic writer could ever pretend” (7). Samuel Johnson, despite his contention that Shakespeare’s characters are “species” or “just representations of general nature” (“Preface”) rather than completely individualized persons, affirmed that these same characters “act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated” (“Preface”). In his 1817 essay on Antony and Cleopatra, William Hazlitt deemed that “[t]he characters breathe, move, and live [:]. . . . [Shakespeare] brings living men and women on the scene, who speak and act from feelings, according to the ebbs and flows of passion . . . .” (4). While psychological character analysis culminated with A.C Bradley’s lectures on tragedy, which inaugurated character as a critical category, the majority of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century critics overlooked what William Jackson had so carefully highlighted: the fact that dramatic characters do not have a metaphysical reality but only produce the “appearance of reality” or a certain reality “effect” that is a by-product of a dramatic technique. This long-standing critical blind spot suggests a question: if a fictional

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2 Babcock traces the tendency to psychologize character to the eighteenth-century discourse of the passions; the character’s ability to emotionally affect the reader or audience led commentators to theorize that passions like pity or ambition inhere in the characters themselves. Babcock claims that the “psychologizing tendency” permeates eighteenth-century discussions of Shakespeare’s “[dramatic] unities, tragicomedy, nature, and original genius” (157). For a comprehensive survey of eighteenth-century critics who psychologize Shakespeare’s dramatic characters, see Babcock (155-182).
person in a text produces a “subjectivity effect”, as Joel Fineman would later theorize, how exactly is this effect produced?

Despite the hostility that Romantic and Bradleyan critics encountered from both New Critics and post-structuralist critics who denounced the reification of character to the exclusion of poetic and social-historical contexts, the relevance and importance of character to Shakespeare’s dramatic oeuvre should not be discounted. In the introduction to the recent essay collection *Shakespeare and Character* (2009), editors Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights maintain that Shakespeare prioritizes character as a dramatic element over the traditional Aristotelian emphasis on plot and boldly claim that “dramatic character is the organizing principle of Shakespeare’s plays— it organizes both the formal and ideological dimensions of the drama and is not organized by them” (6-7). Announcing the re-emergence of “character” as a critical category in a post-structuralist climate of Shakespearean scholarship which has all but dispensed with the notion of character, Yachnin and Slights highlight the centrality of dramatis personae to the dramatic texture and action of Shakespeare’s plays, and strive to resuscitate the “vitality” and “prominence” of Shakespearean character, which has “been de-realized and whose influence has been severely diminished by materialist critique” (Yachnin and Slights 4). This bravely branded “new character criticism” (1) propounded by Yachnin and

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3 “Subjectivity effect” was coined by Fineman to describe the complex reality of the poet-persona in Shakespeare’s sonnets. See *Shakespeare’s Perjured Eye: The Invention of Poetic Subjectivity in the Sonnets*.

4 Bloom’s *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* is a testament to the popular appeal of reading and relating to Shakespeare’s characters as if they were real people. Yachnin and Slights note that theatre-goers and the general reading public primarily experience characters in this manner: “Both the vernacular intuition that characterization is central to Shakespeare’s art and his politics, and the instinct to connect observations about dramatic characters and communities to their own life experience, are common among both readers and audience members” (3).

5 Yachnin and Slights also, significantly, recognize character as an active agent in drama. The post-structuralist rejection of character overlaps with the denial of agency to character, which I later discuss. Yachnin and Slights echo Whately’s observation that “distinction and preservation of character is key, without which the piece [play] is at best a tale, not an action . . . ” (2).
Slights is set in motion by the volume’s contributors, who theorize character and the production of its “subjectivity effects” from diverse methodological approaches such as analytic philosophy, phenomenology, and performance criticism. Yu Jin Ko’s and Michael W. Shurgot’s more recently edited collection of essays, *Shakespeare’s Sense of Character: On the Page and From the Stage* (2012), also participates in this burgeoning new character criticism by charting how performance, rehearsal, and theatrical practices contribute to an understanding of character. However, given this multi-disciplinary rehabilitation of character and given that character is built up from Shakespeare’s particular use of language, it is striking that only William Dodd’s work on Othello’s negotiation of identity in Yachnin and Slights’s volume ventures to account for subjectivity effects from the perspective of linguistics. Not only is a character an element of dramatic discourse that moves the plot forward and unravels the narrative of the play but it is also, though not exclusively, a speaker. In my dissertation, I propose to expand the parameters of this new character criticism by examining subjectivity effects from the perspective of linguistic pragmatics. More specifically, I examine how characters’ subjectivity effects—or the audience’s impression of characters’ reality—are produced within their speech habits.

The concern for “nature” and the “natural” with which the critical discourse of Shakespearean character has been marked also underwrites the enterprise of linguistic pragmatics. As a social science, pragmatics operates on the premise that speakers are or stand in for real people; linguistic methods and theories are grounded in empirical investigations into how actual people use language, based on which rules and theories are formulated to systematically describe speakers’ language behaviour. For pragmatics, language and a speaker’s language behaviour originate in, and are determined by, the speaker’s mind.
Linguistic-oriented Shakespeare critics who have applied pragmatics to elucidate Shakespearean character have also subscribed to the linguistic assumption that characters are equivalent to real people, which risks neutralizing the complexity and idiosyncratic identities of these characters by equating them with “speakers” in linguistics who are interchangeable.⁶ Although my dissertation combines linguistic pragmatics with character criticism, I do not posit that characters are mimeses of extra-linguistic entities with essential selves. The character in Shakespeare’s drama, a hypothetical speaker, is not a self-contained agent as it is in linguistic pragmatics, but is partially put into motion by Shakespeare himself, who employs character to communicate with the audience; characters are dramatic representations of real people. Shakespeare, moreover, carefully selects habits of linguistic behaviour to individualize his dramatic speakers in order to differentiate them from one another and to convey specific meanings. My project, which seeks to account for the distinctive subjectivity effects of personated persons on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage, demonstrates that a character’s subjectivity effects are produced by his/her pragmatic use of language as it intersects with the allegorical meaning with which Shakespeare endows character. I propose that Shakespeare’s characters possess anteriority rather than an a-historical and essential interiority that defines their mimetic “reality”. This anteriority arises from the events depicted in Shakespeare’s historical and dramatic sources—which inform his characters and furnish them with actual, historical “lives” that predate their lives as speakers in a theatrical context—that press up against the distinct allegorical meanings that Shakespeare ascribes to his characters in the history play. These allegorical meanings that Shakespeare conveys through his characters to

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⁶ In pragmatics, which focuses exclusively on the moment of dialogic exchange between addresser and addressee who are real people, the interlocutors are severed from any larger conception of who they are as individuals since pragmatics is interested in accounting for universal modes and methods of communication relevant to human beings as a category.
the audience dialogically respond to the characters’ textually or historically scripted roles and converge with characters’ speech to create the impression that characters control language and have extra-textual lives of their own. I first map the tension between character and language in Shakespeare criticism before introducing linguistic pragmatics and contextualizing my project within it.

**Plucking out the Heart of the Mystery: Character vs. Language**

At the root of the tension between language and character in Shakespearean scholarship, arising in the wake of Bradley’s seminal lectures on tragedy, is a debate about metaphysics and the representation of reality. Marking the culmination of the eighteenth and nineteenth century tradition of moralizing and reading characters as psychologically discrete and autonomous persons, A. C. Bradley’s study of tragic character in *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904) is premised on the assumption that dramatic character is located beyond the language of the play and exists independent of it: character, a mimesis which is created through language, is conflated with reality itself and granted a metaphysical presence. Bradley’s objective, which is to help Shakespeare “lovers” read “as if they were actors who had to study all the parts . . . . [T]hey want to realise fully and exactly the inner movements which produced these words and no other, these deeds and no other, at each particular moment” (2, italics mine), neatly displays his sense of character as a transcendent, coherent, self-contained, and interiorized essence that exists *a priori* to language and generates it. For Bradley, as Terence Hawkes aptly summarizes,

7 For a defence of Bradley’s critical methodology, see Kenneth Muir who contends that Bradley was “fully aware of the vital difference between characters in plays and living persons” but that his mistake lies in “considering what happened offstage, or before the beginning of the action” (1) and in thus interpreting textual lacunae as a dramatic flaws.
“character generates text, text manifests character, and a consistent and perfect ‘fit’ persists between the two” (36). Since Bradley assumes that a character’s language conveys the coordinates of an interior self, he effectively announces that his study will “pass by in silence” the “poetry” or language of the plays “in favour of an investigation into character and action” (1), without considering whether language might constitute character.⁸

L. C. Knights’s “How Many Children had Lady Macbeth?” (1933), however, famously dismisses Bradley’s novelistic approach to character to promote instead a careful scrutiny of dramatic language. Knights asserts that “the total response to a Shakespeare play can only be obtained by an exact and sensitive study of the quality of the verse, of the rhythm and imagery, of the controlled associations of the words and their emotional and intellectual force, in short by an exact and sensitive study of Shakespeare’s handling of language . . . ” (279). Since Shakespeare’s plays, according to Knights, are dramatic poems, an exclusive focus on character as a poetic or mental “abstraction” threatens to “impoverish” the “total response” (272) of the play, whose communicative goal is “a rich and controlled experience by means of words” (272) rather than the creation of character. In stating that Shakespeare uses language to “obtain a total complex emotional response” (275), Knights assumes that language itself affects the audience with a meaning or a value arising from the coherence of its parts;⁹ meaning, for Knights, is intrinsic to—and can be deduced from—poetic language and does not reside in

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⁸ This Bradleyan notion of character as a transcendent self resonates through J. Leeds Barroll’s investigation of the conceptual framework underlying Shakespeare’s creation of character. Barroll holds that Shakespeare’s characters are mental concepts that are based on and abstracted from Elizabethans’ “real” psychic relationship to predetermined ideologies of transcendence (see *Artificial Persons: The Formation of Character in the Tragedies of Shakespeare*).

⁹ For example, Knights claims that to concentrate on the “personal implications” of Macbeth’s famous lines “Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow” would be “to obscure the fact that they have an even more important function as the keystone of the system of values that gives emotional coherence to the play” (305).
character. Knights’s attention to internally coherent poetic codes subsumes character within the play’s larger poetic structure, allowing him to disregard the individuality of a character’s speech. Knights’ polarization of language and character led to a reductive treatment of character as a receptacle for language: in the 1960s, Leo Kirschbaum demonstrated how a character’s dramatic function is embedded in and thus subservient to a “complex architecture” of “event, language, theme and image” (51); in 1976, Madeleine Doran saw the rhetorical figures or syntax of characters’ speech as a vehicle for charting the distinctive linguistic styles or tones of Shakespeare’s tragic plays and investigated how they create a “harmony of effect” (12); and, as late as the 1990s, David Willburn interpreted character as merely a “functional fiction or active figure of speech” that is subsumed in a matrix-like circulation of meaning arising from an autonomous “play of language” in which character “participate[s] but does not own or control” (xiii).

This critical resistance to characters’ verbal agency and speech due to the precedence granted to poetic language resurfaced in a slightly different form in the New Historical emphasis on discourse as a socio-historical and political force which shapes the speaking “subject”. The New Historicist focus on the socio-historical embeddedness of literary texts and on the relationship between texts and their authors reduces literary character to a “subject”. Moreover, the boundary between literary representation and reality is elided under New Historicism’s post-structuralist conception of reality as always and already a discursive

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10 Knights assumes that the tendency to abstract character from language and treat character as if it were a real person arises from the reader’s “reluctance to master the words of the play” (284).

11 Greenblatt claims that “[s]elf-fashioning is always, though not exclusively, in language” (9).

12 Following Stephen Greenblatt, Catherine Belsey (The Subject of Tragedy) and Jonathan Dollimore (Radical Tragedy) label dramatic characters “subjects”.
construct that has no external points of reference. As a result of the New Historicist inability to differentiate between characters and people as well as New Historicism’s conflation of literary and natural language, both individual persons and character-subjects\textsuperscript{13} are denied individual verbal agency and hence autonomous subjectivity since they are “subjected” to “the cultural system of meanings” (Greenblatt 3) which are “fashioned” by competing ideologies inherent to discourse. In New Historicist criticism, the character-subject’s language is a de-personalized by-product of these discourses. The subject’s motives, objectives, and intentions are effects of whatever discourse within which he or she operates. For Stephen Greenblatt, self-fashioning “suggests . . . a distinctive personality, characterizes an address to the world, [a] consistent mode of perceiving and behaving” (2). This “distinctive personality”, however, is a function of how various discourses intersect in the character-subject’s speech and his/her orientation in discourse rather than a quality inherent to the self. In other words, although the New Historicist subject does have (a limited) agency, he or she is denied innate and autonomous agency as well as ontological presence since he or she is subordinated to language’s power. As a function of discourse rather than its origin, the subject speaks from its position as a grammatical subject or an “I” within a discourse whose meaning is determined by the conditions and structures that bring it into being: speech is not self-referential but is a function of the speaker’s relative place in what Foucault styled an “enunciative” domain.\textsuperscript{14} But while Greenblatt does not endow the character-subject with self-conscious awareness in the act of speaking, Alan Sinfield does. In

\textsuperscript{13} I use “character-subject” here to emphasize the alteration.

\textsuperscript{14} As Foucault states:

\begin{quote}
The enunciative domain refers neither to an individual subject, nor to some kind of collective consciousness, nor to a transcendental subjectivity; but . . . it is described as an anonymous field whose configuration defines the possible position of speaking subjects. Statements should no longer be situated in relation to a sovereign subjectivity, but recognize in the different forms of the speaking subject effects proper to the enunciative field. (qtd. in Braver 365)
\end{quote}
his essay “When is a Character not a Character?”, Sinfield re-defines the character-subject as “continuous consciousness” (63) with a distinct interiority, even though he agrees with Catherine Belsey that this interiority is a cultural by-product or “point of intersection of a range of discourses” (58).\(^{15}\) Claiming that New Historicists need not dispose of the concept of character along with their disposal of the Bradleyan essentialism underpinning it (63), Sinfield demonstrates that it is possible to salvage the character-subject’s individual and self-conscious agency.

Contextualizing Shakespearean character within the early modern rhetorical tradition that shapes Shakespeare’s conception of his fictional persons, Karen Newman and Christy Desmet, like Sinfield, also account for characters’ verbal agency by illustrating that characters rhetorically possess their own languages (and hence idiosyncratic identities), which exist alongside their dramatic roles or discursive functions.\(^{16}\) Newman, in particular, in attempting to uncover the origins of an ideology of being, contends that the “subjectivity effects”—or what she calls “residue”—of Shakespeare’s comic characters result from the friction between the linguistic conventions of the soliloquy, which personalize and endow character “with motive and intention, conflict and complexity . . . . [and thus] communicate a mental life which we perceive as lifelike” (4), and the dramatic conventions of comic characterization. This

\(^{15}\) Sinfield’s re-conceptualization of character as “continuous consciousness” accounts for the discrepancy in personality of Shakespeare’s complex characters without assuming that characters are developmentally complex representations of real individuals. Characters, for Sinfield, are “simulated personages apparently possessing adequately continuous or developing subjectivities” (78).

\(^{16}\) Giorgio Melchiori similarly examines character in a rhetorical framework but claims that “each character is endowed with a personal linguistic code and, over and above it, with different rhetorical habits in the construction of their respective speeches” (68). Language, for Melchiori, marks a “change in character and expressions of character” (62) albeit this change is contained within a restrictive rhetorical mode that determines— and is particular to— the character’s linguistic habits and serves to highlight the dominant rhetorical structure of the play (63).
“residue” or excess arises from the audience’s perception of the character’s transcendence beyond its dramatic function:

Shakespeare’s characters are marked by what we might call a ‘residue’ beyond their function . . . as agents, beyond their relations to specific actions. This residue or excess— for what we perceive can be conceived metaphorically as both greater than the action or plot, and as what is left over, what continues in our experience after the action is complete— . . . is what audiences have called the lifelikeness of Shakespeare’s characters. (3)

A character’s speech, as Newman shows, renders character more than a de-personalized agent of discourse, even though Newman does not disassociate this agency from the dramatic convention of the soliloquy within which it seems to be constricted. Christy Desmet, like Newman, sets out to construct a “rhetoric of Shakespearean character” and recognizes that characters are “users of language— not just effects of language” (13) but interprets character as ethical identity issuing from the dramatis personae’s rhetorical performance.17 Although Desmet treats characters as active agents in their use of rhetoric, this agency is constrained by a moral interpretive framework within which a character operates: a character’s use of rhetoric is embedded within, and is an index to, a moral horizon that constitutes the reader’s or audience’s interpretive framework and identification with the play’s characters. Character, for Desmet, is thus a cipher for abstract moral values pertaining to real persons— the distinctive qualities of speech which particularize it are flattened as character essentially becomes a meta-textual testing ground for the evaluation of ethical human actions and judgments.

17 Desmet examines how dramatic identity is shaped through pedagogical exercises such as controversiae and progymnasmata in the early modern English grammar school.
The Linguistic Turn: Toward a Pragmatics of Dramatic Shakespearean Character

What Desmet and Newman—but also New Historicists—do not account for is that a character not only uses language but, as Edward Burns aptly expresses, “character is a kind of language, and language a kind of action, a social praxis” (90, italics mine). Language, in other words, depends on character and does not exist as a reified abstraction (as discourse or poetics) apart from character or character’s use of it.\(^\text{18}\) Collapsing the Aristotelian distinction between lexis (verbal expression) and praxis (action), J.L. Austin’s foundational treatise on speech-act theory, *How to do Things with Words* (1962), argues that a speaker’s verbal utterances are performative— they “do” things or act upon reality rather than merely describe or reflect it. A speaker’s agency can be thus inferred through the illocutionary and perlocutionary force of his/her utterances.\(^\text{19}\)

This marriage of words and actions is the foundational principle of the still relatively young field of pragmatics, which is concerned with language *in use* in social contexts.\(^\text{20}\)

Instigated in the 1970s under language philosopher J.L. Austin and influentially developed

\(^{18}\) For Burns, character “is a special use of language . . . . And language is conceived of as a praxis— as purposive action” which is necessarily “political” (91). Burns, taking a post-structuralist view of language, conceives “the human subject” as constructed in linguistic praxis in relation to other “human subjects”, a relation that is “ultimately the reality of the state” (92).

\(^{19}\) Performative utterances can either be explicit (i.e. indicated by a verb such as “promise” in the utterance “I promise to come”) or implicit (i.e. the action performed is implied by the utterance rather than indicated by a verb, such as “Give me the book”). Transposed into an explicit performative utterance, the latter utterance could read: “I command you to give me the book”). An illocutionary act as is an action that is performed in uttering X whereas a perlocutionary act is an action that is performed by uttering X; the perlocutionary act registers the effect that the action has on the hearer.

\(^{20}\) Austin’s speech-act theory is one of the main subcategories of pragmatics; others include conversation analysis, indexicality and deixis, politeness theory, addressivity, implicature, and relevance theory.
under his successors John Searle and H. P. Grice, pragmatics is a reaction against the conceptualization of language as an abstract, self-referential and fixed system, which is evidenced in both Saussurean-based structural linguistics and Noam Chomsky’s generative grammar. For Saussure, langue (language) is a system of signification constituted by the dynamic relation between signs that, comprised of both the signifier (the linguistic form of a word) and the signified (the mental concept evoked by the signifier), relate to other signs to produce meaning. Meaning in structural linguistics, in other words, is relational or determined by the differences, oppositions, or combinations both within and between linguistic signs in this language system. Langue for Saussure is thus a self-enclosed and self-sufficient system which has no reference to extra-linguistic causes, speaker intentions, or reality lying outside of the realm of language; language is conceived of as a normative system of expressing mental concepts and constructing meaning that is divorced from parole (language as it is spoken or, simply, speech). In Chomsky’s model of generative grammar, the mind has an innate and unconscious knowledge of the principles or rules of a “universal grammar” which allow a speaker to formulate grammatically correct sentences: these sentences are “surface

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21 It has been widely noted that these three founders of pragmatics as a discipline (i.e. Grice, Austin, and Searle) are language philosophers; pragmatics gained ground as a sub-field of linguistics only from the 1980s onward. Searle formulated conditions and rules for the successful performance of illocutionary acts, while Grice developed a theory of conversational implicature, premised on the idea of cooperative communication between speakers and hearers, to account for the disparity between what a speaker says and what he/she means. I use Grice’s theory of implicature in Chapter 1. Chapters 2 and 3 are indirectly informed by Austin’s speech act theory.

22 The distinction between signifier and signified is not between a word (signifier) and a thing (signified), but between the form of a word— which, for Saussure, is its sound—and the concept that it evokes in the mind. Saussure refers to the sign as a “two-sided psychological entity” (66): the signifier and signified are inextricably, yet arbitrarily or conventionally, linked, which is to say that the signifier is ontologically arbitrary since its meaning depends on its conventional usage rather than on any predetermined scheme (for example, the sound cat is associated with the idea of cat, but the sound could very well be associated with another idea in another language). Saussure’s emphasis on the arbitrariness of the sign is crucial, as Daniel Chandler notes, because it renders language autonomous in relation to reality: “language does not ‘reflect’ reality but rather constructs it” (“Signs”). It needs to be emphasized that even though the signified refers to a mental concept, it also indirectly refers to an object existing in reality. Saussure, however, brackets off a metaphysical discussion to focus on the human mind.
structures” of the “deep structure” of syntactic representation in the mind. Grammatical correctness is thus an expression of a mental and universal grammar which delimits the speaker’s competence but isolates his/her “intelligence, motivation, emotional state” (Chomsky, qtd. in Cummings 54) from his/her use of language. Chomsky thus construes language as a logical, syntactic framework in which meaning is equivalent to the speaker’s innate cognitive ability to frame the sentences he/she utters.

Pragmatics revolts against the structuralist tendency in linguistics to examine the logical laws and principles of language by synchronically isolating phonetic, phonological, morphological, or syntactic forms of language since this approach forfeits the content of utterances. Pragmatics, “interested in the process of producing language and in its producers, not just in the end-product, language” (Mey 33), reintroduces the speaker as the user of language into the linguistic equation and shifts the analytic focus of linguistics from langue to parole. The speaker in pragmatics, who acts on reality by speaking, is a rational and intentional agent who has a performative agency: the speaker’s speech or parole creates meaning in a given context (as well as shapes that context) rather than reflects or reproduces the meaning inscribed onto language-as-system. As Jenny Thomas states, pragmatics

23 “Deep structure” and “surface structure” are Chomsky’s terms, first outlined in Syntactic Structures.

24 Meaning is contingent on the speaker’s understanding of the sentence uttered; grammar generates syntactic rules, which semantics elucidates. Chomsky, however, is not interested in semantics, and claims that syntax is autonomous. As Jacob Mey states, Chomsky devised “logic-like rules” for describing syntax (25) and, certainly, the “correct use of language presupposes the use of logic” (23), since grammar is logical. Similarly, the Saussurean sign is underwritten by a logic which unites the signifier and the signified. Austin, as Mey claims, dismisses the Chomskyan idea that speakers “form correct sentences or compose logically valid utterances, but [rather] communicate with each other” (23).

25 As Mey states, “Pragmatics is . . . the science of language as it is used by real, live people, for their own purposes and within their limitations and affordances” (5).

26 As Wataru Koyama states, pragmatics illustrates that “[t]here is no structure (langue) without pragmatics (parole)” (152).
foregrounds “meaning in interaction (or meaning in context) [so that] . . . making meaning is a dynamic process, involving the negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of utterance (physical, social and linguistic), and the meaning potential of an utterance” (22). Context is a crucial component in determining the speaker’s meaning, which is not only dialogic but also relative to his/her intentions and communicative goals. Language, in pragmatics, is thus a constitutive force which personalizes—without essentializing—the speaking subject.

The application of pragmatics to Shakespeare’s dramatic oeuvre, however, has proven to be unenlightening with respect to character since it has tended to override characters’ speech, treating it as a function of—and hence determined by—the language of the play. Using Austin’s speech act theory in their respective studies of the characters of Coriolanus and Henry V, Stanley Fish and Joseph A. Porter interpret these protagonists’ speeches as allegories of the plays’ thematic concern with language. Examining the illocutionary behaviour of Coriolanus, who repudiates the social conventions and moral obligations structuring speech acts to posit an essential and God-like self beyond language, Fish concludes that Coriolanus’ transgressive self-fashioning through performative utterances is a meta-dramatic commentary on the proper

27 Mey refers to context as being “dynamic . . . it is an environment that is in steady development, prompted by the continuous interaction of the people engaged in language use” (10). Koyama traces the pragmatic emphasis on context to the discipline of social anthropology, where Malinowski “advanced ideas of ‘context situation’ and ‘context of culture’” and showed that “linguistic or non-linguistic action needs to be understood in relation to the situational or cultural context in which the action takes place; this was intertwined with the anthropological doctrine of cultural relativism, which urges that actions be seen and understood from ‘within’ or from a ‘natives’ point of view’” (144).

28 Fish states that Coriolanus “wants to be independent of society and of the language with which it constitutes itself and its values, seeking instead a language that is the servant of essences he alone can recognize because he alone embodies them” (988). Coriolanus refuses to perform the speech acts of requesting and accepting, which “are acts which place their performer in a position of dependence”, and opts instead for promising and rejecting, which are “transactions that leave the self inviolate. Coriolanus’ every illocutionary gesture is one that declares his disinclination to implicate himself in the reciprocal web of obligations that is the content of the system of conventional speech acts. To put it simply, Coriolanus is always doing things (with words) to set himself apart” (994-5).
rehearsal of speech acts and the conditions and consequences attendant on their performance; the play, Fish claims, is a “Speech Act play” (1002) about the impossibility of standing autonomously outside of language, which structures reality. Porter, likewise, reads the characteristic verbal action of the monarchs in Shakespeare’s history plays (Richard II, 1 Henry IV, 2 Henry IV, and Henry V) as an index to the second tetralogy’s meta-dramatic concern with the thematic progression of language from the fall of Babel to its reinstatement in Henry’s polyglotism. 29 Since they prioritize thematic development over speech, both Porter and Fish do not concern themselves with how characters’ speech functions in its linguistic and social contexts.

Critics approaching Shakespeare from the field of pragmatics have, moreover, fallen into a Bradleyan essentialism in conflating mimetic representations with real people. This conflation underwrites Juhani Rudanko’s Pragmatic Approaches to Shakespeare, the only book-length study devoted to the practical application of pragmatic theory to dramatic Shakespearean character. 30 Aspiring to bridge the disciplinary divide between linguistics and literary analysis by enriching the understanding of Shakespeare through pragmatic strategies

29 Porter uses the fall of Babel and the expulsion from Eden as ideological “analogues” to map the tetralogy’s narrative progression from a non-dramatic to a dramatic conceptualization of language.

30 The humanist essentialism upon which Rudanko’s linguistic analysis is based also underpins linguist Roger Brown’s and literary critic Albert Gilman’s study of politeness in Shakespeare’s oeuvre. Brown and Gilman employ pragmatics to quantitatively mine the early modern English language of Shakespeare’s plays for linguistic data in the service of furthering the ends of historical discourse, or what would come to be known as historical pragmatics, in the mid-1990s. Brown’s and Gilman’s article, “Politeness Theory and Shakespeare’s Four Major Tragedies”, modifies and applies Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory (1978) to the linguistic corpus of Othello, King Lear, Hamlet, and Macbeth in order to test the theory’s universality as well as to study the phenomenon of politeness in the early modern English language. The co-authors assume that the soliloquy reveals a tragic character’s “true feelings and intentions” and provides “access to the [speaker’s] inner life that is necessary for a proper test of politeness theory” (208). More recent work which mines Shakespeare in the vein of historical pragmatics, but without discussing or making explicit assumptions about character, is Minako Nakayasu’s The Pragmatics of Modals in Shakespeare, which sets out to “give an exhaustive picture of the modal system in the language of Shakespeare” (10), and Raymond Person’s “‘Oh’ in Shakespeare: a Conversation Analytical Approach”, which uses conversation analysis to historically examine Shakespeare’s use of the discourse marker ‘Oh’ in the Quartos and in the Folio.
and vice-versa, Rudanko’s analysis of Othello, Coriolanus, and Iago is premised on the notion held in the field of pragmatics that “man is an essence and not a construct of ‘special discourses’ or of ‘social context’” (9). Because of this assumption, which Rudanko explicitly makes in order to valorize his text-based criticism and to challenge the New Historicist denial of autonomy to works of art (8), Rudanko’s readings of character merely champion the applicability of pragmatic tools to Shakespeare without arriving at any novel insights into character or its subjectivity effects. For example, the difference between the “early” and the “later” Othello sensed by the audience correlates to and manifests in the linguistic breakdown in adjacency pairs and Gricean maxims in Othello’s speech, which indicate his “lack of self-control and loss of composure” (28); Coriolanus’ speech acts of promising denote his insecurity and lack of self-confidence, which impel his boasting as well as dominate the play; and Iago’s mastery of topic control allows him to transcend his role as an allegorical Vice figure, which highlights his complexity as a “human being” (58).

What is notably missing in these early pragmatic explorations of dramatic character is an interactive framework between speakers and hearers and the social context within which speakers operate, for it is the embeddedness of the speaker’s speech— as well as his/her use of this speech— in social and discursive contexts that renders a speaker a character with a distinct

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31 Rudanko clearly recognizes that pragmatic rules and principles are derived from real-life conversation and need to be adjusted when applied to literature, but he nevertheless sees their relevance to dramatic dialogue since real-life conversation and dramatic dialogue are “intimately connected” (19).

32 Adjacency pairs imply turn-taking in conversation. For example, a question and a relevant response which immediately follows the question are considered an adjacency pair. The failure to observe turn-taking in conversation results in the violation of conversational maxims (which are formulated by Grice).

33 Another one-dimensional application of pragmatics to Shakespearean character is Ulrich Busse’s “An Inventory of Directives in Shakespeare’s King Lear”, which claims that a scrutiny of the relationship between Lear’s imperatives and their illocutionary force reveals Lear’s change from a self-assured person to a person who considers other characters’ feelings.
identity and an idiosyncratic subjectivity effect. Social and discursive contexts are the backdrop against which a character’s speech is played off; the synergy between context and speech particularizes character and allows the audience to differentiate one character from another even as characters engage in verbal exchanges. Although Keir Elam and Andrew Kennedy account for this social context of interpersonal, linguistic exchange between dramatis personae, the concept of character is sidelined and underdeveloped in their work since characters are treated as impersonal speakers or switching points in discourse rather than origins of speech. Elam’s *Shakespeare’s Universe of Discourse*, indebted to Austin’s speech act theory and Wittgenstein’s language-games, illustrates that the language of Shakespeare’s comedies is, rather, social discourse: the verbal interaction between characters draws attention to the significance of this social language-in-use. Nevertheless, this social discourse takes on a life of its own as it becomes the central subject of Shakespeare’s plays, which in turn strips Shakespeare’s speakers of agency by rendering them “interpersonal forces responsible for carrying forward the narrative dynamic” (*Shakespeare’s Universe* 7). The speakers’ individual aims and intentions as they intersect with larger discursive narratives within the plays go unexplored, as does their self-presentation within this social discourse. Kennedy, demonstrating that the interactive dialogue or “duologic encounter” between two characters reciprocally transforms their speech and their values, similarly fails to account for characters’ *individual* communication strategies apart from these interpersonal “duologues”, whose purpose is usually to accomplish the play’s dramatic action.

At issue in the metaphysical debate about character with which these pragmatic approaches overlap is the question of agency, which has either been conceptualized as an extra-personal and collective social force (e.g. as New Historicist “discourse”) or as unrestrained free
will that constitutes the core of individual identity. However, the recent performance and linguistic work by William Dodd (1998, 2009) and Lynne Magnusson (1999), as well as Simon Palfrey and Tiffany Stern’s study of cues and part-scripts in the early modern theatre, makes use of Bakhtinian dialogism to illustrate that Shakespearean character is neither an instrument of discourses nor the essential origin of speech but rather negotiates both extremes. Within a performance context, Palfrey and Stern conceptualize character as a dynamic process of immanent becomings borne of the jostling between the actor’s “part” or cue-script (which contains both text and context) and the larger play-script (which includes the other part-texts to which the actor’s role responds); the character’s life-likeness or “residue”, to use Newman’s term, thus emanates from the competition between a character’s desire to tell his/her story (in his/her part) whilst heeding “cues” and responding to other narratives (other scripted speeches or larger ideological forces) of the play-script.34 This strategic negotiation or jostling is also remarked by Dodd and Magnusson, who examine the intersection between “parts” and “wholes”, considering what a character “does” with his/her speech in relation to what is theatrically and discursively (Dodd, “Character”) or historically and discursively (Magnusson) scripted.

Both Magnusson, who builds on Kennedy’s work on dialogue, and Dodd posit that a “character effect”35 issues from the verbal interaction between speakers and hearers as well as from the intersection between speakers’ speeches and plays’ dominant discourses. Magnusson, investigating how speakers socially invent themselves in verbal interaction, blends the

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34 Palfrey and Stern: “[Shakespeare] make[s] the information offered by the cued part tell a slightly differently-angled story from the simultaneously unfolding ‘whole’ scene. We see here how cues can help achieve the ‘psychological’ sophistication and that almost tangible reality of feeling, for which Shakespeare has been so often celebrated” (112).

35 The term “character effect” is first employed by Magnusson and then by Dodd (“Character”).
pragmatic methods of discourse analysis, politeness theory, and Bourdieu’s economic model of
sociolinguistic exchange with socio-cultural practices and contexts, to show that even though
characters are constrained by the “social and power relations” (181) that are recorded in their
speech, they also shape these relations through their linguistic performances. Magnusson’s
claim that “[c]haracter effects are shaped by the speech patterns of speakers’ relative social
positions, both as given in the present moment of the verbal interaction and as gathering up the
cumulative trajectory of accustomed speech positions” (34) is drawn from her study of
Katherine’s character in *Henry VIII* as an “effect of negative politeness” (27). Just as
Katherine’s “external forms of politeness” (27) can serve as the coordinates for constructing
her (illusory) psychology as a real person, Iago’s (also illusory) psychological reality can
likewise be deduced from the manner in which he controls the economics of discourse
production and reception for personal profit in the Venetian linguistic market. Magnusson’s
concept of character as the product of a speaker’s linguistic negotiation relative to his/her
social (or historical) situatedness is translated into performative terms by William Dodd. For
Dodd, the dramatic person’s “character effect” is lodged in a character’s “discourse biography”,
which is “produced dynamically in the interplay between a dramatic person’s pragmatic
behaviour (what that person does with words and how he or she interacts with others) and that
person’s semantic attributes (the social, cultural, and moral identity ascribed to it)”
(“Character” 62). It is this cumulative “discourse biography”, according to Dodd, which creates

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36 Magnusson’s objective is “to examine how social relations are constructed in and figured by interacting and
interactive discourses”, and to look closely “at how and to what extent speech and other verbal activities shape
and are shaped by social organization and by social relations” (5). Sylvia Adamson’s recent sociolinguistic work
on how speaker identity is dialogically fashioned vis-à-vis the interrogative pronouns of “who” and “what”
similarly engages philology and historicism. Adamson concludes that the speaker’s social construction via the
variation in usage between who/what reflects “lived experience at a particular cultural moment or conversational
juncture” (77) but that this linguistic variation also becomes the vehicle for a larger, sociolinguistic change in
grammar.
the quiddity of character as well as an impression of its interiority and hence its reality.

“Character effect”, for Dodd and Magnusson then, is premised on an interpretation of agency as performance or performative agency: a speaker’s agency is evidenced in and inferred from what this speaker pragmatically “does” with or in his/her speech in an interactive context, as well as how this speech dialogically responds to impersonal discourses within which it is necessarily contained.37

My project builds on Dodd’s and Magnusson’s notion of “character effect” as arising from the dialectical interplay between a dramatic speaker’s pragmatic use of speech and the predominant discourses that script dramatis personae’s functions and dictate their roles. Dodd’s primary aim is to theorize character in a performative context by examining the “interface” (“Character” 71) between fictional characters’ “discourse biographies” (via a case study of Othello) and early modern actors’ “performance biographies” (“Character” 69), while Magnusson seeks to delineate how Shakespeare’s characters are “socially constructed” through dialogic interaction and how they in turn construct social relations. My objective, in contrast, is to explore how the subjectivity effects or “character effects”—the very humanness and transcendent greatness of Shakespearean characters—are produced pragmatically. To that end, I focus on three of Shakespeare’s complex and enigmatic characters who are all self-conscious users of language, and have rich literary and historical backgrounds. I employ the tools of pragmatics to examine how Falstaff’s, Cleopatra’s, and Henry V’s verbal negotiations produce their character effects in a theatrical context. However, I do not simply apply a pragmatic methodology to the study of character; my purpose is not to delimit who or what these

37 Agency, according to Dodd, is conscious and underwritten by choice; speakers are “aware of and respond to transpersonal ‘discourses’, as opposed to being simply voiced or subjugated by them; [the] self is capable of choosing whether or not to put on the destined livery” (“Destined Livery” 156). Dodd’s statement reflects Lars Engle’s definition of agency as “the powers of responsible, intentional action vested in persons” (62).
characters are in terms of their idiosyncratic personalities as communicated or determined by
the characteristic aspects of their speech, for to do so would be to sacrifice their multi-faceted
variety and complexity. Rather, I account for the way(s) in which the character effects of
Falstaff’s vitality, Cleopatra’s sexual charisma, and Henry V’s moral opacity are generated by
what these character-speakers pragmatically “do” with their speech in the context of their
interactions with other characters. I claim that “character effects” result from the characters’
pragmatic use of language, which contends with— either to undermine or transcend— the
character’s role as scripted by other characters in the play and by the playwright. Characters
are thus linguistic effects that emerge from individual characters’ speech as well as from
Shakespeare’s pragmatic use of language which shapes them and the narrative of the play.

As pragmatic speakers in a drama, characters undeniably have agency. But this agency
arises from characters’ speech in a dialogic situation: it is an “agency of intention” to move
others which motivates speech and which is evident in the very act of speaking. Nevertheless,
this agency is always and already predetermined, compromised, and set in motion by the
playwright who frames his characters’ utterances to communicate his own meaning to the
audience. As Kennedy notes, the primary difference between actual conversation and dramatic
dialogue is that the latter issues from on-stage actors whose speech is “always directed

38 While I agree with Magnusson that “[i]t is still possible to conceptualize a connection between style and
character, if we reach towards a dialogics of the speaking subject and a pragmatic reading of dramatic character”
(34), identifying a character’s distinctive style of speech does not figure into my project. Although I pinpoint the
pragmatic traits that designate characters’ speech— such as Falstaff’s implicatures or Cleopatra’s reportage— these
pragmatic traits are not identified for the purpose of mapping characters’ personalities or delineating their
larger speech repertoires. While pragmatic traits may certainly indicate a character’s distinctive speaking style,
they are not definitive of that style nor do they solely constitute it: linguistic traits continually fluctuate, since their
use depends on the speaker’s speech situation, social circumstances, and his/her “positioning” (to borrow
Magnusson’s term) in social discourse.

39 I borrow the term “agency of intention” from Laura Ahearn (137), who calls for the need to distinguish and
account for various types of agencies.
outwards to an anonymous or non-conversational auditor or spectator” (11); dialogue is, significantly, scripted. As Mick Short reveals, drama is structured as a series of embedded discourses: the level of discourse between two characters speaking onstage (speaker and hearer) is embedded within a larger level of discourse between author and reader or audience: “character speaks to character, and this discourse is part of what the playwright ‘tells’ the audience” (149). The presence of an overhearing audience in the theatre is inscribed into the dramatic structure of a play as well as in a character’s dramatic “parts”: in an on-stage dialogue or verbal exchange, the triangular relationship between two speakers and the audience attunes the audience to messages which may be directed exclusively to the audience rather than to the other on-stage character(s), while it also helps to constitute the audience’s understanding of the play. Shakespeare, in other words, speaks to the audience through his characters and pragmatically uses them to communicate a layer of meaning that jostles with the meanings created by the characters’ speech. If meaning-making in pragmatics is, to reiterate Jenny Thomas, an interactive “and dynamic process” that involves “the negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of utterance (physical, social and linguistic), and the meaning potential of an utterance” (22), it then becomes necessary to not only examine how a character’s pragmatic use of language encodes and conveys his/her intentions and how it intersects with a character’s scripted roles, but to also examine the effect that this speech has on the onstage and offstage audience(s).

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40 Cf. Jonathan Culpeper, who states that due to what the playwright “tells” or communicates to the audience/reader via the character’s speech, “character behaviour has greater relevance and significance” (146) than a real person’s behaviour. See also Gilbert, who usefully charts the differences between fictional and actual verbal interaction (6-7) to note that in real life conversations, “topics might arise in an indirect way, as a result of shared mutual knowledge, and so be obscured to bystanders” (Shakespeare’s Dramatic Speech 7).

41 Keir Elam, referencing Sidney and Scaliger to argue for the performativity of early modern dramatic texts, notes that “the primary communicative act [in drama] is precisely the dramatist’s doing to or doing toward the audience. Dramatic composition becomes, as it were, a making of doings” (“Much Ado” 44).
In my dissertation, I argue that the character effect—the audience’s sense of a dramatic character’s ontological reality—is produced by the counterpoint between a character’s pragmatic use of speech in response to his/her interlocutors in a theatrical context, and an allegorical meaning conveyed by the playwright that underpins the character’s speech and structures the play. This allegorical meaning informs a character’s speech habits and dialogically speaks to—or rather, challenges—his/her scripted role in the play, as well as allows the audience to posit anteriority to the character-speaker or a pre-existing life from which his/her speech originates. Shakespeare’s allegorization of Falstaff as vitality intersects with Falstaff’s linguistic performances, which allow him to exploit and transcend his scripted role as a medieval Vice figure; Cleopatra’s allegorical meaning as Eros complements her linguistic performances to offset her scripted identity as an Egyptian lecher; and the allegory of rhetorical sovereignty that Henry V instantiates works with his rhetorical performances to illustrate that he is more than just the exemplary Christian monarch of providential history. The interiority ascribed to these characters as speakers is thus a function of their anteriority—of their references to anterior utterances, meanings, and discourses with which they are in dialogue—which creates in the audience the impression that characters exist independent of the play and its discourses. Shakespeare’s dramatic character is not a real person, a nameless subject of discourse or receptacle for language, or even a symbol: it is, rather, a quasi-allegorical personated person whose autonomy and idiosyncrasy are, paradoxically, contingent on Shakespeare’s communicative intentions. This quasi-allegorical character is not static but dynamic; it is in a continual process of becoming. While Robert Weimann has demonstrated that Shakespeare’s audience had a double awareness of the onstage character-as-actor and vice-versa, I suggest that this double awareness is also relevant to or features in the audience’s
observation of character-as-speaker and his/her self-representation through language as it intersects with the dramatist’s presentation of this character. The three chapters that follow present case studies of Falstaff’s, Cleopatra’s, and Henry’s character effects.

In Chapter 1, I examine Falstaff’s verbal exchanges with Hal as well as with the off-stage audience in 1 Henry IV using H. P. Grice’s theory of conversational implicature within the framework of Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory. I contend that Falstaff’s flouting and violation of Grice’s conversational maxims— in other words, his intentional creation of conversational implicatures— converge with the meta-theatrical moments in the play to produce his vitality as a character. Falstaff’s verbal implicatures, evidenced in his use of puns, wordplay, and appositional asides, allow him to enact and thus maintain his scripted social roles in the play as vainglorious braggart, hedonist, and thief. However, the implicatures simultaneously allow Falstaff to undermine or exceed these roles by insinuating his mockery of the illegitimacy and hypocrisy of Hal and of the Lancastrian dynasty in which he, ironically, participates. Falstaff is thus able to uphold his public “face” or image only to comically undermine it, in order to indirectly ridicule the Bolingbroke. Through the instances of meta-theatricality and dramatic irony which attend Falstaff’s implicatures, as well as by invoking visual representation, Shakespeare conveys Falstaff’s allegorical meaning as the exuberance of life. Falstaff’s implicatures, pointing as they do to Shakespeare’s meaning, invite the audience to infer an anteriority to Falstaff.

In Chapter 2, I examine how Cleopatra in Antony and Cleopatra uses reported speech and reportage within a performative framework to affectively convince her on-stage and off-stage audiences of her transcendent greatness and sexual charisma in order to memorialize

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42 In Shakespeare and the Power of Performance, Weimann notes that the actor’s performance of the scripted words on a page creates a tension, or a medial space of bifold authority, between text and performance.
herself for posterity. As a dialogical and performative act that inscribes the reporter’s attitude toward the content being reported, reportage renders the speaker-reporter an active participant in the construction of discourse and in re-scripting his/her identity within this discourse. Cleopatra, whose identity is politically compromised, adopts Roman reportage to re-script her identity as a sexually powerful and victorious Egyptian in a Roman discursive context that denies her this very power. I claim that Cleopatra’s speech acts of reporting other characters’ speech, reporting her personal imaginings, and commanding that her own speech and behaviour be reported to the Romans reveal her enacted submission to Roman authority as a pretext for asserting her superiority and sexual dominance over the Romans. Cleopatra performs her Roman-scripted role as a weak, inconstant Egyptian and denigrated courtesan only to exceed this role by glorifying her sexual sovereignty in an Egyptian context: she turns her powerlessness into sexual self-empowerment through the perlocutionary force of her reports as well as through her discreet self-praise which underlies her praise of Antony’s heroism and Caesar’s greatness. Shakespeare heightens Cleopatra’s pragmatic use of reportage by instances of meta-theatricality and by counterpointing scenes which, in calling attention to the boy actor’s performance of female sexuality, communicate his valorization of her sexuality and his allegorization of her as sexual desire or Eros.

In Chapter 3, I use a pragma-rhetorical approach to examine how Henry’s speeches and verbal exchanges in Henry V create the audience’s impression of his moral ambivalence as a Christian king and a Machiavel. Pragma-rhetoric, an analytical method combining rhetorical persuasion and dialectical argumentation, envisions rhetoric as a mode of persuasive argumentation in which the speaker’s intention to communicate aligns with his/her intention to persuade the audience that he/she addresses. Reading Henry as a consummate orator within
this pragma-rhetorical framework, I argue that the discrepancy between Henry’s constative use of language to establish his ethos as a virtuous Christian monarch (as well as a plain-speaking and humble soldier) and his argumentative use of rhetoric create the effect of his moral ambivalence. While logos and ethos are complementary modes of rhetoric which usually work together in the service of a common end of persuasion, Henry’s logical reasoning (logos) undermines his ethos: Henry’s attempt to persuade his audience of his ethos is undercut by his logical fallacies and faulty logic, which underlie his use of modal verbs and analogies, to expose the means by which he hopes to achieve a legitimacy that his father’s usurpation denies him. Shakespeare reinforces the audience’s sense of Henry’s Machiavellianism, which is a rhetorical effect, by the juxtaposition of scenes and the dramatic irony framing Henry’s rhetorical performances which foreground his political expediency and aggression. Shakespeare’s ironic framing of Henry’s rhetorical manoeuvres, in conjunction with Henry’s logical reasoning, conveys the playwright’s message that Machiavellianism is a crucial element of Christian kingship; Henry stands as an allegory for the paradoxical nature of rhetorical sovereignty.

My dissertation shows that attending to characters’ pragmatic use of language within a theatrical context can help to rejuvenate the re-emerging study of Shakespeare’s dramatic persons by accounting for or giving tangible expression to an audience’s mental impressions of a character’s “roundness”. The use of a pragmatic methodology in a theatrical context can fruitfully yield insights to the play of voices — the character’s, the playwright’s, and the

43 “Round” and “flat” are E.M. Forster’s terms for distinguishing the degree of lifelikeness of novelistic characters. In contradistinction to “flat” or two-dimensional characters which are caricatures or types “constructed round a single idea or quality” (46-7), a “round” character is “capable of surprising in a convincing way . . . . It has the incalculability of life about it . . . ” (54). Although E.M. Forster’s definition of a “round” character pertains to novelistic characters, it aptly conveys the lifelikeness and psychological reality of Shakespeare’s dramatic creations.
actor’s— that structure a play’s meanings and that are endemic to the theatre as an interactive space premised on verbal and non-verbal communication. Pragmatics reveals that the magic of Shakespeare’s dramatic characters emerges only in the presence of an audience.
Chapter 2

“True Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff”: Gricean Implicature and Falstaff’s Roundness in *1 Henry IV*

But Falstaff unimitated, unimitable Falstaff, how shall I describe thee? Thou compound of sense and vice; of sense which may be admired but not esteemed, of vice which may be despised but hardly detested.

—Samuel Johnson, *The Plays of William Shakespeare*

Johnson’s mildly bemused outcry is symptomatic of both past and present critical attempts to assess Shakespeare’s most self-conscious, compelling, paradoxical, and fleshed-out dramatic character. The residual weight that Falstaff carries as a character had inspired critics from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries to interpret him as a fully rounded or psychologically “real” person with an inner core: in 1744, Corbyn Morris deemed that the “excellency of [his] character” is due to “humour, or the representation and detection of a bragging and vaunting coward in real life” (25, italics mine); in the early decades of the twentieth century, Bradley sang the praises of a transcendent or “immortal Falstaff” who is “so extraordinary a being” (“Rejection” 87, italics mine) that he could not but classify him with Hamlet as a man “of genius” (“Rejection” 90); and even E.K. Chambers, writing in 1925, agreed that Falstaff is an “individual in the fullest sense” (119). This early character criticism which posits Falstaff as a real person is perhaps best exemplified in Maurice Morgann’s oft-cited attempt to vindicate Falstaff from critics’ claims of his “constitutional cowardice” by advancing that “Shakespeare has contrived to make secret Impressions upon us of [Falstaff’s] Courage . . .” (13). In his 1777 essay, Morgann attributes Falstaff’s “roundness”— or what
Morgann calls Falstaff’s “distinct and separate subsistence” (177)—not to the audience’s rational conception of his character as determined or “abstracted” by the “Understanding”, but rather to the audience’s instinctually-based “Impression” of Falstaff’s courage which, he deems, “belonged to his constitution, and was manifest in the conduct and practice of his whole life” (28). In other words cowardice, as Morgann claims, “is not the Impression, which the whole character of Falstaff is calculated to make” (4-5); it is the merely “seen” aspect of this character whose true self remains occluded and must be “inferred only” from “general principles, from latent motives, and from policies not avowed” (fn. p. 62).¹ In contending that “externally, and from without” (167) Falstaff is a coward but “illuminated from within” (167) he is a courageous military commander, Morgann predicates his interpretation on the assumption that Falstaff’s explicitly depicted dramatic parameters are informed by, and have recourse to, his interiority.²

Owing in large part to John Dover Wilson’s contextualization of the jovial knight as the allegorical Vanity figure within the morality play tradition, critics in the twentieth century predominantly departed from Romantic bardolatory and turned their focus to tracing Falstaff’s lineage from historical and literary antecedents. The result has been an emphasis on Falstaff as a character type: in addition to being interpreted as a medieval Riot or Vice figure, Falstaff has been classified as a Plautine miles gloriosus, a braggadocio of Italian comedy, a buffoon, a

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¹ This ability to infer the roundness of character, according to Morgann, is distinctly Shakespearean: “in other poets, the parts which are not seen, do not in fact exist. But there is a certain roundness and integrity in the forms of Shakespeare, which give [the characters] an independence as well as a relation, insomuch that we often meet with passages, which tho’ perfectly felt, cannot be sufficiently explained in words, without unfolding the whole character of the speaker” (fn. p. 58).

² Shakespeare, claims Morgann, “boldly makes a character act and speak from those parts of the composition, which are inferred only, and not distinctly shown. This produces a wonderful effect; it seems to carry us beyond the poet to nature itself, and gives an integrity and truth to fact and character, which they could not otherwise obtain” (fn. p. 62).
prototypical Elizabethan soldier, the “burlesque representation of the Puritan” (Poole 63) and the Lord of Misrule of Saturnalian revelry. Although these studies elucidate the elements that comprise “the most substantial comic character that ever was invented” (Hazlitt 148), they downplay the idiosyncratic lineaments of Falstaff’s character and flatten his “roundness”: Falstaff becomes a dramatic function who only has allegorical or symbolic value in the Henriad, particularly in relation to Hal.

That Falstaff is or embodies the polyphony of voices typified by the character types he inhabits can not be denied, but their sum total does not amount to his roundness. Instead, this source study approach minimizes Falstaff’s complexity since it fails to account for Falstaff’s remarkable agency, which allows him to adopt and exceed these roles to his advantage. The other extreme, which affirms Falstaff’s absolute agency, is epitomized by critics who view Falstaff as a “universal mimic” or a “parodist [and] artist” (Van Doren 109) who is paradoxically “so much himself because he is never himself . . .” (109). Roy Battenhouse, for instance, suggests that Falstaff’s use of Biblical allusions intimates that he is a parodist— but one who is a charitable and religious fool at the core; Battenhouse, in a rather Bradleyan fashion, claims that the parody points to “the hidden truth about his inner and real self” (“Falstaff as Parodist” 36). Similarly, Kristen Poole notes that Falstaff is a satirist of extreme Puritanism and is also satirized by Shakespeare (70), but her assessment of his agency is clearly a product of her New Historicist treatment of Falstaff as a social representation of Puritanism who is also an instrument of Puritan discourse. While Harry J. Berger agrees that

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3 Bernard Spivack, in the vein of Dover Wilson, reads Falstaff as a Riot figure (see Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil). C. L. Barber’s identification of Falstaff as the Lord of Misrule (Shakespeare’s Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form and its Relation to Social Custom), coupled with Bakhtin’s theory of the carnival grotesque, inspired a host of readings in the 1990s and in the early 2000s that evaluated Falstaff socio-historically within the contours of the early modern festival tradition and popular culture. See, for instance, David Ruiter’s Shakespeare’s Festive History: Feasting, Festivity, Fasting and Lent in the Second Henriad, and the collection of essays edited by Roland Knowles in Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin, particularly François Laroque’s “Shakespeare’s Battle of Carnival and Lent”.

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Falstaff is an agential subject who mocks others, he asserts that Falstaff is also the intended object of his mockeries ("He parades himself as an example of what he mocks" [8]). Berger shifts the critical focus back onto character, but this time as a subject-speaker, by contending that critics’ interpretations of Falstaff as a depersonalized voice or as a “site” for various discourses renders character an “object” of language rather than a subject of its use. The critical tendency to abstract dramatic character, Berger claims, separates or “dethrones” the “subject” of discourse from the “speaker” of discourse to position in its stead “an object, a symbol, an iconograph, the bearer of the meanings of others” (46) which speaks through the character. This objectification of the character as speaker through his/her language detracts from the subject-speaker’s self-representation as the “subject[,] of [his/her] speech” (53) and reduces Falstaff as a character to a constellation of character-types, which “are more objects than subjects of their speech” or “characters who are not objects for themselves, who do not present their self-representations as characters to themselves or to others” (62). For Berger, “[t]o imagine Falstaff as subject is to imagine the speaker on the model of the actor, imagine him performing like the actor (but not as an actor) in that he presents his representation of himself as the object he interprets, and in that he continuously audits and monitors this performance” (62-3). While Berger underlines the importance of Falstaff’s performance as an agential subject in his self-representation and self-interpretation as a stage Puritan and while he predicates his conception of character on the subject-speaker’s active and willed use of discourse as both a subject and an object, Berger does not examine how Falstaff uses these discourses or what he pragmatically “does” with his words in an interactive context. Moreover, given that Berger’s concept of character is founded on the notion of the subject-speaker’s self-

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4 Berger does not study the particulars of “the discursive registers through which Falstaff as the agent or subject of his speech constructs and deconstructs, represents and interprets, himself and his relation to Harry” (59).
audition of his discursive self-presentation as actor, his reading of Falstaff accounts more for the audience’s sense of Falstaff’s self-consciousness than it does for Falstaff’s character as a whole, for Falstaff’s idiosyncratic complexity certainly includes but is not exclusively defined by self-consciousness.

Richard Levin, building on the dialectical interface of interiority/exteriority that structures Morgann’s visible part/invisible whole theory, strives to ascertain what exactly Falstaff’s verbally unarticulated “latent motives and policies not avowed” (15) are by examining the “recurrent device” of covert or “secret scheming” (15). Not only does Levin not question the polarization between a character’s public role and his/her interior and ultimately inaccessible private “self”, but in labelling Falstaff a “schemer” with Machiavellian shadings, he also groups Falstaff with a host of other, minor Shakespearean characters who, in his view, apparently also possess a quiddity of being to disclose how Falstaff adheres to this schemer “type” rather than to outline how Falstaff differs from this type and from minor characters.

Although Levin claims that “secret scheming increases alertness to the dense texture of language” (128) and lays out in his Appendix the rhetorical modes or “oblique prompts” (132) adopted by “schemers” to achieve their goals—such as protesting, affirming, denying too strongly (133), adopting a rhetoric of court compliment (134), learned or popular allusions and

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5 Secret scheming is “formulated and executed by characters who never disclose it either to the audience or to other characters and [] goes unremarked within the plays” (15).

6 Levin claims that “[i]n early modern drama, even when a scheming character by no means resembles the stage Machiavel, we can often discern the shadow of that figure” (125). Regarding complexity: “when characters are seen to scheme secretly, they become more complex for us and more fully integrated into the world they inhabit” (125).
verbal equivocation (136)—he divorces (and thus reifies) these rhetorical modes from schemers’ pragmatic use of them in their social interactions with other characters.\(^7\)

The critical attention accorded to Falstaff’s language has largely been in the service of excavating Falstaff’s essence or who or what he “is” as a character. While pre- and post-Romantic critics raved about the tangible “wit” that controls and directs Falstaff’s speech, contemporary commentators identify either the copious and varied range of discourses that Falstaff amalgamates into his speech as a parodist or actor, or note in passing the characteristic elements that render his speech distinctive, such as his conditional pseudo-promises, his puns, “his surreal images, his lightening lies in self-exculpation, [and] his parodies of fashionable rhetoric” (West 541) including, as Poole and others have noted, his parodic use of Puritan jargon and a Puritan rhetorical style replete with repetition and Biblical allusions.\(^8\) Joseph A. Porter, working with J.L. Austin’s speech act theory, identifies Falstaff’s speech acts such as naming, summoning, and denying (56, 59)\(^9\) while other critics like James Calderwood even go as far as claiming that Falstaff is a “corporealized word” (43). But despite the focus on Falstaff’s engagement in various discourses or on his self-fictionalization through language, modern scholarship on Falstaff has not looked at his performative use of language within the particular speech context of his utterances and in relation to his interactions with his

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\(^7\) Levin holds that “[s]ecret scheming helps us to see how rules of conduct are violated or evaded, how the established order maintains itself or fails or adapts to accommodate an upstart” (128).

\(^8\) Mark Van Doren’s description of Falstaff’s “personal idiom” encapsulates the spirit of early twentieth-century commentators’ observations of Falstaff’s speaking style. Van Doren states that Falstaff’s “native speech is casual yet pure, natural yet distinguished, easy and yet expertly wrenched out of line with the conventions of syntax; impossible to define yet audibly his very own” (109). Van Doren also notes what is now considered to be a critical commonplace: “. . . most of the time [Falstaff’s native speech] is buried under heaps of talk delivered from a hundred assumed personalities, a hundred fictitious identities” (110). Falstaff’s speech “is also repetitive, it rolls back on itself, it picks up its theme and tosses it to us again, with rich improvements” (110).

\(^9\) The brunt of Porter’s analysis is focused on Hal.
interlocutors. Doing so reveals that Falstaff’s roundness is not an a priori essence expressed through speech but an effect of his linguistic performances in a theatrical context.

Working within the framework of pragmatics, I examine how Falstaff’s verbal exchanges with Hal and with the off-stage audience produce the character effect of his roundness or the audience’s sense of his reality as a character. Using Grice’s theory of implicature to examine Falstaff’s speech can bring to light how the audience “infers” what Falstaff indirectly implies beyond what he explicitly says. I contend that Falstaff’s conversational implicatures in 1 Henry IV in his exchanges with Hal allow him to uphold his scripted roles as an allegorical Vice, a braggart thief, a hedonist, and a Puritan, as well as allow him to simultaneously exceed these roles by mocking the illegitimacy and hypocrisy of Hal and the Lancastrian dynasty through self-mockery. This mockery or critique of the Lancastrians, as it intersects with Falstaff’s meta-theatricality, instances of dramatic irony, puns and wordplay through which Falstaff converses with the audience, allows the audience to posit an anteriority—rather than an interiority—to Falstaff which precedes but also transcends his in-the-moment performances. The tectonic jostling between Falstaff’s inflation and deflation of the self-representations which his implicatures facilitate produces an energy or vitality that gives him his roundness. Falstaff is certainly to be interpreted with reference to the literary and dramatic types toward which he constantly gestures and which he invokes, but he is also to be read on a pragmatic level as a speaker who hints at or suggests opinions that he never explicitly states. A Gricean approach to Falstaff’s speech can thus illuminate how the character carefully treads the interface between subverting and upholding the Machiavellian power structure of the main Lancastrian plot to craft a distinctively life-like identity:10 it can

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10 Hugh Grady claims that Falstaff subverts the Machiavellian power structure of the play while Berger claims that Falstaff cooperates with Hal and is complicit in maintaining the power structure. Grady claims that Falstaff’s
also demonstrate how Falstaff fulfills the audience’s expectations of his vainglorious braggartism while also unpredictably exceeding or subverting these same expectations.

I first outline Grice’s theory of implicature and its relationship to Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory before launching into an analysis of Falstaff’s use of conversational implicatures in his interactions with Hal and with the offstage audience.

“I have much to say in the behalf of that Falstaff”: Gricean Implicature and Unspoken Meaning

Conversational implicatures provide the means to access a meaning that is implied beyond the grammatical or semantic (conventional) meaning of words or sentences. According to language philosopher H. P. Grice, a conversational implicature is an intentional and responsive act performed in a conversation by a speaker who utters a clause or a sentence, whose conventional or semantic meaning differs from its implied (or implicated) meaning.\textsuperscript{11} To use Wayne Davis’s more explicit formulation, “implicature”, derived from the verb “to imply”, is “the act of meaning or implying something by saying something else” (5): what is implied is thus independent of what is said, but it is nevertheless implied in addition to—rather than instead of—what is said. Grice identifies conversational implicature as a non-

\textsuperscript{11} Grice uses the verb “implicate” to signify “imply”. Implicatures are produced by implying a meaning. Grice opts for using the verb “implicate” in order to “avoid having to make choices between words like ‘imply,’ ‘suggest’, ‘indicate’, and ‘mean’” (“Utterer’s Meaning” 86). My use of “implicate” mirrors Grice’s use of the verb.
conventional subclass of conventional implicatures. A conventional implicature occurs when “the conventional meaning of the words used . . . determine what is implicated, besides helping to determine what is said” (“Logic” 25), or rather when the implied meaning of an utterance is identical to, because it is determined by, the semantic meaning of the utterance.12 A conversational implicature, however, signals an additional and independent—or different—meaning apart from the semantic meaning of the utterance that is both contextually sensitive and variable, depending on the discursive features of the conversation. For example, in responding to A’s question “Are you coming to the party tonight?” with “I have an overdue paper to write”, B is explicitly stating that he has another obligation (a paper to write) but he is also implying (implicating) that he is not coming to the party without explicitly saying so. To use Davis’s concise formulation, “[s]peaker implication is indirect speaker meaning: meaning one thing by meaning another” (5); an implicature is a performative act embedded in the “cooperative” efforts of a conversation.13 As a bi-directional exchange between speakers, conversation operates on the general and foundational assumption governing interaction which Grice terms the “Cooperative Principle”, to which speakers and hearers must adhere if they are to communicate efficiently and achieve their conversational goals.14 This Cooperative Principle

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12 Grice provides the following as an example: “He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave” (“Logic” 25). Bravery, which is a consequence of the subject’s being an Englishman, is denoted by the word “therefore” which implies this causal connection. The speaker does not explicitly say that his bravery consequentially follows from his being English in so many words but certainly implies this on a semantic level. Conjunctions such as but, even, therefore, and yet are indicative of conventional implicatures.

13 Grice notes that verbal exchanges between two interlocutors are not a series of “disconnected remarks” but are “to some degree at least, cooperative efforts” (“Logic” 26).

14 In a conversation, “each participant recognizes . . . a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction. This purpose or direction may be fixed from the start (e.g., by an initial proposal of a question for discussion), or it may evolve during the exchange; it may be fairly definite, or it may be so indefinite as to leave very considerable latitude to the participants (as in a casual conversation)” (“Logic” 26). Grice additionally notes that even though the “mutually accepted direction” of the conversation may be common or shared, the “ultimate aims may, of course, be independent and even in conflict” (“Logic” 29). Wayne Davis notes that the only way that the Cooperative Principle will not apply in a conversational exchange is when “nothing is required
is expressed by the axiom: “Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (“Logic” 26), and is predicated on four maxims: the maxim of quantity (“make your contribution as informative as is required [for the current purposes of the exchange]”); the maxim of quality (the super-maxim “try to make your contribution one that is true” is broken down into two smaller maxims: “do not say what you believe to be false; do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence”); the maxim of relation (“be relevant”); and the maxim of manner (“be perspicuous: avoid obscurity of expression, avoid ambiguity, be brief, and be orderly”) (“Logic” 27). The intentional transgression or infringement of these maxims, however, creates a conversational implicature only if the speaker still adheres to the Cooperative Principle. Once these maxims are infringed, violated, opted out of, suspended, or “flouted” by a speaker or if a speaker, in other words, “blatantly fail[s] to fulfill” a maxim (“Logic” 30) by doing any of the aforementioned, the hearer must be able to engage in an

by the accepted purpose of the conversation either because there is no conversation, or because it has no accepted purpose, or because the accepted purpose is not specific enough to require a particular contribution” (60).

It should be noted that maxims are not norms or rules that interlocutors follow in conversation but are rather universally held assumptions that govern conversation or “statements of regular patterns in behaviour” (Brown and Levinson 5). Grice adds a disclaimer that only interlocutors “who care about the goals that are central to conversation/communication (such as giving and receiving information, influencing and being influenced by others) must be expected to have an interest, given suitable circumstances, in participating in talk exchanges that will be profitable only on the assumption that they are conducted in general accordance with the Cooperative Principle and the maxims” (“Logic” 30).

Grice mentions two non-decisive tests for determining a conversational implicature: “nondetachability” (i.e. an implicature is non-detachable if it is not possible “to find another way of saying the same thing” [“Logic” 39]), and “cancelability” (i.e. an implicature can be cancelled by the speech context, or by a clause that demonstrates that the speaker opts out of the implicature. For instance, the speaker says X and implicates Y but then adds an additional sentence or clause to clarify that he/she does not mean Y [see “Further Notes” 44]).

An example of an implicature that flouts the maxim of quantity would be if A asks B for the time, and B responds by saying: “It’s exactly the same time as it was yesterday at this time”. B’s response is not as informative as it should be and does not answer A’s question in a precise manner; he/she uses circumlocution to unnecessarily say more than is called for. If B had said “It is three o’clock”, for instance, he/she would have been observing the maxim of quantity. An example of an implicature that flouts the maxim of relevance would be if A asks B what he/she thinks of their mathematics Professor, and B responds by saying “It’s a gorgeous, sunny day

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inferential process to “work out” or rationally deduce the speaker’s suggested meaning by taking into account the conventional meaning of the spoken words, the speaker’s conformity to the Conversational Principle (CP) and its maxims, linguistic and other contexts of utterance, and shared background knowledge. In other words, in the Gricean scheme, the speaker intends and thus expects the hearer to recognize implicature X and to thereby contemplate what the speaker had in mind in uttering X, given that the speaker spoke cooperatively. However, as Davis claims, the speaker’s implicatures may not necessarily be successful in achieving their ends: “what a speaker means or implies is determined by what the speaker intends. But one person’s intentions do not depend on what others presume, believe, or infer . . . . implicatures today”. In this case, B’s response is not relevant to A’s question: he/she changes the topic of conversation to avoid having to express his/her opinion (a response along the lines of “He’s great” or “I don’t really like him” would have been in keeping with the maxim of relevance). An example of an implicature that flouts the maxim of quality would be if A exclaims “This is the third day in a row that we’ve had thunder-showers!” and B sarcastically responds with “Yes, it’s another fantastic day”. The irony in B’s response indicates that he/she believes (and thus implicates) the opposite of what he/she says (what he/she says is not true). Finally, an example of flouting the maxim of manner would be if A asks B what the secret to making an exquisite chocolate cake is, and B responds by giving an overly detailed description of the process using foreign terms that A does not understand. B’s response would be anything but “brief”. Other instances of flouting the maxim of manner may involve exaggeration or a certain ambiguity in the choice of words themselves. Grice identified only three ways of failing to fulfill a maxim (i.e. flouting, violating, and opting out); the other two were added by subsequent pragmaticians. Jenny Thomas notes that both Grice and contemporary pragmaticians use violating, suspending, flouting, opting out, and infringing interchangeably. For the difference between the terms, see Thomas (65-74).

Cf. Wayne Davis, who claims that the “existence of conversational implicatures does not depend in any way on the assumption that the speaker is observing the CP, [even though] conversational principles may play a role in the recognition of implicatures” (127).

Neo-Gricean philosophers who revise or extend Grice’s observations deem that implicatures need not necessarily be intended or “meant” in order to be construed as implicatures: Charles Lassiter holds that conversational implicatures can be unintentional (“a hearer may attribute a belief to the speaker— one which the speaker actually holds— on the basis of the speaker’s utterance[,] without the speaker’s intending to implicate anything . . . one may construct cases in which a speaker’s utterance implicates but the speaker does not intend to implicate anything by her utterance” [Lassiter]); Christopher Gawker notes that it is not necessary for a hearer to believe that a speaker believes Y in uttering X; and Jennifer Saul provides a description of “near-implicature” (230). Wayne Davis identifies sentence implicatures in addition to conversational implicatures, asserting that the former have independent and conventional meanings and carry implicatures that are unintended by the speaker (6). I assume that Falstaff’s implicatures are intentional or intended rather than accidental.
need not be recognized” (114). Despite this possible failure of uptake on the part of the hearer, a speaker’s conversational implicature nevertheless effectively signals that a speaker’s message has (intentionally) been “made available” (Saul 229) to the hearer or audience for uptake, regardless of whether or not it is recognized as an implicature. Meaning-making is a cooperative and interactive process between speaker and hearer that rests not only on the semantically intelligible utterance of words in a verbal exchange but also on their pragmatic import as registered by hearers.

These conversational implicatures are motivated and justified by their interlocutors’ reciprocal need to maintain public “face”. Lying at the root of Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson’s theory of politeness, “face” is the “public self-image” (61) shared by both speaker and hearer in verbal interaction. Brown and Levinson’s concept of “face”, influenced by Erving Goffman, is comprised of two elements: negative face wants or desires, such as the right to “non-distraction” (in other words, the right to “freedom of action and freedom from imposition”), and positive face wants or desires, defined as a “positive consistent self-image” that needs to be “appreciated and approved” (61) or “ratified, understood . . . liked, or admired” (62) by others. These positive and negative face wants can be satisfied or partially fulfilled by

20 Gawker similarly notes that the Gricean scheme does not account for the hearer’s failure of uptake (i.e. understanding), “if in fact the specific supposition that X is not a part of the explanation of the speaker’s conformity to the CP” (126).

21 Saul distinguishes between “audience implicature” and “utterer implicature” (243), claiming that an utterance is successful if the implicature is acknowledged by both parties.

22 Brown and Levinson claim that, if “the assumption underlying [the Cooperative Principle]” can be phrased as “no deviation from rational efficiency without reason”, then politeness certainly provides “principled reasons for deviation” (6). Unlike the Cooperative Principle, politeness “must be communicated, [it] cannot be presumed” (6). The hearer’s inference of the speaker’s intention is contingent on the hearer’s awareness of the speaker’s transgression of Gricean maxims in accordance with the Cooperative Principle, along with his/her “knowledge of face-preserving strategies” (6). Brown and Levinson, coinciding with Grice who notes that speakers can break conversational maxims but still observe the Cooperative Principle, similarly note that the speaker’s failure to observe politeness principles does not necessarily mean that the speaker does not adhere to politeness (the speaker may, in fact, be observing politeness on a “deeper” level).
the linguistic “actions (including expressions of wants) of others” (60) in a verbal exchange. Since “face” is highly vulnerable and subject to being easily “lost, maintained, or enhanced” (61) in social interaction, interlocutors tend to cooperate in upholding or “attending to” each other’s face wants—in recognition of each other’s need to do so—by deploying politeness strategies to “mitigate[e] or counteract[] modes of aggression inherent in speech interaction” (Magnusson 144). Politeness strategies are thus a means of minimizing the face-threatening acts (FTAs) inherent to interaction and can be performed either “on record”, if potential face threats are slight and require no redressive action, or “off record”, if potential face threats are serious enough to warrant avoidance or indirect communication. Whereas the speaker resorts to positive politeness strategies—such as expressing interest, approval, or sympathy with the hearer (104), using in-group identity markers or address forms (107), seeking agreement (112), or joking to put the hearer at ease (124)—in the face of lower-risk FTAs to signify his/her appreciation of the hearer’s wants, in the case of high-risk FTAs the speaker tends to use negative politeness strategies that are “avoidance-based” and consist of “assurances that the speaker recognizes and respects the addressee’s negative face wants and will not (or will only minimally) interfere with the addressee’s freedom of action” (75) in order to tend to the hearer’s negative face. In addition to these strategies, the speaker may choose to perform

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23 Brown and Levinson state: “[i]n general, people cooperate (and assume each other’s cooperation) in maintaining face in interaction, such cooperation being based on the mutual vulnerability of face” (61). Face can be broken down in cases of “effrontery, urgent cooperation, or in the interests of [communicative] efficiency” (62).

24 Joking is ambivalent and may also indicate an “exploitation of FTA” (124) or the desire to threaten the hearer’s face.

25 Brown and Levinson note that “[p]ositive politeness utterances are used as a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy, to imply common ground or sharing of wants . . . ” (103) and constitute an exaggerated form of “intimate language behaviour” (101). For instance, the phrase “Sweetie pie, could I borrow one of your pens?” registers positive politeness. Negative politeness strategies, which are characterized “by self-effacement, formality and restraint” (70), distance the speaker from hearer through linguistic formality, the use of honorifics, impersonal
“off-record” or indirect linguistic utterances, which render his/her communicative intention ambiguous by hinting at “what a speaker wants or means to communicate, without doing so directly, so that the meaning is to some degree negotiable” (69). These off-record strategies, which include metaphor, irony, rhetorical questions, understatements/overstatements, contradictions, and tautologies, violate the Gricean maxim of quality and give rise to politeness implicatures which, in turn, invite inference. Attending to Falstaff’s conversational implicatures within a politeness framework that emphasizes public face can reveal how Falstaff expertly maintains his face and Hal’s face even as he discreetly undermines them at the same time.

In the tavern scenes of *I Henry IV*, Falstaff’s conversational implicatures demonstrate his preservation of face as he performs his scripted roles as braggart, rogue, and clown of the Bolingbroke world; they also foreground his attempts to preserve Hal’s public face (as a privileged prince and future king) only to, paradoxically, damage it. As close companions, Hal and Falstaff are engaged in cooperative conversations whose common and immediate goal is the sheer pleasure afforded by each other’s company and the witty repartee and baited responses that mark their time in the tavern realm. Their verbal exchanges are endlessly perforated by implicatures that typify their playful game of one-upmanship. Although the presence of implicatures suggests the transgression of Gricean maxims, this transgression does not entail Hal’s and Falstaff’s non-observance of the Cooperative Principle. As J. McLaverty notes, “our sense of their relationship . . . depends not so much on what is said as on the passives and linguistic as well as non-linguistic acts of deference. For instance, the utterance “I sincerely apologize for bothering you, Sir, but could you please shut the door?” registers negative politeness.

26 “To construct an off-record utterance one says something that this either more general . . . or actually different from what one means (intends to be understood). In either case [the hearer] must make some inference to recover what was in fact intended” (Brown and Levinson 211).
interchanges’ assurance and rapidity” (106). In other words, the audience infers that “in their efforts to cap insults they reveal their familiarity with, and dependence on, one another” (107). However, Falstaff’s implicatures also allow him to discreetly and politely criticize Hal and the corrupt rule of the Lancastrian dynasty in an off-record and humorous manner: Falstaff’s self-mockery, which allows him to seemingly undo his own face in order to mock Hal’s illegitimacy and Lancastrian theft, attenuates the force of his implicated ridicule to make it anything but malicious. Falstaff is thus, to use Berger’s terms, both a subject of ridicule as well as its object; this is, as Kazuhiko Murai affirms, what causes the “mirth we feel brought on when we are with Falstaff” (32). Falstaff’s commentaries are spun from his wit and do not constitute any principled criticism of the Bolingbroke rule, of which he clearly takes advantage. Hal’s implicated ridicule of Falstaff, on the contrary, thinly masks his intentional impoliteness and sincere criticism of Falstaff’s dissolute behaviour; Hal’s impoliteness suggests to the audience that his witty exchanges with Falstaff are a pretext for exercising his forthright criticism of the fat rogue. Their relationship, loving and playful as it is, thus contains “tensions that make it doubtful” (A. Bloom 132). But while Hal’s relationship with Falstaff is certainly “merely provisional” and self-serving (Gottschalk 607), this does not necessarily mean that Hal is, according to Harold Bloom, a “cold opportunist” and a “hypocritical and ambitious politician, caring only for glory and for power, his father’s true son” (3); Hal is a more opaque character since the audience never quite knows when he is performing and when he is not.27 As Hal reveals in his soliloquy in 1.2, his investment in the tavern world of play is (only) a means to his ultimate end of garnering glorious accolades and admiration for himself by eventually enacting a sudden and “glitt’ring” “reformation”: “I’ll so offend to make offence a skill,

27 I deal with Hal’s opacity as Henry V in Chapter 3.
In the process of doing so, however, he makes a habit of foregrounding and exercising his superiority over Falstaff. Hal knows himself to be better than the words he utters and the behaviour he adopts in the tavern realm (“I know you all, and will a while uphold/ The unyoked humour of your idleness” [1.2. 174-175]) and is confident in his ability to counterfeit that which he is not (“I am so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life” [2.5.15-17]): Hal’s intentions, unlike Falstaff’s, seem to be visible and are directly communicated to the audience through his soliloquy even as they are withheld from Falstaff. But Falstaff’s and Hal’s conversational implicatures are additionally overheard and inferred by the theatre audience, who participate in the process of meaning-making based on what is said and what is implied. The triangular relationship between the audience, Hal, and Falstaff allows the audience to pick up on Falstaff’s implicated meanings that Hal misses, and creates a dramatic irony that contributes to the impression of Falstaff’s anteriority. Falstaff thus functions as a Vice figure for the Bolingbroke world but also possesses, for the audience, a moral aspect which distances him from his scripted roles.28

In his opening conversation with Hal in 1.2, Falstaff’s request for political immunity is framed as a politeness implicature that serves to maintain Hal’s negative face as well as Falstaff’s own positive face. However, the request ironically acts in the service of Falstaff’s mockery, as Falstaff mocks his self-glorification as a braggart and a thief as a means of thereby mocking the Lancastrians: Falstaff implicates his ridicule of Hal and the illegitimate reign of

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28 The range of Falstaff’s scripted roles is made explicit by Hal, and later Poins, who mockingly characterize—or rather, caricature—Falstaff. Throughout the play, Hal reductively characterizes Falstaff as a self-indulgent and immoral lout, parasite, lecher, devil, coward, iniquity figure, and a symbol for paradoxical youthfulness in age as “latter spring” and “All-hallow’n summer” (1.2.140-141) can attest, and thereby assigns him a clear allegorical function in his own scripted “play” of a prodigal’s reformation. Poins additionally refers to Falstaff as “Monsieur Remorse” (1.2.101) to hint at his cognizance of Falstaff’s Puritan feigning, and “Sir John, sack-and-sugar Jack” (1.2.101) to reinforce that Falstaff is a hedonist.
the Lancastrian dynasty by shamelessly promoting and praising himself as a vainglorious braggart and thief. There are, essentially, two implicatures: contained within the larger frame of the politeness implicature that maintains Hal’s face is another implicature whereby Falstaff exclaims against Hal and the Bolingbrokes through self-mockery. The mockery that Falstaff makes of his self-praise enables him to fulfill his scripted role and to thereby maintain his public face as a witty and jocular knight only to undo it as he indirectly damages Hal’s face. The question that Falstaff poses to Hal in order to ascertain the time of day, “Now Hal, what time of day is it, lad?” (1.2.1), is a politeness implicature that acts as an overture to a request that Hal safeguard Falstaff from potential punishment as a thief under Hal’s future rule. Interrupted twice by Hal in lines 2 and 16, Falstaff’s request is only preliminarily formulated in line 20 using the positive politeness strategy of an in-group identity marker (i.e. “sweet wag”), which underlines Falstaff’s attempt to ingratiate himself with Hal by highlighting their intimacy: “Marry then, sweet wag, when thou art king let not us that are squires of the night’s body be called thieves of the day’s beauty” (20-22). This request, which itself contains an additional implicature due to the presence of two metaphors (“squires of the night’s body” and “thieves of the day’s beauty”) that flout the Gricean maxim of quality (“do not say what you believe to be false”), is explicitly re-formulated as a command with illocutionary force after Falstaff comically praises himself: “Do not thou when thou art king hang a thief” (1.2.54). Since Falstaff’s opening question (what time of day is it?) ultimately segues into his request for Hal’s assurance of his safety as well as for emotional reassurance (“do not . . . hang a thief”),

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29 “Sweet wag” complements Falstaff’s initial use of “lad” as an identity marker in his opening question; both are friendly appeals to Hal. These strategies of intimacy are used by Falstaff each time he tries to make his request (“sweet wag” is repeated in lines 13-14).

30 Illocutionary force inheres in the illocutionary (speech) act. A command, according to Austin, is a speech act.
the speech act that Falstaff performs is an indirect illocutionary act that politely serves to uphold Hal’s negative face: it is an implicature comprised of saying one thing (asking for political and legal pardon) by saying something else (asking for the time of day).\(^{31}\)

Although Falstaff’s request is sincere—he genuinely seeks to be spared a trial and to persist in his hedonistic ways by reminding Hal of the passing of time and thus alluding to Hal’s coronation as the future monarch—the sincerity of his request is diminished and its politeness is even comically exaggerated due to the proliferating implicatures which puncture Falstaff’s responses to Hal. Falstaff’s question about the time of day, serving as prologue to his request, is immediately intercepted by Hal’s profuse and (at least partially mocking) abrasive accusation that Falstaff’s question violates the Gricean maxim of relation (“be relevant”). Hal fails to infer, or at least fails to acknowledge, Falstaff’s implicated meaning. Hal claims that it is out of character for the excessively self-indulgent and hedonistic Falstaff, who disregards the call to duty, to ask for the time of day since Falstaff sexually and gluttonously devours it:

“What a devil has thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the tongues of bawds, and dials the signs of leaping-houses, and the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in flame-coloured taffeta, I see no reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of day” (1.2.5-10).\(^{32}\) While Hal’s harangue itself violates the Gricean maxim of manner (“be brief”) by enumerating Falstaff’s defects through

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\(^{31}\) Indirect illocution or “indirect (illocutionary) act” is Searle’s term for speech acts that have more than one action. For instance, Searle claims that in asking the question “Can you pass the salt?” the speaker is not asking about the hearer’s physical ability (i.e. whether or not he/she can pass the salt) but is rather making a polite request (or implicating) that the salt be passed to the speaker. The speaker uses an interrogative to make a request. Geoffrey Leech classifies Searle’s example as a Gricean implicature (32-33). The implicature is also an off-record politeness strategy used to mitigate face-threats.

\(^{32}\) Poins reinforces that Falstaff transgresses social and religious norms for personal physical satisfaction: “How agrees the devil and thee about thy soul, that soldest him on Good Friday last, for a cup of Madeira and a cold capon’s leg?” (1.2.102-104).
metaphors and personifications to, doubtless, showcase his rhetorical skill, Falstaff’s response both maintains Hal’s face by politely agreeing to and affirming his observations (“Indeed, you come near me now, Hal” [1.2.11]) and preserves his own comic face through an implicature: “Indeed you come near me now, Hal, for we that take purses go by the moon and the seven stars, and not ‘By Phoebus, he, that wand’ring knight so fair’” (1.2.11-13). Flouting the conversational maxim of manner (“avoid obscurity of expression”), Falstaff uses a pleonasm to reference the Pleieades constellation (“the moon and the seven stars”) and a ballad that alludes to Phoebus as the personified sun (“that wand’ring knight”). If, as Herbert Weil suggests, the “moon and the seven stars” is a pun that refers to a tavern or an inn, then Falstaff’s implicature certainly reinforces his public image as a tavern parasite who “goes by” or visits inns. But since “the moon and the seven stars” is also a direct allusion to the Pleieades, Falstaff is implying his mock self-value as a thief with a noble vocation in order to offset Hal’s unflattering description of him and to ironically redress his face-damage by further undoing it. This ironically redressive self-promotion gives way to a second implicature, denoted by an apposition, whereby Falstaff makes a jab at Hal’s illegitimacy in the process of formulating his request:

33 Although it appears that Hal is not observing the Cooperative Principle since he answers Falstaff’s question with a question which has the illocutionary force to insult his companion, Hal’s subsequent remarks illustrate that he is, in fact, cooperating with Falstaff in their exchange. Whether or not Hal is sincerely criticizing Falstaff, he is certainly showcasing his own rhetorical skill; by critiquing Falstaff, Hal implicates his own superiority. Falstaff, however, meets Hal’s implicature with his own implicature to competitively outdo Hal’s through his self-mockery. Falstaff’s phrase “you come near me now” acknowledges Hal’s correct inference that Falstaff intends something, even as the implicature works to paradoxically distance Hal from uncovering what Falstaff’s exact intention is.

34 See fn.11, p. 93.

35 The pun violates the super-maxim of manner (“be perspicuous” or “avoid obscurity of expression”). The comedy here arises in part from Falstaff’s reversal of the values attributed to the moon and the sun. Falstaff ironically praises the constancy of the notoriously inconstant moon and suggests that the “wand’ring” sun strays aimlessly.
FALSTAFF: . . . And I prithee, sweet wag, when thou art a king, as God save thy grace— ‘majesty’ I should say, for grace thou wilt have none—

PRINCE HARRY: What, none?

FALSTAFF: No, by my troth, not so much as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter.

PRINCE HARRY: Well, how then? Come, roundly, roundly. (1.2.13-19)

The syntactic apposition, denoted editorially in this instance by dashes, teases Hal as it interrupts and qualifies Falstaff’s only half-formed request (13-14). Characteristic of conventional rather than conversational implicatures, the syntactic apposition is made into a conversational implicature by Falstaff through reverse defeasibility or reverse “cancelability”.36 Since the meaning of Falstaff’s utterance can not be “cancelled” because it is not an implicature to begin with, the insertion of an apposition into his utterance produces a conversational implicature: the utterance ends up transgressing Grice’s maxim of quantity (“be as informative as required”) for the information provided in the apposition effectively retracts Falstaff’s wish for Hal’s political and spiritual blessedness as king (“as God save thy grace”) by glossing “grace” (spiritual blessedness) as “majesty” (a title of honour). Falstaff’s implicature conveys that Hal will lack spiritual salvation due to his thieving and whoring lifestyle, but it may also invite the audience to infer that Hal will lack salvation since he is not the legitimate or divinely anointed king who will rule by divine right, given his father’s

36 An implicature, for Grice, is subject to cancellation if it is incompatible with a further meaning added by way of a phrase which makes another interpretation of the utterance possible. An example of a conventional implicature is denoted in the following sentence by the word “and”: “She drank a bottle of wine and jumped into the pool”, which implies that jumping into the pool is a result of her drinking a bottle of wine. To cancel this conventional implicature, or in other words to eliminate the meaning attendant on the semantic consequentiality produced by the coordinating conjunction “and”, the speaker would need to append a phrase such as “but not in that order” at the end of this statement. Falstaff’s apposition, I claim, counts as an additional phrase which turns his utterance into a conversational implicature rather than cancels its implicated meaning.
usurpation of Richard’s crown and the Yorkist throne;\textsuperscript{37} the implicature exploits the effect of the verbal aside which, as Jeremy Lopez defines it, “comment[s] on, misinterpret[s], break[s] into, or sound[s] over . . . dialogue . . .” (56). Falstaff intends his implicature to be (over)heard and understood not only by Hal but also by the audience; it may even be spoken in a sarcastic tone.\textsuperscript{38} The appositional implicature seems to be an instance of off-record impoliteness for it transgresses the unspoken and unformulated maxim of face (e.g. work to maintain one another’s face through negative or positive face strategies) in order to threaten the hearer’s face by conveying “deliberate aggression” (Bousfield, \textit{Impoliteness} 212).\textsuperscript{39} Whereas on-record impoliteness is explicitly conflictive—Bousfield claims that “the attack is made in an unambiguous way given the context in which it occurs” (\textit{Impoliteness} 212)—off-record impoliteness is conveyed by an implicature that attacks the face of the interlocutor by the sheer absence of, or the intentional “withholding of [,] politeness” (Bousfield, \textit{Impoliteness} 213).\textsuperscript{40} Nevertheless, Falstaff’s off-record impoliteness is rather an \textit{insincere} form of impoliteness that marks his FTA as a good-humoured jest rather than a serious threat; his insincere impoliteness, masquerading as sincere impoliteness, may serve to counteract Hal’s thinly veiled insults and

\textsuperscript{37} The first meaning is intentional on Falstaff’s part whereas the second (i.e. Falstaff implies that Hal will be damned because of his father’s illegitimacy) possibly arises from the audience’s ability to read Hal (the future king) as a stand-in for his father (the present king).

\textsuperscript{38} The dashes may stand in for a mid-line prosodic switch and thus indicate a change in Falstaff’s voice or tone. Grice notes that prosody or the stress on words “help[s] to generate implicature” (“Further Notes” 51).

\textsuperscript{39} Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness can, in Gricean terms, constitute a conversational maxim. While Grice does not include politeness among his maxims, he does acknowledge that there are maxims ‘such as ‘Be polite’, that are also normally observed by participants in talk exchanges, and these may also generate nonconventional implicatures” (“Logic” 28). Derek Bousfield defines impoliteness as “the issuing of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive face-threatening acts that are purposefully performed” (\textit{Impoliteness} 211).

\textsuperscript{40} Hal’s persistent interruptions, accusations, insults, and his name-calling tend toward impoliteness for his verbal behaviour attests to “acts that threaten positive face-wants”. Brown and Levinson list the following as FTAs: expressions of disapproval, criticism, contempt or ridicule, complaints and reprimands, accusations, insults, contradictions or disagreements, challenges, expressions of violent emotion, and blatant non-cooperation (e.g. disruption, making non-sequiturs, or showing inattention) (66-67).
to suggest that Falstaff is aware of Hal’s agenda. Drawing out his pun on “grace”, Falstaff creates a second implicature that violates the maxim of manner (“avoid ambiguity”) to further mock the future king who will receive only grace enough “as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter” (17-18). Falstaff puns on grace as a prayer or blessing before a simple meal to suggest that Hal will receive minimal grace or thanks from God but even, perhaps, minimal favour from his subjects; the second implicature via the pun on grace allows Falstaff to elude Hal’s (thus far failed) attempts to comprehend his meaning. Hal’s inability to infer Falstaff’s meaning (“Well, how then? Come, roundly, roundly” [18-19]) is juxtaposed against the audience’s almost certain comprehension of the pun and uptake of the implicature. As Jeremy Lopez claims, the Elizabethan audience found pleasure in the pervasive pun (37) and their minds were “automatically” conditioned to “look for the convergence of literal and figurative levels of meaning in any context” (49). By virtue of its ability to conjoin differing meanings in the same-sounding word, the pun inhabits the interface between literal and figurative meanings and invites its audience to actively participate in the process of inferring a variety of additional meanings that are implied by what is said (the sound of the word when spoken). The disjunction between Hal’s failure of uptake and the audience’s successful uptake allows the audience to not only join in humourous league with Falstaff against Hal, but to also grasp his anteriority by witnessing how his character exceeds the semantics of his scripted identity.

41 Hal’s sudden response to Falstaff’s implicature (“What, none?” [1.2.16]) could be interpreted as an angry outburst (which would suggest that he believes Falstaff’s insincere face-damage to be sincere) or it could reflect Hal’s sincere questioning of the meaning of “none” (and thus his failure of uptake). I vouch for the latter interpretation, given Hal’s subsequent response (“come, roundly, roundly”).

42 Herbert Weil points out that Hal’s use of “roundly” “may glance at Falstaff’s rotund shape” (fn. 18, p. 95) and may thereby serve as an insult.

43 Jeremy Lopez states that the pun “fills the space between stage and audience by transforming all-too-literal words and syllables into a matrix of virtually endless figurative and interpretive possibilities” (56).
Falstaff’s appositional implicature undermines his attempt to formulate his polite request and exposes it as a sincere request, as much as it is an excuse to jeeringly exclaim upon Hal.

Falstaff’s second appositional implicature similarly implicates his ridicule of Hal’s illegitimacy by way of a pun. But rather than intruding upon his attempt to formulate a polite request, Falstaff’s second apposition is quickly muffled by his finally formulated request. Embroiled in a punning contest in which Falstaff accuses the profligate prince of bedding the Hostess of the Boar’s Head tavern (1.2.35-36), Hal plays along with Falstaff’s sexual puns on financial words. Rather than affirming or denying Falstaff’s joking contention that Hal has “called [the Hostess] to a reckoning many a time and oft” (1.2.44-45), Hal performs a speech act that deflects Falstaff’s accusation: Hal’s interrogation becomes an offensive attack with which he accuses Falstaff of financial irresponsibility even as he maintains the bantering tone of the exchange to humour Falstaff by punning on “part” as penis: “Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part?” (46). Anticipating a negative response which he indeed receives (Falstaff admits “No, I’ll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there” [47]), Hal uses the question to imply his superiority of wealth in paying Falstaff’s tavern expenses and thus financially redeeming Falstaff: the question segues into a statement which Hal uses to gallantly redeem himself from the rumours of his dissolute behaviour. Hal claims to have paid his bills “so far as [his] coin would stretch; and where it would not, [he has] used [his] credit” (1.2.48-49). While Hal cooperatively continues the sexual punning, his mention of “credit”, or financial solvency

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44 Falstaff’s response, however, also plays upon the sexual meaning of “part” to reinforce his original claim that the Prince has “paid all” at the tavern.

45 Hal’s statement that he repays his dues and that he remains true to his word is effectively proven when he promises to pay Falstaff’s bill for food (“The money shall be paid back again, with advantage” [3.1.499]) and when he releases Douglas after the battle at Shrewsbury: “Deliver him/ Up to his pleasure ransomless and free” (5.5.28-29). These two instances typify Hal’s vow to “pay the debt [he] never promisèd” (1.2.187).
based on his character, good name, or reputation which allows him to pay the debts Falstaff owes, registers his pride and shores up his sense of personal self-worth. The pun which creates Falstaff’s appositional implicature, however, undercuts Hal’s self-confidence. Punning on “credit” as reputation, “favourable estimation”, or “honour” (OED 5b), Falstaff performs an insincere, off-record FTA by appearing to agree with Hal: “Yea, and so used it that were it not here apparent that thou art heir apparent—but I prithee, sweet wag, shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king?” (1.2.45-47). Falstaff’s pun on here/heir apparent implicates his admonition of Hal’s misuse of his time and reputation (his good name or “credit”) to the point where Hal is no longer recognizable (“apparent”) as the future king. Falstaff essentially states that if it were not obvious or clearly visible (apparent) that Hal is physically palpable (apparent) to him on stage at the moment of their conversation (here), nobody would know that Hal is the “heir apparent” or next in line to the throne. Falstaff thus suggests that Hal is recognizable as the future heir based only on his physical appearance since his behaviour is anything but laudable; he thus deflates Hal’s aggrandizement of his nobility and generosity. But he also points out the deictic “here”—the fact that Hal is present not only to Falstaff but to the audience. In thus underlining Hal’s corporeal presence on stage, Falstaff’s “here” of the stage undercuts Hal’s “apparent” appearance as the prince by calling attention to the dramatic artifice and the actor’s body which legitimates the actor’s performance of the illegitimate prince. This discreet meta-dramatic irony allows the audience to witness how Falstaff undoes his own pun by insinuating that it is, after all, not Hal (the personated person) who is “here” apparent as the true prince but rather the actor playing Hal, who is himself a counterfeit. Falstaff’s admonition, however, is quickly abandoned as he reverts to a positive

46 Given their sexual punning contest, Falstaff may also be punning on “apparent” to suggest that Hal is “a parent” (a father) due to stretching his “coin”.

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politeness strategy in order to hearken back to his ultimate intention to secure his livelihood (“but I prithee, sweet wag, shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king?” [1.2.45-47]). Falstaff’s appositional implicatures thus allow him to mock Hal’s illegitimacy since they are verbally performed within, and perhaps also shielded by, his polite request.

Falstaff’s comic lambaste of Hal occurs in tandem with his self-mockery as a vainglorious braggart: his shameless self-ennoblement and self-praise as a thief implicate his additional critique of the corruption and theft of the Lancastrian dynasty through self-ridicule. This self-ridicule allows Falstaff to simultaneously inhabit and play up his comic face as he enacts his scripted role, as well as to damage his own face in the service of indirectly critiquing the political Bolingbroke world. Akin to his first instance of self-valorization as a thief and tavern lout via an implicature (“Indeed you come near me now, Hal, for we that take purses go by the moon and the seven stars, and not ‘By Phoebus, he, that wand’ring knight so fair’” [1.2.11-13]), Falstaff’s response to Hal’s request that he explain his egg-and-butter reference comically foregrounds his inflated sense of self-worth:

Marry then, sweet wag, when thou art king let not us that are squires of the night’s body be called thieves of the day’s beauty. Let us be Diana’s foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon. And let men say we be men of good government, being governed as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we steal. (1.2.19-24)

The copious and rather redundant metaphors contained in Falstaff’s utterance, which flout the Gricean maxim of manner (“be brief”), undo his attempt to politely express his request and mark his imposition on Hal’s negative face-want (i.e. freedom) as he praises himself. Falstaff’s enumerative synonymy, which comically competes with the plethora of metaphors with which Hal assaults Falstaff’s face but which also invites Hal to share in their ironic verbal repartees,
renders him a braggart or the archetypal *miles gloriosus* of Plautine comedy and approves Hal’s suggestion that the fat knight embodies vanity.\(^47\) It is under this guise that Falstaff jeers at the Lancastrian reign; as Herbert Weil claims, Falstaff’s superfluous metaphors parody the “titles for officers in the government of the future king” (fn. 20-2, p. 94). In re-constituting himself as a “squire of the night’s body” who claims to safeguard the night’s virtuous chastity personified by the moon goddess Diana, Falstaff inverts Hal’s incrimination that he steals and self-indulgently consumes time in order to valorize himself and his vocation as a thief who protects the time of night. Nevertheless, the puns attendant on this rhetorical self-vaporization undermine Falstaff’s claim to be a worthy knight. The puns on night’s body (“knight’s bawdy”) and day’s beauty (day’s “booty”) ironically reinforce Hal’s opening remarks that Falstaff is a sexually promiscuous thief, which thus renders Falstaff’s attempt at self-promotion comically futile. In saying that he abides by the laws of the moon as her “minion”, Falstaff implicates that he upholds the moon’s bawdy acts.\(^48\) Falstaff’s distinction between a knight and a thief collapses in light of his implicature, which reveals the knight to be a thief. While Falstaff expresses his desire for political immunity and social advancement by refurbishing his reputation, his puns and illogical metaphorical connections intentionally undermine these attempts: “. . . and let men say we be men of good government, being governed as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we steal” \(^1.2.22-24\). Notorious for its inconstancy, the moon and its personification as a chaste and fickle woman denote the unstable ebb-and-flow of rule, which renders ironic Falstaff’s claim that her

\(^{47}\) The suggestion is evidenced in Hal’s eulogy to Falstaff at Shrewsbury: “O, I should have a heavy miss of thee./ If I were much in love with vanity” \(^5.4.104-105\).

\(^{48}\) Jack Sublette notes that Falstaff changes the “traditional association between the sun and the king to the moon and the king” \(^69\). This change, he claims, indexes Falstaff’s critique of Lancastrian illegitimacy or, as Sublette himself subtly phrases it, “the results of Richard not being England’s proper sun and Bolingbroke’s stealing the crown show themselves early” \(^69\).
government is “good”. The pun on government, which connotes not only personal discipline but also political regime, further destabilizes what Falstaff says by implicating an additional meaning that constitutes his critique of the Lancastrian regime. Falstaff claims that he is a politically “well-governed” or well-disciplined thief because he performs his duty (“steals”) and is protected under the aegis of a Lancastrian government (the moon) that sanctions this theft; the meaning of “good government” is thus ironic and implicates a moral attack on the Lancastrian government’s corruption and Henry’s usurpation of the Yorkist throne. However, Falstaff’s derision is aimed at Hal’s anticipated rule as much as it is at Henry’s illegitimate reign: the “let us” of Falstaff’s request hints at the likelihood that Hal’s government will similarly and deceitfully endorse robbery, given that Hal himself is complicit in Falstaff’s thievery. But aside from making jabs at Lancastrian illegitimacy and political corruption, Falstaff’s implicature may have a second function: Falstaff could additionally be suggesting that even without the moon’s protection and endorsement of theft, he is “disciplined” enough (a man of “good government”) to move unobtrusively or stealthily (“steal”) beneath her face (“countenance” taken to mean physiognomy). This possible second implicature, in which Falstaff discreetly asserts his own cunning by claiming that he can outdo or out-cheat the Lancastrian thieves, is exclusively intended for the audience as it signals Falstaff’s competitive self-reassertion over Hal’s continuous attempts to deflate him. The double implicature allows Falstaff to wink at the audience and to let them “in on” his attempts to covertly praise his ability to cheat the Bolingbrokes under the guise of feigned self-praise, which itself paradoxically implicates his criticism of the theft that constitutes Lancastrian politics in which he ironically partakes. The double implicature allows Falstaff to win the audience over to his

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49 The second implicature may also be an instance of ironic self-address, though overheard by the audience, in which the actor playing Falstaff congratulates himself at having “stolen” not only under Hal’s face but also under
side by creating a sense of dramatic irony and exposing his performance to them: the audience knows more about Falstaff than Hal does and is able to laugh at, as well as with, Falstaff. Thus, by praising himself as a thief, Falstaff enacts his role as a vainglorious braggart via implicatures which mockingly undo his self-praise and serve to ridicule the corruption of a Lancastrian rule that is founded on theft. That Falstaff strives to endow himself with a “good” name by boasting but ends up reaffirming his identity as a thief serves as a commentary on the illegitimate king Henry: despite Henry’s ability to give himself a good name (king) by stealing the crown, the king is still a hypocritical Machiavel or more significantly, a thief.50

In thus framing his request for protection by asking Hal for the time of day, Falstaff reminds Hal of his political obligation to the crown in order to assure himself of immunity. However, Falstaff may also be enjoining Hal to reclaim his virtuous ways; the opening question which serves as an overture to Falstaff’s request may mark Falstaff’s attempt to instruct, or at least incite, Hal to morally reform his behaviour in order to redeem time.51 The audience’s impression of a serious undercurrent that underlies Falstaff’s implicatures and his exchanges with Hal surfaces in his confession of melancholy following his allusion to the hangman during his repartee with Hal: “S’blood, I am as melancholy as a gib cat, or a lugged bear” (1.2.64-65). Although this suddenly professed melancholy develops into a simile contest the audience’s collective face in the theatre. Hal’s response illustrates that he picks up on Falstaff’s comic attempts at self-promotion but he does not recognize (or acknowledge) Falstaff’s mockery of Lancastrian rule, let alone his audience-oriented implicature. In a characteristic move, Hal exposes the theft and bawdiness that underpin Falstaff’s braggartism via the sexual slang he injects into the sea analogy which constitutes his very own implicature (see 1.2.27-34).

50 The parallels between Falstaff and Henry are discussed by James Black, who deems that “echoes of the king are distant and debased, yet satirically antiphonal” (29) in Falstaff. Black notes that the king’s “art of deferral” (31) echoes in Falstaff’s question, which is likewise deferred (see Black, 29-31). The association between Falstaff and King Henry, surfacing in references to appetite and consumption, further emerges in Worcester’s speech to the king (5.1.59-64).

51 Hemingway notes that asking for the time was “used, in Elizabethan times, to indicate tardiness of apprehension on the part of the person questioned” (fn. 1, p. 26).
(and eventually into his parody of Puritanism) that detracts from or perhaps temporarily disguises Falstaff’s emotion, it nevertheless suggests that Falstaff is conscious of the inescapable moment of his reckoning. His only soliloquy, which is similarly informed by regret and a biting conscience due to his having accepted bribes to conscript “toasts and butter” (4.2.20) to fight for the king, functions as a confession and allows the audience to perceive Falstaff’s shame: “I have misused the King’s press damnably. I have got in exchange of one hundred and fifty soldiers three hundred and odd pounds” (4.2.12-14). By speaking alone on stage and perhaps occupying a downstage position close to the audience, Falstaff allows the audience to perceive his detachment or distance from his mockery and self-mockery. Falstaff’s soliloquy, like the aside, allows the audience to perceive the “character’s apartness . . . interpretable as a vital ‘moral’ and/or theatrical function” (Lopez 59) but unlike the aside, Falstaff’s soliloquy does not emphasize his “moral function” as much as it substantiates the impression that the instances of melancholy or genuine sentiment which intrude upon Falstaff’s utterances bespeak an anteriority that informs his complexity. This “apartness” is reinforced by Hal’s entrance and his critique of Falstaff’s soldiers, which urges Falstaff to defend his “ragamuffins” as “good enough to toss, food for powder, food for powder, they’ll fill a pit as well as better” (4.2.54-55). Since Hal remains oblivious to the soliloquy that the audience has just witnessed, the audience is able to see how Falstaff dons a comic mask of nonchalance to brush off his grim thoughts; the dramatic irony contributes to Falstaff’s roundness as a simultaneously involved and detached spectator of his own actions. This disjunction between Falstaff’s private emotion and public comedy thus informs Falstaff’s suppression of his

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52 The soliloquy counterpoints Hal’s soliloquy in 1.2 and highlights Falstaff’s abuse of time vis-à-vis Hal’s “virtuous” use of time to “pay the debt [he] never promiséd” (1.2.187). Falstaff’s disguise of his emotion ironically parallels Hal’s “disguise” as the prodigal prince in the tavern scenes.
melancholy in his exchange with Hal (1.2), and it may well index a self-less intention that underlies his request to Hal: his critique of Hal and the Bolingbroke sphere may serve to inspire Hal’s amendment.53

The robbery at Gad’s Hill provides Falstaff with an ideal opportunity to perform his scripted role as a self-praising braggart only to dismantle this self-representation and to thereby poke at Hal’s illegitimate succession to the throne. Falstaff implicates a critique of Hal by undoing his own face and exposing his cowardice. The audience’s expectations of Falstaff’s excessive boasting are not only gleaned from the exchanges witnessed between Hal and Falstaff but are also informed by Poins’ and Hal’s anticipation of Falstaff’s reaction to their deviously concocted ploy: Hal plans to turn on the rogue and rob him (while Falstaff robs the travellers) at Gad’s Hill, and to subsequently entrap him by repudiating his face for his jeering pleasure: “The virtue of this jest will be in the incomprehensible lies that this same fat rogue will tell us when we meet at supper. How thirty at least he fought with, what wards, what blows, what extremities he endured, and in the reproof of this lives the jest” (1.2.148-151).54

Fulfilling these expectations, the braggart Falstaff gracefully enumerates his braggadocios to eulogize his bravery: “I am a rogue if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them, two hours together. I have scaped by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose, my buckler cut through and through, my sword hacked like a handsaw” (2.5.151-154).

The “dozen” (2.5.150) thieves who fall upon Falstaff are rapidly and hyperbolically exaggerated to “sixteen at least” (2.5.161), then to fifty, and beyond: “if I fought not with fifty

53 Falstaff’s concern for Hal’s welfare is also evident in his suggestion that he and Hal put on a play: “Well, thou wilt be horribly chid tomorrow when thou comest to thy father. If thou love me, practise an answer” (2.5.340-341). Although Falstaff clearly mocks Hal and wishes to display his verbal wit, his seriousness is also latent.

54 As James Calderwood notes, Hal is “an interior playwright” (131).
of them I am a bunch of radish. If there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then I am no two-legg’d creature” (2.5. 170-173). Falstaff’s duelling victories fall into the same predicament: the “two rogues in buckram suits” (2.5.176) with whom Falstaff claims to have fought quickly grow to “four” (182), “[s]even, by these hilts, or I am a villain else” (190), then to “nine in buckram” (195-196) and eleven: “seven of the eleven I paid” (200-201). While Hal recognizes that “[t]hese lies are like their father that begets them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable” (2.5.208-210) and strives to exonerate himself from his involvement in the theft by exposing Falstaff’s lies (“Mark now how a plain tale shall put you down” [2.5.235-236]), Falstaff, in turn, punctures Hal’s face and mockingly tarnishes his reputation through his insincere, off-record impoliteness to disclose Hal as a false prince. Evading Hal’s entrapment by overturning Hal’s expectations of Falstaff’s response, Falstaff captures Hal in his own game by implicature as he continues to uphold his braggart pose:

Was it for me to kill the heir-apparent? Should I turn upon the true prince? Why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules; but beware instinct. The lion will not touch the true prince—instinct is a great matter. I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life—I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. (2.5.247-253)

While Falstaff praises himself in drawing a comparison to both Hercules and a lion, he also indirectly praises Hal through his opening rhetorical questions which delineate Hal as the true or legitimate prince (“Was it for me to kill the heir-apparent? Should I turn upon the true prince?”) that he abstains from killing (the lion “will not touch the true prince”). However, Falstaff’s assertion of his instinctual cowardice comically undermines his professed courage

55 Falstaff’s self-reference as a lion reinforces his connection to King Henry. Falstaff associates the monarch with a lion when mocking Hal: “as thou art prince, I fear thee as I fear the roaring of the lion’s whelp” (3.3.121); the king “himself is to be feared as the lion” (3.3.123).
while the wordplay on “true” implicates his denunciation of Hal’s worth: “I shall think the better of myself, and thee, during my life—I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince” (2.5. 252-253). Since Falstaff clearly mocks his own courage, he also mocks Hal’s legitimacy: because Falstaff is not valiant, neither is Hal a true prince or an honest (loyal) prince. The wordplay on true, which signifies both a faithful and loyal (OED 1a) or a genuine (OED 5a) prince, allows Falstaff to thus implicate his ridicule of Hal’s legitimacy as well as his ridicule of Hal’s hypocrisy and Hal’s failure to remain “true” to Falstaff. The wordplay in Falstaff’s statement ironically deconstructs Falstaff’s and Hal’s face as the statement conveys the opposite of what it proclaims, for Falstaff implies his awareness of Hal’s fabrication of the ruse at Gad’s Hill: “By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye” (2.5.246). The irony of Falstaff’s statement echoes with the wish he expressed to Poins “that the true prince may, for recreation’s sake, prove a false thief” (1.2.36-37) by participating in the Gad’s Hill robbery, and rests on the same inverted logic. Falstaff reverses the values associated with truth and falsehood: while he wishes that the honest (true) prince “falsely” disguises himself as a thief, the implicature (instigated by the wordplay on “true”) ironically conveys Falstaff’s additional meaning that Hal is the illegitimate (thus false) prince who is also a genuine (true) thief. In thus fulfilling Hal’s, as well as the audience’s, expectations of his braggartism, Falstaff’s

56 Falstaff’s exclamation after he is left without his horse at Gad’s Hill sounds Hal-as-thief’s disloyalty to Falstaff as well as humorously denounces the thieves in the Bolingbroke world who turn against each other: “A plague upon’t when thieves cannot be true to one another!” (2.2.26-27). The exclamation also invokes Hal’s banishment of Falstaff.

57 In addition to meaning that Falstaff knows Hal as well as his father does, the sentence also means that Falstaff knows that Hal and his father (i.e. “he that made ye”) are similar. This second, implied meaning hints at the villainy that Hal shares with his father—which Falstaff further develops in the play extempore scene—and illustrates that Falstaff knows what Hal is up to in the present conversation and can predict his moves, just as it implies his awareness of Hal’s ruse at Gad’s Hill. Falstaff’s awareness of the ruse is additionally highlighted when he accuses Poins of cowardice after the latter flees the scene of robbery. Falstaff hints that he recognizes Hal and Poins as the two thieves in buckram by playing on the words back/backing: “I would give a thousand pound I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders; you care not who sees your back. Call you that backing of your friends? A plague upon such backing! Give me them that will face me” (2.5.134-138).
stupendous lies also exceed his anticipated role for they comment—in a choric manner—on the main plot of Lancastrian usurpation against which the subplot is juxtaposed. Falstaff’s lies, which expose even as they disguise the truth of his fleeing the scene of robbery, ironically call attention to the king’s great “lie” or his authenticity as king. As James Calderwood claims, “[t]he biggest lie of all is one of the keystones of political order, the notion of the true anointed king set apart from his lesser fellows by divine distinction . . .” (40). However, Falstaff’s improvised performance of his braggadocio also ornately outdoes the king’s calculated attempts to conceal his unfitness for the throne; the audience witnesses that Falstaff and, by extension, the actor he meta-theatrically blends into and exposes, is one who earns public accolades for his performance.\(^{58}\)

In addition to fulfilling yet exceeding his role as a braggart rogue, Falstaff also adopts a Puritan role to mockingly accuse Hal of corruption and to indirectly incriminate the Lancastrian reign of hypocrisy, even as he mocks his own hypocrisy and undermines his adoption of this very role. Falstaff ends his simile competition with Hal (1.2.64-69) by donning the verbal disguise of a Puritan in order to project his own faults onto Hal as he asks his companion to refrain from corrupting him “with vanity” (1.2.65):\(^{59}\)

\[O,\] thou hast damnable iteration, and art indeed able to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal, God forgive thee for it. Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing, and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked.

\(^{58}\) I discuss how the actor informs Falstaff’s roundness in the following pages.

\(^{59}\) In making this request to Hal, Falstaff ironically deflects his allegorical role as a Vice (manifest here as a Vanity figure) onto Hal in order to reclaim his innocence. In evoking “vanity”, Falstaff anticipates Hal’s reductive labelling of him: in calling Falstaff “that reverend Vice, that grey Iniquity, that Father Ruffian, that Vanity in years” (2.4.375-376), Hal equates Falstaff with the Vanity of the medieval morality play who seduces him to sin and thus emphasizes Falstaff’s dramatic function in his own scripted “play”. Falstaff’s comic projection of his physical characteristics or defining traits onto others mirrors his deflection of his scripted role onto Hal: Falstaff launches his assault on the travellers at Gad’s Hill by exclaiming “[a]h, whoreson caterpillars, bacon-fed knaves! They hate us youth” (2.2.77-78).
I must give over this life, and I will give it over. By the Lord, an I do not I am a villain. I’ll be damned for never a king’s son in Christendom. (1.2.72-75)

Falstaff portrays himself as a “saint” who has been corrupted by the dissolute behaviour and immoral actions of the prince who Falstaff himself, according to Hal’s narrative, seduces into riot.Falstaff-the-Puritan’s recognition of his need and his intention to repent (“I must give over this life, and I will give it over”) is ironically undercut by his response to Hal’s question (“Where shall we take a purse tomorrow, Jack?” [1.2.87]), which rebounds back onto Falstaff to expose his feigned piety: “Zounds, where thou wilt, lad! I’ll make one; and I do not, call me villain and baffle me” (1.2.88-89). This self-contradiction deflates Falstaff’s performance of Puritanism to foreground his hypocrisy but Falstaff’s self-exposed hypocrisy implicates his indirect attack on Lancastrian hypocrisy and immorality. The irony that arises from Falstaff’s self-contradiction—the fact that he concedes his repentance and vows self-reformation but willingly gives in to thievery at Hal’s injunction so that Hal can test his mettle—denotes an implicature: Falstaff’s parodic utterances and his response to Hal, when taken together or interpreted dialogically, defy the Gricean maxim of quality (do not provide false information or say what is not true). The implicature, however, is a structural rather than a conversational implicature since it rests on the audience’s ability to hold Falstaff’s self-parody in counterpoint with the preceding scene, where King Henry persuasively attempts to garner military strength for the crusade in order to absolve himself of his guilt in killing Richard II and usurping the throne. Falstaff’s self-mockery of his Puritan hypocrisy thus implicates his commentary on the king’s religious hypocrisy; in publicly proclaiming to wage war in order

To chase these pagans in those holy fields

Falstaff evidently plays along with his scripted role as Vice in Hal’s narrative.
Over whose acres walked those blessèd feet 
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed, 
For our advantage, on the bitter cross (1.1.24-27)

Henry hypocritically (mis)uses Christianity to serve his own ends and to dispel his care (1.1.1-2). If, as Hal sarcastically remarks, there is a “good amendment of life [in Falstaff], from praying to purse-taking” (1.2.90-91), there is also certainly a “good amendment” in the king from robbing the Yorkists of their crown to using religious piety to justify his theft. Moreover, Falstaff’s Puritan impersonation brings the Oldcastle controversy, brewing in the play’s background, to the surface: the play’s anteriority adds to Falstaff’s complexity. Not only would the audience have been aware of the political drama surrounding Falstaff’s name-change in the play, but they may have associated Falstaff’s Puritan parody with Oldcastle; Hal’s wordplay, when he refers to his fat comrade as “my old lad of the castle” (1.2.37-38), certainly invites the inference that Falstaff is Oldcastle. Read within this historical allegory, however, Falstaff’s self-mockery may implicate his marked difference from the pious Oldcastle, if the latter is interpreted within a Protestant context that valorizes Oldcastle as a martyr. On another level, Falstaff (or rather, Shakespeare-as-Falstaff) may be implicating a Catholic mockery of Oldcastle’s feigned piety and his moral corruption: Shakespeare-as-Falstaff may be implicating

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61 Falstaff’s Puritan parody foregrounds how Falstaff breaks his vow to repent; King Henry is likewise referred to as a breaker of oaths at multiple points throughout the play.

62 King Henry’s actions may be forefront in the future Henry V’s mind when, in Henry V, Hal-as-king warns Canterbury that the decision to wage war against the French should be “washed/ As pure as sin with baptism” (1.2.31-32). The simile is certainly applicable to—and evokes—King Henry’s sinful usurpation of the throne, which he strives to wash away or “baptise” by claiming to go to war in God’s name.

63 The pun may also refer to a brothel in Southwark called the “Castle”, or to a tavern. See Weil (fn. 34, p. 95). Poole notes that Falstaff’s style is highly reminiscent of Puritan preaching: Falstaff uses 56 Biblical references from the non-conformist Geneva Bible (65), uses cant terms like “saint”, “vocation”, and “wicked” (66), and his style “is repetitive, pedagogic, and laced with abundant biblical exegesis, and it often incorporates a question-and-answer format” (65).
his endorsement of the Catholic view of Oldcastle as a traitor and a hypocrite rather than as a pious, proto-Puritan martyr by foregrounding Falstaff’s parody of Puritan rhetoric. The double implicature present in Falstaff’s parody—Falstaff’s critique of Lancastrian religious hypocrisy through self-mockery and Shakespeare’s meta-theatrical critique of Oldcastle’s Puritanism through Falstaff—heightens Falstaff’s anteriority as a choric voice that intersects with Shakespeare’s voice to comment on the play.  

Falstaff’s impersonation of the king in the play extempore scene (2.4) for comic self-praise implicates his derision of not only Hal but also the king and ironically deflates his own self-praise in the process of doing so. While the incentive for the play is for Hal to “practice” appeasing his scolding father, Falstaff unabashedly turns the play into an opportunity to showcase his play-acting and to reinstate his good name. Adopting the king’s voice, Falstaff faces off with Hal to redeem his reputation by having the “king” praise him. Falstaff-as-king deems Falstaff-the-rogue to be “A goodly portly man, i’faith, and a corpulent; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and a most noble carriage . . . . If that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me, for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks” (2.5.384-388). The “king’s” praise is an indirect attempt made by plump Jack to persuade Hal to keep Falstaff in his company (“Him keep with, the rest banish” [2.5.391-392]). However, by rhetorically exaggerating the king’s speech in “king Cambyses’ vein” (2.5.352), Falstaff ends up mocking the king’s performance

64 Shakespeare also threatens to make Falstaff’s anteriority an effect of his own authorial anteriority. Kristen Poole outlines that Falstaff is an “image of the grotesque puritan” (54) and “satiric representation of a famous Lollard martyr” (68) parodied by Shakespeare based on the Marprelate tracts. Shakespeare’s satire of Oldcastle, claims Poole, rests on Falstaff’s physical appearance and behaviour: “On a superficial level the discrepancy between Falstaff’s gluttonous lifestyle and the more restrained and abstemious conduct expected of a reformist religious leader becomes a basis for satire that runs throughout both parts of Henry IV” (68).

65 Thomas van Laan states that “[f]or Falstaff, the ‘play extempore’ is to a high degree an extension and formalization of the same impulse he is constantly demonstrating through his more incidental role-playing. The king and the prince become two further portrayals in a repertory . . . .” (148). The play extempore renders explicit Falstaff’s latent association with the king.
of kingship and undermining his authority. Falstaff-the-king’s speech is riddled with Lylyian euphuisms, rhetorical questions, and comparisons which ought to suggest the king’s wisdom and his authority but instead reveal the foolish reasoning that informs the king’s faulty judgment: flouting the maxims of manner (avoid ambiguity, avoid obscurity of expression) and relation (be relevant), Falstaff-the-king’s rhetorical turns, tropes and schemes expose the king’s failure to morally instruct his son and thus showcase his incapability as a father and as king. Falstaff-the-king’s comparison between a creeping camomile flower and Hal’s youth, for instance, functions as a moral maxim and is intended to gently reprove Hal’s reckless behaviour (“For though the camomile, the more it is trodden on, the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted, the sooner it wears” [2.5.365-367]). But the comparison, which posits a difference between Hal’s wasted youth and the down-trodden flower rather than highlights their similarity, is nonsensical in its didactic force and fails as a comparison. In drawing attention to the king’s symptomatic use of the form of words without their substance, Falstaff-as-king comments on the king’s superficial kingship, which is underwritten by Henry’s illegitimacy or insubstantiality as a true king.66 Falstaff not only parodies Henry as a counterfeit king but also parodies his role as a father and ridicules his inability to recognize his own son: “That thou art my son I have partly thy mother’s word, partly my own opinion, but chiefly a villainous trick of thine eye, and a foolish hanging of thy nether lip, that doth warrant me” (2.5.367-370). The incertitude that belies the king’s knowledge of his son, based on Hal’s appearance and his wife’s word, is Falstaff’s way of mocking the king as a cuckold but he may

66 In peppering his speech with Biblical references and sententious phrases, Falstaff-as-king is equally ridiculing the king’s attempts to build up his ethos and present himself as a virtuous monarch. Hotspur also underlines the king’s hypocritical use of appearances by referring to him as the superficial “king of smiles” (1.3.244). In recounting a past meeting with the Machiavellian ruler, Hotspur details how Henry strategically uses forms of politeness and flattery to disguise his true agenda (1.3.248-251).
also be suggesting that the king himself was a lecher in his day and fathered a number of children. Although the king’s incertitude is diminished by his trust in appearances (Hal’s lip and eye “warrant” that he is Henry’s son), the subsequent conditional sentence comically undermines the king’s appearance-based logic: “If then thou be son to me, here lies the point” (370-371, italics mine). Moreover, the “villainous . . . eye” and “foolish hanging” of the “nether lip” inscribe Falstaff’s commentary; the expressions implicate Falstaff’s off-record accusation of Hal’s depravity by speaking in the king’s voice. Falstaff’s ridicule of the king thus comically deflates his own boastful self-praise through the king’s voice; since the king is oblivious to his son’s true identity, his proclamation of Falstaff’s virtue based on his looks is ironic. Falstaff-as-king mocks and thus deflates Falstaff-as-virtuous-thief-or-knight at the same time as Falstaff mocks the king’s hypocritical façade to which he is clearly heir.

In the role-reversal that ensues due to Hal’s prompting, Falstaff also derides Hal’s villainy by impersonating the prince. Hal-as-king, resorting to his characteristically harsh name-calling, explicitly attacks Falstaff’s face and further undercuts Falstaff’s self-praise by impolitely insulting Falstaff: “that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend Vice, that grey Iniquity,

67 Falstaff pronounces Hal and his compatriots to be “stony-hearted villains” (2.2.21) and later reiterates his implication of Hal’s villainy when he lamentably tells Bardolph that “Company, villainous company, hath been the spoil of me” (3.3.7-8). Cowl notes that the “foolish hanging lip” is a “sign of wantonness . . .” (qtd. in Hemingway fn. 379, p.163).

68 Falstaff’s mockery of the king is reinforced by Hal’s observation: “[t]hy state is taken for a joint-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown” (346-348). The king’s golden sceptre is reduced to a leaden dagger, a prop which evokes in the audience’s mind Falstaff’s “dagger of lath” (2.5.126) that certifies Falstaff as a Vice (and here implicates the king’s villainy by way of association); the king’s rich “crown” is reduced to a bald head (or crown) but the pun on crown (a gold coin) and its subsequent reduction to a clipped (or “bald”) coin suggests that Falstaff will counterfeit the (counterfeit) king. While Hal exposes the mechanics of Falstaff’s mockery, he also—inadvertently and ironically—heightens the similarity between his father and Falstaff (as villainous thieves) for the audience.
that father Ruffi, that Vanity in Years” (2.5.410-414). As Derek Bousfield demonstrates, Hal-as-king masks his linguistic impoliteness as banter to sincerely criticize Falstaff under the pretext of play (see “Never a Truer Word”). The undeterred Falstaff, however, counters Hal-as-king’s insults by not only adopting Hal’s voice to repair his face-damage through hyperbolical self-praise in the prince’s name (2.5.426-438) but also by implicating Hal’s baseness, which aligns with Falstaff’s own. In response to Hal-as-king’s query as to whether or not Falstaff-as-Hal knows the “old white-bearded Satan” (422), Falstaff-as-Hal states that “to say I know more harm in him than in myself were to say more than I know” (426-426). While Falstaff’s response slyly inscribes his wish-fulfilment that Hal protectively cares for and preserves him from persecution (and thus dialogically answers his initial request in 1.2 which opens his repartee with Hal), it also implies that Falstaff is taking a jab at Hal’s “harmfulness” through, ironically, Falstaff-as-Hal’s attempt to absolve Falstaff from vice by measuring Falstaff’s vice against his own. Nevertheless, Hal-as-king’s terse counter to Falstaff’s explicit request that Hal (in his future role as king) not banish Falstaff— since to “Banish plump Jack” would signify that he “banish[es] all the world” (2.5.438)— is a performative utterance that breaks with the play extempore. Hal’s monosyllabic “I do; I will” (2.5.439) marks the collusion between Hal-as-king’s voice and Hal-the-future-king’s voice; the anticipatory promise “I will” meta-dramatically breaks free of the performative “I do”, uttered in the moment of performance, to foreshadow Hal’s rejection of Falstaff in 2 Henry IV. Hal’s promise, which oddly invokes Falstaff’s mock-promise “I must give over this life, and I will give it over” (1.2.84-85), may also critique Falstaff’s feigned intention to repent.

Falstaff’s ability to both hyperbolize his braggartism through praising himself as the king and Hal and to, in turn, deflate this braggart role by mocking the king and Hal through his
implicatures in the play extempore is compounded by the audience’s awareness that the actor impersonating Falstaff draws attention to his craft. Falstaff’s part is written to invite the kind of “secretly open” playing that Will Kempe would have embraced, in which the actor competes with the character he impersonates to showcase his representational acting ability in an ironically presentational manner. The audience’s meta-theatrical awareness of the actor impersonating Falstaff while Falstaff impersonates other character types contributes to Falstaff’s anteriority: while Falstaff’s implicatures in the play extempore are intended both for Hal and the audience, the audience is additionally privy to a double implicature that rests on the dramatic irony that Kempe (or the nameless actor) speaks as Falstaff even as Falstaff speaks as Hal and Henry. Falstaff’s self-praise has meta-theatrical recourse to Kempe, who inscribes his own self-praise under the veil of mocking Falstaff’s self-praise. If, as Calderwood contends, the play extempore is Shakespeare’s “burlesque version of kingship” (46), it is no less Kempe-as-Falstaff’s burlesque of King Henry’s performance of kingship: Kempe-as-Falstaff’s mockery of the king’s feigned kingship implicates Kempe-the-actor’s superior performance of kingship via Falstaff, which outdoes that of the king. In this way, Kempe-as-Falstaff’s ironically “true” performance outdoes King Henry’s “false” performance. While Falstaff thus ridicules the king’s failed performance of kingship, Kempe authorizes his own performance and invites the audience to witness just what he can do with all his roles—as king, Hal, and braggart. This “double personation” of Kempe-as-Falstaff and Falstaff-as-king in the play extempore, as Robert Weimann contends, makes play-acting “secretly open” or simultaneously presentational and representational for the audience: the scene, he claims, “is

69 I am not here making a historical argument about Kempe’s specific relationship to the Globe audience. Instead, I am using Kempe as an example to demonstrate the theatrical implicature inherent to Falstaff’s part that can be exploited by an actor. The meta-theatricality written into Falstaff’s part can certainly be activated in other, non-Elizabethan reception contexts.
almost a play within a play or, to be more exact, a play with playing. The donning of imperfect masks in this scene is almost entirely dependent on its representational purpose; disguise serves as a ‘secret’ gear through which openly to display (and enjoy) the ‘sport’ of exuberant role-playing” (Author’s Pen 97). In advising Hal to “[n]ever call a true piece of gold a counterfeit— thou art essentially made, without seeming so” (2.5.449-450) right after the sheriff’s knock interrupts their improvised play, Kempe-as-Falstaff asserts his authenticity (despite counterfeiting Falstaff) in a way that competes with Falstaff’s reiterated claims that he is not a thief. In thus foregrounding his play-acting, Kempe’s implicatures work with Falstaff’s implicatures and elicit a dramatic irony that reinforces the audience’s sense of Falstaff’s anteriority as a character who is simultaneously involved in and distanced from the multiple roles he performs. Kempe-as-Falstaff or the actor, thus, “steals” under the audience’s “countenance” in a secretly open manner.

The dramatic irony arising from Falstaff’s verbal implicatures in his exchange with Hal at Shrewsbury and in his “conversation” with the audience intersect with Kempe’s visual representation of performance to reinforce the audience’s perception of an anteriority which allows Falstaff to comically enact and deflate his braggart role in order to ridicule Lancastrian theft and illegitimacy. Falstaff, feigning death in his skirmish with the Douglas, resurrects himself and speaks in a soliloquy overheard by the audience. Falstaff ironically claims to not be a counterfeit even though the audience has just witnessed his counterfeit death: “Counterfeit? I lie, I am no counterfeit. To die is to be a counterfeit, for he is but the counterfeit of a man who hath not the life of a man. But to counterfeit dying when a man thereby liveth is to be no

70 Weimann: “The Shakespearean confluence of personating actor and personated character thrives on and artfully enhances the friction inherent in the contrariety informing the shape of an artificial person, a mere representation, himself or herself appropriately the artful player’s real practice” (“Personation and Playing” 155).
counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life indeed” (5.4.113-117). Akin to his claim that he is “a true piece of gold” rather than a “counterfeit” (2.5.449-450), Falstaff inverts logic to premise his authenticity on the ability to imitate or uphold a deceptive self-image; unlike the king and Hal, Falstaff affirms that he is not what he appears to be—he is anterior to his appearance. The irony is redoubled by the audience’s meta-theatrical awareness that Kempe is speaking as Falstaff and is denying his counterfeiting or playing even as he counterfeits Falstaff on stage. Kempe thus punctures his impersonation of Falstaff impersonating death to tell the audience that he, rather than Falstaff, is “the true and perfect image of life indeed” (116-117). In rising from the stage Kempe-as-Falstaff, like Falstaff-the-actor, proves that he “liveth” (116) by playing Falstaff just as Falstaff lives by counterfeiting. But even Falstaff’s claim that he is the “true and perfect image” of life becomes ironic when juxtaposed against what the audience visually witnesses on stage. In standing (rather than lying) on the stage and hovering over the slain Douglas, Falstaff emblematically illustrates that his claim to being “real” or life-like is a lie; according to one definition, “counterfeit” signifies that which is “represented by a picture or image” (OED 4). The visual juxtaposition of a standing Falstaff (with his large protruding belly) against a slain man lying on the stage may be Shakespeare’s implicature that Falstaff is, truly, a counterfeit or a visual—and thus allegorically symbolic—representation of life in the play, even as he tries to script his own play.

Falstaff’s resurrection from death would also have attuned the audience to the Protestant myth of the martyred Oldcastle for there were apparently “widespread rumours that [Oldcastle] would rise again in three days” (Corbin and Sedge 6). Falstaff’s action (stage direction: FALSTAFF riseth up), coupled with the irony attending his claim that he is not a counterfeit, could suggest that Shakespeare, again, is possibly mocking the Protestant view of Oldcastle as a pious man who deceptively “rises up” of his own accord rather than by divine sanction.

Falstaff tries to re-script valour in terms that vindicate his cowardice: “The better part of valour is discretion, in the which better part I have saved my life” (5.4.117-118). Discretion is defined as the “ability to discern or distinguish what is right, befitting, or advisable, esp. as regards one’s own conduct or action . . . sound judgment” (OED 6a). Although Falstaff’s statement is a joke, it nevertheless calls forth Falstaff’s chaffing of the king’s lack
Falstaff’s conversational implicature in his brief verbal exchange with Hal and John of Lancaster moreover works with visual presentation to create a second implicature directed toward the audience. Responding to Hal’s observation that Falstaff seems to be alive while Hal knows him to be dead (“Thou art not what thou seem’st” [5.5.133]), Falstaff politely affirms Hal’s observation that he is not an apparition while implicating that he is, in fact, two men at once: “No, that’s certain: I am not a double man. But if I be not Jack Falstaff, then I am a jack” (5.5.134-135). The wordplay on double—two men—which creates the implicature is ironic due to the discrepancy between Falstaff’s verbal claim and visual proof; since Falstaff carries Hotspur on his back, this visual image affirms precisely what Falstaff denies—that he is a double man or two-men-in-one. The implicature is additionally compounded by dramatic irony, which gives rise to a second implicature to which Hal is not privy. Since the audience has just witnessed Falstaff’s counterfeit speech and his resurrection on stage, Falstaff’s claim to not be a double man is doubly ironic since Kempe’s impersonation of Falstaff produces a double man or Kempe’s counterfeit. While Falstaff may be implicating that he is not a “double” or duplicitous man to differentiate himself from the dishonest and hypocritical prince whom he may be indirectly ridiculing, the implicature is undercut by Kempe-as-Falstaff’s implicature to the audience that Kempe the actor is a double man or at least counterfeits his of judgment and serves as a useful counterpoint to the rash behaviour exhibited by both the king and Hotspur in the play.

73 The image of Falstaff piggybacking Hotspur hints at the morality play tradition in which a devil typically whisks Vice away on his back. Hal’s label for Falstaff (i.e. the “white-bearded Satan”) thus visually materializes in the scene to highlight that Falstaff is, ironically, a double man. Murai suggests that the image of Falstaff with Hotspur on his back is the visual reification of a pun on “horseplay” (36), which is latent in the play even though it is not represented verbally (37). Murai claims that “having been deprived of his own horse, [Falstaff] himself becomes a horse and has been prodded into motion by a spur named ‘Hotspur’” (36).
doubleness. In thus drawing attention to his acting, Kempe asks the audience to suspend their involvement in theatrical illusion. Moreover, Falstaff’s pun on “jack”, a diminutive of his proper name but also signifying a knave, implicates that Falstaff is indeed a double man. His *non sequitur* (“But if I be not Jack Falstaff, then I am a jack”) collapses since Falstaff has consistently demonstrated that in being himself, he is always and already a knave: his pun implicates Falstaff’s double identity even as the wordplay on “double” comically denies it. Falstaff’s duplicity is embodied in his final braggadocio, in which he claims to have killed Hotspur: “I grant you I was down and out of breath, and so was he; but we rose both at an instant, and fought a long hour by Shrewsbury clock. If I may be believed, so; if not, let them that should reward valour bear the sin upon their own heads” (5.4.140-143). Not only does Falstaff lie, but in asking to be rewarded for his honourable action he embraces the same chivalric code of courage that he had dismissed in his soliloquy on honour; holding honour to be an insubstantial “word” (5.1.133) and deeming that he will have “none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon” (5.1.138), Falstaff paradoxically not only cheats death by refusing to “pay” death with his own life but also robs Hal of his honour in claiming to have stabbed Hotspur. If, as Calderwood notes, “Shrewsbury is a form of Gad’s Hill” (54) or if Shrewsbury is Gad’s

74 Calderwood claims that “Falstaff may expand to include Kempe. Falstaff is a character whose role is to play the actor. If Kempe may play Falstaff, may not Falstaff play Kempe?” (136). The meta-theatrical game, then, comes full circle at Shrewsbury: Kempe plays Falstaff playing Kempe. Weimann notes that Falstaff exposes himself as an actor primarily during the play extempore where he “delivers not only the presumed speech of Henry but a burlesque image of the act of impersonation itself” ("Personation and Playing" 185).

75 Prior to their fight at Shrewsbury, Hal tells Hotspur that “all the budding honours on thy crest/ I’ll crop to make a garland for my head” (5.4.71-72). Herbert Weil claims that Falstaff’s soliloquy on honour “attacks the vanity of dying to save face” (17). But even though Falstaff comically deflates military heroism to protect himself, his soliloquy is nevertheless laced with choric seriousness and carries weight as an apt critique of the Bolingbroke sphere. Although Falstaff’s response to Hal’s “Thou owest God a death” is spoken in the voice of a cowardly and parasitical knight (“’Tis not due yet. I would be loath to pay him before his day” [5.1.127-128]), the response nevertheless hints at Falstaff’s disrespect for the king and his enterprise which is anything but divinely sanctioned, much like his death. Sublette states that Falstaff’s response “brings to mind all of those Englishmen for whom the time of reckoning is not necessarily due. The burden of responsibility for a battle . . . lies on the king” (76).
Hill’s dramatic double, then Falstaff’s robbery of Hal’s honour is his way of repaying Hal for robbing him of his “earnings” at Gad’s Hill. In demonstrating that the insubstantial word of honour is not worth dying for, Falstaff shows that it is certainly worth living for and comically “redeems” his reputation and his name through counterfeiting.76 Falstaff’s conversational implicatures in the Shrewsbury scene, which intersect with his visually represented actions on stage, allow him to inhabit the interface between a rounded character and an allegorical symbol of persistent vitality or life; the dramatic irony and meta-theatricality that inheres in the scene, which informs Falstaff’s implicatures, allows the audience to glance at an anteriority which enables Falstaff to simultaneously inflate and deflate himself and to thereby adhere to but also transcend his scripted identity.

H.N. Hudson aptly states that Falstaff “has so much, or is so much, that we cannot easily tell what he is” (84). His gargantuan physical and verbal proportions endow Falstaff with a characteristic roundness or psychological reality—symbolized by his bulging belly—that transcends his dramatic characterization. But if, as William Empson notes, “[t]he whole joke of the great rogue is that you can’t see through him, any more than the Prince could” (224), then Falstaff is certainly laughing at those critics who to try to peer through his performances into a non-existent, essential self. Falstaff possesses anteriority rather than interiority; his roundness is a linguistic effect that arises from the ironies that attend his conversational implicatures as they intersect with the meta-theatrical moments of the play that inform Falstaff’s meaning.

Falstaff’s implicatures in his conversations with Hal, which flout Gricean maxims and allow

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76 I agree with Paul Jorgensen, who argues that to “redeem” time is to “spend present time well, not trying to recover or atone for the time of days past . . . to redeem or (or “rescue”) time was to take full advantage of the time that man is given here on earth for salvation” (104). Jorgensen claims that the time Hal spent in the Falstaffian underworld was productively used since Hal was educating himself and thus using his time wisely. Since Hal’s redemption “has been going on almost constantly” (108), his slaying of Hotspur does not mark his sudden redemption of time.
him to implicate or suggest more than he says, enable Falstaff to uphold his scripted identity as a braggart and cowardly knight even as he undercuts his scripted roles to mock Hal and the Lancastrian dynasty for their hypocrisy, theft, and illegitimacy. In his opening exchange with Hal, peppered with politeness strategies and a politeness implicature that frame his self-mockery, Falstaff indirectly ridicules Hal’s illegitimacy and damages his face while appearing to maintain both his and Hal’s face. His parodic impersonations of King Henry, Hal, and a Puritan similarly register conversational implicatures which enable Falstaff to scoff at the Lancastrian dynasty for its hypocrisy. Falstaff’s simultaneous inflation and deflation of his self-representations through the use of implicatures, which ironically maintain his comedic face, allow him to damage Lancastrian political face. Falstaff’s conversational implicatures work with the meta-theatrical structure of the play extempore and the Shrewsbury scenes to highlight his anteriority by enabling the audience to infer additional and different meanings that apparently escape or bypass Hal’s registration. Thus, while Falstaff may play or gesture toward the various literary and historical types with which the Lancastrians associate him—Oldcastle, the morality play Vice, the miles gloriosus—the moralistic voice that emerges from Falstaff’s mockeries sets him apart from his impersonations for it is compounded by the visual metaphors, meta-theatrical moments, and dramatic irony of the play which Shakespeare himself uses to implicate that Falstaff ultimately embodies the energy and exuberance of life both within and outside of the theatre. It is through this double implicature that Falstaff becomes, to use Johnson’s terms, a “compound of sense and vice” (355).
Chapter 3

The “Serpent of Old Nile”: Reporting and Re-representing Shakespeare’s Cleopatra

Now pale and faint she languishes, and straight
Seemes in a sound, unable more to move:
Whilst her instructed followers plie thine ears
With forged passions, mix’t with fained tears.

—Samuel Daniel, “A Letter from Octavia to Marcus Antonius”

I must not be, unlesse I be mine owne.

—Samuel Daniel, The Tragedy of Cleopatra

Shakespeare’s Cleopatra is, as William Hazlitt called her, a “masterpiece”; she is so “voluptuous, ostentatious, conscious, boastful of her charms, haughty, tyrannical, fickle” (75) that she “breathe[s], move[s], [and] live[s]” (74).¹ It is this vitality in her character that impelled Bradley to proclaim that “Cleopatra stands in a group with Hamlet and Falstaff . . . . They are inexhaustible . . . . you feel that, if they were alive and you spent your whole life with them, their infinite variety could never be staled by custom; they would continue everyday to surprise, perplex, and delight you” (Oxford Lectures 299). Yet for all of her “infinite variety”, Cleopatra has customarily been subject to critical condemnation or praise, which emblematizes her and actually flattens her variety.² Moralistic critics with a patriarchal bias have condemned Cleopatra as a wanton, devious Eve or a Circe-like temptress who is a “symbol of Antony’s slavery to desire” (Stempel 63), while romantic critics have praised Cleopatra’s greatness of spirit and her noble-heartedness— and thus Antony’s and Cleopatra’s transcendent love— in

¹ E. E. Stoll additionally draws attention to Cleopatra’s lifelikeness: “For she is alive, every inch of her, to her fingertips” (qtd. in Stempel 60).

² “Cleopatra’s admirers, like her detractors, often treat her as an archetype and an emblem, rather than a complex, interiorized dramatic creation” (Deats, “Anamorphic Drama” 17).
deeming her to be a “good . . . genius” who rescues Antony from the “snares” of the Roman world (Bethell 131), and have thus mythologized her as an eternal feminine principle that is a source of passion and reproduction akin to Venus (Fisch) or even a universal symbol of the “essential woman” of literature and myth (Wilson Knight 14). This bifurcated moral judgement of Cleopatra has largely been informed by the critical treatment of Egypt and Rome in the play as irreconcilable binaries. Inspired by Harley Granville-Barker’s remark that the opposition between Rome and Egypt “braces the whole body of the play” (371), critics have pitted Egypt as the exotic, Eastern “Other” against Rome as the civilized, Western empire: Egypt, as James Hirsch explains, is associated with “passion, love, pleasure, sensuality, vice, vitality, extravagance, indolence, imagination, intuition, dream, ecstasy, private life, individualism, variety, affirmation, or inclusion” whereas Rome is identified with “reason, honour, duty, temperance, virtue, morality, stoicism, action, realism, judgment, cynicism, war, the public sphere, authoritarianism, order, negotiation, or exclusivity” (180). These binaries are moreover underwritten by gender categories which allegorize Egypt—because of its metonymical monarch—as a feminine space of “nature, procreation, beauty, . . . play . . . sex” that is “generative [and] erotic” but also “tempestuous, cruel, and variable” (French 256) in contradistinction to the masculine realm of Rome which is defined by permanence or solidity, “power, hierarchy, ownership . . . contest” (French 255). This binary has led critics to either

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3 I borrow the terms “romantic” and “moralistic” from Deats. See Deats, “Anamorphic Drama” (15-17), for a bibliography of moralistic and romantic critics. Daniel Stempel holds that Cleopatra is “to be read against a background of medieval clerics who picture women as weak in reason, strong in passion, carnal in nature and governed by lust” (63).

4 Hirsch’s list is representative rather than comprehensive.

5 Paul Lawrence Rose suggests that Rome is the domain of rational, calculating politics whereas Egypt is the realm of impulse or emotionally charged politics (383-384); and more recently, Russ McDonald juxtaposes Rome as a locus characterized by an Attic style of speech against Egypt as a locus of Asiatic speech. McDonald reads
valorize Rome over Egypt and to thus adopt a misogynistic perspective toward Cleopatra as a dangerously hedonistic lover and prostitute who subverts reason (Deats, “Anamorphic Drama” 8) or, following Lind T. Fritz’s feminist prompting in 1977, to champion Egypt and its monarch over Rome as a desirable alternative to the deceit and calculation of Rome. Fritz’s seminal feminist essay, calling out the sexist bias of male critics who myopically adopt “public Roman values”, defends Cleopatra as a co-protagonist in the play and rescues her from being an “antagonist at best, [or] nonentity at worst” (306).

While later critical attempts to champion Cleopatra as a protagonist heed Fritz’s feminist cry, their endorsement of Egyptian values sidelines the Roman perspective which necessarily contributes to her complexity. Although critics polarize Egypt and Rome, they nevertheless recognize the relative values attributed to both geographical locales since Egypt and Rome interpenetrate each other; the boundary between them is fluid. A host of “complementarian” critics in the 1970s have insisted on the play’s ambivalence as well as on the necessity of holding both Egyptian and Roman perspectives in counterpoint rather than carrying a moral judgment on the play: Michael Payne deems that the play’s irony undermines the “encompassing myth” of Rome and Egypt for the two are “unseparable oppositions” or

Antony’s vacillation between Asiatic Egypt and Attic Rome as allegorical of Shakespeare’s stylistic oscillation between the two poles in his own writing.

6 French states that “Egypt and Rome are in some ways contained in each other” (262) and Rosalie Colie sees that “Egypt is constantly open to Rome” (180) just as Rome is ridiculed through the silliness of Lepidus, “opportunistic” Menas, “ambitious Pompey, and self-serving Octavius” (181).

7 “Complementarity” is Norman Rabkin’s neologism; Rabkin follows Derek Traversi in vouching for a “complementary, not contradictory, reading of the play” (241). Rabkin provides a “communal” reading of the play that encompasses the “profoundly dualistic” perspectives of Egypt and Rome (Common Understanding 185) by claiming, for instance, that Rome is both a bastion of honour and military heroism as well as a “vicious political arena where honour is meaningless” and where “a general atmosphere of treachery and triviality” prevails (Common Understanding 186). Likewise, love is ennobling and liberating (Common Understanding 186) as much as it is self-destructive (Common Understanding 151).
interrelated polarities (266); Howard Felperin claims that Rome and Egypt engage in a “dialectic of mutual demystification” (109) where the Roman denigration of Cleopatra and Antony as a pair of “degenerate hedonists”, and Egypt’s criticism of the Romans as “petty worldlings”, illuminate the “inadequacy or weakness of the other as a model of conduct” (108-9) as well as their respective failures in fashioning themselves after an epic model; John F. Danby claims that Rome-as-World and Egypt-as-Flesh paradoxically “maintain and destroy each other” (149) through their union; and Janet Adelman, somewhat divergently from this balanced view, contends that “uncertainty is the central feature of the play” (The Common Liar 14) for “we are forced to judge and shown the folly of judging at the same time” (The Common Liar 39). As James Hirsch aptly states, the Egypt-Rome binary is false for, in presupposing the existence of two rather than four locales, the binary attests to the mythification of Egypt from a Roman perspective— rather than from an Egyptian perspective— and equally presents a mythified Rome from an Egyptian perspective rather than a Rome from a Roman perspective.8

This attention to ambivalence or ambiguity refocuses critical attention on Cleopatra as not just a noble or vile woman in love but also as Egypt, a metonymical monarch of her country and its political figurehead. Cleopatra essentially becomes a locus of ambivalence in being both “a quean and a queen, masculine and feminine, source of life and death, object of satire and reverence” (Shapiro 32), or as Maynard Mack calls her, an “absolute oxymoron like Lucretian Venus, whose vitality resists both definition and regulation” (19).9 Critics have noted

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8 According to Hirsch, the play presents four figurative locales: “Rome as it is perceived from a Roman point of view; Rome from an Egyptian point of view; Egypt from a Roman point of view; and Egypt from an Egyptian point of view” (125).

9 Shapiro notes that the ambivalence operating within the personalities of the major characters, within the play’s imagery, and within the structure of the scenes, divides the audience’s response and sustains a “controlled ambivalence” in the audience’s mind as it “keep[s] the audience continually aware of potential oppositions and reversals” (20). The play, claims Shapiro, structurally operates by alternation and oscillation (19). Paul Cantor (127), Paul Lawrence Rose (388), and Marilyn Williamson all hold that the play’s political context subtends the
that the play’s “Roman” political context is intertwined with, and inseparable from, its “Egyptian” love plot or, as Rick Bower admirably formulated it in 1998, “the game of love is a game of politics is a game of power” (535). Cleopatra’s love for Antony is thus not only transcendentally romantic from an Egyptian perspective or lustfully base from a Roman perspective and thus a trait that defines her as a woman— it is also a political tool that informs her sexual strategies and defines her public role as a monarch. Politically inclined critics in the 1990s have valorized Cleopatra’s agency and her sexual diplomacy to re-conceptualize Cleopatra as a politically autonomous and sovereign monarch who plays a crucial role in orchestrating the power relations in the play. As Julius Caesar’s, Gnaeus Pompey’s, and Mark Antony’s seductress and concubine, Cleopatra employs sexual strategies to retain her political power and her kingdom. Theodora Jankowski claims that Cleopatra unites her bodies natural and politic to tactically maintain her power on the Egyptian throne (149); Mary Ann Bushman contends that Cleopatra’s role-playing allows her to renounce a limited Roman identity and to construct an idiosyncratic as well as a politically autonomous identity predicated on performance (43) as Linda Charnes similarly contends that Cleopatra’s “histrionic constitution” (*Notorious Identity* 127) and performative identity enable her to subvert Roman voyeurism in order to maintain her sovereignty (129); Heather James equally notes that Cleopatra “exploits artistry, spectacle, and theatricality as self-representational materials in the exercise of her royal power” (*Shakespeare’s Troy* 136); and Catherine Belsey claims that Cleopatra’s strategic seduction-by-deferral endows her with power, for her self-representations

love plot; Williamson’s study focuses on characters’ “wavering loyalties, their deceptions, their policy, their betrayals” (“Political Context” 251).
masquerade absence as presence while allowing her to be “inconsistently *elsewhere*” (“Cleopatra’s Seduction” 42).10

That Cleopatra’s political manoeuvring is inextricably intertwined with and dependent on her theatrical strategies of seduction is now a critical commonplace.11 However, in endowing Cleopatra with absolute agency and in correlating this agency with a political power that she does not possess since she is a subject of— and hence subjected to— the Roman Empire, critics have opted for a highly “Egyptian” reading of the queen which sidelines her Roman contextualization and her ambivalence. As Cristina León Alfar notes, viewing Cleopatra as “an agent of events, . . . a woman in control of her body and her own representation” (137) fails to account for her political subordination to patriarchal Roman rule which not only instigates but also constrains her reactions.12 Egypt’s colonization by Rome makes Cleopatra’s “celebrated sexuality both an effect of imperial domination— rather than an erotically motivated act on her part— and a practical mode of natural preservation” (Alfar 151).

Rather than define or emblematize who or what Cleopatra is, I look to account for how the effect of Cleopatra’s sexual or transcendent greatness as a character is produced. The chapter will demonstrate that Cleopatra’s ambivalence— her capacity to produce sexual greatness within the context of her subordination— is an effect of her use of report as a particular linguistic strategy to negotiate her power. Attending to Cleopatra’s linguistic strategy

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10 Though not in a political vein, Jyotsna Singh claims that Cleopatra’s improvisational acting empowers her femininity (113).

11 As Heather James notes, “theatrical spectacle and sexuality are politically efficient strategies” (*Shakespeare’s Troy* 143). Despite this critical commonplace, critics like Robert A. Logan still insist on the play’s disassociation of love from politics: “Shakespeare is assuredly less interested in the politics that envelop Antony and Cleopatra than in their love” (162). For Logan, Cleopatra is “apolitical” since emphasis falls on “the accoutrements, trappings, and ceremonial aspects of her queenship as theatrical spectacle” (162).

12 Alfar’s analysis is centered on Cleopatra’s use of her material (sexual) and metaphorical (political), but also racialized, body “as an object of desire” (139).
illustrates that Cleopatra’s sexual power is a product of, as well as a response to, her political subordination in a Roman context; Cleopatra’s sexual charisma is a political tool used to fashion her sovereignty as an Egyptian queen.

**Shakespeare’s Cleopatra as Reporter: Report and Reportage in *Antony and Cleopatra***

Renaissance conceptions of Cleopatra were informed by the imperially biased reports and records of Roman and Greek historians, which depict the Egyptian monarch in an exclusively condemnatory manner as an ambitious, morally depraved, and threatening Other who corrupts Antony in an attempt to gain control over Rome.  

13 Horace and Virgil, for instance, depict the monarch as a powerful and sexually—and thus politically—threatening woman who emasculates men by turning them into her servants (see Williamson, *Infinite Variety* 20 and 23). Flavius Josephus proclaims Cleopatra to be a wicked, covetous, and self-centred woman who is enslaved “to her own desires” (*Antiquities*, in Bullough, 331) and uses her own lust as an excuse to venefully “intrap” (332) men such as Herod.  

14 Lucan similarly notes Cleopatra’s ambition as a “vicious” woman (Bk. X, 60) who “owns Egypt, [but] whores for Rome” (Bk. X, 359) to lead “Caesar captive in a Pharian Triumph” (Bk. X, 65) but also

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13 Franklin M. Dickey notes that the Elizabethans, prior to Shakespeare, recognized Antony and Cleopatra as self-destructive and “shameless voluptaries” who were “notorious for [their] lust and extravagance” (152). The Prologue in G. B. Giraldi Cinthio’s 1583 dramatic tragedy of Cleopatra (*Cleopatra Tragedia*) best illustrates the Elizabethan view of the lovers as allegorical exempla: “pursuit of pleasure outruns virtue;/ Pleasure which draws a man beyond his scope” (in Bullough, 29-30).

14 Flavius recounts how Cleopatra “sought to allure and draw [Herod] to her lust, being of her selfe naturally addicted to such pleasures and intemperance; and happily also being somewhat touched with love, or rather (as it seemeth most likely) she in this sort laid foundation to intrap him under colour to revenge her selfe of some outrage by that meanes. But in effect she generally manifested, that she was overcome by her desire and sensuall lust” (*Antiquities*, in Bullough, 332-333).
compares her to Helen of Troy to stress that the monarch uses her physical appearance and “balefull charm” (Bk. X, 61) to seduce Caesar: “Her trial of Caesar’s stern ear would have been fruitless, but her face entered her plea, her tainted beauty summed up: she seduced her judge” (Bk. X, 104-106). Plutarch, like Lucan, similarly emphasizes Cleopatra’s physical allure but suggests that it is Cleopatra’s discursive ability or the “sweetness of her tongue” (119) that complements her beauty and allows her to enchant men:

so sweet was her company and conversation, that a man could not possibly but be taken.
And besides her beauty, the good grace she had to talk and discourse, her courteous nature that tempered her words and deeds, was a spur that pricked to the quick.
Furthermore, besides all these, her voice and words were marvellous pleasant: for her tongue was an instrument of music to divers sports and pastimes, the which she easily turned to any language that pleased her. (120-121)

For Plutarch, the wily and circumspect Cleopatra is a gifted conversationalist and courteous speaker who employs her tongue—rather than solely her beauty—to flatter, deceive, and seduce.15

Countering this persisting, negative perception of the Egyptian monarch in Elizabethan England, Mary Sidney valorizes Cleopatra as a sympathetic, heroic, and self-sacrificial woman in love who is undyingly devoted to her Antony in the Tragedie of Antonie.16 Although Diomede comments on “th’enchaunting skilles” (in Bullough, 2.719) of Cleopatra’s “training speach” (in Bullough, 2.720), her “forcing voice” (in Bullough, 2.721), and her polyglotism or her versatile use of multiple discourses to answer ambassadors (“each in his owne language…”)

15 John Wilders claims that “something of the ambiguous, self-contradictory quality of Antony and Cleopatra was already present in Plutarch’s narrative waiting to be developed” (60).

16 See Lisa Jardine’s “Still Harping on Daughters” for a revisionist reading of Sidney’s Cleopatra whose agency, Jardine contends, reinforces Cleopatra’s adoption and embodiment of stereotypical female passivity. Mimi Still Dixon concurs, stating that Sidney’s representation “is bound to be refracted through a male gaze . . . . the male perspective is fully articulated by Antony’s accusations, which Cleopatra defends” (84).
Cleopatra’s speech—expressed primarily through self-revelatory or confessional monologues in the play—is sincere rather than manipulative: Sidney’s Cleopatra is a “patient Griselda or falsely accused Constance” (Dixon 77) who accepts her responsibility in Antony’s demise and wilfully renounces her duties as monarch and mother in order to reciprocate Antony’s love by committing suicide. Samuel Daniel’s Cleopatra, by contrast, is a political and self-conscious queen whose heroism lies in her headstrong determination to retain her honour and freedom, vowing: “I must not be, unlesse I be mine owne” (in Bullough, 1.73). Acutely aware of the disparity between her public image and her powerless condition following Antony’s suicide, Daniel’s ambitious Cleopatra carefully deliberates her suicide to trump Caesar in her opening monologue and acknowledges that her love for Antony was insincere (in Bullough, 1.170-186).

Traces of this deceitful and proud Cleopatra can be found in Shakespeare’s representation of the monarch, which is nevertheless more enigmatic and complex than these of Sidney and Daniel. Markedly distinct from her Renaissance predecessors, Shakespeare’s Cleopatra is undecipherable: the audience can not access the private, internal workings of her mind through either a soliloquy or monologue since she is never encountered alone and does not introspectively address herself. Shakespeare, in foregrounding Cleopatra’s verbal interaction with a host of Romans and Egyptians, locates Cleopatra in the public sphere of performance where she is a master of discourse and a speaker of reports, rather than the sole

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17 Sidney takes up Lucan’s observation that Cleopatra’s physical beauty is the cause of the lovers’ downfall. She has Cleopatra lament her beauty: “My face too lovely caus’d my wretched case./ My face hath so entrap’d, to cast us downe” (in Bullough, 2.430-431). Antony, however, refuses to believe in Cleopatra’s innocence following their defeat at Actium and adopts the typical, accusatory Roman voice: “Too wise a head she weares/ Too much enflam’d with greatness, evermore/ Gaping for our great Empires government” (in Bullough, 3.883-885).
subject of Roman reports about her: Shakespeare’s Cleopatra is attended to and heard. Re-orienting Plutarch’s and Sidney’s observations of Cleopatra’s pleasing and skilful speech, Shakespeare shifts the focus away from reporting Cleopatra’s manner of speaking (whether it be speaking courteously, musically, or in different languages) toward the content of her speech. Shakespeare reinvents Cleopatra as a reporter and self-conscious user of language.

Although critics have focused on Cleopatra’s use of histrionic tactics and strategies to consolidate her power, they have overlooked Cleopatra’s speech and her pragmatic use of language. Aside from Russ McDonald’s vague assertion that Cleopatra is “the play’s main figure . . . of verbal prowess and ambiguity” (101) and David Schalkwyk’s brief exploration of how Cleopatra and Antony engage in an “overt staging of the performative” (Speech and Performance 133) or how they theatrically perform their illocutionary acts, discussions of Cleopatra’s language have tended to focus on what Robert D. Hume calls “linguistic typology” (300); literary critics have identified general rhetorical traits or figures like paradox and hyperbole which characterize Cleopatra’s speech, inhere in her characterization, and underwrite the thematic and poetic structure of the play. However, in a play like Antony and

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18 It is interesting that throughout Daniel’s play, the Roman characters Rodon, Proculeius, and Nuntius “report” Cleopatra’s offstage behaviour. Juxtaposed against Cleopatra’s soliloquy which opens the play, these reports either reveal Cleopatra’s conflicting desires vis-à-vis her son, her suicide, and her political circumstances, or reveal how she performs her self-conflict. Shakespeare may have adopted this feature of reportage from Daniel but whereas Roman reportage in Daniel endows Cleopatra with more complexity if not humanity, in Shakespeare it diminishes Cleopatra altogether.

19 Although Hume is interested in understanding “how Shakespeare obtains his effects— and what these effects are meant to be,” his methodology is premised on the Bradleyan assumption that character is “embedded” in language (300), and that language thus expresses character. Hume notes that sea or fishing imagery, repetition, parallelism, and euphonic assonance pertain to Cleopatra’s linguistic domain but that her fascination as a character arises from her “feminine flip-flops of logic, scrambles of idiom, and mincing, mousing tones . . .” (295); Janet Adelman, building on Benjamin T. Spencer’s contention that paradox is the “matrix from which much of the characterization and the action [springs] . . .” (Spencer 376) and that Cleopatra is “the greatest paradox in the play” (Spencer 375), identifies paradox (for Cleopatra) and hyperbole (for Antony) as the protagonists’ defining linguistic traits as well as the tropes which shape character and underlie the thematic structure of the play (The Common Liar, 112; see also “Nature’s Piece ‘gainst Fancy”, 63 and 66); Carol Cook, referring to the use of language in the play rather than to Cleopatra’s speech specifically, states that this language “locates or creates
Cleopatra which infamously trades in reports and messages—more so than any other Shakespeare play, as critics have noted\textsuperscript{20}—investigating how Cleopatra pragmatically uses or reports other characters’ speech as well as her own speech vis-à-vis what is reported about her by the Romans is as crucial in accounting for her political agency and greatness as a character as examining her theatrical subversion is, since her linguistic acts not only complement but also constitute her histrionic performances. I examine what Cleopatra “does” with reports—or rather, what she does both by and in using reports—and what, in turn, reports “do” for her self-presentation. Using the tools of linguistic pragmatics, I contend that Cleopatra’s instances of reportage—her reporting other characters’ speech, reporting her personal imaginings, and commanding that her own responses and behaviour be reported—illustrate her powerless submission and adherence to Roman authority as a pretext for asserting her superiority and sexual dominance over the Romans. This oscillation between Cleopatra’s demonstration of sexual power and her revelations of political powerlessness—or rather, her ability to fulfill her powerless Roman role while simultaneously exceeding it by turning it into a source of sexual self-empowerment—intersects with meta-theatrical moments that foreground the boy actor’s presentational acting skills to produce Cleopatra’s charisma and her ultimate power as a character.

\textsuperscript{20} Linda Charnes contends that the play is about “report, news, messages. The word ‘report’ occurs more frequently in this play than in any other” (\textit{Notorious Identity} 106); Michael Goldman states that the play “takes an unusual interest in reports, particularly reports about the great, and especially the imaginative impact of reports both on the reporter and his audience” (252); and L.G. Salinger notes that the play is populated not only by messages but by “speeches of report, and even reports about report” (20).
Report, as an account that is publicly shared, either verbally or in writing, is not just an account of events but also an account of other speakers’ words. Although the study of reported speech is interdisciplinary in nature, participating in diverse fields such as anthropology, sociology, and philosophy, it has enjoyed particular prominence in linguistics. Reported speech, also called direct and indirect quotation in linguistics, has long been approached syntactically as an object of formal analysis. The syntactic approach examines the speech units of reported speech to determine the grammatical difference in meaning between its manifestation as indirect and direct quotation, and is “chiefly concerned with positing rules for converting one RS [reported speech] construction into another” (Collins 11). However, this syntactic approach has proven to be “reductionist” (Collins 11) since it does not account for the context or utterance “frame” of the report which “provides resources for its appropriate

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21 For anthropological treatments of reported speech, see the collection edited by John Lucy, *Reflexive Language: Reported Speech and Metapragmatics*; for sociological studies see Erving Goffman, *Forms of Talk*; and for philosophical studies see, for instance, Herman Cappelen and Ernie Lepore’s article, “On an Alleged Connection between Indirect Speech and the Theory of Meaning”. Tom Güldemann and Manfred von Roncador’s edited collection of interdisciplinary papers, *Reported Discourse: A Meeting Ground for Different Linguistic Domains*, encompasses reported speech in philosophy, psychology, and sociolinguistics; see also their “Comprehensive Bibliography of Reported Discourse” (363-416) in the same volume. A linguistic approach to reported speech, however, is most congenial and relevant to literary analysis due to its ability to illuminate textual discourse and the concepts of author, narrator, and character (Güldemann and Roncador, Preface vii). Ann Banfield’s *Unspeakable Sentences: Narration and Representation in the Language of Fiction*, which revises narrative theory by examining instances of report in prose narration using a theoretical approach to syntax known as Chomskyan grammar, is an early example of combining stylistic discourse analysis with literary studies. Interestingly, the study of reported speech in literature has been restricted to prose; there has been no treatment of it in drama.

22 The term “reported speech” lacks “terminological consistency” (Wlodarczyk 30) in linguistics and is usually synonymous with indirect speech (speech that is reported or quoted indirectly), as opposed to direct speech (speech that is quoted directly). See Elizabeth Holt (192) for other synonyms of reported speech. I use the term reported speech to signify speech that is reported either indirectly or directly. With reference to Cleopatra, I opt for the term “reportage”, which encompasses not only variegated instances of reported discourse (direct, indirect, hypothetical, etc.) but also encompasses reported thought, reported occurrences, and the use of reports themselves. As Anna Wierzbicka states, “reported speech is inseparable from that of reported thoughts, reported feelings, reported perceptions, etc.” (297).

23 For instance, linguists examine how the meaning of the direct report in the sentence “He said ‘it’s raining’” is altered by its transposition to the syntactic unit of a that-clause which characterizes indirect speech: “he said that it was raining” (italics mine). The transposition would also entail an examination of “pronoun shift, tense shift, mood shift” (Baynham 62).
interpretation” such as “cultural setting, speech situation, shared background assumptions” and participant perception (Duranti and Goodwin 3). In other words, reported speech, as linguists now acknowledge, is “a category of discourse analysis rather than syntax” (Collins 11), for its meaning is not just determined by abstract grammatical and syntactical rules but is shaped by the reporter’s linguistic performance within a given discourse context: the context, speaker intention, and hearer reception and perception all determine the meaning of a reported speech (Collins 1-2). As a result, a discourse pragmatic approach to reported speech has superseded a syntactic approach since the former takes into account the variability between the reported speech and the reporting context as well as the “intentional and creative character” (Collins 2) of the reporter, who “chooses to present [the reported speech] to interpreters in a specific context, for his own communicative purposes” (Collins 3). As Collins states, “[t]he act of representation that mediates between reports and their anterior utterances (real or projected) not only allows but even compels reporters to impose their will upon both form and content” which “can include selection, choice of reporting strategy and contextualization, condensation or amplification, and evaluation” (3).

A pragmatic approach to reported speech is heavily indebted to Mikhail Bakhtin’s and Valentin Vološinov’s dialogical and heteroglossic theory of language in which utterances are

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24 Duranti and Goodwin mount a sustained and detailed defence of context from the perspective of linguistic anthropology and claim that context is “socially constituted, interactively sustained” (3).

25 See Collins (11-16) for an extensive linguistic critique of the syntactic approach to reported speech.

26 Here I specify the pragmatic approach as a “discourse pragmatic approach” in order to differentiate it from the historical pragmatic approach to reported speech in linguistics, which examines how reports are used within their historical linguistic contexts. Examples of the latter include Collins’s study of medieval Russian trial transcripts and Wlodarczyk’s study of early modern English courtroom records and depositions.
evocative of and responsive to prior utterances rather than monological and self-sufficient. Reported speech, defined by Vološinov as “speech within speech, utterance within utterance, and at the same time also speech about speech, utterance about utterance” (115), is a discursive category that emphasizes the “active relation” or “dynamic interrelationship of . . . the speech being reported (the other person’s speech) and the speech doing the reporting (the author’s speech)” (119) which are inextricable from one another. Since the “‘authorial’ context surrounding the reported speech” comprises reply and commentary (Vološinov 118), the act of reporting is neither neutral nor can it transmit the original utterance verbatim but is rather an interpretive or, to borrow J. L. Austin’s term, a “performative” act that renders the reporter an active participant in the construction of meaning rather than a passive instrument of its use. The reported speech re-presented by the reporter thus conveys not only the form and content of the original utterance but also registers the reporter’s stylistic, syntactic, or compositional adaptation of the speech to suit his/her communicative intentions. Reportage,

27 The utterance i.e. “The word is oriented toward an addressee” (Vološinov 85) is “the product of the reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener, addressee and addressee” (86). The speaker and hearer, as participants, determine an utterance as does the “immediate social situation and the broader social milieu” (Vološinov 86).

28 A syntactic approach separates the reporting context from the reported speech. Vološinov decries the categories of syntactic, morphological, and phonetic forms in linguistics since they “are of value exclusively as regards the constituents of an utterance and cease being serviceable when it comes to defining the whole”. The syntactic “category of the sentence is merely a definition of the sentence as a unit-element within an utterance, and not by any means as a whole entity” (Vološinov 110).

29 A “performative” utterance, for Austin, is a speech act that “does” something— it is sharply distinguished from utterances which merely describe or “constate” reality. Illocutionary and perlocutionary acts are both performatives: an illocutionary utterance denotes what is done in saying something (Austin gives the example of saying “I do” during a wedding ceremony and claims that there are certain verbs which denote illocutionary acts, such as inform, order, promise, undertake, warn, request, etc.) whereas a perlocutionary act is an utterance that denotes what is brought about by saying something, i.e. what the effect of the utterance on its hearers is (whether it persuades, deters, misleads, etc.). The illocutionary utterance alters reality in the very moment of its pronouncement while the perlocutionary utterance alters the circumstances of its reception (see Austin 5 and 108). Austin’s speech-act theory is a reaction against the “descriptive fallacy” of the philosophical tradition which holds speech to be indicative, and descriptive, of reality (3).

30 Vološinov notes that the reported speech is adapted “to the syntactic, compositional, and stylistic design of the author’s utterance . . . .” (116).
overall, is thus a creative and intentional act which inscribes the reporter’s commentary or response onto the content or onto the utterance he/she purports to report, within his/her reporting context.

Approaching Cleopatra’s instances of reportage from a pragmatic perspective reveals how the monarch diplomatically and self-servingly deploys the illocutionary and perlocutionary force of her reports to control her self-presentation and self-representation as a victorious Egyptian in others’ speech. I first address the significance of report in Rome and examine Caesar’s reported tribute to Antony as a point of departure for launching into an analysis of Cleopatra’s reportage.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, report and reportage is a trademark of Roman discourse and a measure of its political power. The continual presence of messengers and their reports in the play serves to illustrate the geographical extent of the Roman empire and its colonies, whose boundaries stretch far “beyond our sight-lines” in the theatre (Barfoot 109), and signals Caesar’s governance and control over this territory (Perret 68). Report is a tool for, but also reflects, geographic conquest and imperialistic Roman control, as Linda Charnes states: “Rome’s geographical imperialism is the spatial equivalent (and strategic requirement) of its ever-more-authoritarian narrative imperialism” (*Notorious Identity* 110). A space that privileges the “moral ascendancy” of the ear over the eye (Charnes, *Notorious Identity* 115), Rome is the locus of the “narrative imperative” or the “authoritative (and authoritarian) representational institution of epic and narrative history” that “drives imperialist

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31 The content of reports and messages in the play takes backstage to the effect that reports have on their intended recipients. Marion Perret claims that characters’ treatment of messengers reveals the “heights and depths” of their character; for instance, Perret notes that Caesar’s exchanges with his messengers reveal his “deceit” and “callousness” (70).
historiography” (Notorious Identity 110). Caesar’s use of report and reported speech serves as a means of verbally appropriating or territorializing the foreign Other and absorbing its contours into a standardized and politically sanctioned Roman narrative that boasts of a “unified, self-consistent temporal story line” (Charnes, Notorious Identity 110).

Report is, moreover, used as a means of public self-display. Although the factuality or truthfulness of the content conveyed by report can be intentionally or unintentionally compromised, mis-communicated, manipulated or distorted, reports and reportage play a crucial role in shaping Roman public opinion, as Antony’s concern for his reputation can attest.32 Antony’s desire to thank Pompey for his “strange courtesies and great” prior to waging war against him, lest Antony’s “remembrance suffer ill report” (2.2.164), reveals his concern for upholding his reputation as an honourable and courteous Roman and safeguarding it against rumoured report and destructive gossip. This concern is symptomatic of the creative and destructive force of reportage in the play, which has the power to forge, maintain, or demolish one’s cultivated public image and reputation.33 If Caesar exercises the narrative imperative through his use of report to discursively construct a mighty Roman Empire, he also fashions

32 Rome is a place, according to Agrippa, “[w]here now half-tales be truths” (2.2.141) since messages are skewed due to fear, gossip, rumour, or manipulation; it is a minefield of “common liar[s]”, as Demetrius notes (1.2.63). An instance of distorted or mis-communicated report is the news that reaches Caesar’s ears that Antony conspired with Fulvia and his brother to overthrow Caesar; the confrontation between the two Triumvirs in 2.2. clears up this misunderstanding. As Janet Adelman holds, the plethora of messengers in the play is “symptomatic of [a] breakdown in direct and reliable communication” (The Common Liar 34) and indicates that “all information is unreliable, that it is message or rumour, not fact” (The Common Liar 35).

33 Antony’s concern for his reputation is further evidenced in his conversation with Octavia before he departs for Egypt; he warns Octavia to refrain from believing Roman hearsay or rumour regarding his character (“[r]ead not my blemishes in the world’s report” [2.3.4]). Antony, who wants to re-inhabit his role as an honourable Roman general and thus become a noble subject of discussion or report since honour is the cornerstone to his identity (“If I lose mine honour, I lose myself” [3.4.22-23]), decides to wage war against Caesar to not only prove his heroism and earn accolades but to also, in turn, tarnish Caesar’s reputation in retaliation for his stained reputation (Antony confesses to Octavia: “I’ll raise the preparation of a war/ Shall stain your brother” [3.4.26-27]). Reputation is built up by and channelled through report or word-of-mouth, as Antony’s confirmation (“I have heard”) of Caesar’s observation that Pompey “by sea/ He is an absolute master” (168-9) attests.
himself for the Roman public as a powerful and exemplary Emperor at its helm through report. Caesar not only commands and receives reports from his messengers, but also acts as a reporter who reports other characters’ speeches, written words, and their actions in a self-serving manner to consolidate his power in an environment where reports can be “exceeded, overtaken by new [and proliferating] narratives formulated by interpreting subjects across the empire” (Hiscock 196): Caesar thus “must continually strive through violence, seduction, or obligation to create and/or subjugate, listeners to his self-narratives” (Hiscock 196). In a Rome whose “Romanness” is “fast fading” (Cantor 26) due to political competition, Caesar strategically uses reports and reported speech to memorialize himself as a powerful ruler for the historical record and does so by discreetly belittling his rivals, Antony and Cleopatra.

Caesar’s use of report and reported speech to promulgate his desired public image is exemplified in his tribute to Antony’s past greatness as a stoic general at Modena (1.4. 57-72). Although Caesar laments Antony’s loss of his heroic Roman nature as well as his present self-indulgence in Egypt where “he fishes, drinks, and wastes/ The lamps of night in revel” (1.4.4-7), Caesar later sculpts himself into the Augustus of Virgil, Horace, and Ovid” and “become[s] chief executive of a massive discursive empire, the productions of which would be referred to again and again, from Dante to Pope, as models of literary, moral, and historical ‘authority’” (The Common Liar 108).

Charnes similarly observes that “reporters” are “not just the play’s ubiquitous anonymous messengers but also major figures—such as Octavius, Enobarbus, Antony, and Cleopatra—all of whom deliver discursive recreations of other characters’ performances” (The Common Liar 106). Charnes, however, neither analyzes Octavius’ speech nor what he “does” with reports.

Cantor states that: “[f]rom the time of Julius Caesar, Roman history becomes the record of the struggle of Roman against Roman, first Brutus and Cassius against the second Triumvirate, then the members of the Triumvirate against each other” (130); Rome becomes a locus where private interests oust public service and where intrigue and treachery take precedence over merit (Cantor 152). The degeneration of Rome after Julius Caesar is marked by the physical absence of Rome’s distinctive geographical markers (such as public buildings, the Senate, etc.) in the play; as a result, Cantor claims that Rome is “an abstract locale” (137) in Antony and Cleopatra. This abstract space reflects the absence of essential and definitive Roman qualities such as virtus, which is merely present in conversational speech: “Acting like a Roman may still be talked of as a possibility, but the talk remains just talk, sounding increasingly hollow as the play progresses and one searches in vain for some sign of the traditional Roman virtus in practice” (26-7). Replacing witnessed deeds and acts, the prominence given to discourse and report in Rome seems to underline that “Romanness” is, to use Cantor’s words, “a potentiality but not in fact an actuality” (27).
5), his lament is an effectively calculated rhetorical performance. Caesar’s tribute to Antony and the latter’s past glory at Modena merely masquerades as praise: Caesar uses report to degrade and criticize Antony under the pretext of praising him in order to reinforce his own public image as a virtuous and righteous ruler who displays no ill will toward his rival. Prior to praising Antony, Caesar reads aloud to Lepidus the written report he receives from Alexandria in order to prove that his rumoured distaste for Antony stems not from personal bias but is well-grounded in factual evidence corroborated by the report. Caesar uses the report to warrant and justify his criticism of Antony: “You may see, Lepidus, and henceforth know/ It is not Caesar’s natural vice to hate/ Our great competitor. . .” (1.4.1-3, italics mine). Caesar’s pervasive and obsequious references to himself in the third person throughout the play, as well as his concern with “showing” himself up as an exemplary ruler to an audience of potential Roman reporters, underlines Caesar’s acute awareness of his public role and his need to condition public perception by constantly performing to an audience. This concern with “show” or public appearances is further evidenced when, learning of Antony’s suicide, Caesar not only weeps but draws attention to his weeping by invoking his audience to visually witness his weeping (“Look you, sad friends,/ The gods rebuke me” [5.1.27-8]) and subsequently urges his war council to “see” the messages he wrote to Antony which stand as testament to his pacifism in war:

Go with me to my tent, where you shall see
How hardly I was drawn into this war,
How calm and gentle I proceeded still
In all my writings. Go with me, and see
What I can show in this. (5.1.73-77, italics mine)
Caesar uses these “writings” as visual reports to persuade his audience of his good opinion of Antony and thus of his genuine emotional response\(^{37}\) to Antony’s death; he also uses them to absolve himself of his guilt in and responsibility for the war by manipulatively implicating Antony as being solely at fault. If Roman “rationalism”, as Phyllis Rackin claims, “relies on ocular proof” (“Shakespeare’s Boy” 82), these proofs are underwritten by Roman bias and stage-managed by a Caesar who “controls the conditions of the production of spectacle” (Charnes, *Notorious Identity* 133) as well as its interpretation. By thus manipulating what is publicly displayed, Caesar safeguards his reputation from being tarnished by rumour.\(^{38}\)

Caesar’s verbal report or tribute of Antony is, thus, similarly orchestrated to “show” that he admires Antony’s Roman qualities; the tribute is scaffolded by written report or the letter— the “ocular proof”— which dispels the false rumours of Caesar’s antagonism toward Antony. In praising Antony’s temperance and stoic abstinence from proper nourishment at Modena, Caesar’s report appears to idealize Antony’s past “heroic endurance” (166) but as much as his “admiration of Antony is genuine” (166), as Alexander Leggatt asserts, Caesar’s tribute is nevertheless undercut by his use of degrading imagery which discreetly de-mythologizes Antony’s heroism: “Thou didst drink/ The stale of horses, and the gilded puddle/ Which beasts

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\(^{37}\) Octavia’s return to Rome from Antony in Egypt exemplifies Caesar’s equation of genuine emotion (in this case, “true” love) with public display: he laments that Octavia’s arrival “prevented/ The ostentation of our love; which, left unshown,/ Is often left unloved” (3.6.51-53). Love is not love if it is not put on display (cf. *King Lear*); love is consonant with public spectacle, but spectacle is a vehicle for political power.

\(^{38}\) Public display or theatricality is not exclusively characteristic of the Egyptian realm, as the foregoing discussion demonstrates. Rome’s “narrative products” (Charnes, *Notorious Identity* 128) are equally dependent on a visuality that precedes them— but a visuality that is voyeuristic. As proof of this, Rackin points to the opening scene where the Roman Philo urges Demetrius to “behold and see” (1.1.13) Cleopatra enter the scene. Charnes claims that both the narrative imperative and voyeurism “fix the object in view with the aim of deciphering and delimiting its meaning” (*Notorious Identity* 128). Egypt by contrast, she claims, is equated with spectacle. The crucial issue, however, to re-state Charnes, is “not whether one is to be a spectacle but, rather, who is producing it and to what ends” (*Notorious Identity* 132-33).
would cough at’’ (1.4.61-63). It is moreover significant that, rather than praising a victorious soldier at Modena, Caesar praises a defeated Antony who is “beaten from Modena” (1.4.57) by the Roman Senate: his heroism is depicted through a personal war with famine for survival (59) rather than through a political battle in which he fights for the Roman state. This famished man, whom Caesar frames in an equally famished or desolate landscape, highlights that Antony’s association with Rome’s “myths of rugged origins” is meant to “undo” Antony as a viable leader for Rome’s imperial future “since [Antony] is an anachronism in the emerging bureaucracy of the Roman empire” (James, Shakespeare’s Troy 128).

Caesar’s use of a reported speech in his tribute (1.4.66-71) additionally serves to undermine his praise of Antony’s heroism and to turn his tribute into a critique. Caesar’s eight instances of reportage throughout the play all, significantly, contain variations of indirect reported speech. According to Vološinov, the relationship between authorial context and reported speech is expressed differently in direct report and indirect report. Indirect report—or what Vološinov terms the “pictorial” style of speech—is structured on a reporting context that “strives to break down the self-contained compactness of the reported speech, to resolve it, to obliterate its boundaries” (Vološinov 120): by “infiltrat[ing]” the reported speech with authorial retort and commentary (Vološinov 120), the report is subordinated to the reporter. Unlike direct reported speech which gives voice to both the original speaker’s matter and manner of utterance, indirect reported speech suppresses the original speaker’s voice to reframe and convey only the content of the speech in order to make it appear objective and

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39 “Gilded”, if construed as golden rather than yellow, could be read ironically to suggest Caesar’s ridicule of Antony.

40 Although Vološinov focuses on indirect and direct reported speech, they are not dichotomies. Indirect reported speech also includes mixed forms of speech reporting such as quasi-indirect discourse and quasi-direct discourse (see Vološinov 122).
official; the latter typifies Caesar’s use of report. Indirect reported speech allows him to control the imperial narrative over which he presides by manipulating “the textual remains of the past, to re-create history and to delimit its meaning” (Hiscock 194) in order to “reinvent himself so that he too may become part of the Roman narratives of heroic lineage which are greeted with awe by the city-state” (Hiscock 194). Nevertheless, the report contained in Caesar’s tribute to Antony is not an indirect report of Antony’s speech. Rather, the “report” is what Caesar has indirectly heard reported about Antony: “On the Alps,/ It is reported, thou didst eat strange flesh/ Which some did die to look on” (1.4.67-9). This unofficial word-of-mouth that Caesar hears at second-hand is made into official public record and, as Barfoot notes, implies that “rulers and their subjects are conscious about the making of history” (119). Although it may sound Caesar’s wonder or incredulousness at Antony’s hardiness and his heroic endurance, the report further belittles Antony by underlining his uncontrolled appetite which urges him to consume “strange flesh” (rather than berries and bark) and perhaps even attributes to him a savagery that Caesar had just claimed that Antony’s stoicism allows him to transcend (Antony has fought against famine “with patience more/ Than savages could suffer” [60-61]). Thus, while Caesar’s report admirably illustrates that Antony’s physical form does not diminish after his “strange” feast (his “cheek/ So much as lanked not” [70-71]), this admiration covertly registers his implicit criticism of the Triumvir’s current intemperance and self-indulgence as he

41 As a historiographer, Caesar has a need to “re-interpret his perceived marginality in the March of History” (Hiscock 194). An example of Caesar’s use of indirect report, broadly defined, occurs during his confrontation with Antony when he tells Antony: “you/ Did pocket up my letters, and with taunts/ Did gibe my missive out of audience” (2.2. 76-78). Although the quote does not report the words spoken by Antony, it nevertheless recounts the manner of Antony’s speech (“gibe”) to depict him antagonistically. The sole instance of Caesar’s use of direct reported speech, however, occurs during the Bacchanalian feast on Pompey’s galley when Antony enjoins Caesar to bask in drink (“Be a child o’th’time” [2.7.94]), to which Caesar replies: “Possess it, I’ll make answer” (2.7.95). This direct self-quotatation, in which Caesar reports or announces what he would say before he says it, reinforces the illocutionary force of his command (the imperative “possess it”) to underline his authoritative power. There is a dearth of pragmatic work on self-quotatation; exceptions are anthropological studies in other languages such as German and Japanese.
sexually feasts on Cleopatra’s— not coincidentally— strange flesh in Egypt and loses his physical shape as a result.\textsuperscript{42} The comparison is subtle yet registers Caesar’s haughtiness and superiority— even as the passive voice of the report (“it is reported”) distances him from owning his critique— by altering the terms of Antony’s heroism in order to ridicule it.\textsuperscript{43} Framed within a reporting context in which Caesar laments the loss of Antony’s past heroism and urges his return to Rome, Caesar’s indirect report renders this past heroism questionable. His tribute to Antony thus illustrates his self-serving use of report. Under the pretext of singing of Antony’s past greatness at Modena, prompted by the appearance of a messenger who reports the onslaught of Pompey and his men, Caesar’s report deflates Antony’s heroism and tarnishes his reputation in an attempt to foreground and discreetly promote his own ethos as a ruler. Caesar transforms praise into self-praise in order to “earn a place i’th’story” (3.13.44), in the written and officially recorded Roman narrative.

Although report and reportage delimit Rome as the locus of the “narrative imperative” and distinguish it from Egypt as the realm of “mimetic improvisation”, as Charnes notes, the Egyptian Cleopatra nevertheless adopts Roman reportage to re-script her social and political

\textsuperscript{42} Robert Lipscomb notes that food and sexuality are frequently intertwined in the play (4) and also notes the nuanced, overlapping meanings of “strange flesh”, which point to both Cleopatra’s excess and Caesar’s temperance (5). Lipscomb, interestingly, also detects a note of “envy” in Caesar’s report which may suggest his homosexual desire for Antony. Lipscomb deems that instead of questioning why Antony remains with Cleopatra, Caesar’s report really questions why Antony, who is perfectly capable of consuming Cleopatra’s strange flesh, chooses not to “consume” her (6). Antony’s physical shape is reflective of his Roman self— he must maintain his visible shape if he is to maintain his reputation. Antony later complains to Eros that “Here I am Antony,/ Yet cannot hold this visible shape” (4.15.13-14).

\textsuperscript{43} It is interesting that Caesar fashions himself not as a clearly defined reporter but as the recipient of news and reports, as the two quotations “it is reported” and “From Alexandria/ This is the news” illustrate. Offering a somewhat different perspective on Caesar’s tribute to Antony, Peter Parolin claims that “[t]he Antony that Caesar praises resembles no more than Caesar himself” (215), who abstains from self-indulgence and distances himself from the common herd: “Antony . . . combats famine [and] becomes a noble animal, the resourceful and self-sufficient stag, far from the swinish examples of degraded humanity” (215).
power within a Roman discursive context. However, Charnes’s juxtaposition of Cleopatra’s “mimetic subversion” against this Roman narrative imperative with which it competes prevents her from recognizing that not only are Cleopatra’s verbal acts and histrionic deeds mutually constitutive, but that Cleopatra does not solely embody “the subjection, and resistance, to the narrative imperative” (Notorious Identity 106): she also embraces and transcends it. Whereas Caesar reports the past or present in order to control and contain them and thereby underline his political status as a powerful Triumvir, Cleopatra’s use of report marks the absence of her political power as well as a desire to negotiate an identity that is paradoxically self-sufficient and self-empowering while already and inevitably subjugated to Rome’s imperial authority. As an Egyptian monarch but also a Roman subject, Cleopatra is already and inevitably subjected to Rome’s imperial authority but she manages to turn her powerlessness to her sexual advantage; reportage allows Cleopatra to stage herself as an independent female sovereign who both enacts and directs her self-staging. The “real battle” in the play, as Charnes affirms, is “between Caesar and Cleopatra” which is “staked out across the terrain of Antony’s ‘identity’” (Notorious Identity 112).

Unlike Caesar who celebrates Antony’s past, stoic greatness at Modena and laments his present condition in Egypt, Cleopatra celebrates Antony’s present greatness as her war-like lover and laments his absence in Egypt: she recasts Antony’s greatness by turning his past

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44 Charnes reads the Rome-Egypt binary as a division between discursivity and theatrical visuality or the “compulsion to . . . the narrative ‘imperative’— and the resistance of mimetic improvisation, or mimetic subversion” (Notorious Identity 107). Charnes holds that “Cleopatra and Octavius are engaged in a war of competing strategies” (Notorious Identity 107).

45 While Charnes claims that “mimetic subversion” is not essentially “anti-discursive per se” since it “filches from and poaches on existing discourses” (Notorious Identity 170), she nevertheless views mimesis and narrative as opposite ends on a spectrum rather than as complementary modes of representation (Notorious Identity 107).
stoicism into present military strength.\textsuperscript{46} Although Cleopatra’s monologue is juxtaposed against, and competitively counters, Caesar’s tribute to Antony, it nevertheless reveals her self-praise under the pretext of praising Antony in a bid to celebrate her sexual power. As a means of combating her vulnerability after Antony is summoned back to Rome, Cleopatra’s direct report of Antony’s words in her monologue marks her self-glorification and sexual dominance over Antony under the pretext of glorifying Antony as a hero and acknowledging his Mars-like power over her: the direct reported speech allows Cleopatra to turn her political powerlessness as a mere woman and sexualized Roman object into a sexual power that she can memorialize. Addressing Charmian and Iras, a seemingly melancholic Cleopatra makes Antony the subject of her ruminations:

\begin{verbatim}
O, Charmian,
Where think’st thou he is now? Stands he, or sits he?
Or does he walk? Or is he on his horse?
O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!
Do bravely, horse, for wot’st thou whom thou mov’st?—
The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm
And burgonet of men! He’s speaking now,
Or murmuring ‘Where’s my serpent of old Nile?’
For so he calls me. Now I feed myself
With most delicious poison. Think on me
That am with Phoebus’ amorous pinches black
And wrinkled deep in time. Broad-fronted Caesar,
When thou wast here above the ground, I was
A morsel for a monarch; and great Pompey
Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow;
There would he anchor his aspect, and die
With looking on his life. (1.5.19-35)
\end{verbatim}

In littering her monologue with rhetorical questions (20-21, 23) and an apostrophe (22) that hyperbolically dramatizes her (arguably feigned) longing for Antony and her fantasizing over

\textsuperscript{46} Antony’s heroism and his reputation as a noble Roman, significantly, are construed exclusively through report. Antony does not prove or demonstrate his heroism in the play.
his quotidian motions, Cleopatra depicts herself as an enamoured woman lamenting her lover’s absence and obsessively pining for her noble, heroic Antony’s presence. Alluding to Antony as a “demi-Atlas” and metonymically referring to him as the “arm/ And burgonet of men” (24-5), the smitten Cleopatra praises Antony’s heroic magnanimity and military prowess as she pictures him mounted on a horse in preparation for battle (22-3). As a means of extending her praise of Antony’s heroism, Cleopatra imagines Antony speaking and directly reports his epithet for her: “‘Where’s my serpent of old Nile?’/ For so he calls me” (26-7).47 This instance of direct reported speech employed by Cleopatra creates the impression of her homage to, and admiration of, Antony who takes centre stage in her fantasizing. Direct reported speech—or what Vološinov calls the “linear” style of speech—is an imitative act that is underwritten by the desire to maintain the original speech’s “integrity and authenticity” (Vološinov 119) by “demarcat[ing] and “screen[ing] it from penetration by the author’s [read: reporter’s] intonations” and syntactic reformulations in order to “enhance its individual linguistic characteristics” (Vološinov 119). In thus granting authority to the original speaker of the utterance, direct reported speech underscores the reporter’s concession to and acknowledgement of the utterance’s encoded authority (Vološinov 119). Nevertheless, as Patricia Mayes and Deborah Tannen point out, direct reported speech is neither factual nor reliable evidence of an actual, previous utterance (Mayes 331); rather, it is a form of

47 While Cleopatra’s report of Antony’s speech is not circumscribed by quotation marks in the Folio, modern editors have—more often than not—chosen to place the speech within quotes. However, quotation marks (or a lack thereof) do not necessarily signify direct or indirect reported speech. In linguistics, if the deictic centre of the speech is that of the speaker of the original utterance rather than that of the reporter—in other words, if the speech fosters the “illusion that the event is presently occurring” (Mayes 342)—as is the case here (i.e. “Where is my serpent of old Nile?”), then the reported speech is direct. If the deictic centre of the speech is “in the report situation” or occurs within the time that the report is uttered, then the reported speech would be classified as indirect. If Cleopatra’s report of Antony’s speech were indirect, it would read: “Antony is speaking or murmuring, and asking where his serpent of old Nile is” (see Coulmas 6). A direct reported speech is “faithful to the [linguistic] form of the original utterance” (Coulmas 5) and is not syntactically restricted by, or partially absorbed into, the reporting context like indirect reported speech is.
“[creatively] constructed dialogue” (Tannen 42) or a form of “sanctioned make-believe” (Collins 67) which allows the reporter to use it “as evidence . . . to present a more believable story” (Mayes 348). It is, moreover, a powerful tool for strategically “manipulating social distance between participants in a discourse context” (Collins 62). In thus casting herself into a subordinate role as a longing, passive beloved by putting a chivalric Antony on a pedestal, Cleopatra underlines the social distance between her and Antony by adopting the “deference or self-suppression” (Collins 74) attendant on direct report to present a more “believable” story of the extent of her love for Antony.

In fulfilling and enacting her role as a powerless woman in love as her use of the direct report highlights, however, Cleopatra turns her apparent deference to her sexual advantage. If Cleopatra, as Ania Loomba claims, “plays the Egyptian flamboyantly, thus appropriating and flaunting the difference that Rome assigns to her” (133), this performance does not necessarily imply that her love for Antony is merely feigned. While Cleopatra loves Antony, it must also be recognized that her love for him is closely intertwined with self-interest: in hyperbolizing her love for him by turning it into a spectacle worthy of public admiration and report both in her monologue and in the play’s opening scene, Cleopatra clearly subordinates love to her political agenda of self-promotion in order to stave off complete Roman colonization. Her

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48 Mayes notes that direct quotation is an invented reconstruction (331). As Tannen holds, “the construction of the dialogue represents an active, creative, transforming move which expresses the relationship not between the quoted party and the topic of talk but rather the quoting party and the audience to whom the quotation is delivered” (111).

49 Collins notes that the “[a]pparent self-suppression of [the] reporter, deferring to the addressee, can have the effect of objectivity” (71). The majority of Cleopatra’s instances of reported speech are direct reports.

50 Even Cleopatra’s request to Charmian—“Give me to drink mandragora” (1.5.3)—illuminates her equivocation between embodying an utterly infatuated woman who is prepared to cease to exist for her Antony, and a woman whose unwillingness to commit suicide speaks to the fact that Cleopatra holds her self-interest at heart: “Give me to drink”, as Deighton notes, can be glossed as either “enable me” or “give me the power to” drink poison (qtd. in Spevack 59).
deference proves self-serving since her direct report of Antony’s speech (“Where’s my serpent of old Nile?”) registers not just the extent of her obsessive preoccupation with his absence but more significantly depicts an Antony longing for her presence. In immediately glossing Antony’s act of speaking as murmuring (“He’s speaking now./ Or murmuring” [24-25]) in the act of pronouncing it, Cleopatra portrays Antony as a man in love who is under her control since he is emotionally dependent on Cleopatra and longs for her presence, as much as she pines for his. Direct reported speech, moreover, is theatrical (Wierzbicka 272): it is an act of ventriloquism which allows the reporter to temporarily “play the part” (Wierzbicka 272) or dramatize another speaker’s reported words in order to affect his/her audience by involving them in the inference of meaning (Mayes 339), for the speech is “shown” rather than explicitly told as it is in indirect reported speech.\(^51\) Rather than solely communicating the propositional content of the reported speech or what Antony says, direct reported speech allows Cleopatra the reporter to communicate the affective aspects of meaning that are associated with, and conveyed through, the modality, wording, or “prosody of the utterance” (Mayes 338) in order to persuade her audience of Antony’s sentiments but to also highlight her applause-worthy impersonation of him.\(^52\) Since “murmuring” implies that Antony indistinctly or inaudibly utters his words and hence perhaps keeps them private and undisclosed, Cleopatra uses the verb to portray Antony secretly pining for her. In thus glossing his “speaking” as “murmuring”— while making it evident that she is doing so— Cleopatra conveys his

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\(^{51}\) The author “does not say what the content of the quote is (i.e. what was said)— instead he does something that enables the hearer to see for himself what it is, that is to say, in a way, he shows this content” (Wierzbicka 282, italics mine).

\(^{52}\) Indirect speech, as Vološinov demonstrates, can not register emotion: “All the emotive-affective features of speech, in so far as they are expressed not in the content but in the form of a message, do not pass intact into indirect discourse. They are translated from form into content” (128). See also Mayes (345).
endearment toward her and his chivalric qualities as a general to control her audience’s reception of Antony’s reported epithet. In showing that Antony is bound to her, Cleopatra also shows how Antony’s greatness is due to her. The military associations of Antony’s horse quickly give way to erotic associations as the horse, symbolizing “the lust of concupiscence” (Adelman, The Common Liar 60), doubles as a sexual self-reference to Cleopatra who literally (physically) “bear[s] the weight of Antony” (22) and makes him “move” in bed but also “bears” the weight of Antony in her memory as she performs her report. Antony’s heroism, as Cleopatra reveals, is premised on his Egyptian sexuality which is engendered or brought to life and praised by Cleopatra, who urges herself to “do bravely” (22) and depict him in a chivalric light: she is the agent or source of his greatness and his greatness, according to Cleopatra, does not rely on Roman abstinence or austere measures. Antony is great because of Cleopatra’s sexual performance but he is also great because of her current theatrical performance which ironically re-enacts his “greatness”. While the horse reference thus seems to undermine Cleopatra’s authority by associating her with the ardent lust of Egyptian femininity that Romans attribute to her, she nevertheless uses it self-servingly to construct her sexual authority. Finally, while her allusion to Antony as a heroic “demi-Atlas” (23) appears

53 “Murmuring” transforms what could easily be a simple question (where is Cleopatra?) into an emotionally-inflected rhetorical question.

54 Cleopatra is later denigrated by Scarus in being called a “riband-red nag of Egypt” (3.10.10) and is mocked by Enobarbus, who refers to her as a horse [whore] (3.7.7-10). Adelman draws the sexual connotations of the horse from North’s Plutarch. For the connection between motion, copulation, and sexual climax, see Spevack (fn. 141, p. 23). The imagery of childbirth labour invoked by Cleopatra’s horse resonates back to her exchange with Antony where she similarly used the verb “bear” to express her dissatisfaction with and criticism of Antony’s unheroic behaviour. Even though Cleopatra seems to acknowledge the flippancy of which Antony accuses her, she also diplomatically overturns his discreet accusation by suggesting that Antony’s flippancy is the heavy weight she “bear[s]” “near the heart” in keeping him in Egypt: “‘Tis sweating labour/ To bear such idleness so near the heart/ As Cleopatra this” (1.3.94-6). The “this” is ambiguous and may refer to either Cleopatra or Antony. Cleopatra’s “sweating labour” is borne of her love for Antony but it does not shield him from being criticized by her in turn. A closer inspection of the mid-line prosodic switches in Cleopatra’s speech (1.3.94-102) illustrates her progressive movement from accusation to: ambivalent apology, a call to duty mixed with ironic self-pity, a pledge of his greatness, and a wish for good luck.
laudatory, it is also ironic since it registers her belittlement of an Antony who is unable to embody an absolute or complete Atlas. As Adelman claims, the allusion registers an ambivalence of praise and criticism: “the allusions to Hercules [in the play] serve partly to remind us of the discrepancy between Hercules’ actions and Antony’s pretensions, of the degree to which Antony has dwindled from the heroic stature of his great ancestor but also . . . emphasize[] the grandeur of Antony’s ventures” (The Common Liar 135). In thus labelling Antony a “demi” Atlas, Cleopatra may be implying that she is the other half-Atlas—or perhaps even a complete and self-contained Atlas in and of herself—who grants Antony his greatness and acts as the standard of greatness against which she measures him.55 In “praising” an Antony who reportedly longs for her, Cleopatra indirectly praises herself by putting words into the mouth of a heroic Antony to show that she is the cause of his greatness but to also suggest that she needs Antony in order to be great herself.56 Her response to Alexas, that Antony is “that great medicine” who “hath/ With his tinct gilded” (36-37) Alexas, suggests that Antony may be the philosopher’s stone that facilitates her transmutation from a Roman quean to an Egyptian queen and allows her to gain a political foothold in Rome. Cleopatra’s verbal slight-of-hand allows her to re-fashion her dependence on Antony as Antony’s dependence on her and to use the latter to sing her own praises. Cleopatra’s report is a means of coping with Antony’s absence and convincing herself of her power over him and his return since, for all she knows, Antony could be “packing cards” with Caesar against her. She pleases herself by imagining that Antony imagines her as having seductive power and thus feeds herself with

55 Adelman’s description of Hercules could equally be applicable to Cleopatra as a demi-Atlas: “[Hercules] functions in the play neither as Roman nor Egyptian but rather as a distant and godlike figure of achieved excess” (The Common Liar 135).

56 The boy actor playing Cleopatra similarly “needs” the actor playing Antony in order to be great, i.e. in order to show his greatness being acted.
“delicious poison” at the thought that her love is reciprocated or that she has successfully captivated Antony.

In reporting Antony’s “serpent of old Nile,” Cleopatra moreover reinterprets the epithet to turn her political disempowerment—suggested by the negative Roman connotations of the word “serpent”—into a valorizing self-reference that showcases her erotic power and sexual dominance. While Cleopatra’s direct report of Antony’s epithet frames her self-praise by implying that Antony’s heroism is not entirely his own, it may also subtly ridicule or condemn Antony for condemning her in adhering to possible Roman connotations in referring to her as a serpent. That Antony adopts Roman words and calls Cleopatra his “serpent of old Nile” offshore is not questionable; what is questionable is Antony’s intention in pragmatically using this epithet, which renders Cleopatra’s contention that Antony spoke the words in a state of amorous longing for her (as she imagines him doing) suspect or ironic. Since “murmuring” also connotes a “complain[t] in low muttered tones” or “an inarticulate discontent” (OED 1a), it may suggest that Antony is complicit in Cleopatra’s power games and is dissatisfied with—or bemoaning—Cleopatra’s control over him, or even that Antony may himself be using flattery to disguise his one-upmanship with Cleopatra. Cleopatra’s reportage of Antony’s murmur is contextualized by a negative tissue of allusion to and repetition of the word “serpent” in the play which invites Antony’s Roman, as opposed to his exclusively Egyptian, sympathies to emerge. Connoting Satanic wiliness and postlapsarian deceit in the Roman lexis, “serpent” is used by Antony to negatively characterize Pompey’s impending invasion of Rome.

57 The Roman epithet may also be a private joke shared by Antony and Cleopatra, which Cleopatra may be exploiting for her own purposes.

58 Antony’s deceptive or wily side is emphasized in Lepidus’ direct report of Antony’s speech. Learning of Lepidus’ imprisonment by Caesar after Lepidus had conspired with Caesar to fight against Pompey (3.5.4), Antony expresses his indignation at having lost a potential ally in Lepidus who, as Eros’ report makes it seem, Antony could have possibly used in a league against Caesar (3.5.15-18).
(1.2.199-201) as the latter “creeps apace” (1.3.51). Although Antony does not explicitly refer to Cleopatra as a devious snake, the metaphorical connection between the serpent and Cleopatra is implied by Pompey’s association with the snake (which connotes his “overweening Satanic pride” [Payne 269]). Just as Pompey “creeps” quietly and stealthily into the idle hearts of Romans to win their favour and “poison” their loyalties toward the state, Cleopatra “creeps” into liking with Antony to win his love and admiration in order to disempower him by “poisoning” or sexually over-indulging him. Like the Romans whose idleness is partially at fault for inviting (“breeding”) this pestilential invasion that is Pompey, Antony’s own acknowledged idleness and his wilful complicity in his bondage to Cleopatra are similarly at fault: “Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know,/ My idleness doth hatch” (1.2.136-7).59 Antony’s references to Cleopatra as his “enchanting queen” (1.2.135),60 who is “cunning past man’s thought” (1.2.152) and who employs “strong Egyptian fetters” (1.2.123) and crocodile “tears” to hypocritically ensnare him, illustrate his awareness of Cleopatra’s duplicity and her manipulative strategies.61

Within this interpretive context, Cleopatra not only uses Antony’s reported speech to re-contextualize it in a manner that flatters herself, but also parenthetically draws attention to her act of reporting his epithet: “For so he calls me” (26). In a monologue saturated with mid-line prosodic switches for the actor which, as Palfrey and Stern demonstrate, indicate “actable

59 Caesar similarly compares Pompey to a snake that “thrives in our idleness” (1.4.77).

60 The pun on “queen” (quean) indicates Antony’s ambiguous attitude toward his Egyptian lover since it registers Antony’s admiration of Cleopatra at the same time as it reflects his demeaning Roman perception of her as a play-thing. The pun also suggests that Antony may possibly be as wily as Cleopatra is. Loomba observes that Antony’s love for Cleopatra is mixed with political self-interest (Antony “needs to gain a foothold in Egypt, a place from which he can assert himself against Caesar” [134]).

61 Lepidus highlights the association between the crocodile and the serpent: “Your serpent of Egypt is bred, now, of your mud by the operation of your sun: so is your crocodile” (2.7.26-27).
shifts in voice, gesture, or attitude” or even tone (329), the mid-line switches serve to illustrate that “power is truly at work—minds at a cusp, fates undecided, fear and anxiety afoot” (364). The switches that occur after and also possibly before Cleopatra’s parenthetical “for so he calls me” suggest a change in tone or attitude: “And burgonet of men! [switch] He’s speaking now./ Or murmuring ‘Where’s my serpent of old Nile?’/ [switch?] For so he calls me. [switch] Now I feed myself” [25-27]. The mid-line switch between “men” and “He’s speaking” in line 25 marks Cleopatra’s movement away from acting the role of a gushing beloved for it attunes her audience to hear the words that Antony speaks and that she reports. The switch in line 27 between “me” and “Now” (and possibly also before “for”) within this reporting context marks Cleopatra’s distance from reporting/glossing the report: she undercuts her praise with a pause pregnant with ironic commentary that acts to mock or condemn Antony’s possibly negative use of the epithet as she addresses her attendants. Moreover if irony, as Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson claim, is a case of echoic “mention” rather than “use,” in which the speaker expresses a “belief ABOUT the utterance rather than BY MEANS OF it” (202, capitals original), Cleopatra’s mention of Antony’s speech—evidenced by the parenthetical “for so he calls me”—draws attention, as Sperber and Wilson would say, to the “the expression itself” and not “to what the expression refers to” (303). The combination of prosodic switches and the ironic mention present in Cleopatra’s report of the epithet can highlight her teasing contempt of Antony and detract from the praise she initially lends him. The irony allows Cleopatra to condemn an Antony who has deserted her for Caesar and to instate her self-praise.

62 Speaking of part scripts, Palfrey and Stern claim that “[e]ach part’s persona is built through [dramatic prosody]: prosody is less imitative than constitutive, allowing the actor to perceive, experience, and possess a ‘reality’ that is otherwise unknowable” (329).
Despite the possibility of Antony’s insinuated belittlement— and thus domineering Roman attitude\textsuperscript{63}— toward Cleopatra in calling her a serpent, Cleopatra re-interprets the epithet in an Egyptian context and turns it into a source of personal pride, power, and self-flattery as she recollects her successful sexual conquests of both Julius Caesar and Gnaeus Pompey. In an Egyptian context, the serpent carries positive connotations. As Egypt’s preeminent mythical creature, the serpent is spontaneously born of the mud of the ebbing Nile “by the operation of [the] sun” (2.7.27)\textsuperscript{64} and symbolizes fertility, renewal, and resurrection as figured in the ancient symbol of the ouroboros.\textsuperscript{65} Encompassing antitheses such as mortality and eternity, the serpent as ouroboros additionally instantiates cyclicality; this is a cyclicality that Cleopatra’s seduction of both Caesar and Pompey embodies as she renews (re-scripts) herself as a sexually powerful sovereign. If Cleopatra performs the role of a woman in love for Antony, she likewise performs (and reports her performance of) the role of a courtesan for Caesar and Pompey to assert her superiority and sexual power over them. Using her feminine wiles to seduce the great Caesar and the equally great Pompey, Cleopatra embraces her scripted role as a denigrated and subjugated female or Egyptian “Other”: she is a “morsel” (32) of food that serves to satisfy Caesar or appease his sexual appetite, as well as a woman-mirror which subserviently and obediently reflects Pompey’s image back to him (33-4). However, Cleopatra enacts her scripted role as a denigrated courtesan for Pompey and Caesar only to valorize and re-structure this sexual role in an Egyptian context. Cleopatra’s mention of

\textsuperscript{63} Antony also domesticates Cleopatra in referring to her as “\textit{my} serpent” (italic mine).

\textsuperscript{64} Cleopatra attributes her dark complexion to the sun (1.5.27-28).

\textsuperscript{65} The ouroboros dates back to the ancient alchemical textbook called the \textit{Chrysopoeia of Cleopatra}, which depicts a black-headed snake devouring its white tail. Adelman claims that “[p]opular tradition associated the serpent with his tail in his mouth with the cosmos and with eternity” (\textit{The Common Liar} 62; see fn. 25 and fn. 29 for references to the serpent in the iconographical and emblematic traditions). The serpent’s “ambiguous multiplicity is an analogue for Cleopatra’s” (\textit{The Common Liar} 63).
“morsel,” like her mention of “serpent,” suggests her awareness of its negative, Roman connotation even as she re-structures its meaning in an Egyptian context. Whereas “morsel” in the Roman lexis is used in a derogatory or condemnatory fashion to belittle Cleopatra as a worthless leftover, as Antony’s use of the word later demonstrates, in the Egyptian lexis, according to Adelman, a “morsel” may “owe something . . . to the folk tradition that if one ate the food of the supernatural realm one could never leave” (The Common Liar 66). Cleopatra’s mention of the “morsel”, although it is not is not identifiable as a category of reported speech proper, is an implicit “report” and registers her acknowledgment of how she is called in Rome. This mention is, nevertheless, ironic for Cleopatra uses it to undermine Roman power as she interprets “morsel” in an alternative, Egyptian context where it underlines the inescapable bondage to which Cleopatra and her erotic ploys subject her rivals; it suggests that Cleopatra not only feeds others’ appetites but also “feeds” her own appetite by rendering her opponents subservient to her. Playing Caesar’s sexual game, as Agrippa reports, Cleopatra outwits him politically by wielding sexual power: “She made great Caesar lay his sword to bed./ He ploughed her, and she cropped” (2.2.238-9). As Caesar prepares to colonize (“plough”) Egyptian territory, metonymically figured in the person of Cleopatra herself, Cleopatra actively stakes a claim to the Roman throne by bearing Caesar an heir, a son Cesarion, through whom she hopes to secure political power. As Heather James notes, their love child “is the harvest she made out of the Roman instrument of devastation” (Shakespeare’s Troy 142).

66 Cleopatra’s use of “morsel” foreshadows an irate Antony’s condemnatory (i.e. Roman) use of the word when he confronts Cleopatra after she flees Actium: “I found you as a morsel, cold upon/ Dead Caesar’s trencher— nay, you were a fragment/ Of Gnaeus Pompey’s” (3.13.121-123). Cf. Charnes’s claim that “Antony’s terms of debasement are ‘uncontaminated’ by the Romans and are ever-present in his mind, ready to be mobilized under the appropriate political conditions” (Notorious Identity 139).
Cleopatra’s conquest of Pompey is similar to her conquest of Caesar: while Cleopatra’s self-dramatization as Pompey’s narcissistic mirror of “self-contemplation” underlines her status as an object to be consumed, she re-interprets herself in an Egyptian context as a consuming subject. In describing how Pompey stares at her sexually, Cleopatra underlines how she returns Pompey’s gaze in alluding to herself as the power-wielding Gorgon Medusa whose stony gaze makes Pompey “anchor his aspect, and die/ With looking on his life” (33-4). As in her appearance on Cydnus where Cleopatra, as James notes, actively “watches” as a spectator (“Politics of Display” 217), Cleopatra here also overturns the desiring male gaze to become “the bearer of the desiring gaze, not its Petrarchan object” (“Politics of Display” 212). The pun on “die,” which indicates Pompey’s sexual fulfillment in a Roman context, also suggests his political destruction at Cleopatra’s hands (in an Egyptian context) following their sexual tryst: Cleopatra uses the pun to valorize herself as a powerful ruler who ironically grants Pompey “life” as her powerless, political subject in the Egyptian realm after his Roman “death”. Within a reporting context where Cleopatra fashions herself as a superlative beloved, her reference to herself as Pompey’s “life”, in conjunction with the pun “die”, carries a romantic valence that is shaded with irony. As a result, Cleopatra’s fleeting notes of praise bestowed on Caesar, whose “broad front” (29) signals his triumphal laurel wreath and thus her homage to his greatness, and on Pompey who is similarly called “great” (31), is ironic for it illustrates the tension in her recognition of her political powerlessness as a courtesan or love-sick beloved which she dramatizes and turns into a source of sexual powerfulness. As Carol

67 Jonathan Gil Harris argues that Cleopatra is a narcissistic image of the Romans: she is labelled an “other” because she is essentially the “same” (421).

68 Seward (1750), quoting Suetonius’s *The Histories of Twelve Caesars* (1606), states that Caesar had a broad forehead and “boasted that how he would cover his Temples with Laurels instead of Hair; and for that purpose, after he was Dictator, constantly wore his Laurel-Crown” (qtd. in Spevack fn. 556, p.62). Cleopatra’s reference to Caesar’s forehead could indicate a faint mockery of his physical deformity.
Cook states, “[f]emininity is mimetic . . . to play roles of the feminine deliberately, to affirm [the] subordination of feminism, becomes a way to elude that subordination” (52). In turning the Triumvirs’ surrender and personal loss into self-gain in the same manner that she turns her lack of youth and a dark complexion (29-30) into a desirable vitality to bait her men, Cleopatra embodies the ouroboric cyclicality of the Egyptian serpent and revels in the glory of her sexual conquests. Recounting these conquests right after reporting Antony’s speech allows Cleopatra to validate her proud superiority and her authority, for the conquests reveal how she has outsmarted and outwitted the powerful Triumvirs by seducing them with her feminine wiles; her homage to Antony is thus undercut by rebounding back to her. The oxymoronic “delicious poison” with which Cleopatra “feeds” herself (27) in a self-congratulatory manner underlines her ouroboric self-identity as she mythologizes herself as a self-sustained, self-sufficient, and self-begetting serpent: Cleopatra’s claim to superiority rests on her being her own beginning and her own end, which is reinforced by Antony’s tautological description of Cleopatra as a crocodile which “is shaped . . . like itself, and it is as broad as it hath breadth” (2.7. 42-3). Cleopatra’s poison, the pleasurable reminiscence of her success at the expense of the three Triumvirs’ destruction, enables her valorization as an Egyptian serpent and her self-immortalization as great and sexually powerful monarch while it also foreshadows her suicide with the asp, which she maternally “feeds” with her “poison” as her baby (rather than allowing the asp to “feed” her with its poison); this self-generated poison, in turn, grants her immortality in report and ensures that she is memorialized for posterity. In the face of patriarchal Roman

69 The irony of describing Cleopatra without actually describing her illustrates that she cannot be contained in narrative frameworks of description, interpretation, or report: since she is the master of report, she cannot be mastered by report. The tautology evokes Puttenham’s Italian dedication of his The Arte of English Poesie (1589) to Elizabeth I which, translated, reads: “to her who resembles herself and no one else”. For historical readings of the connection between Elizabeth I and Cleopatra, see Jankowski and James (“Politics of Display” 219).
power, Cleopatra’s re-contextualized Egyptian serpent comes to symbolize her sexual, phallic power which turns her into—to borrow Heather James’s phrase—a Cleo-pater (*Shakespeare’s Troy* 143).

Cleopatra’s use of direct reported speech in her monologue thus allows her to glorify herself and her sexual exploits by dramatizing—and thereby overturning—her position as a politically powerless Roman victim and as a mere woman in love in an attempt to control her presentation and representation in others’ speech and thoughts. Not only does the direct reported speech sound a self-congratulatory note of praise and mark her pride in having sexually conquered the Triumvirs, but the performative nature of direct reported speech invites her audience of female attendants (Charmian, Mardian, Iras) as well as the offstage theatre audience to praise her and to admire or applaud her performance. Direct reported speech allows the audience to actively participate in the construction of meaning or “to infer what the intended assertion is” and “to participate both in the new event (the re-creation) and, vicariously, in the prior event, real or imagined, that is being represented” (Mayes 335). Direct reported speech allows Cleopatra to both histrionically speak through Antony to indirectly tell her audience of her sexual power and to enact her role as a passive beloved to show or affectively persuade her audience—through prosody, physical enactment, or both—of this power by directly involving them in the interpretive process. By embedding her direct report of Antony’s epithet in a monologue that opens with her verbal performance as a smitten beloved, Cleopatra hopes that her audience will applaud and honour not only her present conquest of Antony but also her improvisatory performance of a powerless Roman subject and an Other that are prerequisite to her to triumph. Cleopatra’s imperative injunction to her

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70 The quintessence of direct reported speech is, as Collins says, *methexis* or participation (74).
audience to “Think on me./ That am with Phoebus’ amorous pinches black,/ And wrinkled deep in time” (27-29), as well as the mid-line prosodic switch which both introduces and concludes the injunction, is a public request that her audience hold her in the same esteem that she holds herself. In thus reporting Antony’s epithet as well as reporting her past sexual conquests, Cleopatra uses report as a means of flattery and self-flattery while she urges others to similarly flatter her by flattering Antony (she tells Charmian to flatter her by praising Antony over Caesar: “Say ‘the brave Antony’” [1.5.69]). In desiring to hear others speak and in imagining others speaking—while ironically controlling this speech—Cleopatra wishes to be ever-present in others’ speech and thoughts and hence publicly memorialized as a sexually noble monarch. Report, for Caesar as well as for Cleopatra, is a vehicle for publishing one’s superiority or magnanimity to posterity and for controlling public opinion. Whereas Caesar consolidates his political power as a Roman Triumvir under the guise of paying tribute to a lustreless Antony, Cleopatra stages her political powerlessness as a smitten and deferential beloved and sexualized Roman object, as sexual power. The juxtaposition of Cleopatra’s monologue against Caesar’s tribute, which de-mythologizes Antony’s heroism and condones his sexual desires, sets off the greatness of Cleopatra’s monologue: the monologue re-mythologizes Cleopatra’s as well as Antony’s heroism through her sexuality and allows her to transcend her Roman script by exhibiting herself as the director, actor, and spectator of her own “show”.

In addition to her direct report of Antony’s epithet, Cleopatra’s direct report of her own hypothetical speech further allows her to valorize herself as a triumphant victor in a political

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71 The prosodic switches that introduce her apostrophizing of Antony’s horse (21) and her apostrophe to Caesar (22) mark a shift in her monologue from either directly addressing her audience or soliloquizing, to staging her speech as a spectacle.
Roman context that denies her that very role. Entertaining the thought of going fishing during Antony’s sojourn in Rome to pass away the time, Cleopatra envisions herself “betray[ing] / Tawny-finned fishes” (2.5.11-12) and reports her anticipated success to her attendants: “... as I draw them up,/ I’ll think them every one an Antony,/ And say ‘Ah ha! You’re caught’” (2.5.13-15). Cleopatra’s reference to fishing, a metaphor for her amorous entrapment of Antony, commemorates her success at outwitting Antony at his own game, as reported by Charmian (2.5.15-18) and as outlined in North’s Plutarch. Cleopatra adopts the role of a passive spectator at the outset who witnesses Antony’s fishing feats only to overturn the power dynamic between her and Antony by becoming instead the fisher(man) who sexually baits the “tawny-finned” and “slimy”-jawed Antony.72 Cleopatra’s report of her own hypothetical speech to her female attendants not only conveys, once again, her pride and exultation at having sexually conquered her fish Antony but also invites her audience to participate in her success by singing her praises with her for, as Maria Luisa Dañobeitia Fernández claims, “if by symbolically emasculating the main representative of Rome’s power she manages to control him, she also manages to control Rome” (186).

If Cleopatra aspires to condition her attendants’ responses through directly reporting Antony’s (and her own) words, she also attempts to affectively control Antony’s emotional response by directly reporting Caesar’s hypothetical words.73 Cleopatra mocks Caesar through direct report in an attempt to turn her powerlessness into power: her mocking, theatrical performance of the words she imagines Caesar uttering serves to manipulate Antony into

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72 Fernández notes a pun on tawny as “insignificant, little, tiny” (185); the pun may mark Cleopatra’s debasement of Antony. Tawny, of course, is also a reference to Cleopatra’s complexion which she here projects onto Antony. “Slimy” (2.5.13) connotes slippery and echoes the notorious “slipperiness” of the Romans in Antony’s speech (1.2.169); Cleopatra may be suggesting that Antony is as wily as she is.

73 Caesar’s speech can be labelled hypothetical direct speech since Cleopatra imagines what he would say.
craving Cleopatra’s command over that of Caesar and to thus render him submissive to her. In
the opening scene of the play, Cleopatra shames Antony and exposes Caesar’s emasculation of
him while urging him to hear the messengers from Rome:

Nay, hear them, Antony.
Fulvia perchance is angry, or who knows
If the scarce-bearded Caesar have not sent
His powerful mandate to you: ‘Do this, or this,
Take in that kingdom and enfranchise that.
Perform’t, or else we damn thee.’ (1.1.20-25)

In urging Antony to attend to the messengers (“Nay, hear them”), Cleopatra shows herself as
an obedient subject who respects and adheres to Caesar’s authority: “Your dismission/ Is come
from Caesar, therefore hear it, Antony” (1.1.28-29). Antony, as Cleopatra implies, is subject to
Caesar’s command just as she is. Nevertheless, this urging is quickly undercut since Cleopatra
effeminizes Caesar by referring to him as “scarce-bearded” (a pubescent boy) and may even
possibly be histrionically “boying” or parodying Caesar’s tone or gestures as she performs her
report (Rosenberg 58). Her interrogative formulation (“who knows if”), moreover, expresses
her accusation of Caesar or “forcefully asserts the opposite of what it asks” (Blits 21) even as it
masquerades as a questioning supposition. As Fernández claims, Cleopatra hopes to stir a
“profound animosity” (73) in Antony by making him “feel like a foolish servant ready to jump
at [Caesar’s] ‘powerful mandate’” (23); emotionally manipulating Antony is a way to persuade
him to stay in Egypt. Cleopatra’s mockery of Caesar and her unflattering depiction of Fulvia as
“angry” and “shrill-tongued” (34) is additionally meant to shame Antony by hinting at his
emasculaton, which results from his submission to his wife and Caesar, under the pretext of
endorsing this submission: Cleopatra’s mockery is intended to persuade Antony to redirect his
loyalties to her by making him desire a freedom and a reciprocal relationship that is
characteristically Egyptian. However, this implied freedom and reciprocity—defined by their
difference to Rome—are illusions orchestrated by Cleopatra since her speech ironically
exposes her adoption of Fulvia’s and Caesar’s modes of speaking (even as she mocks them) to
ascertain her own power over Antony. In reporting how “shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds” (34),
Cleopatra uses Fulvia’s shrillness as a pretext for her own scolding of Antony, which she
implicitly does in ridiculing Caesar and exposing Antony’s shame. As Jan Blits states, “[b]y
accusing Antony of being unmanly for obeying Fulvia, she proves him unmanly for obeying
her. She shows his fear of a woman by shaming him for his fear of a woman” (19). Cleopatra
additionally scolds Antony by shaming him for not heeding what she craves to know: the
Roman messenger’s report. The hypothetical speech that Cleopatra attributes to Caesar,
moreover, is ironic for while Cleopatra parodies Caesar, the opening scene reveals how she
adopts Caesar’s “‘Roman’ language of command” (Yachnin, “Politics of Loyalty” 347) to
similarly exert her authority over Antony. Cleopatra employs imperatives in her exchange
with Antony to challenge him, in the vein of King Lear, to quantify his love for her (“If it be
love indeed, tell me how much” [1.1.14]) and commands Antony on three different occasions
to hear the Roman messengers (lines 20, 29, and 49). In proclaiming that she will “set a bourn
how far to be beloved” (16), Cleopatra adopts “Roman” values of order and calculation and
thus directly competes with Caesar to secure Antony’s faithfulness to her and to Egypt by
making Antony desire exactly what she warns him against desiring: control and subservience.

74 Blits’s observation is noteworthy: “Cleopatra, while ignoring that his blush might be for his submission to her—for his shame at allowing her to shame him—not only shames Antony with her taunt, but adds to his shame by drawing attention to his blush. She compounds his shame by causing him to feel ashamed of his shame and does so, moreover, in the sight of others . . . .” (19).

75 Cleopatra’s appropriation of report reveals her engagement in the “struggle for hegemonic power that is expressed by and realized through a competition for the right to speak the language of command” (Yachnin, “Politics of Loyalty” 348).
Performing the role of a calculating and rational monarch, Cleopatra theatrically directs Antony to verbally display his love for her so that she can showcase— and thus boast of— his submission to her and her sexual power over him to her audience but also to the voyeuristic Romans in Egypt who would report this as a challenge to Caesar’s power. As Juliet Dusinberre affirms, “Caesar’s imperiousness is made up, a speech written for him by another performer, Cleopatra herself” who plays “both [the] Empress and the master himself” (56). By impersonating Caesar and his command at the same time as showing how undesirable it is to be subject to Caesar, Cleopatra draws attention to her histrionic abilities which enable her to exceed her scripted Roman role.

The irony that attends Cleopatra’s adoption of Caesar’s voice, however, is also metadramatic since it foregrounds the boy actor’s impersonation of Caesar. The description of Caesar as “scarce-bearded” is also a self-reflexive reference to the boy actor playing Cleopatra who, ironically, ridicules Caesar for being a “boy” in order to competitively assert his superiority over the actor playing Caesar: the boy actor “boys” Caesar to transcend the limitations of his own “boy”hood by calling attention to his presentational acting abilities. Just as Cleopatra’s mocking enactment of Caesar’s command reveals her use of Caesar’s command to outdo Caesar and win over Antony, the boy actor’s presentational acting is meant to expose his skilful, representational performance of Cleopatra which outdoes or belittles the performance of the actor impersonating Caesar in order to win over the audience. Since Antony and Cleopatra, as Jan Blits claims, “not only display [love] in public; they put it on display” (17), this mix of presentational and representational acting— both performing and drawing attention to one’s performance— allows Cleopatra to exceed her containment in Philo and Demetrius’ report of her as a “gipsy” (1.1.10) which frames the opening scene. The
juxtaposition between the Rome narrative frame and the Egyptian show that is staged emphasizes Cleopatra’s appropriation and subversion of Caesar’s language of command and thus, the authority of the Roman frame altogether; the scene that ensues depicts an Antony who is not a fawning “fan” (1.1.9) to Cleopatra’s lust but instead a savvy Triumvir who effectively performs an Egyptian part in expressing his heroic love to Cleopatra and engages in a battle of wits with his queen (1.1.43-45). Under the pretext of mocking Caesar and exposing his “command”, then, Cleopatra’s direct report of Caesar’s hypothetical reported speech is designed to reinforce her affective control and “command” over Antony under the pretext of, paradoxically, showcasing her own inability to command Antony to him even as she attempts to stage this command for her audience.

In addition to her use of direct reported speech, Cleopatra dispatches reports and messages to further affect Antony and condition his response toward her. Unlike Caesar, Cleopatra’s commanding of reports and her dispatching of messengers are reactive rather than pro-active actions that demonstrate her lack of political power, but this lack quickly forms the basis for Cleopatra’s sexual and affective power over Antony as she performs her prescribed role as a Roman subject. Antony’s return to Rome triggers an emotionally and politically vulnerable Cleopatra to imagine and voice her sexual power in her monologue, as demonstrated in 1.5, but she also attempts to assert this power by calling Antony back to her: she vows that “He shall have every day a several greeting,/ Or I’ll unpeople Egypt” (1.5.76-77).

76 Antony’s diplomacy is evident in the opening scene when he responds to Cleopatra’s command that “Antony/Will be himself” (1.1.43-44) with: “But stirred by Cleopatra” (45). Cleopatra’s command could be an assertion that Antony will be (or will return to) his Roman self, in which case Antony’s response would be interpreted as an honourable acknowledgement of his obeisance to Cleopatra who could “stir” him back into shape. Her command may also suggest that Antony will remain her submissive Egyptian, in which case Antony’s response could accusingly indict Cleopatra as the agent of his downfall. Antony is able to play Cleopatra’s game and vice-versa.

77 See Perret, who contends that “a sense of governing is created by the very dispatching of messengers” but that Cleopatra “can dispatch her messengers only in reply to Caesar’s” (68-9).
In keeping with her performance as a longing beloved in her monologue, the excessive messages with which she vows to shower Antony are intended to flatter him by proving to him how great her love for him is, at the same time as they also serve to combat the powerlessness of being in love. The messages also, however, have a political purpose: to continually remind Antony of their love and to distract him from his political dealings with Caesar in order to prevent Caesar’s and Antony’s forming a league against her.\(^78\)

Cleopatra’s actions and behaviour that she commands her messengers to report to Antony also serve to secure his emotional and political loyalty toward her. In literally putting words into her messengers’ mouths, as she had put words into Antony’s, Cleopatra controls her public representation as well as others’ response—in this case Antony’s—to this representation. While Cleopatra’s commands clearly bear illocutionary force for her messengers since she orders them to speak on her behalf, this illocutionary force is transposed into perlocutionary force for Antony. Upon hearing of Fulvia’s death and Pompey’s plot to invade Rome, Cleopatra fears Antony’s re-alliance with Caesar and Egypt’s conquest and attempts to sidetrack Antony from his “Roman thought[s]” (1.2.86). She orders Charmian to report her feigned emotional state to him but only in response to his own emotional state: “If you find him sad,/ Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report/ That I am sudden sick” (1.3.4-6, italics mine). Rather than blatantly and forcefully imposing a rigid message on Antony (“Say I am dancing” or “report/ That I am sudden sick”), Cleopatra’s “command” is a perlocutionary act calculated to effectively persuade Antony to return to her. Divulging Cleopatra’s strategy of

\(^78\) By contrast, the superfluity of reporters or messengers in Rome, where a messenger tells Caesar that “[t]hy biddings have been done, and every hour,/ Most noble Caesar, shalt thou have report/ How ‘tis abroad” (1.4.34-36), illustrates Caesar’s political power. Cleopatra is not just an agent of report but also yearns to give audience to Roman report. She commands Alexas to “[r]eport the feature of Octavia: her years,/ Her inclination; let him not leave out/ The colour of her hair” (2.5.113-115).
reinvention through performance, this particular report highlights how Cleopatra embraces the patriarchally-coded and stereotypical role of a fickle woman to subvert Antony’s expectations so as to condition his emotional response: she shows that she is, to use Belsey’s term, consistently “elsewhere” (“Cleopatra’s Seduction” 42). Her contradictory actions, disguised here as potential reactions in report, are orchestrated to render Antony emotionally subservient to her as well as to “test” where his loyalties lie; by making his reactions dependent on her “reactions,” Cleopatra hopes to emasculate Antony and make him incapable of acting without her supervision. This strategy of opposing Antony is put into practice when, upon Antony’s entrance, Cleopatra notes his good humour (“I know by that same eye there’s some good news” [1.3 19]) and pretends to be “sick and sullen” (13) as a pretext for exclaiming:

What says the married woman—you may go?
Would she had never given you leave to come.
Let her not say ‘tis I that keep you here
I have no power upon you; hers you are. (1.3.20-23)

This feigning is orchestrated to make Antony divulge his love toward her as a guarantee of his loyalty and of his eventual return to her. Cleopatra also directs Antony on how to flatter her; she urges him to perform his love for her in order to stir his anger as a test of his true love:

I prithee turn aside and weep for her,
Then bid adieu to me, and say the tears
Belong to Egypt. Good now, play one scene
Of excellent dissembling . . . (1.3.75-78)

In thus attempting to affectively overpower Antony, Cleopatra aspires to offset his potential “oblivion” of her (1.3.90-92). Like a true serpent that daily sheds its skin only to renew it, Cleopatra plays and thus maintains her role as an inconstant, fickle, weak and powerless
Egyptian woman for the Romans while discreetly shedding or transcending this role by wielding affective, sexual power over Antony.

Cleopatra’s final test of Antony’s devotion to her also occurs by means of report: she commands that her impersonation of a love-sick beloved on her deathbed be reported to him. Enclosing herself in her pyramid to escape Antony’s rage following their naval defeat at Actium, a powerless Cleopatra orders Mardian to “go tell [Antony] I have slain myself./ Say that the last I spoke was ‘Antony’./ And word it, prithee, piteously” (4.13.7-9). Dramatizing the degree of her love for, and reliance on, Antony by having it reported that his name was the last word she spoke, Cleopatra flatters Antony by signalling to him the extent of his power over her. Cleopatra attempts to move Antony to pity and guilt by making him feel partially responsible for her death, which she dramatically performs in grievance at the thought that he blames her for their defeat and which she urges Mardian to “dramatically” or tragically report (“word it . . . piteously”). Serving as a political “test of [Antony’s] love” as well as a “testimony of her love” (Blits 174), the report of Cleopatra’s feigned suicide is deployed to incite Antony as well as her onstage audience to affectionately commemorate her as Antony’s noble and faithful beloved to posterity, to the same extent that she has just (reportedly) modeled the nobility of her love for Antony by committing suicide.79 Cleopatra employs her scripted role as a devoted lover, a smitten beloved, and a fickle woman as a pretext to turn her powerlessness to her sexual advantage by emasculating and disempowering Antony through the affective power of her reports which condition his responses. Cleopatra uses Antony as a pawn in her political contest with Rome so that she can proclaim her sexual greatness and thus challenge Caesar’s political power.

79 Learning of Cleopatra’s suicide, Antony laments that “[m]y queen and Eros/ Have by their brave instruction got upon me/ A nobleness in record” (4.15.97-100) and have thus trumped him in establishing their fame for posterity.
In reporting her dream-vision of Antony in her role as his beloved (5.2.81-91), Cleopatra similarly turns her political powerlessness into a source of power by affecting Caesar’s messenger Dollabella with her greatness. Like her report of Antony’s epithet, Cleopatra’s report of her dream-vision of Antony serves as a means of self-glorification under the pretext of praising Antony, with the difference that her report achieves its intended perlocutionary effect of impressing Dollabella. Politically vulnerable and powerless after Antony’s death, Cleopatra confronts a Dollabella who arrives to “take her to [his] guard” (5.2.66). Her report is an offensive verbal attack that acts to transform Dollabella’s ridicule (he “laugh[s] when boys or women tell their dreams” [5.2.74]) into admiration in order to evince his loyalty toward her so that Cleopatra can sound Caesar’s intentions (5.2.105). Refusing to satisfy Dollabella’s craving to hear Cleopatra acknowledge his reputation by hearsay or report (“No matter, sir, what I have heard or known” [5.2.73]), Cleopatra proceeds instead to report and thus to build up Antony’s— and hence her own— reputation with the hope that her praise will be report-worthy and thus reach Caesar’s ears. Although Cleopatra’s grandiose, hyperbolic, and rather ekphrastic description of Antony to Dollabella evidences her celebratory commemoration of his magnificent heroism as well as her deference to him, it is nonetheless an act of homage to her own greatness. Cleopatra composes her description of Antony with others’ as well as her own reports about her real or imagined traits, including what Enobarbus reports about her. Cleopatra’s vision of an Antony whose legs straddle the ocean and “reared arm/ Crest[s] the world” (81-2) is an allusion to the Colossus of Rhodes, the Titan sun god Helios, whom she has claimed has lovingly kissed her and made her into a tawny Egyptian: she

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80 The presence here of “boys” (“boys or women”) is a meta-theatrical nod to the boy actor playing Cleopatra.

81 Enobarbus is the “spokesman for Cleopatra’s . . . paradoxical nature as a fait accompli, . . . as . . . a premise” (Adelman, The Common Liar 116).
is “with Phoebus’ amorous pinches black” (1.5.28). Antony’s voice, comprised of both the harmonious music of the spheres (82-3) and the “rattling thunder” (85) which evokes Cleopatra’s own Fulvia-esque “shrilling tongue,” embodies the oxymoronic binaries or the variety that characterizes Cleopatra as an ouroboric serpent. Antony is— like Cleopatra or rather, because of Cleopatra—a macrocosmic and transcendent force of nature, as Enobarbus tells Antony: “We cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears; they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report” (1.2.154-156). Enobarbus’ description indicates that Cleopatra’s “passions are made of nothing but the finest parts of pure love . . . This cannot be cunning in her; if it be, she makes a shower of rain as well as Jove” (1.2.133-137). Although her hyperbolical passions are genuine, they can easily be mistaken for being feigned but even this feigning is so superbly performed (“as well as Jove”) that it comes across as authentic.82 In thus attributing her own variegated performance to Antony, Cleopatra—or rather, the boy actor playing Cleopatra—points to his own Jove-like performance which allows him to impersonate Cleopatra but to also “make” a new Antony out of the materials of his own performance. Finally, Cleopatra’s comparison of Antony’s bounty to an autumn “That grew the more by reaping” (5.2.87)83 recalls Enobarbus’ observation of Cleopatra’s own “infinite variety” and her paradoxical, self-regenerating ability to “make[] hungry/ Where most she satisfies” (2.2.247-248). In reconstituting Antony’s fragmented, heroic masculinity in an Isis-

82 Enobarbus’ description essentially gets at Cleopatra’s self-contradiction, which he further describes in the barge scene:

I saw her once
Hop forty paces through the public street,
And having lost her breath, she spoke and panted,
That she did make defect perfection,
And breathless, pour breath forth. (2.2.234-238)

83 Reaping, gathering a harvest, also has a sexual connotation and recalls Agrippa’s report of how Cleopatra “cropped” Caesar. It also recalls the ebb and flow of the Nile which continually renews Egyptian crops.
like fashion, Cleopatra re-authors Antony in the process of reinventing herself. Attendant on this self-reinvention through report, nonetheless, is Cleopatra’s re-interpretation and valorization of Egyptian values. Ennobling Antony’s sojourn in Egypt by claiming that Antony’s “delights/ Were dolphin-like: they showed his back above/ The element they lived in” (5.2.87-89), Cleopatra counteracts the prevailing Roman view that a dissipated and hedonistic Egypt causes Antony’s moral demise and, by implication, that she too rises above or transcends her “element” (Egypt) if she is accused for Antony’s demise. She instead re-scripts Egypt as a realm of generosity, abundance, and liberality which, instead of corrupting Antony, turns him into an altruistic spirit who lavishly drops a wealth of “realms” and “islands” from his pockets (89-91). In bestowing such praise on Antony, Cleopatra implies her own generosity and magnanimity as reporter.

Evoking and complementing Enobarbus’ famous barge-scene description of Cleopatra, Cleopatra’s dream-vision report of Antony highlights the similarity she shares with Enobarbus as a reporter. Concerned with “earn[ing] a place i’th’ story” (3.13.44) of Rome’s official written narrative, Enobarbus attempts to inscribe himself into his report in order to glorify himself under the guise of praising Cleopatra. Enobarbus’ report of Cleopatra’s transcendent greatness aspires to move his audience by “reproducing in his auditors the effects that Cleopatra has” and “to make hungry where most he satisfies” (Tassi 297), to the same extent that Cleopatra’s reference to Antony’s paradoxical self-renewal is meant to inspire her audience with awe at her own self-renewal and reconstitution through her report of Antony. As critics often note, Enobarbus’ ekphrastic description of Cleopatra’s appearance on Cydnus (2.2.

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84 Charnes claims that Cleopatra “provides commodifiable material for male figures who compete with one another in terms of an imaginative imperialism that renegotiates their own social and political statuses” (Notorious Identity 119).
200-214, 216-228) is notable for its absent description of Cleopatra herself, who cannot be verbally reported or contained within a report since she “begged all description” (205). Using hyperbole, metaphor, and simile, Enobarbus describes Cleopatra’s barge and her attendants—her theatrical props—which bear witness to Cleopatra’s seductive powers (i.e. the oars made the water “follow faster,/ As amorous of their strokes”; the winds are “love-sick” with the perfumed sails, etc.) and hence reports the effect of her presence on him as a witness of the event. Enobarbus thus invites or lures his audience of Maecenas and Agrippa to imaginatively “picture” or witness Cleopatra through his own, seductively rhetorical report of a woman who “beggar[s] all description” (2.2.208); the report rebounds back to flatter the reporter who is responsible for conveying (or rather mythologizing) Cleopatra’s greatness for, as Charnes claims, “[b]y appropriation, one partakes of the very charisma one invents” (Notorious Identity 125). Like Enobarbus, Cleopatra lures Dolabella into imaginatively witnessing and affectively acknowledging the mythical presence of an absent Antony through a description that is self-flattering and self-referential, even as she suggests that his magnanimity exceeds the very possibility of describing him.

The self-flattery registered in Cleopatra’s dream-vision report, however, outdoes that of Enobarbus’ report and succeeds in persuading Dolabella of her glory. While Enobarbus claims that Cleopatra “O’er-pictur[es] that Venus where we see/ The fancy outwork nature” (2.2.210-211), Cleopatra demonstrates her ability to imaginatively depict an equally supreme Antony who “overpictures” nature (“Nature wants stuff/ To vie strange forms with fancy” [5.2.96-7]). However, her depiction of Antony is not just imaginative but is also real in that it constitutes

85 For observations on how Cleopatra stimulates desire through absence, see Harris and Belsey (“Cleopatra’s Seduction”).

86 By the end of the play, Caesar reports Antony’s and Cleopatra’s deaths in order to bring praise to himself as the reporter.
nature or brings Antony to life: “yet t’imagine/ An Antony were nature’s piece ‘gainst fancy,/ Condemning shadows quite” (5.2.97-99). In equating herself with nature while also suggesting that she paradoxically exceeds nature in giving imaginative birth to a “real” Antony which outdoes her very ability to imagine an even more superior Antony, Cleopatra turns her tribute to him into an encomium of her life-giving capacity and unfettered creativity. As Schalkwyk notes, Cleopatra’s report attests to a “performative use of language that is neither true nor false, but rather enacts or brings into being the figure it speaks about” (Speech and Performance 49); the report has illocutionary force, or the ability to transform reality by making what is tangibly real conditional on Cleopatra’s speech. The reference to “shadows”, as stage actors, cues the audience to hear the boy actor’s voice who similarly praises himself as an exquisite actor that can “naturally” bring forth an Antony that exceeds (“condemns”) other actors (“shadows”) in their capacity to histrionically perform Antony’s greatness on stage; the boy overshadows them all. The dream-vision report, also, achieves its perlocutionary effect on Dolabella by moving him to sympathy, as he admits to Cleopatra: “Your loss is as yourself, great, and you bear it/ As answering to the weight” (5.2.100-101). Having verbally emasculated Dolabella by cutting off his speech and his ability to “do” anything with his words— witness lines 78, 80, and 91— and by appealing to his emotions or “commanding his mood” (118) as Goldman calls it, Cleopatra refuses to be his audience and successfully transforms Dolabella “from a ready tool of Caesar’s into [her] devoted servant” (Goldman 119) who reveals Caesar’s plans to her (5.2.108- 110). Cleopatra turns Dolabella from an actor into a member of her onstage audience.

Whereas Enobarbus’ report succeeds in mythologizing Cleopatra but fails at “crafting a social performance that will elevate his status” (Charnes, Notorious Identity 121)— despite his attempt to “redeem” Antony as a dutiful general who reportedly abstains from gazing at
Cleopatra on Cydnus (2.2.224-227)\textsuperscript{87} — Cleopatra’s report both mythologizes Antony and succeeds in crafting a powerful social performance in which she is both actor and spectator, and with which she can countervail Rome’s power. In re-composing a mythical and heroic Antony, Cleopatra makes herself out to be as great as—or greater than—the Antony she reports by giving performative “birth” to him. Her dream-vision of Antony, structured as it is on her own self-description and on other characters’ reports, not only “[s]atisf[ies] Antony’s wish to be remembered as the greatest prince of the world” (200) as Jan Blits proposes, but also satisfies her own, rather Enobarbian desire to “earn[] a place i’th’ story” (3.13.47).\textsuperscript{88} In a play world where “the nature of [ ] news infects the teller” (1.2.101) and where the reporter is coloured by the content of his/her report (1.5.37-9), Cleopatra’s dream-vision report rebounds back on—and thus flatters—herself as the charismatic and heroic subject of her speech. If Enobarbus needs Cleopatra to craft a social performance, Cleopatra needs Antony for the same purpose. Juxtaposed against Enobarbus’ barge scene, Cleopatra’s dream-vision report of Antony nevertheless transcends Enobarbus’ report for it demonstrates her control of Antony and of his effect which she reports to her audience, whereas Enobarbus’ report is only able to convey Cleopatra’s effect, which he adopts for himself. Under the pretext of praising Antony in her dream-vision report, Cleopatra gains power and asserts her control over the Romans. Cleopatra’s donning of Antony’s “sword Philippan” (2.5.23) becomes a metaphor for her pragmatic use of Antony in her speech as a powerful phallic weapon in her verbal war against Caesar and Rome.

\textsuperscript{87} Although Enobarbus’ report of Cleopatra on Cydnus flatters Cleopatra, it also discreetly praises Antony by suggesting Antony’s stoic adherence to his Roman values as he, “[c]enthroned i’th market-place, did sit alone./ Whistling to th’air” (2.2.221-223).

\textsuperscript{88} Carol Thomas Neely states that “Cleopatra’s dream of Antony rescues him from defeat. It enlarges and reconciles his sexuality and heroism, satisfies her desire for him, and makes him worthy to die for” (159).
The words that Cleopatra commands to be reported to Caesar further illustrate her strategic manoeuvring to gain power over Caesar: by enacting her submissive role as Rome’s subject and feigning loyalty to Caesar, Cleopatra exceeds this role and asserts her superiority by disrupting or challenging Caesar’s power. Her reported words to Caesar instantiate her self-glorification and pride under the pretext of acknowledging Caesar’s superiority and his power over her. In keeping with her philosophy that news ought to flatter the hearer rather than report the “honest” truth (2.5.85), Cleopatra’s encomium of Caesar is accompanied by a rhetoric of submission that is classified as a negative “face” strategy in pragmatics: Cleopatra adopts negative face strategies only to subvert them. According to Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson’s linguistic theory of politeness, interacting speakers employ either positive or negative “face” strategies to maintain each others’ “face” or public self-image in conversation. Negative “face” strategies such as self-effacement, linguistic formality, the use of honorifics, impersonal passives, and linguistic as well as non-linguistic acts of deference all convey the speaker’s respect for the hearer’s desire to remain “unimpeded in [his/her] actions” (Brown and Levinson 70). Following the defeat at Actium, Cleopatra uses deference to flatter Caesar and to sue for political power, as revealed by the Roman ambassador’s report to Caesar: “Cleopatra does confess thy greatness,/ Submits her to thy might, and of thee craves/ The circle of the Ptolemies for her heirs” (3.12.16-18). As suggested by the verbs “confess,” “submit,” and “crave,” Cleopatra’s obedience to Caesar registers her acknowledgement of his greatness. However, in her conference with Thidias who is sent by Caesar to “win” (3.13.27) Cleopatra from Antony through manipulative rhetoric, as Caesar makes clear, Cleopatra subverts her

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89 Unlike Cleopatra, Antony desires and values honesty in report rather than flattery: “Who tells me true, though in his tale lie death,/ I hear him as though he flattered” (1.2.87-88).

90 Caesar tells Thidias:
negative “face” strategy in which she claims that Caesar “is a god, and knows/ What is most right” (3.13.60-61) with a pun to assert her own superiority. Cleopatra commands Thidias to:

Say to great Caesar this in deputation:
I kiss his conqu’ring hand. Tell him I am prompt
To lay my crown at’s feet, and there to kneel
Till from his all-obeying breath I hear
The doom of Egypt. (3.13.78-82)

The pun on crown, signifying diadem but also head, undermines Cleopatra’s proclaimed submission and structures her apparent obsequiousness as a challenge to Caesar’s reported obsequiousness (“For he partly begs/ To be desired to give. It much would please him/ That of his fortunes you should make a staff” [3.13.66-68]). Indicating that she will fully obey Caesar only when she is decapitated (only when her “crown” lies at his feet), the pun suggests that Cleopatra’s implied suicide is a precondition for her subservience. While the speech manifests Cleopatra’s powerless obedience to Caesar, it also provides a powerful challenge to Caesar’s quest for domination. Moreover, in response to Proculeius’ request that Cleopatra flatter Caesar by allowing him to report her “sweet dependency” (5.2.25-6) on Caesar to him, Cleopatra asks Proculeius to report the following: “Pray you, tell him/ I am his fortune’s vassal and I send him/ The greatness he has got” (5.2.28-30). Cleopatra’s response once again foregrounds her humble submission and her acceptance of her fate in the face of Caesar’s newly acquired fortune. But this submission is undermined by the equivocation on the verb “send.” Rather than merely “sending” or paying homage to Caesar’s greatness, Cleopatra uses “send” to suggest that she literally grants Caesar his greatness by giving him Egypt.

To try thy eloquence now ‘tis time. Dispatch.
From Antony win Cleopatra. Promise,
And in our name, what she requires. Add more
As thine invention offers. (3.13.26-29)
is a great and heroic Colossus thanks to Cleopatra’s dream-vision report and her praise of him in her monologue, then Caesar is equally as great thanks to a Cleopatra who has bestowed her greatness upon him. In “sending” Caesar her greatness, Cleopatra glorifies herself as the agent or cause of Caesar’s greatness under the pretext of embracing her vassalage. The equivocation is reinforced by Cleopatra’s message, which she tells Proculeius to report to Caesar:

If your master
Would have a queen his beggar, you must tell him
That majesty, to keep decorum, must
No less beg than a kingdom. If he please
To give me conquered Egypt for my son,
He gives me so much of mine own as I
Will kneel to him with thanks (5.1.15-21)

While Cleopatra performs or stages her power as a monarch in Proculeius’ company, she nevertheless performs her powerlessness to flatter and dupe Caesar. Cleopatra resorts to her submissive posture when she confronts Caesar by kneeling and voicing her female role: “[I] confess I have/ Been laden with like frailties which before/ Have often shamed our sex” (117-120). By “wording” Caesar who “words” her to “not/ Be noble to [her]self” (5.2.188-189) in an endless game of one-upmanship (5.2.190), Cleopatra transforms her political powerlessness into power by challenging Caesar’s power. Her adoption of Roman reportage allows Cleopatra to exhibit her subordination while simultaneously allowing her to challenge her scripted role in direct response to Rome’s and Caesar’s denigration of her as a powerless, female, Roman subject.

Cleopatra not only refuses to be limited to her Roman role and contained within Roman report but she also refuses to be subject(ed) to Roman voyeurism and display, which would diminish her reputation. Learning of Caesar’s plans to lead her and her women in a victory
parade that visually showcases his political power and “nobleness well acted” (5.2.43),\(^9\)

Cleopatra, ironically, imagines how a stage actor and balladeer would reportedly “stage” her and her women:

- Saucy lictors
- Will catch at us like strumpets, and scald rhymers
- Ballad us out o’tune. The quick comedians
- Extemporally will stage us, and present
- Our Alexandrian revels. Antony
- Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
- Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
- I’th posture of a whore. (5.2.210-217)

Re-contextualized in a Roman reporting context which would diminish her as an “Egyptian puppet” (5.2.204), Cleopatra fears that her “greatness”— her already lost sovereignty but also her “greatness” as a heroic lover and thus her affective and sexual power— would be subject to scorn and ridicule. Cleopatra’s meta-theatrical speech operates on two levels and reveals how the boy actor’s presence informs and contributes to eliciting Cleopatra’s effect of greatness.

Cleopatra’s speech addresses her female attendants and discusses her potential diminution by Roman actors within a Roman theatrical framework (which implies the superiority of Egyptian theatre). The dramatic irony— that Cleopatra as a personated person is already impersonated and staged by a young boy whose voice has not yet broken (“squeaking”)— allows the audience to see the futility of Cleopatra’s attempts to consolidate her power but it also invites the audience to posit a posteriority that makes Cleopatra’s ontological reality as a character contingent on the boy actor impersonating her. On another level, the actor playing Cleopatra addresses the theatre audience and discusses the diminution of his skilful impersonation of

\(^9\) Hiscock also claims that Caesar “wants to re-present the Egyptian queen ceremonially as a political and erotic deviant” (199). Caesar’s “use of political theatre is only a stage . . . along the way to narrative inscription: a factory in which Cleopatra’s histrionic evasiveness can be reassembled into something appropriable by Rome” (Charnes, *Notorious Identity* 132).
Cleopatra by other, less skilful actors. By drawing attention to his presentational and representational acting skills, the boy actor foregrounds his own performative greatness for he has just demonstrated how Cleopatra the vulnerable queen employs her diplomatic, linguistic strategies to secure her power, and uses this performance to distinguish himself from the caricature or parody that a lesser actor might show in impersonating the same; Cleopatra the character summons the actor, and his skilful acting, into being. In addition to the counter-pointing of scenes and speeches in the play, this particular speech is the means by which Shakespeare controls his audience’s response. Shakespeare speaks through Cleopatra and the boy actor who is posterior to her so as to emphasize the superiority of his Cleopatra, his dramatic creation, to his audience. Although Shakespeare has already (ironically) “entrapped” Cleopatra in his play world by making her the subject of his play, he has not scripted her as a “whore” like his historical sources have done: his dramatic medium, as Shakespeare seems to imply, does not “boy” or reduce Cleopatra’s greatness. Instead, it permits a play of voices—the actor’s and the playwright’s—which inform Cleopatra’s linguistic performances and invite the audience to read their meanings in dialogical relation to Cleopatra-the-dramatic-character’s utterances. Shakespeare thus praises his own work— itself a “report” albeit a dramatic one cobbled together by what he has seen in or learned from his historical sources— by throwing a sceptical light on the reliability of official historical sources (Plutarch, etc.) or reports where Cleopatra is presented as a vile prostitute. Shakespeare may be a Cleopatra figure himself—a reporter speaking from a pre-existing discourse—who adopts, challenges, and undermines the power of his authoritarian, “Roman” narrative sources to display and publicize his work in a

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92 I draw on Barfoot’s observation: “Drama’s own re-creation of source material becomes a critique of that material. The remaking of myth unmakes the myth by revealing to us the dubious processes by which myth is made” (115).
theatrical medium that affectively moves his audience to participate in the (re)construction of a mighty and glorious Cleopatra.

Cleopatra’s final instance of reportage marks her self-ennoblement as a sovereign as she transforms herself into a praiseworthy object of report. In imaginatively conjuring up a speaking Antony who beckons and praises her, Cleopatra finally achieves the recognition which she had so passionately sought, for she is praised by him on whom she had conferred heroic greatness:

. . . . —methinks I hear
Antony call. I see him rouse himself
To praise my noble act. I hear him mock
The luck of Caesar. . . . (5.2.274-277)

While Cleopatra’s report of Antony’s praise and mockery may grant her self-satisfaction or courage as she prepares to act out her suicide, the report nevertheless acts as an official tribute to Cleopatra’s heroism and greatness from the Antony of her dream-vision whose superiority and transcendent power validate her intended suicide. Moreover, in reporting such an Antony, Cleopatra also envisions the effect of her suicide and stages herself as her own audience witnessing her act. It is this self-staging that serves to involve Cleopatra’s onstage and offstage audiences and it is Antony’s praise that Cleopatra enjoins her audiences to emulate; reporting Antony’s imagined words has the intended perlocutionary force of showing or teaching her audience how they should honour her. Responding to Antony’s praise with a declaration that is performative (“Husband, I come” [5.2.278]), Cleopatra appears to enact Austin’s matrimonial “I do”, a performative speech act with illocutionary force that instantaneously turns her into

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93 Cleopatra moreover longs for the asp to mock Caesar and thus imaginatively personifies it: “O, couldst thou speak./ That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass/ Unpolicied!” (5.2.297-99).
Antony’s wife. This self-authorizing, declarative promise grants Cleopatra a life-in-death as Antony’s spouse: in proclaiming her marital status, Cleopatra verbally completes the visual family portrait she staged in Alexandria’s marketplace as the matriarchal Isis (3.6.1-11) and thus foregrounds her authoritative sexual power which has enabled her not only to woo but also to win over Antony as a husband.94

Cleopatra’s verbal self-ennoblement through reportage complements a physical self-ennoblement through performance, which is actualized in her Roman suicide. Exemplifying a “nobleness in record” (4.15.100), suicide is Cleopatra’s final theatrical performance which frustrates Roman report: suicide reifies Cleopatra’s sexual power and her self-proclaimed heroic greatness as it allows her to fix herself as a commemorative funerary monument and to thereby exceed any attempt that Caesar makes to contain her within his official report. Showing herself “like a queen” and proclaiming “I am again for Cydnus/ To meet Mark Antony” (5.2.226-227), Cleopatra marks her paradoxical life-in-death and stages herself as a political figure (rather than a wife or a lover) who can seduce and entrap Antony as well as the Romans through royal spectacle.95 Transforming “self-presentation into representation” (van Laan 222) over which only she has control, Cleopatra’s suicide and her “marble” constancy in death allow her to trump Caesar’s victory parade and “mock[] the limitations of his power” (Cook 164), to conquer “the fortune that rules [Caesar]” (Cartwright 269), and to affectively

94 Cleopatra’s elaborately staged suicide is juxtaposed against Antony’s bungled suicide to appear all the more great. Antony’s motives for suicide are “disgrace and horror” (4.15.66), which he feels after having fallen away from his Roman self, as well as shame since Cleopatra has “got upon” Antony “[a] nobleness in record” (4.15.99). Antony lacks the courage to commit suicide and tries to persuade Eros to kill him by telling him of Caesar’s eventual triumphal procession (4.15.72-77).

95 Caesar’s remark, that Cleopatra “looks like sleep,/ As she would catch another Antony/ In her strong toil of grace” (5.2.336-338), signals his awareness of her meek and harmless appearance (a performance) which she uses as bait to secure her sexual dominance.
disempower the Romans by turning them into awe-filled spectators— rather than reporters— who cannot appropriate or “boy” her greatness “[i]’th’ posture of a whore” (5.2.219).

Cleopatra’s glory and sexual charisma are further heightened by the juxtaposition of her suicide against Caesar’s report. Striving to diminish Cleopatra’s glory by reporting the words of Cleopatra’s physician, Caesar belittles Cleopatra’s death and dismisses the metaphorical significance of her suicide by suggesting that her suicide attests to her cowardice rather than to her nobility: “for her physician tells me/ She hath pursued conclusions infinite/ Of easy ways to die” (5.2.353-355). If Caesar, as Hiscock notes, “re-models Octavia as an affective outcast . . . [and] confers on her only a sexual status” (204), he also clearly moulds a woman he finds infinitely intolerable into a disempowered and irresolute monarch whose flight from pain impels her to seek “infinite” ways to die. Caesar’s denigration of Cleopatra, moreover, is evidenced in his attempt to de-politicize, romanticize, and hence reduce the force of Antony’s and Cleopatra’s love (5.2.348-350) by “translating” the couple “from [politically] rebellious figures who escaped his control and punishment” into “legendary lovers” (Charnes, Notorious Identity 145). But while Caesar’s gloss that Cleopatra’s love for Antony is a “love that is to die for” (Charnes, “What’s Love” 277) delimits Cleopatra as a submissive and smitten beloved, Cleopatra’s self-immortalization as the Egyptian queen on Cydnus renders her a sexually powerful ruler whose motive for suicide is complicated by political expediency rather than exclusively inspired by her love for Antony; this love, as Charnes calls it, is “a love that is to die for if nothing else is to be worked out” (“What’s Love” 277). Caesar tailors his report of the protagonists’ lives and deaths to publicize himself as the “glorious” reporter who affectively moves his audience and begets their lament:

96 Caesar’s words oddly recall his desire to tell Antony that “I have many other ways to die” (4.1.5).
High events as these
Strike those that make them, and their story is
No less in pity than his glory which
Brought them to be lamented. (5.2.359-361)

The report is orchestrated to “show” Caesar’s greatness of heart, which has supposedly compelled him to publicly report the lovers’ deaths, and complements the “solemn show” (5.2.353-355) that he commands his army to present in attending the lovers’ funeral. Nevertheless, instead of glorifying Caesar over Cleopatra and Antony, the report belittles Caesar by exposing the limitations of his “empiricism” which “activates” the audience “to contemplate this scene by seeing even more than Caesar indicates” (Cartwright 231) and actively to recreate what he misses (Cartwright 241). By encountering Cleopatra theatrically, rather than attending to Philo and Demetrius’ report which diminishes her in the opening scene and Caesar’s report which similarly reduces her in the final scene, the audience is able to attribute a transcendence to the Egyptian monarch who struggled to publicize and immortalize her nobility. Just like her use of Roman report, Cleopatra’s adoption of Roman suicide allows her to turn this suicide to her advantage by using it to enhance her sexual power.97

Cleopatra’s instances of reportage throughout the play reveal a controlling and politically astute female monarch who is concerned with ascertaining, publicizing, and representing her power so as to offset an already politically compromised identity. In a play-world where she is reductively labelled a “gipsy” (1.1.9), “strumpet” (1.1.13), “slave” (1.4.19), “whore” (3.6.67), and a “cow in June” (3.10.13) by the Romans, Cleopatra’s glory and her greatness as a character arise from her adoption of Roman report— that underwrites the

97 As Leggatt notes, “Cleopatra savours the irony of being in the end the noblest Roman of them all” (183). The asp represents Antony’s sexual power while also being a symbol for Cleopatra’s own phallic power.
narrative imperative and Rome’s political power— which enables her to re-script herself as a sexually powerful monarch (even though this sexuality is an effect of Roman domination rather than freely chosen) and to redeem herself “by the artifice to which she is simultaneously reduced” (James, “Politics of Display” 216). Her direct report of Antony’s and Caesar’s hypothetical or imagined speech as well as her dream-vision report of Antony allow Cleopatra to self-servingly and gloatingly stage her superiority to an audience by performing (and thus undercutting) her scripted, submissive role as a lover and a Roman subject. Her use of messengers to report her speech and actions to Antony and Caesar measures her attempts to garner political and sexual power for herself through the affective power of report, as a means of memorializing herself for posterity. Her acts of reportage, which illuminate how Cleopatra transforms her political powerlessness into sexual self-empowerment, reveal that the extra-ordinary character effects associated with Cleopatra lie in her pragmatic use of report as it intersects with meta-dramatic moments that call attention to the boy actor’s performances. These performances that the boy stages draw attention to his role-playing of female sexuality and invite the audience to posit an anteriority to Cleopatra’s character that valorizes (and even allegorizes) her sexual power and allows her to exceed the denigrated sexual role ascribed to her by Rome.98 Cleopatra-as-Egypt, like the boy actor, is able to contain others rather than be contained by them in her performances. As a result, the moral binary underlying the critical debate about whether Cleopatra is the play’s victim or victor can be resolved with the recognition that her victory is predicated on her enactment and transformation of her victimization. Rather than an inner core self, it is the specific way in which Cleopatra is absent in her presence through the manipulation of reportage that produces her ontological presence;

98 The structural counterpoint between scenes and reports similarly highlights Cleopatra’s superiority and validates her sexuality.
her theatricality allows her to control her self-presentation in others’ reports as a sovereign by “find[ing] a show which passes everything—all obstacles and competitors” (Goldman 138).
Chapter 4

Re-Framing the Rabbit-Duck:
Pragma-Rhetoric and Henry’s Moral Ambivalence in *Henry V*

Eloquent and grave was his speech, and of great grace and power to persuade.

—Holinshed, *Chronicles*

William Hazlitt’s pronouncement that “Henry V, it is true, was a hero . . . . Yet we feel little love or admiration for him” (160-161) forecasts the ambivalent response to— and perception of— the complex character of Henry that has persisted in critical scholarship of the play since Gerald Gould’s essay in 1919. Countering univocally patriotic interpretations of *Henry V*, Gould outlines the play’s ironies to illustrate that *Henry V* is just as plausibly “a satire on monarchical government, imperialism, on the baser kinds of patriotism, and on war” (44) and stakes a claim for Henry’s hypocrisy. Gould’s observations, complicating and challenging the idealized image of the monarch, set the stage for the emergence of the critical debate regarding Henry’s moral indeterminacy. Primarily rotating around two diametrically opposed axes, commentators have either defined Henry as a virtuous Christian monarch whose glorious deeds are performed to benevolently serve the English commonweal or they have defined Henry as a conniving and self-interested Machiavel whose seemingly virtuous façade belies his ambition for power and political self-aggrandizement.² Attempting to reconcile these reductive

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¹ For Hazlitt, Henry is a scheming Machiavel and an “amiable monster, a very splendid pageant” (161).

² Critics who view Henry in the former light include E.M. Tillyard, Moody Prior, and Sherman H. Hawkins; critics who view Henry in the latter light include Roy W. Battenhouse (“Heroic Comedy”) and H. Matthews. This critical partisanship, as Phyllis Rackin notes, is grounded in “the ideological struggles depicted in and incited by the [history] plays” (*Stages of History* 45) between the opposing conceptions and discourses of history: medieval providentialism, which is “[p]olitically conservative” and “look[s] backward to an older feudal world and upward to transcendent spiritual authority to oppose change and justify hereditary privilege”, and a Machiavellian view of history which “validates change, mobility, and individual initiative . . . [and] offers [a] rationalist demystification of the historical past and ratifies opposition to the status quo” (*Stages of History* 43).
and fallacious either/or viewpoints, Norman Rabkin draws on gestalt psychology in his influential 1977 article, “Rabbits, Ducks, and Henry V”, to claim that the play “dares” its readers to “choose one of the two opposed interpretations it requires of us” (279), even though the interpretations are interdependent and relative to each other.\(^3\) Henry, claims Rabkin, is simply an ambiguous “rabbit-duck” who holds in equilibrium the incompatible qualities of a Christian and a Machiavel, which leaves the critic in a limbo of uncertainty.\(^4\) However, Rabkin seems to predicate this uncertainty or indeterminacy on an inner/outer dialectic that is instantiated in the conflict between Henry’s private “self” and his public “role” as he adapts to kingship (296). By claiming that Henry trades his idiosyncratic “inwardness” for power (296), Rabkin falls into the predicament symptomatic of Bradleyan critics: that of interpreting character as if it were a psychologically real person and an \textit{a priori} entity. In this psychologically realistic reading of the monarch, Hal’s sincerity—or lack thereof—presupposes the existence of an interior, essential self which, as Matthew Wikander claims, skirts the issue, for “Kings are ambiguous beings, unavailable to public knowledge: this is the truth ensconced in the doctrine of the king’s two bodies . . . .” (309). Although Wikander would assert that “Hal’s repudiation of the ‘thing’ he was, of his festive or amphibious other

\(^3\) Harold C. Goddard, like Gould, points out the ironies in the play and, like Rabkin, claims that the reader is free to choose either the Chorus’ “popular” idea of Henry or the “truth” about Henry which Shakespeare reveals to us in the play itself (218). The most recent discussion of irony in the play is Roy Battenhouse’s monograph, \textit{Christian Irony in Shakespeare’s History} (Vol. 2), in which he contends that the irony gives rise to a brand of Chaucerian satire that is “gently sympathetic and covertly hilarious” (3). Battenhouse also holds that the irony in Shakespeare’s \textit{Henry V} is “unwittingly” present in Holinshed’s \textit{Chronicles}.

\(^4\) Although the rabbit and the duck coexist and constitute one another, Rabkin claims that the critic cannot “see” them at the same time; he/she must relinquish one in order to clearly see the other. He also notes that the ability to see either a rabbit or a duck is determined by whether the audience views \textit{Henry V} as an extension of \textit{1 Henry IV} or of \textit{2 Henry IV}: “Taking the play, as we have just done, to be an extension of the first part of Henry IV, we are almost inevitably propelled to optimism. Taking it as the sequel of the second part of \\textit{Henry IV}, we are led to the opposite view” (288). Sara Munson Deats, who focuses on Henry “at war”, is the most recent critic to agree with Rabkin but she opts for a different metaphor: Shakespeare, she claims, “creates [a] memorable anamorphic painting” of Henry (“\textit{Henry V at War}” 97).
self, postulates an unknowable real self, a true self, that has been concealed throughout his two
plays and that may, indeed, remain unknowable in *Henry V* (297). Hal’s “knowability” or his
“true” self—what Wikander calls his “elusive essence” (298)—behind the protean roles he
adopts is not at issue in the play and neither is Hal’s sincerity, for the audience is
unquestionably accustomed to Hal’s antics and role-playing from *1 Henry IV* and can perhaps
assume that this may resurface in *Henry V*. As Conal Condren notes, “any alleged opacity in
the causative chain from inner self to stage performance becomes evidence of [Henry’s] moral
ambiguity rather than a sign of our critical and psychological presuppositions” (196). Rather
than excavating the moral disparity inherent to this presupposed connection between Hal’s
inner (private) and outer (public) selves, I believe that an examination of the moral values and
consequences of Henry’s adoption of his public role as king is more relevant to the discussion
of a character who “disappears into his roles” (Ayers 58). Critics like Phillip Mallett in the late
1970s and more recently Conal Condren have shifted their focus to examine Henry’s agency
vis-à-vis his role as king, claiming that Henry’s moral ambiguity arises from his performance
of kingship: Mallett re-assesses Henry as a “parody of the true king he claims to be, who is
unaware of the distortion that he presents” (80), while Condren reads him as a “persona”,

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5 It should be noted that the apparent contradiction in the two Wikander quotes I present here is misleading, for in
his article Wikander suggests that Hal is both a prince and an actor (300) and argues that the play stages an
ambivalence vis-à-vis both theatre and kingship, which is then picked up by critics in their readings.

6 Hal allegorically “fashions” himself into a prodigal son in *1 Henry IV* by role-playing, and thus deceiving, his
father.

7 I believe that the play’s ambiguity is built into its structure as much as it is the offspring of our “critical
presupposition[s]”.

8 I agree with P.K. Ayers that Henry “reflects in his speech not himself, but the expectations of those to whom he
speaks. He himself becomes in the process largely invisible; the Hal, Harry, or Henry on display is the one those
around him want or need to see” (258). Nevertheless, that Henry possesses a secretly occluded, “true” inner self is
still a widely accepted commonplace in criticism of the play.
defined by a public or “institutionalized office” (198), whose vacillating adherence and non-adherence to standards of conduct account for his moral ambiguity.

Nevertheless, these critics exclude from their analyses the tensions inherent to Henry’s linguistic manoeuvring and his strategic self-fashioning in discourse. Despite the praise that has been liberally bestowed on Henry as a master rhetorician, there has been a dearth of discussion concerning how Henry pragmatically uses language to negotiate his power. Although P.K. Ayers investigates the discrepancy between Henry’s use of “plain speech” and his ethical self-presentation, Ayers’s analysis is scaffolded on Henry’s dialogic performances of others’ (particularly Hotspur’s) personae which underlies, once again, Henry’s role-playing into which—as Ayers claims—his idiosyncratic identity simply “disappears”.9 In claiming that Henry resorts to “rhetorical performance[s] to conceal [his] self” (255), Ayers does not recognize that Henry, as an agent, not only uses language to instrumentally negotiate his identity but that language itself and its particular use precisely encode this struggle with negotiating an identity that not only succeeds but also fails. Linguistic literary critic Roger D. Sell calls Henry an “observant communicative pragmaticist” (121) who uses the persuasive strategy of “co-adaptation” in his speeches to adapt himself to his audience in order to adapt society to his own ends.10 This co-adaptation, Sell argues, has the effect of shortening “the distance between [Henry’s] rank and humanity” (126) and accounts for the “extraordinary force” (126) of Henry’s speech, from which his “greatest achievements spring” (126).

However, Sell appears to address Henry’s speech rhetorically rather than pragmatically. Working within Austin’s speech-act theory, Joseph A. Porter and David Schalkwyk both

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9 Ayers claims that Henry “renames and recreates himself in Hotspur’s image” for the latter has a “constant persona” that Henry exploits (257).

10 “The persuasive speaker adapts to society in order to be listened to and understood, but with the further motive of adapting society to the speaker’s own project” (Sell 114).
content that Henry’s idiosyncratic speech consists of illocutionary acts such as vowing, swearing, and taking oaths, which are modifications of promising, but also ordering, commanding, requesting, urging, advising, prophesying, and warning (Porter 144). Porter claims that these performative utterances have a propositional content that is distinctly a future act (144) and thus contends that “Hal, through his concentration on futurity [i.e. via his illocutionary speech acts which point towards the future], redeems time by making tense significant” (145) since, unlike Richard II, he linearly rather than circularly endows the present with future meaning (145). This “futurity” for Porter is characteristic of Henry’s speech; the verbal action which Henry performs is “communicative and hence not merely action but also . . . . consequential interaction” (148). David Schalkwyk, building on Porter’s work, reduces Porter’s emphasis on the communicative function of Henry’s speech to foreground its persuasive function by arguing that Henry displaces the illocutionary force of his speech (i.e. his performative utterances) onto performance itself which is, in the play, usually not actualized but only hinted at: “Henry systematically attempts to overcome the performative weakness of his position as King of England (derived from the crisis of illegitimacy precipitated by his father’s deposition of Richard II), by displacing questions of performative validity with the achieved perlocutionary force of action, especially warfare” (“Proto-nationalist Performatives” 200). It is this “movement between performative and

11 An illocutionary act is a speech act; the two terms are synonymous (“illocutionary act” is Austin’s coinage whereas “speech act” is used by Searle). An illocutionary act, according to Austin, is an action that is performed in uttering a sentence (for instance, in uttering “I swear I will come”, a speaker is performing a promise). “Performatives” or “performative utterances”, which are juxtaposed against constative utterances (i.e. sentences which describe reality) in Austin’s speech-act theory, are also interchangeable terms that encompass locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. A locutionary act is simply the act of stating something (e.g. “It is raining”) and a perlocutionary act is an act that is performed by uttering a sentence (it can produce an intended or unintended effect on the hearer).
“Proto-nationalist Performatives” 200), according to Schalkwyk, that accounts for Henry’s oscillation between a rabbit and a duck. Schalkwyk’s histrionic reading of Henry’s verbal displacements to boost his performative authority as a king may underscore Henry’s inability to translate words into deeds and thus signals his failure as a king, but it need not necessarily register his failure as a rhetorician. Schalkwyk divorces the utterance’s illocutionary force from its persuasive or perlocutionary force rather than treating them as interrelated modes of communication.

What exactly is it in the way that Henry uses language that accounts for his moral undecidability or indeterminacy as a character? Extending the work of Porter and Schalkwyk, I propose to read Henry as an orator whose pragma-rhetorical self-construction and deconstruction convey his moral indeterminacy and impel both critics and audiences to question whether Henry is a Christian monarch, a Machiavel, or both.\(^{13}\) Rather than examine the performative gap between what Henry “does” (or fails to do) with his illocutions and the displaced or perlocutionary effect this creates, I examine how Henry’s overt statements which build his ethos—his “constative” use of language\(^ {14}\)—contradict what his words “do”, or his performative use of language. In other words, I examine how the performative force of Henry’s

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\(^{12}\) For example, Schalkwyk claims that the Chorus, which “promises Mars but delivers a mercurial wordsmith” (“Proto-nationalist Performatives” 204), is like Henry who musters his imperatives—a series of “commands, orders, threats, warnings”—to “God, which displace the responsibility for his subsequent actions—the exercise of power in the theatre of war—from himself . . . .” (“Proto-nationalist Performatives” 203). Henry’s actions are thus “confined entirely to the perlocutionary rhetoric through which he emboldens his soldiers and threatens the enemy under the guise of illusionary sleight of hand” (“Proto-nationalist Performatives” 207). Schalkwyk notes that this “displacement of speech acts of right by those of mere performance are enacted by Nim and Pistol” (“Proto-nationalist Performatives” 204).

\(^{13}\) Omry Smith examines Henry as an orator but focuses on his “rhetorical-emotional” strategies (i.e. pathos) from a Machiavellian perspective. Smith claims that Henry manipulates his soldiers’ and the Frenchmen’s emotional states by holding in counterpoint love and fear (31). Unlike Smith, who investigates audience-oriented pathos, I examine Henry’s logos and ethos, which are more speaker-oriented and play a direct role in Henry’s self-fashioning of his public image.

\(^{14}\) “Constative” is Austin’s term for utterances which describe reality or report/assert a fact that can be contested (i.e. the statement may be true or false) (5).

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rhetorical actions, intended as persuasive argumentation, undermines the ethos that his constative utterances delineate and proclaim he has. I contend that Henry’s argumentative use of rhetoric in the Folio inadvertently undermines his ethos as a virtuous Christian monarch and as a plain-speaking, honest soldier which he seeks to construct, and thereby produces a sense of Henry’s Machiavellianism. The discrepancy between Henry’s ethos and his logos, two complementary modes of rhetorical persuasion, intersects with the dramatic irony that contextualizes Henry’s encounters with his interlocutors to produce for the audience the effect of Henry’s moral ambivalence. Reading Henry in an anti-essentialist fashion as a consummate orator who discursively builds his rhetorical ethos avoids the ontological quandary stemming from the assumption that Henry “masks” an a priori and inaccessible self. As an orator, Henry’s identity or self-image (ethos) is not pre-discursive but is rhetorically constructed through language to motivate persuasion. It is in this light of public communication and persuasion that Henry needs to be read.15

I first briefly outline the various representations of the historical Henry V in Shakespeare’s dramatic and historical sources in order to highlight Shakespeare’s novelty in delineating Henry as an orator. I then explain the theory of pragma-rhetoric and how it reconstructs rhetoric as a communicative act of argumentation, before launching into an analysis of Henry’s speeches to his lords, bishops, soldiers, and to his future wife using this pragma-rhetorical paradigm.

15 I agree with Omry Smith’s statement that “[t]he king is a shrewd and skilled rhetorician, whose speeches and declarations are designed, first-and-foremost, to influence the actions of others” (26).
Henry as Orator in Shakespeare’s History

In the chronicles of Hall and Holinshed, which subscribe to providential history, Henry V is depicted as a pious monarch and a just warrior-king who renounces his riotous past to reform himself into a virtuous and righteous ruler. In Hall’s *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrious Families of Lancaster and York*, the morally reformed Henry is “almost the Arabicall Phenix” (in Bullough, 287) who “determine[s] with hymself to put on the shape of a new man…” (in Bullough, 286). Hall enumerates the monarch’s virtues as a ruler (“wit, gravitie, circumspeccion, diligence and constancie” [in Bullough, 287]) and lauds Henry’s desire to educate himself so as to “shewe hymself a synguler mirror and manifest example of moral virtues and good qualities to his comen people” (in Bullough, 287) by submitting to the tutelage of his counsellors and becoming a scholar: Henry engages in “daily study how to acquire to hymself laude and glory . . . and not to delight in wor[l]dly pleasures whiche are commen emongest the lowest sorte of the vile and rustical people” (in Bullough, 287).

Holinshed’s *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, which incorporate many of Hall’s observations, not only praise Henry for his wisdom and virtue but also laud his military prowess. Henry is the paragon of a warrior who is “[o]f courage invincible, of purpose unmutable, so wisehardie alwaies, as feare was banisht from him” (in Bullough, 407) and “a capeteine against whome fortune never frowned, nor mischance once spurned, whose people him so severe a justicer both loved and obeyed (and so humane withal)” (in Bullough, 406).

Henry’s speech, moreover, expresses and bears the mark of his spiritual devoutness:

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16 Both Hall and Holinshed depict the workings of providence in their chronicles: Tillyard notes the providentialism in Hall, while Phyllis Rackin notes that the 1587 edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, which was used by Shakespeare, contains Abraham Fleming’s “insistently moralistic commentary” (*Stages of History* 24). Providential interpretations of history, for the humanists, aptly serve the purposes of “moral instruction” and political or “practical utility” (*Holderness, Shakespeare’s History* 25), and work to maintain the Tudor myth.
“[e]loquent and grave was his speech, and of great grace and power to persuade” (in Bullough, 408; italics mine). In keeping with an idealized portrayal of the monarch, Holinshed makes Henry’s speech anything but the site of the monarch’s moral complexity.

Unlike the Renaissance chronicles of Hall and Holinshed, the anonymous play *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* interrogates the idealized portrait of Henry by representing an impetuous and stubbornly ambitious monarch whose self-interest takes the place of the virtue he is purported to have. While the dramatization of Henry’s reformation in *The Famous Victories* is meant to highlight Henry’s accomplishments as a warrior and a king, the play nevertheless reveals Henry in a less flattering light as an arrogant aggressor.17 Despite Henry’s transformation from a dissolute and lewd young rascal who disrespects authority in the first half of the play18 to a sedate and obedient king who takes his responsibilities and his role seriously in the second half of the play, Hal retains his peremptoriness and haughty manner.

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17 Hal’s reformation is symbolized by his renunciation of the cloak of needles, which he dons as “a signe that [he] stand[s] upon thorns, til the Crowne be on [his] head” (in Bullough, 6.488). As Sally Robertson Romotsky claims, Hal wears the gown to “flaunt and advertise his impatience” but doffing it suggests the transformation of his “crude ambition” to “filial respect” (158). The reformation is, of course, questionable as the anonymous playwright makes clear by consistently maintaining Hal’s manner of speaking throughout the play.

18 Shakespeare later attributes Hal’s cunning antics in the opening scene of *The Famous Victories* to Falstaff during the Gad’s Hill episode in 1 Henry IV; he even projects Hal’s linguistic habitus onto Falstaff (Henry’s cursing—“zounds”—becomes a trademark of Falstaff’s speech, for instance). The hypocrisy, theft, promiscuity, and dissolve behaviour of which Falstaff comically accuses Hal in 1 Henry IV have ironic recourse to Hal’s self-presentation in *The Famous Victories*. In the first half of *The Famous Victories*, the prodigal prince boxes the Lord Chief Justice’s ears for trying to take him to prison and chastises his father’s receivers (after having robbed them) for failing to retain the king’s money. Hal’s devotion to his fellow thieves and his earnest enjoyment of the life he leads in the tavern is demonstrated by the promise, or boast, he makes to his tavern cronies to socially advance them when he becomes king: “heres prisoning, heres hanging, whipping, and the divel and all: but I tel you sirs, when I am King, we will have no such things, but my lads, if the old king my father were dead, we would all be kings” (in Bullough, 6.454-457). By contrast, Shakespeare’s Hal is self-conscious and morally averse to the tavern underworld in 1 Henry IV, which he exploits in order to reclaim his social prestige and reputation. Falstaff’s request to Hal in 1.2 that Hal protect Falstaff from punishment once he is king retrospectively alludes to Hal’s promise in *The Famous Victories* that Hal will protect highway robbers once he is king: “but that fellow that will stand by the highway side courageously with his sword and buckler and take a purse, that fellow give him commendations; beside that, send him to me and I will give him an anuall pension out of my Exchequer, to maintaine him all the dayes of his life” (in Bullough, 6.468-474). Falstaff’s ironic reference to the Hal of *The Famous Victories*, with which many audience members would have been familiar, underscores Shakespeare’s alternative portrait of a prince whose allegiance lie far from—rather than with—his tavern mates.
His callous indifference to and disregard for others is translated into his role as king, and his speech—both in the tavern scenes and after he is crowned king—reveals a peremptoriness that accompanies his undeterred ambition to achieve his goals. Hal’s aggressive command to his father’s servant that he “goe and tell my father, that I must and will speake with him” (in Bullough, 6.501-502) surfaces again in his unabashedly authoritarian response to the French king that he will take the throne (“Thus I have set it downe, and thus it shall be” [in Bullough, 7.1336]); even Henry’s aside reveals his ambition to quell his sentimental longing for Catherine (“I, but I love her, and must crave her./ Nay I love her and will have her” [in Bullough, 7.1358-1359]). But while the plethora of modal verbs in Henry’s speech conveys his aggressive determination and supercilious manner of speaking, this interpretation of Henry rests on the audience’s adherence to or sympathy with the scenes of low comedy, which expose the “corruption, egocentricity, and militaristic monomania” (Champion 14) of a wastrel youth and which alternate with the high scenes of history that glorify the monarchy and render Henry’s aggressive determination virtuous, relative to his role as warrior-king. As Larry S. Champion claims, the very structure of *The Famous Victories* provides the audience with an ambivalent perspective on Henry as a representative of the monarchy:

Hal, from one perspective the mirror of Christian kings, is from another an impetuous upstart reflecting the worst of aristocratic disdain for his common subjects . . . . If to some the play depicts a unified commonwealth, to others it reveals an oppressive oligarchy with commoners subject to fear, suppression, and disruption of livelihood” (14).\(^{19}\)

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\(^{19}\) In *The Famous Victories*, Henry is a flat rather than a round character since he stands as a metonym for the monarchy. The spectators (commoners) who would subscribe to the play’s de-glorification of monarchy would question the sincerity of Hal’s reformation. Champion believes, as I do, that Henry’s “repentance [is] more politically expedient than genuine” (7-8) in the play.
Thus, although the play’s episodic structure, as Champion claims, provides a dialectical view of history “as ideological confrontation” (15) between ruler and ruled and despite the possibility of validating or condemning Henry’s speech, his speech nevertheless bears a mark of violence as the offspring of personal initiative and prowess that expose the anonymous playwright’s attempt to question providential history.

In the Folio version of *Henry V*, Shakespeare re-historicizes Henry as an orator as well as a king by combining the “grace” and graceful eloquence of Henry’s speech, as noted by Holinshed, with the communicative intentionality suggested by the aggressive use of modals inherent to the speech of the anonymous playwright’s Henry, to render Henry’s speech the site of moral complexity. Shakespeare thus makes Henry’s language a site where the spiritual virtues of a Christian king converge with the personal audacity and political expediency animating this public role.\(^{20}\) Shakespeare seems to have been interested in exploring how humanist values and ideals challenge the political institution of kingship or how, to borrow Canterbury’s terms, a learned “theoric” (1.1.53) informs the “practic part” (1.1.52) of Elizabethan life.

**Reviving Aristotle: from Classical Rhetoric to Pragma-Rhetoric**

While classical rhetoric has traditionally been conceived as a mode of “persuasive communication” (Vickers, *Defense* 1), contemporary philosophical theories of rhetoric use

\(^{20}\) Shakespeare also clearly adopts the structural juxtaposition of Acts and scenes in *The Famous Victories*. I deal exclusively with the Henry of the Folio, since the Quarto version of the play (1600)— in which the Chorus, the scheming Canterbury and Ely, Henry’s Harfleur speech, and his Biblical analogies in the scene with Grey, Scrope, and Cambridge are absent— does not lend itself to an ambivalent reading of Henry. The Quarto, in fact, reduces Henry’s moral complexity since Henry’s shortened speeches and interactions fail to instantiate his use and construction of rhetorical ethos; the Quarto more closely resembles *The Famous Victories*. 
pragmatics to re-conceptualize rhetoric as a cognitive art of interpretation based on inference.\textsuperscript{21} Although Aristotle defines rhetoric as the counterpart or \textit{antistrophos} to dialectic in his \textit{Rhetorica}, rhetorical treatises both before and after Aristotle separate rhetoric from dialectic (i.e. logic) to categorize the former as a distinct art of public persuasion.\textsuperscript{22} Classical rhetoric, as George Kennedy notes, was “primarily an art of [oral] persuasion” geared toward civic life (2) and practical, political questions of the state; Cicero explicitly linked rhetoric to politics in his \textit{De Inventione} (Kennedy 102). While rhetoric, in the forms of “[o]ratory, as well as the writing of epistles, histories, dialogues, and poetry, took on a practical political purpose . . .” (228) and retained its primary function of public persuasion under the Italian humanists, as Kennedy notes, it had all but lost its function as a practical and “spoken art” (Vickers, “Recovery” 28) in early modern England after becoming a subject of study in the grammar school.\textsuperscript{23} Due to the institutionalization of rhetoric as a discipline under Tudor rhetoricians and pedagogues, rhetoric became a “creative art, [the] basis for those classics [the schoolboys] tried to imitate”

\textsuperscript{21} Although rhetoric has recently become a topic that is discussed in a variety of disciplines ranging from law to media studies, I am primarily concerned with philosophical re-conceptualizations or adaptations of rhetoric. For a sampling of titles which point to the interdisciplinarity of rhetoric in contemporary scholarship, see Brian Vickers (“The Recovery of Rhetoric” fn 42, p. 48).

\textsuperscript{22} The separation of rhetoric from dialectic or logic dates back to Plato. Aristotle discusses dialectics in both his \textit{Topics} (his treatise on dialectic) and in his \textit{Rhetorica} (his treatise on rhetoric). Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla similarly recognized logic as an essential constituent of rhetoric, as his treatise \textit{Dialectica} demonstrates: “What else is dialectic . . . than a species of confirmation and refutation? These are parts of invention; invention is one of the five parts of rhetoric. Logic is the syllogism. Does not the orator use the same? Certainly he does, and not only that, but also the enthymeme and the epicheirme, in addition to the induction” (qtd. in Kennedy 242). Rhetoric, as Kennedy notes, was also referred to as “persuasion” (\textit{peithô}) in earlier ancient Greek (1).

\textsuperscript{23} Brian Vickers notes that while in Quintilian’s day the “educational status of rhetoric still included political activity”, the “practical role of rhetoric” virtually disappeared 1000 years later (“Recovery” 28). Kennedy notes that the “persistent characteristic” of rhetoric throughout its history has been its slippage “from persuasion to narration, from civic to personal contexts, and from speech to literature” (qtd. in Kennedy 242) and vice-versa, most likely due to “the place given rhetoric in education through the centuries, combined with limited opportunities for public speaking and an increased role for writing in society” (3).
(Kennedy 227): rhetoric, serving the ends of poetics, was stripped down to elocution or style.24

The pedagogical reforms of Ramism additionally granted rhetoric a merely ornamental function; by detaching \textit{inventio} or invention— one of the five canons of rhetoric25— from rhetoric and attributing it exclusively to dialectic, Ramism reduced rhetoric’s reign by equating it solely with elocution. However, in re-conceptualizing rhetoric as a theory of argumentation, language philosophers Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca grafted the reductive, Ramist notion of rhetoric as “an art of expression . . . an art of style” (Perelman 3) back onto Aristotle’s original conception of rhetoric as “a practical discipline that aims, not at producing a work of art, but at exerting through speech a \textit{persuasive action} on an audience” (Perelman 5, italics mine). While Perelman’s and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s “New Rhetoric” reintegrates dialectics with rhetoric, the dialectical structure of this “New Rhetoric” rests on non-formal argumentation or discursive logic rather than on the fixed, mathematical process of deduction, abstraction, and the self-evident and necessary truths that characterize formal logic. In other words, Perelman’s and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s rhetorical theory is predicated on argumentation,

24 Northern humanists encountered rhetoric primarily through Cicero, who re-worked and compounded, rather than faithfully translated, Aristotle. Cicero, as Sister Miriam Joseph notes, “subordinated logic to rhetoric” (19-20) and “followed Isocrates rather than Aristotle in emphasizing the graces of style and the value of figures” (20) over \textit{inventio}. Eloquence or \textit{elocutio}, “the art of speaking well” (De Oratore 1, XVIII [80]) or rather, copiously yet wisely, was an “eminent virtue” (De Oratore 3, XIV [52]) for Cicero, and became a Renaissance ideal. While the art of oratory— modelled on Cicero and Quintilian— was preserved in the early modern grammar school, it nevertheless served the purpose of literary composition and stylistics in the classroom. The focus on poetic composition in the upper forms of the grammar school tended to foreground “the choice and arrangement of words in a verse-line, sentence structure, and [ ] embellishment. Interest in content or effect, for example, invention, plot, structure, persuasion, yielded to a concern with verbal forms” (Vickers, “Recovery” 28). Boys were taught to read Latin texts with an eye to extracting rhetorical tropes and schemes into their commonplace books and re-using them in their own compositions. For the place of rhetoric in the early modern grammar school curriculum, see Joseph (8-13), Vickers (Defense 254-268), and T. W. Baldwin’s seminal work, \textit{William Shakespeare’s Small Latine and Lesse Greeke}, in two volumes.

25 The five canons of rhetoric, mentioned by Aristotle, are organized by Cicero in his \textit{De Inventione} (c. 85 B.C.E). Rhetoric encompasses \textit{inventio} or invention (techniques for composing arguments, discovering ideas, or delimiting the subject of the speech); \textit{dispositio} (the arrangement of the argument); \textit{elocutio} (the style and language of delivery, including tropes and schemes); \textit{memoria} (memory, i.e. memorization of the speech to be delivered); and \textit{pronunciatio} (the actual delivery or pronunciation of the speech to the audience, including the orator’s \textit{actio} or gesture).
“the domain of . . . the credible, the plausible, the probable” rather than on the “the certainty of calculations” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1). Argumentation or non-formal reasoning is dialogic; it involves the interaction between orator (speaker) and audience (hearer), and aims “at obtaining or reinforcing the adherence of the audience to some [i.e. the orator’s] thesis, assent to which is hoped for” (Perelman 10) so that “argumentation, unlike demonstration [in formal logic], presupposes a meeting of minds: the will on the part of the orator to persuade and not to compel or command, and a disposition on the part of the audience to listen” (Perelman 11). Audience-oriented for the purpose of achieving “adherence” to the orator’s thesis, argumentation thus relies on the orator’s discursive use of rhetoric to accommodate “the possibility of various reactions, varying decisions” (Vickers, “Recovery” 39); located beyond the realm of demonstrable proofs, rhetoric both drives and responds to the audience’s psychological expectations, exigencies, and desires, all of which allow the orator to “to induce or to increase the mind’s adherence to the theses presented for its assent” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 4). Rhetorical tropes argumentatively used by the orator necessarily involve “inference in their understanding. In Gricean terms, a maxim is flouted and an implicature created” (Dascal and Gross 122). The success of the orator’s argumentation hence relies

26 Perelman, nevertheless, states that the “new” rhetoric is “complementary to formal logic; argumentation [is] complementary to demonstrative proof” (31).

27 The “audience” refers to both a group of listeners or readers, depending on the orator’s medium.

28 In adopting non-formal logical reasoning rather than formal logical reasoning native to dialectics as well as to the current study of logic, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca essentially reject the Cartesian conception of rationality which underlies “the study of the methods of proof used in the mathematical sciences” (Perelman 2) and “start[s] from clear and distinct ideas, extended, by means of apodictic proofs, [to] the self-evidence of the axioms to the derived theorems” (Perelman 1). Formal logical reasoning draws out a hypothesis that is already present in the premise and transmutes it into a conclusion that has general truth value; informal logical reasoning, however, constructs a probabilistic argument whose truth-value is contingent on the audience’s interpretation. As Michel Meyer notes, formal logic is privileged in philosophy since “[t]ruth is convincing ‘as such,’ hence the superiority of any procedure which establishes truth univocally”; informal logic, however, “debates without establishing one conclusion in a decisive and necessary way, and . . . makes acceptance subjective instead of placing it in an objective field” (131).
neither on the argument’s deductive or inductive “correctness” nor on an abstract standard of truth in accordance with which the truth/falsity of the thesis is to be judged, but on the argument’s effectiveness— that is, on its perlocutionary effect as measured by the degree of the audience’s adherence to the thesis.29 As Harold Zyskind states, the power of the New Rhetoric “comes from giving full faith and credit to . . . the ultimacy of speaker and audience, and to their being anchored in the social matrix” (xi). In thus conceiving of a “rhetorical approach to argumentation” (6), Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca reintegrate rhetoric and dialectic to put forth a cognitive theory of rhetoric in which tropes and schemes have argumentative force: style is argumentative-persuasive and not merely expressive of a personal state.30

Nevertheless, the assumption that underlies Perelman’s and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s theory of rhetorical argumentation is that the orator’s intention to persuade his/her audience necessarily coheres with his/her intention to pragmatically communicate— via informal reasoning— his/her argument to the audience. Jesus Larrazabal and Kepa Korta have recently claimed that “the crucial notion of the intention to persuade links rhetoric with pragmatics in a global intentional architecture of individuals, distinguishing and combining at the same time communicative intention and persuasive intention. It is very clear that these two intentions are

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29 As Zyskind aptly puts it, the “audience’s actual judgment is itself the standard of judgment” (x). This judgment depends on inference; deductive or inductive inference are characteristic of formal reasoning whereas, as Zyskind notes, in non-formal reasoning inference is comparative: “and this in a way that again fits justification” e.g., in morals “judgments regarding particulars are compared with principles, for a preferential decision in favour of one or another” (xvi). Rhetoric can persuade without necessarily convincing; the latter pertains to formal logic.

30 Not all tropes and schemes, however, are argumentative. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca note that a trope is “argumentative, if it brings about a change of perspective” (169). A number of contemporary scholars working in the field of dialectics have commented on the relationship between dialectic and rhetoric: Michael Leff believes that dialectic and rhetoric occupy the “opposite ends of argumentation” but “speak to one another in a pattern of call and response” (62), while Erik Krabbe holds that they encompass one another and makes the case for integrating speeches (which traditionally pertain to rhetoric) with dialogue/conversation (the domain of dialectic) (39).
in [sic] different levels” (7, italics mine). Larrazabal and Korta thus propose a “pragma-rhetorical” approach to persuasive discourse that examines “communicative intentions first, and then persuasive intentions” (9) in order to chart their potential difference. Marcelo Dascal and Alan Gross, marrying Gricean pragmatics with Aristotelian rhetoric, agree with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca that persuasion is “a kind of communicative interaction” (109) premised on the audience’s (or hearer’s) ability to correctly infer the intent behind the speaker’s utterance but like Larrazabal and Korta, they also recognize the potential for discrepancies between the speaker’s intention and the hearer’s recognition of that intention; Dascal and Gross acknowledge “the possibility of misdirection and deception” (107) in persuasive discourse. Whereas successful pragmatic communication is premised on the recognition of uptake—on the hearer’s ability to grasp the speaker’s meaning by participating in its (re)construction—“persuasion may depend on the [hearer’s] lack of recognition” of the speaker’s “systematic misdirection” (Dascal and Gross 109) or intent to deceive. As an example, Dascal and Gross offer Searle’s WWII scenario of a British soldier held hostage by an Italian to illustrate their point about how a speaker’s covert intention diverges from his/her overt intention to communicate. The British soldier (speaker), who speaks to his Italian interrogator in German,

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31 Larrazabal and Korta deem that the intention to convince (by argument) is an overt intention; the intention to persuade may either be overt or covert, if the speaker desires to disguise “her real persuasive intention behind her discourse behaviour” in order to achieve a goal (8). Larrazabal and Korta affirm that persuasion is generally “not an overt intention” (7).

32 Larrazabal and Korta do not provide examples.

33 Grice conceives of utterance meaning in the following manner: “A uttered x with the intention of inducing a belief [y] by means of the [hearer’s] recognition of this intention” (qtd. in Dascal and Gross 109).

34 The gist of Dascal and Gross’s re-conceptualization of rhetoric as a Gricean theory of communication can be summarized by the following sentence: “I am engaged in a rhetorical transaction, attempting to persuade you to alter your beliefs, attitudes or actions as a consequence of your recognition of my intent to do so” (112). In other words, they extend “cognitive rhetoric to include not only illocutionary force but also illocutionary uptake and perlocutionary force” (117) by injecting the speaker’s intentionality into the rhetorical equation and by establishing a certain causality between the hearer’s belief and the speaker’s utterance.
wants the Italian (the hearer) to be “persuaded of his German nationality by means of the hearer’s not understanding the speaker’s intention to do so. So the speaker utters [a sentence in German] with the intention of inducing a false belief as to his true intention” (110, italics mine). If the Italian infers that the British soldier is truly a German and releases him, this action (releasing the British POW) is a consequence of the Italian’s recognition of the British soldier’s overt intent to communicate his nationality to the Italian, even though the Italian remains oblivious to the British soldier’s covert intention to deceive him. Since the intention to persuade is intertwined with, as well as distinct from, the intention to communicate, a theory of “pragma-rhetoric”— as Larrazabal and Korta call it (3) and as Dascal and Gross develop it— is a theory of persuasive communication in which “style is construed as a matter of inference” (Dascal and Gross 123). Although I adopt the “pragma-rhetorical” approach originally propounded by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca and subsequently extended by the pragmatists already mentioned, to interpret Henry in light of Dascal and Gross’s distinction between an orator’s (or a speaker’s) apparent and covert intentions would mean falling into the Bradleyan fallacy by alleging that Henry’s Machiavellianism precedes his speech and lies at the core of his identity as a character. Henry, however, is not the innately evil and deceptive

35 Argumentation, an interdisciplinary topic in its own right, is also part of “pragma-dialectics”, a mode of discourse analysis formulated by Frans van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst in Amsterdam in the early 1980s.Pragma-dialectics, which melds together pragmatics and dialectic, examines argumentation as a complex speech act involving two parties who seek to dialogically (or rather, dialectically) “resolve a difference of opinion by means of a methodological exchange of moves in a well-ordered discussion” (Blair 14).Pragma-dialectics assumes that argumentation is rational (Blair 15) and that the aim of argumentation is the interlocutors’ desire to convince each other of the validity of their points; argumentation is thus a normative theory that examines how differences of opinion are resolved and how they coincide with the norms of reasonable discussion. More recently, Frans van Eemeren has combined rhetoric with a pragma-dialectical approach to argumentative discourse to investigate what he calls “strategic manoeuvring”, or how speakers strike a balance between dialectical reasonableness and rhetorical effectiveness in conveying their arguments. For van Eemeren, however, rhetorical effectiveness acts to maintain reasonableness—it does not deviate from it; rhetoric, for him, is thus subordinated to the dialectical enterprise. While pragma-dialectics may be a counterpart to pragma-rhetoric, the former privileges rationality as an expression of intentionality whereas the latter integrates interlocutor responsiveness.
schemer that Marlowe’s Barabas or Shakespeare’s Richard III are. Rather, as I will show, Henry’s Machiavellianism is an effect of his rhetorical performance in tandem with the dramatic irony that the juxtaposition of scenes sets up. Henry’s intention to persuade his audience of his ethos is overt, but the very fact of making this persuasion overt—that is, of rhetorically performing an ethos he does not yet possess in order to legitimate his actions—ironically gives rise to the audience’s sense of his Machiavellianism. Henry’s ethical claims, predicated on merely empty “ceremony” rather than on divine right, are disrupted by the logic of his utterances which reveal his plan to “win” his right and reclaim his legitimacy by invading France.

**Rhetorical Ethos** and its Discontents

As an orator and politician who seeks to persuade his audience, Henry consummately employs the three *pisteis* of persuasion, or what Aristotle would call internal or “artistic”

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36 The Machiavel abides by realpolitik virtù rather than by Christian virtue (although virtù is a notoriously difficult term to define, it can be partially glossed as prowess, martial strength, or ruthlessness). As Niccolò Machiavelli states:

> it is unnecessary for a prince to have all the good qualities [e.g. mercy, faithfulness, humanity, virtue, piety] . . . but it is very necessary to *appear* to have them . . . . that to have them and always to observe them is injurious, and that to *appear* to have them is useful; to appear merciful, faithful, humane, religious, upright, and to be so, but with a mind so framed that should you require not to be so, you may be able and know how to change to the opposite. (The Prince, Ch. XVIII, italics mine)

Since the Machiavel is protean, he is also associated with the early modern actor (see Rackin, *Stages of History* 72-74). Cf. Hugh Grady, who likens Henry’s Machiavellianism to that of Essex during his Irish campaign and claims that this Machiavellianism is consistently “positive”, even though it is undermined by “an implied anti-Machiavellianism” that “constitutes the political unconscious of the play” (*Shakespeare, Machiavelli, Montaigne* 208).

37 There is a distinct difference between Aristotelian and Ciceronian ethos. Whereas Cicero conceives of ethos as *conciliare*, or that which is directed toward creating sympathy on the part of the audience, Aristotle conceives of ethos as *ratio*, or that which is aimed at creating the impression of the orator’s reliability. Cicero’s sympathy-based ethos conjoins the character of the speaker and the audience (Kennedy 114). Cf. Richard Leo Enos and Karen Rossi Schnakenberg’s claim that *conciliare* is not equivalent to Aristotle’s ethos (205), since Cicero’s notion of ethos is comprised of *ingeniun* (eloquence), *prudentia* (prudence), and *diligentia* (intense commitment) (201), all of which produce *conciliare*. I predominantly deal with Aristotelian ethos, in keeping with Perelman’s and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s recovery of the cognitive dimensions of rhetoric.
rhetorical appeals: logos (logic or rational argumentation), pathos (emotional appeal), and ethos (moral character). Ethos, for Aristotle, denotes the “personal character of the speaker” — the orator’s moral and intellectual qualities — which is established discursively rather than with reference to the orator’s past actions or behaviour. Although the Aristotelian orator should appear to be trustworthy, he need not necessarily be so: what is crucial is that the orator establishes the impression of truthfulness and credibility in order to gain the audience’s confidence and compel their belief in the matter of his speech. As Aristotle claims, “[p]ersuasion is achieved by the speaker’s personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others” (Bk. I, ch. 2). The speaker’s construction of his personal character rests on his “appeal to personal authority, sincerity, honesty, [or] anything to convince that [he] has admirable qualities” for the purpose of making the audience “believe [that he is a] good person who can be trusted to tell the truth” (Corbett 67). The grounds for inspiring this belief in the orator’s trustworthiness or reliability are moral character or virtue (arete), good will (eunoia), and good sense or prudence (phronesis), all of which are intricately interwoven: virtue is grounded in the orator’s ability to “gauge society’s [cultural] values” such as “courage, justice, temperance and prudence” and display them in his/her speech (Kinneavy and Warshauer 175); good will rests

38 Van Eemeren notes that a “rhetor means public speaker but also means politician” (66).

39 Aristotle, as Kinneavy and Warshauer note, uses ethos ambiguously: it is, for him, both a “type of rhetorical appeal and the qualities of character that audiences find persuasive” (183).

40 It should be noted that Aristotle’s emphasis on the orator’s appearance of ethos is not Machiavellian in any respect; rhetorical ethos is intertwined with Aristotle’s notion of the Good (see Nan Johnson for a fuller explanation, 101-103). Aristotle’s emphasis on the “appearance” of ethos runs contrary to Cicero’s and Quintilian’s claim that the orator needs to be a good man in order to be a good orator. Aristotle departs from the Platonic and Isocratean tradition of ethics, in which discourse expresses or reveals the speaker’s moral character, which itself incarnates truth (Baumlin xiii). For Aristotle, “discourse becomes an active construction of character — or, rather, of an image, a representation of character” (Baumlin xv).
on the speaker’s ability to identify with his/her audience by demonstrating the prejudices, values, or emotions he shares with them, which bespeaks his good intentions (Kinneavy and Warshauer 176); and prudence, as “moral knowledge and right action”, is the ability to deliberate and make practical decisions, which is buttressed by the speaker’s moral character that directs his/her practical thinking to select an appropriate means to an appropriate end (Kinneavy and Warschauer 179). These three modes of ethical appeal can either be produced directly through statements or anecdotes, or indirectly through pathos, logical proofs, or even style (Kinneavy and Warshauer 180). Although ethos, which focuses exclusively on the speaker, is distinct from logos (which focuses on speech) and pathos (which is concerned with the audience’s reaction), it is nevertheless closely intertwined with both logos and pathos and relies on them for its persuasive force. Ethos and logos in particular, as Eugene Garver notes, are kindred spirits: if ethos is, for Aristotle, the most persuasive mode of appeal, then logos—in the form of an enthymeme (the rhetorical variant of the syllogism in logic)—is the “primary evidence for being persuaded by speech’s ethos” (Garver 195). Logos and ethos are inextricably linked: “if enthymeme is the body of proof, ethos is its soul” (Garver 175). By extension, ethos must not only be consistent with logos but it must also be self-consistent—that is, it must be consistently presented in the orator’s speech: “the whole discourse must

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41 Kinneavy and Warshauer further differentiate between the three modes of ethical appeal by disclosing that arete refers to the speaker, eunoia refers to audience, and phronesis refers to the subject matter (179).

42 For instance, an orator who explicitly states “I have worked as a diplomat for over 20 years” can directly enhance his credibility (his ethos) but he may not necessarily persuade his hearers or obtain the perlocutionary effect of making his audience believe him to be a credible or reliable authority. If, however, the orator combines this statement with an argument that displays his knowledge concerning international relations (logos) or presents this argument in a touching manner (pathos), his ethos would be indirectly strengthened. Logos relies on ethos and pathos as much as ethos relies on pathos and logos; Dascal and Gross deem that logos “is all-pervasive, applying, not only to logical matters, but also to matters of emotion and character” (117).
maintain the ‘image’ that the speaker or writer seeks to establish. Ethical appeal must be pervasive throughout the discourse” (Kennedy 82).

Henry’s ethos, however, is notably inconsistent. Henry discursively presents himself as a pious, wise, merciful, patient, humble, and devout Christian king who abides by Christian law and sues for peace, as well as one who collapses social hierarchy to befriend and toil alongside his countrymen, but this public image is consistently destabilized by his deviant logos—his reasoning or argumentation, though not necessarily in the form of an enthymeme—that neither promulgates nor complements the ethos he presents. Despite Henry’s claims to value truth, peace, and piety (in his speech to Canterbury and Ely), loyalty and obedience (in his exchange with his three lords), and plainness, honesty, and humbleness as a soldier (in his wooing of Catherine), his logic shatters the ethos he so carefully carves out for himself.

In his opening scene with Ely and Canterbury, Henry’s rhetorically crafted ethos is undercut by his performative use of modal verbs which reveal a mode of reasoning that is dissonant with his assumed Christian virtue: the modal verbs communicate Henry’s intent to wage war against France under the pretext of persuading his interlocutors of his virtuous disdain for the same. Henry establishes his ethos directly in his opening monologue. Soliciting the advice of his “learnèd” (1.2.9) and religious counsellors before making a decision about

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43 Henry, in calling himself a warrior “for the working day” (4.3.110), effectuates the sympathy of his countrymen by displaying his solidarity with them. In his St. Crispin’s day speech, in which he groups himself with his soldiers (“We few, we happy few, we band of brothers” [4.3.60]), Henry democratically alters the royal “we” into a communal “we”. Sister Miriam Joseph holds that “[i]t is chiefly [Henry’s] plainness and lowliness which make him lovable and help to make him great” (280).

44 Erasmus’s The Education of a Christian Prince and Chelidonius Tigurinis’s Of the Institution and Firste Beginning of Christian Princes outline the qualities and duties of a Christian humanist king. Tigurinis holds that kings “ought too indeuer . . . to shew themselves towards their subiects, as [God] hath done hymselfe towards his. This is the true Mirror and purtraicte whereby they shoulde frame their actions and order their lyves” (qtd. in Del Vecchio 37-38). The Christian king should not only imitate God but should also be an exemplar or model of Christian behaviour to his people; he should possess “wisdom, zeal, goodness, moderation, affability, placability, and understanding” (plus bounty, mercy, devotion, patience, courage) (qtd. in Del Vecchio 85).
war—which in itself exhibits his *phronesis*—Henry invokes God in his warning to Canterbury that the latter speak the “truth” in “justly and religiously” (10) unfolding the reasoning behind the Salic Law so as to prevent the outbreak of war:

> And God forbid, my dear and faithful lord,
> That you should fashion, wrest, or bow your reading,
> Or nicely charge your understanding soul
> With opening titles miscreate, whose right
> Suits not in native colours with the truth. (1.2.13-17)

In calling for an ethical and Neoplatonic correspondence between word (*verba*) and thing (*res*) or between “right” and “truth”, Henry implies his allegiance and obedience to a higher moral order, which directly underlines his *arete* or virtue; a legal right to the French crown should correspond to a moral right.\(^{45}\) In further warning Canterbury not to “awake our sleeping sword of war” (22) and not to make “such waste in brief mortality” (28) that would spill the “guiltless drops” (25) of both the English and French forces, Henry underlines his morality, his principled and peace-loving character, and his justness or good will (*eunoia*) in equally proclaiming the innocence of both the French and the English and in recognizing the brevity and sacredness of a life that should tend toward achieving virtuous ends. Henry’s performative use of modals, however, undermines this ethos by calling into question his very prudence, virtue, and good will. Henry’s urging Canterbury to tell the truth, which is a seemingly virtuous warning in God’s name, immediately segues into anticipating a hypothetical war by

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\(^{45}\) Henry’s question to Canterbury following the latter’s excursus on the Salic Law (“May I with right and conscience make this claim?” [1.2.96]) conflates legal right with moral right. This equivocation on “right” renders Henry’s injunction to Canterbury that the latter avoid “titles miscreate” absurd, for if these titles are morally right, then they are also already true. Even as he poses the question, Henry decides the matter.
way of *descriptio*,\(^{46}\) which ends up colouring Henry’s request or warning to Canterbury as a promise: “For God doth know how many now in health/ Shall drop their blood in approbation/ Of what your reverence shall incite us to” (1.2.18-20). The brief *descriptio*, which delves into the potential outcome of a hypothetical war, is notable for the double presence of the modal verb “shall”. Modality, whether expressed by inflexion, by modal adverbs (e.g. “possibly” or “probably”), or by modal verbs such as will, shall, may, can, must, or ought, denotes “the speaker’s attitude to the propositional content of a statement” (Görlach 112). Modal verbs refer to future events and can be either epistemic or deontic: epistemic modality indicates that the modal verb expresses the speaker’s knowledge, belief or opinion (i.e. his/her judgment) about a proposition, whereas deontic modality expresses the necessity or possibility of acts performed by a morally responsible agent (Görlach 20). In other words, epistemic modality informs while deontic modality is *performative* in the Austinian sense— the latter “acts” out the speaker’s illocutionary intentions. The sentence “He may come tomorrow”, for instance, can suggest the *possibility* of an arrival (epistemic) or it can denote that the speaker is permitting someone’s arrival (deontic). However, modality and tense may easily overlap. The first modal “shall” in Henry’s pronouncement (“For God doth know . . . shall drop their blood”) bears an epistemic modality of belief as well as prediction (“shall” as a future tense), which suggests that it is only God who knows the consequences of the action that Canterbury will urge: only God will know “how many” (or how few) will die and whether Canterbury’s urging is just or unjust. The “shall” is thus a declaration or an “assertive” speech act à la Searle (see Görlach 114). However, the second “shall” in Henry’s pronouncement (“Of what your reverence shall incite us to”) bears a deontic modality which signifies obligation or permission.

\(^{46}\) Although *descriptio* is the equivalent of *enargia* or “vivid description”, Gideon Burton notes that the unknown author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* qualifies *descriptio* by specifying that it “contains an exposition of the consequences of an act” (*Silva Rhetoricae*).
The rules for using modal verbs deontically are prescribed by the Wallis rules. Formulated by bishop John Wallis in 1653 to delineate the proper usage of “shall” and “will”, the Wallis rules, according to Leslie Arnovick, teach a speaker how to perform illocutionary acts or “how to do things” (Arnovick 9) with “will” and “shall” in “certain declarative and interrogative sentences” (1). The Wallis rules are, essentially and formally, “a sophisticated system for expressing speaker attitude in utterances” (170). The normative rules delineate that the verbs “will” in the first person and “shall” in the second and third person singular and plural signify the agent’s “volition” or his/her threat, promise, or command; inversely, “shall” in the first person as well as “will” in the second and third person singular and plural signifies prediction or expectation. Rather than adhere to the Wallis rules by using the predictive “will” as his second modal verb (i.e. “For God doth know how many now in health/ Shall drop their blood in approbation/ Of what your reverence will incite us to”), Henry instead uses the deontic “shall”, which demonstrates that he is in fact promising Canterbury that the latter’s counsel will be staunchly adhered to and that his countrymen will be obliged to “drop their blood” as urged, under the pretext of the descriptio offered as a warning to Canterbury. Henry, in thus giving his word to Canterbury that war will occur as a necessary consequence of what Canterbury commands, creates a conversational implicature in promising war by providing a

47 The impetus behind the formulation of the Wallis rules was Wallis’s desire to minimize the confusion between “will” and “shall” as future constructions in modern English: “It is difficult for foreigners to know when to use the first form and when the second (we do not use both interchangeably), and no other description that I have seen has given any rules for guidance, so I thought I ought to give some; if these rules are observed they will prevent any mistakes being made” (qtd. in Arnovick 2). The Wallis rules were later codified and enhanced by eighteenth-century grammarians William Ward (1765) and Robert Lowth (1762). While the use of the Wallis rules may seem anachronistic, Arnovick’s work illustrates that the rules are historically grounded in early modern English and late middle English utterances; she concludes that deontic futurity was “more predominant than epistemic futurity” (169) in early modern English but that in modern English, modality is “an expression of futurity” rather than of speaker attitude (170).
warning or request to *avoid* war at all costs. The second “shall” of Henry’s warning, moreover, can also be read as a command that Canterbury urge war in the process of unfolding the prohibitive measures of the Salic Law. But regardless of whether Henry’s second “shall” is interpreted as a promise or as a command, these two speech acts of commanding and promising demonstrate that Henry “does” something with his verbs.

The indeterminacy of shall/will suggests that Henry has already made his decision to invade France despite the counsel he is about to receive from Canterbury. The dramatic irony framing Henry’s use of deontic modal verbs invites the audience to infer his Machiavellianism by illustrating that war, under the aegis of what “God doth know”, is a foregone or predetermined conclusion. In 1.1, the conversation between the devious Ely and Canterbury suggests that Henry accepts the bishops’ bribe to not pass a parliamentary bill in order to obtain the clergy’s financial support for his war; in response to Canterbury’s offer “[a]s touching France, to give a greater sum/ Than ever at one time the clergy yet/ Did to [Henry’s] predecessors part withal” (1.1.79-82), Canterbury reports that Henry “seems indifferent,/ Or rather swaying more upon our part” (1.1.73-74). The possibility of Henry’s complicity with the clergy not only renders his sudden “reformation” (34) questionable and undermines his studious virtue which is praised by Canterbury (“Consideration like an angel came/ .... / Leaving his body as a paradise/ T’envelop and contain celestial spirits” [1.1.29-32]) but also makes it seem as if Henry’s anti-war rhetoric in 1.2 is a form of public display used to promote his Christian ethos and to thus justify war. In this case, it would appear that Henry abides by Machiavelli’s dictate that a prince “ought to have no other aim or thought, nor select anything else for his study, than war and its rules and discipline” (*The Prince*, Ch. XIV); Henry’s own

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48 As explained in Chapter 1, a conversational implicature occurs when a speaker implies (or “implicates”) an additional or different meaning apart from the conventional meaning of the words in his/her utterance.
father, Henry IV, also advises his son in *2 Henry IV* “to busy giddy minds/ With foreign quarrels, that action hence borne out/ May waste the memory of the former days” (4.3.341-343). As a result, the logical cues in Henry’s monologue which serve to promote his cause of peace and thereby his ethos—such as the adverb “therefore” in “therefore take heed how you impawn our person./ How you awake our sleeping sword of war” (21-22), which directly follows Henry’s warning to Canterbury—prove ironic for they logically contradict his pragmatically-revealed motive to invade France. Henry’s performative or deontic “shall”, embedded in a hypothetical *descriptio* overseen by God, reveals that Henry’s reasoning or operating logic may be one of self-interest as he relegates the responsibility for the war onto the Archbishop in order to absolve himself of guilt as he intends for Canterbury’s speech to justify his actions to invade France. The unchristian logic underpinning Henry’s use of modals undermines the virtue, good judgment, and good will that serve as pillars of his ethos, for Henry’s intent to persuade against war belies the decision to wage war, which countermands the religious doctrines and principles that Henry preaches.

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49 The difference, of course, is that Henry IV was a true Machiavel; his advice to his son is grounded in his own intention to lead his men into a crusade so as to divert attention away from his usurpation of the throne.

50 In 1.2, Henry reinforces the responsibility he places on the bishops by paraphrasing Ely’s and Canterbury’s injunctions to him in his speech to his soldiers at Harfleur. For instance, Ely and Canterbury rouse Henry to invade France by using pathos; Canterbury claims that Henry is the scion of a mighty stalk who needs to resurrect and graft this past onto his present form: “look back into your mighty ancestors…/…/invoke his warlike spirit./ And your great-uncle’s, Edward the Black Prince” (1.2. 102, 104-5). Ely states likewise: “Awake remembrance of those valiant dead/ And with your puissant arm renew their feats./ You are their heir, you sit upon their throne”(1.2.115-117). Using different words that nevertheless retain the same message, Henry urges his men to glorify their ancestors by glorifying themselves in battle: “On, on, you noblest English,/ Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof” (3.1.18) and again: “Dishonour not your mothers; now attest/ That those whom you called fathers did beget you” (22-23). As Henry is urged to “rouse [him]self/ As did the former lions of [his] blood” (1.2. 123-4) by Exeter, Henry in turn tries to rouse his soldiers via pathos to “imitate the action of the tiger” (6). In such a manner, Henry distances himself from being complicit in the impending crime of war.

51 Erasmus deems that “the good Christian prince should hold under suspicion every war, no matter how just” (252). Although I do not examine Ely’s and Canterbury’s speeches, their pro-war arguments constitute logical fallacies. Henry’s unquestioning acceptance of the bishops’ arguments indirectly dismantles his prudence or *phronesis*, and casts a shadow over his credibility. At the same time, Ely’s and Canterbury’s fallaciously
Canterbury to observe the Gricean maxim of quality (“do not say what you believe to be false; do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence”) in his injunction (1.2.13-17), Henry himself breaks his own maxim by revealing that what he says has no direct, ethical correlation to the “native colours” of the “truth”. What Henry pragmatically “does” with his modal verbs countermands the persuasive efficacy of his rhetorical ethos rather than reinforces it.

In a similar vein, the deontic modal verb “will”, which triggers another promise (1.2.30-32), appears to work in accordance with the analogy it introduces in order to persuade Henry’s audience of his ethos even as the modal verb and the analogy actually destabilize Henry’s ethos by revealing his political praxis. In telling Canterbury that “we will hear, note, and believe in heart/ That what you speak is in your conscience washed/ As pure as sin with baptism” (30-32) after urging him to speak the truth, Henry uses the deontic modal “will” in accordance with the Wallis rules to perform the speech act of a promise. However, this promise is not only rendered suspect since it fails to fulfill Searle’s felicity conditions, but it is also aggravated by an analogy which logically undermines the terms of the promise. According to language philosopher John Searle, there are four conditions that must be fulfilled in order for a promise to be “felicitous” or to be an illocution: the propositional condition (the speaker’s uttering of the promise predicates his/her future action—hereafter referred to as X), the preparatory condition (the hearer prefers that the speaker will do X rather than not do X, and the promise is uttered only if it is not obvious to both speaker and hearer that the speaker will do X in the normal course of events), the sincerity condition (the promise is uttered if the speaker fully intends to do X), and the essential condition (the utterance of the promise places structured arguments make the audience question their credibility as bishops as well as renders ironic their praise of Henry as a “true lover of the holy Church” (1.1.24).
the speaker under an obligation to carry out X). Henry’s promise, however, does not fulfill the preparatory condition for it is clearly not the case that Canterbury would “prefer” that Henry does X— that is, “believe in heart” Canterbury’s pronouncement— since the course of events regarding the war with France, as evidenced in (1.1.73-82), has already been decided and Canterbury has nothing to gain from this impending pronouncement at the moment at which Henry makes it. Moreover, granted that Henry is, as he claims, a virtuous and prudent Christian king, it would be obvious to both Henry (speaker) and Canterbury (hearer) that the “speaker will do X in the normal course of events” and wisely heed the Archbishop’s counsel without the need of making explicit his intention to do so. Due to flouting Searle’s preparatory condition, Henry’s promise comes across as unnecessary, superfluous, and even defiant of Grice’s maxim of quantity (if the maxim is to be used as a pragmatic standard) in the sense that Henry provides more information than is necessary.

Henry’s promise, rather, is a means of flattering Canterbury by paying homage to his greatness, which in turn serves to indirectly buoy up Henry’s humility and eunoia.

The promise, however, is coupled with an analogy that demolishes Henry’s image of piety and beneficence even as it intends to shore it up. In Gricean terms, Henry’s analogical comparison breaks the maxim of manner (be clear, brief, and orderly) since “as pure as sin with baptism” is an ambiguous phrase and ambiguity is a logical fallacy, according to Aristotle,

52 Adapted from Searle’s Speech Acts: an Essay in the Philosophy of Language.

53 Grice’s maxim of quantity reads: “Be as informative as possible; provide only as much information as necessary”.

54 Although the analogy, in this instance, is clearly a simile, the analogy in ancient rhetoric has argumentative force whereas the simile does not. Since the simile is functionally argumentative here, I classify it as an analogy. Perelman calls the analogy a “condensed metaphor” (92). However, not all metaphors are argumentative analogies: “metaphors can only be classified as arguments from figurative analogies if they are used as argumentative utterances and the speaker wants to prove a controversial standpoint” (Garssen and Kienpointner 40).
that detracts from the argumentative weight of logos. Although the analogy refers to the religious sacrament of baptism— which is a significant nod toward Henry’s virtue as it is indicative of Henry’s obligation to, or recognition of, Canterbury’s ethos to which he appeals as a precondition for acting upon Canterbury’s word— it misfires. Henry appears to be saying that he will believe that Canterbury’s speech is clean, sober, and a direct reflection of his innermost thoughts, which are subservient to his good conscience (i.e. the “god” within); in other words, that the impurity of his thoughts are “baptised” or cleansed by his conscience and by the dictates of moral wisdom. But Henry’s intent to persuade the audience of his good ethos via his promise to Canterbury gives rise to a deviant meaning. Evidenced by the contradiction inherent to the phrase “as pure as sin”, the analogy reveals that Henry is proclaiming that sinful or untruthful speech may become “good” when washed (baptized) within one’s own conscience; what is bad can become good when it is self-justified. These discrepant meanings play off of the bifurcated connotations of “conscience”. Conscience, according to Camille Slights, can be defined as “moral self-awareness” and is a locus where “the obligations of obedience and authority of personal judgment converge” (41). Thus, although Henry tells (promises) Canterbury that he will believe the matter of his speech, since Canterbury obeys a transcendent moral authority (God) that is incarnated in his personal conscience, Henry is also insinuating that Canterbury follow the dictates of a self-authorized personal judgment which owes allegiance to Henry as the supreme monarch. The analogy, employed to persuade Henry’s interlocutors of his Christian ethos, is logically undermined by its argumentative force, which substitutes God’s authority for Henry’s. Henry’s promise— intended to persuade— also

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55 According to Aristotle, ambiguity in language constitutes a “material fallacy”, or a “fallacy that vitiates an argument which on the surface appears to be formally correct” (Joseph 367). A material fallacy, according to Aristotle, can also arise from a hidden assumption or ambiguity in language (Joseph 368); equivocation, as Joseph notes, is a common material fallacy.
serves as a silent behest to Canterbury which, framed as it is by the audience’s suspicion of Henry’s complicity with the bishops, evokes the sense of Henry’s scheming and a deviousness that equals that of the bishops. The communicative and persuasive dimensions of Henry’s rhetoric fail to coalesce and thus render him morally ambiguous.

Not only do Henry’s modal verbs and verbal equivocations serve to undo his ethos, but his use of analogies as a means of persuasive argumentation strongly undercut the direct, constative statements with which he builds his ethos.\(^{56}\) Henry’s retort to the French ambassador that “We are no tyrant, but a Christian king./ Unto whose grace our passion is as subject/ As is our wretches fettered in our prisons” (1.2.241-43) is meant to highlight his Christian clemency, temperance, and self-restraint in reigning in his irrational passions and rendering them subservient to his good will; this benign image is intended to persuade the French ambassador to freely divulge the Dauphin’s message “with frank and with uncurbèd plainness” (1.2.243) without the fear of Henry’s potentially irate response. The analogy, however, undoes the logical reasoning that ought to support Henry’s ethos. While subjecting passionate emotions to the exercise of grace may be virtuous, the vehicle of the analogy or what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tytcya call the theme (i.e. “our wretches fettered in our prisons”) suggests the action of a tyrant who is anything but an exemplar of temperance, which thus overturns Henry’s claim to Christian benevolence. Henry compares his passions or private affections to “wretches” who are fettered in the “prisons” of his grace; Henry’s subjection of the “wretches” is presupposed to be equivalent to his ability to control his passions. However, the comparison between prison and grace fails for, according to the OED, grace signifies “favourable or benignant regard or its

\(^{56}\) Perelman and Olbrechts-Tytcya explain the argumentative structure of the analogy in the following manner: “A is to B as C is to D” (372). This is the form that Henry’s analogy takes. However, analogies can also be comprised of three terms (“B is to A as C is to B” [375], or “A is to B as A is to C” [376]). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tytcya, however, claim that the analogy is “an unstable means of argument” (393).
manifestation . . .; favour or goodwill, in contradistinction to right or obligation, as the ground of a concession” (OED 6a) as well as “pardon or forgiveness” (OED 15a). Grace thus does not “fetter” but rather liberates; Henry’s illiberal grace, however, contradicts this spiritual conception of divine favour or grace and reveals his re-translation of it. The illocutionary force of his argumentative analogy detracts from rather than complements Henry’s constative statement that he is a merciful Christian king and instead reveals his manipulation of virtue and his tyrannous exercise of power to expediently justify a rule which lacks divinely sanctioned authority. This illogical coupling between phoros and theme or tenor and vehicle destabilizes Henry’s proclaimed benevolence and goodwill and underlines instead his power, to which all must submit if he is to command authority and “win” his right. This particular analogy reflects the vacuity of Henry’s “either/or” construction when he vows to “bend” France “to our awe,/ Or break it all to pieces” (1.2.224-225). While the either/or construction suggests choice (albeit a fallaciously dialectical one) as evidenced in Henry’s speech to Canterbury whom he urges to explain “[w]hy the Salic that they have in France/ Or should or should not bar us in our claim” (11-12), there is obviously no choice between “bending” or “breaking” France to Henry’s and thus England’s will since both are indicative of subordination. This false choice presented by Henry just prior to his analogy renders his claim to not be a “tyrant” highly ironic.

The irony that informs the analogy is additionally compounded by Canterbury’s and the Chorus’ praise of Henry, which hint at his calculation and cruelty. Although Canterbury praises Henry as a sinless, second Adam, he also praises Henry’s skilfulness as an orator and reveals his power to seduce his auditors: “List his discourse of war, and you shall hear/ A fearful battle rendered you in music” (1.1.44-45). If Henry can “bend” France to his “awe”, he can

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57 Whereas Cleopatra ravishes the sight of her audiences, Henry ravishes their ears. Canterbury states that:
certainly also admirably “bend” his own awe-filled countrymen to his will in order to promulgate his cause. However, Canterbury’s allusion to Alexander the Great throws a Machiavellian shadow over Henry. Commending Henry’s political savvy, Canterbury boasts that Henry is superior to Alexander: “Turn him to any cause of policy,/ The Gordian knot of it he will unloose,/ Familiar as his garter” (1.1.46-48). Notwithstanding the possibility that Canterbury’s allusion may intend, as Judith Mossman notes, to set Henry up “as a more virtuous version of Alexander” (63) by highlighting his ability to “unloose” or unravel the knot that Alexander could not (the latter resorted to “cheating” [61]), the allusion inadvertently implies Henry’s cunning and cruelty as a ruler by allegorically associating him with the proverbially cruel Alexander who, according to two different accounts of the Gordian knot episode, either removes the shaft of the knot or cuts through the knot (Spencer 169). The physical violence of the second account that is latent in Canterbury’s allusion, which is also reinforced by the Chorus’ praise of the military prowess of a “warlike Henry” (Prologue 5) who bears the “port of Mars” (Prologue 6), underscores the aggression and desire for domination that underwrite Henry’s faulty analogy and renders his ethical claims ironic.

When he speaks,
The air, a chartered libertine, is still,
And the mute wonder lurketh in men’s ears
To steal his sweet and honeyed sentences. (1.1.48-51)

In suggesting Henry’s glorification of war (he turns a gruesome “battle” into the pleasant sound of “music”), Canterbury’s quote highlights the myth-making enterprise shared by both the King and the Chorus. See Lawrence Danson for a discussion of the parallels between the Chorus and Henry.

58 Mossman bases her favourable view of Henry on the word “unloose” which, as she claims, “stresses the ease and smoothness of Henry’s politics, implying perhaps that Henry is more politically accomplished than Alexander” (61), even as she claims that the comparison between Alexander and Henry “has the potential for equal polyvalency” (63). Janet Spencer, however, claims that Canterbury “suppresses the guile of the one version [of the Gordian knot episode] and the violence of the other” (169) through his gloss (i.e. “unloose”). Alexander’s wiliness and physical aggression, nonetheless, ironically emerge through this “suppression”. The remaining allusions to Alexander in the play tend to disclose Henry’s cruelty which, in turn, makes his rhetoric seem manipulative. Canterbury, like the Chorus, is a historiographer in his own right who marginalizes Henry’s vices to emphasize and laud his virtues.
Erasmus’ question seems particularly relevant—as well as uncannily addressed—to Henry: “You have allied yourself with Christ—and yet you will slide back into the ways of Julius and Alexander the Great?” (153).

Henry’s counter-challenges or threats to the Dauphin, peppered with promises of revenge, further suggest his aggression and undercut his image as a Christian king as much as his seemingly virtuous promises do. In his speech to the French ambassador in 1.2, Henry claims that he will “keep [his] state,/ Be like a king, and show [his] sail of greatness” (273-4) and “rise . . . with so full a glory/ That [he] will dazzle all the eyes of France,/ Yea strike the Dauphin blind to look on us” (278-80). This promise, in keeping with the Wallis rules, is closely related to Henry’s threat to the Dauphin that “his soul/ Shall stand sore charged for the wasteful vengeance/ That shall fly from them [i.e. cannonballs]” (282-4). Motivated to requite revenge with revenge rather than abstain from war altogether and show clemency, Henry’s claims to be a merciful monarch are quickly undermined by this show of force, which brings to the fore Machiavelli’s dictum that it is “much safer to be feared than loved” for fear “preserves” the ruler’s power “by a dread of punishment which never fails” (The Prince, Ch. XVII).59 Many of Henry’s promises and threats, which characterize his utterances, are conditional on God’s grace. Right after making the above-mentioned promises and threats, Henry renders these performative utterances conditional: “But this all lies within the will of God,/ To whom I do appeal, and in whose name/ Tell you the Dauphin I am coming on” (289-

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59 Erasmus: “the tyrant strives to be feared, the king to be loved” (164). Depending on how the actor chooses to speak these lines, Henry’s utterances may convey his rage, which would thus also undercut his claim to temperance and self-restraint. Erasmus deems that the ruler should be governed by reason rather than passion: “God is swayed by no emotions, yet he rules the universe with supreme judgment. The prince should follow His example in all his actions, cast aside all personal motives, and use only reason and judgment” (159).
Henry suggests that his militancy and heroism as a soldier, as well as his moral rectitude as a Christian monarch, are premised on his obedience to God’s laws since the conditionality illustrates that Henry’s agency is subordinate to God’s. However, as Henry’s uncomfortable analogy above indicates and as his rallying cries for vengeance—rather than mercy—illustrate, his ethos-building promises are empty gestures that disclose an appropriation of religious concepts and doctrines to legitimate his decision to go to war and gain the French throne. As “Henry’s agency becomes correspondingly elusive on an increasingly public stage” (Kezar 450), God is used to veil his policies and actions.

Although the discrepancy between Henry’s ethos and logos renders him morally dubious, he is nevertheless successful in persuading his interlocutors of his Christian ethos. Henry persuades Scrope, Cambridge, and Grey to confess to the crime of treason: his speech achieves both the illocutionary effect of accusation and a complementary, perlocutionary effect of causing repentance, since the three lords infer Henry’s intended meaning correctly and are moved to pitifully confess their complicity in plotting to overthrow the king. However, given that Henry has already been acquainted with the treasonous plot, as Gloucester reveals to the audience (“The King hath note of all that they intend,/ By interception which they dream not of” [2.2.6-7]), the goal of Henry’s argumentative-persuasive speech is not the lords’ confession;

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60 And again: “We will in France, by God’s grace, play a set/ Shall strike his father’s crown into the hazard” (1.2. 263-264).

61 The Chorus’ glorification of Henry’s heroic war is deflated by the Eastcheap subplots, particularly by Nim’s and Pistol’s skirmish over Hostess Quickly (2.1). The scene, juxtaposed against the tennis ball incident, ironically comments on Henry’s skirmish with the Dauphin: not only does Pistol’s “theft” of Quickly from Nim reflect Henry’s attempt to steal France (which is figured in feminine terms throughout the play) from the Dauphin, but Pistol’s impetuosity and fiery rage (particularly his warning to Nim: “I can take, and Pistol’s cock is up,/ And flashing fire will follow” [2.1.46-47]) is reminiscent of Henry’s threat to turn the Dauphin’s balls into “gunstones”. Pistol, thus, also renders Henry’s claims to temperance and self-restraint doubtful. Pistol’s desire to profit from the war (“For I shall sutler be/ Unto the camp, and profits will accrue” [2.1.100-101]) could additionally suggest that Henry’s impending invasion of France is motivated by personal gain.

62 In Austin’s terms, there is a successful “uptake” of the illocution by the three lords.
instead, Henry wishes to exact his authority over the accused in order to ignite their admiration of him by performing his ethos as a divinely anointed monarch. Henry’s use of Biblical allusion as well as the analogy, his two preferred methods of logos, indirectly reassert rather than detract from his carefully crafted ethos as a Christian monarch. However, Henry nevertheless terminates the scene with a logical fallacy that doubles back to dismantle his image as a pious monarch. Henry presents himself to his lords as an honest, Christian king who embodies the arete and eunoia that constitute ethos. He underlines his disbelief regarding Scrope’s betrayal by asking Scrope a rhetorical question: “May it be possible that foreign hire/ Could out of thee extract one spark of evil/ That might annoy my finger?” (2.2.97-99). This innocent question is followed by Henry’s confessed incomprehension of the betrayal (“‘Tis so strange/ That though the truth of it stands off as gross/ As black on white, my eye will scarcely see it” [2.2.99-101]), which additionally foregrounds the degree of his faith and trust in Scrope’s character, the virtue and purity of which have metaphorically blinded him to the news of treason (i.e. the “black” crime that sullies Cambridge’s white character). The use of anaphora in: “Thou that didst bear the key of all my counsels, /That knew’st the very bottom of my soul,/ That almost mightst ha’ coined me into gold” (93-95) highlights Henry’s astonishment and his difficulty (or unwillingness) in coming to terms with the crime. The foregoing underscore Henry’s all-encompassing benevolence or good will (eunoia) toward his men, whom he has taken into his bosom and for whose sins he promises to lament or “weep” (137). Henry, moreover, reinforces his arete (virtue) by a Biblical analogy in which he compares the three fallen lords to prelapsarian Adams who have been tempted by a “cunning fiend/ That wrought upon [them] so preposterously” (108-109). Their revolt is compared to “another fall of man” (139) for they are “duped” or deceived. The analogy is argumentative
since it is an enthymeme which can be expressed as: the lords are fallen Adams because they were tempted by the devil to commit a crime.\textsuperscript{63} The analogy, however, attenuates the severity of their crime by attributing the cause of treason to temptation rather than to any ill-will on the lords’ part; Henry’s goodness appears to salvage the lords’ reputable characters.

The analogy leads to \textit{enargia} or a vivid description of the fictional consequences of the temptation from the perspective of the devils in Hell. The \textit{enargia} denotes Henry’s rhetorical tactic of “presence” which, according to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, “makes present, by verbal magic, what is actually absent but what [one] considers important to [one’s] argument . . . or to enhance the value of some of the elements of which one has . . . been made conscious” (117).\textsuperscript{64} Henry succeeds in (re)creating this presence of the Biblical Fall by allusions to Tartarus, the personification of treason and murder as two “yoke-devils” (103-4), hypothetical description as \textit{hypotyposis},\textsuperscript{65} and direct dialogue on behalf of the devil tempter so as to directly affect his hearers’ sensibilities and move them toward confession, all the while reinforcing his rhetorical ethos:

\begin{quote}
Treason and murder ever kept together,  
As two yoke-devils sworn to either’s purpose,  
Working so grossly in a natural cause  
That admiration did not whoop at them;  

And whatsoever cunning fiend it was  
That wrought upon thee so preposterously
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{63} An enthymeme is a “conclusion coupled with a reason” (\textit{Silvae Rhetoricae}): the conclusion (the lords are fallen Adams) is appended to a reason (because they are tempted or “duped” by the devil).

\textsuperscript{64} Presence is also the tactic confidently used by Henry in his Harfleur speech, where he vividly depicts the ravage he could potentially cause in France (3.3.78-120).

\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Enargia} is the general term for vivid description; it is subdivided into specific rhetorical devices. \textit{Hypotyposis} is one of these specific rhetorical devices which, called “counterfeit representation” by Puttenham, seems to evoke a person, place, or thing so strongly that this person, place, or thing is actually thought to be visually seen and felt rather than just verbally understood.
Hath got the voice in hell for excellence.
And other devils that suggest by treasons
Do botch and bungle up damnation
With patches, colours, and with forms, being fetched
From glist’ring semblances of piety;
But he that tempered thee, bade thee stand up,
Gave thee no instance why thou shouldst do treason,
Unless to dub thee with the name of traitor.
If that same demon that hath gulled thee thus
Should with his lion gait walk the whole world,
He might return to vasty Tartar back
And tell the legions, ‘I can never win
A soul so easy as that Englishman’s’. (2.2.102-122)

By thus deploying various rhetorical strategies to create presence and by comparing his men to fallen Adams, Henry not only underlines his arete but also writes himself in as God. The anaphoric “Why so didst thou”, which is juxtaposed against the “Thou that” anaphora (93-5) of Henry’s disbelief, along with the enumerated rhetorical questions that attend them and highlight the extent of the lords’ infamy,\(^{66}\) becomes accusatory as Henry fashions himself into an authoritative judge carrying out the verdict of his men’s guilt:

Show men dutiful?
Why so didst thou. Seem they grave and learned?
Why so didst thou. Come they of noble family?
Why so didst thou. Seem they religious?
Why so didst thou . . . (2.2.124-127)

The anaphora, marking the end of Henry’s use of presence to pathetically\(^{67}\) elicit the lords’ repentance, emphasizes not only the lords’ crimes but also Henry’s sense of his betrayal and

\(^{66}\) The series of questions that tailgate each instance of anaphoric repetition instantiate epiplexis or percontatio, which can be defined as: “accusations and reprehensions, asking questions not in order to know but to chide or reprehend” (Joseph 256).

\(^{67}\) i.e. in the service of pathos.
thus his condemnation of his men, the resoluteness and finality of which mirrors the persistent repetition of “Why so didst thou”. However, the image of Henry as a righteous God who doles out justice that is produced by this anaphora to buoy up his Christian ethos is ironic since Henry is guilty of exactly what he accuses the lords of doing. Henry deceives the lords at the beginning of the scene when he dangles his supposed pardon of a drunken man’s raillery against his royal person in front of the lords and makes them condemn themselves; their “own reasons turn into [their] bosoms./ As dogs upon their master, worrying [them]” (79-80). In granting the lords the authority to accuse themselves by accusing the drunken man, Henry makes the lords responsible for their own fates, much in the same way that he grants the Archbishop the authority to determine whether or not to wage war against the French and thus renders him responsible for the actions he counsels (1.2.21-23). Henry thus enacts the role of the tempter or devil through what he “does” with his words, which contradict the virtuous public image of an honest and sincere king that these very words create for he entraps the lords by their own logic in offering them a choice and deceives them as they unwittingly exercise their agency to condemn Henry’s pardon for the drunken man.

Since the audience is aware that Henry already knows of the lords’ treason prior to confronting them, as Gloucester’s, Exeter’s, and Westmorland’s opening discussion suggests (2.2.1-11), Henry’s ethos comes across as a performance of Christian virtue to consolidate his power by maximizing adherence to his ethos through pathos. Moreover, the Eastcheap scenes which immediately frame Henry’s accusation of the lords attest to a dramatic irony that makes the audience question the

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68 This deflection of personal responsibility is also evidenced in Henry’s continual relegation of his power to God.

69 In presenting the lords with a supposedly free choice regarding mercy or punishment vis-à-vis the drunken man, Henry shows that the choice of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is predicated on damnation. The Machiavel is commonly referred to as a devil in Elizabethan drama.
impression that Henry is a morally upright sovereign. The Hostess’s remark in 2.1 that “[t]he King has killed [Falstaff’s] heart” (2.1.79), along with her description of the fat knight’s death (2.3.9-33) and Pistol’s grief over the same, foreground Henry’s cold-hearted and calculated rejection of Falstaff in 2 Henry IV to demonstrate that Henry is, ironically, guilty of a similar disloyalty of which he accuses his lords: just as the lords sever their allegiance to the king and sell themselves to France for personal gain, Henry cuts off his loyal friend Falstaff to fulfill his obligations as king, but the comparison also hints that Henry may be motivated by profit. If Henry’s betrayers are betrayed by him, then Falstaff’s death similarly betrays Henry as a betrayer. Henry’s accusation of the lords thus ironically ends up implicating Henry himself in the very crime he condemns; his disloyalty to Falstaff haunts the ethos of moral righteousness he projects. The Christian king who calls for an ethical correlation between appearance and inner essence proves that he himself lacks such a correlation.

Henry’s logical fallacies, with which he concludes his accusation, additionally reveal the logic that destabilizes the God-like image he presents to his lords. Once the traitorous lords leave the scene, Henry attributes his success in discovering the lords’ treason to God and predicts that this success will herald the success of the English in war against France:

We doubt not of a fair and lucky war,  
Since God so graciously hath brought to light  
This dangerous treason lurking in our way

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70 Although Pistol may parody Henry, he also underlines Henry’s shortcomings: Pistol’s grieving for Falstaff (“my manly heart doth erne” [2.3.3]) invokes Henry’s cold-heartedness. Pistol’s advice to his wife prior to leaving for France— “Trust none, for oaths are straws, men’s faiths are wafer-cakes” (2.3.42)— also serves as an indirect commentary on Henry’s (as well as the three lords’) untrustworthiness.

71 Although political loyalty and personal loyalty are not identical, the former casts a shadow over the latter.

72 Logical fallacies demonstrate rational thinking (logos) gone astray, for fallacies distort the inductive and deductive processes of logic which are the building blocks of a convincing argument. Fallacies occur when a conclusion does not follow from its premise(s).
To hinder our beginnings. We doubt not now
But every rub is smoothed in our way. (2.2.180-184)

Henry’s pronouncement instantiates the logical fallacy of *non causa pro causa*, which is when something is identified as being the cause of an event without actually having been shown to be the cause (specifically, there is no mention of God during Henry’s confrontation with the lords). In a characteristic move, Henry attributes the discovery of— and thus the responsibility for— treason to God and ignores himself as an efficient cause (or agent); God is tacked on at the end to justify Henry’s own virtue, even though God has not been the guiding principle in Henry’s discovery. The statement is clearly untruthful and may even be termed a *post-hoc* inference fallacy. The *post-hoc* inference fallacy reveals that A causes C but ignores the middle term, B; here, Henry infers a direct, causal relationship between God and the discovery of treason by, as already mentioned, removing himself as the agent of God’s will. This oversimplification justifies Henry’s actions by showing that Henry presents himself as a divinely appointed monarch even as his father’s usurpation renders his divine right questionable.73 The second fallacy in the passage is embedded in the claim that this recent discovery guarantees a “fair and lucky war” for the English: because God has done X, he will also do Y. However, the fact that the premise X (God has exposed treason) is not valid (as just shown), skews the truth value and thus the probability of the conclusion (the war will be successful). As Sigurd Burckhardt aptly states, “[n]o claim is made that the English are privy to God’s intent, the chosen instrument of divine policy, the executors of a manifest destiny.

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73 The *post-hoc* fallacy operates on the rationale that what occurs before an event is the direct cause of an event (L. *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*). Henry assumes (or rather, pretends to assume) that God’s *a priori* presence in the world and his intervention has brought treason “to light”. The *post-hoc* fallacy is a leap in logic (see Walton, who calls for a need to distinguish correlation from causation [266]). However, if Henry had acknowledged himself as the middle term or agent of God’s will, he would have rendered the discovery of treason less miraculous and hence run the risk of constructing a less convincing ethos. Henry’s fallacy is calculated to urge his audience to have faith in divine providence.
Nothing is manifest until god [sic] has spoken, and he speaks only in the event. Harry fights for a claim, not a cause” (194). Both of the causal fallacies used by Henry essentially feed into the larger fallacy of argumentum ad consequentiam, in which the belief in something (here, God) leads to good consequences, but these consequences are irrelevant and do not prove that God has brought treason to light. These illogical claims negatively impact Henry’s ethos, despite his success in persuasive argumentation vis-à-vis the lords. The evident fallaciousness of his justification of war undermines the moral authority with which he condemns and punishes treason.

Paralleling Henry’s encounter with Scrope, Cambridge, and Grey is his encounter with the English soldiers Williams, Court, and Bates in 4.1 with the crucial difference that Henry’s exchange with his soldiers registers the failure of his persuasive argumentation to uphold his ethos as a loyal and virtuous soldier. In order to persuade his men to fight for the king’s cause, Henry dons Sir Thomas Erpingham’s cloak to pass himself off as a common soldier who argues in the king’s name. Thus garbed, Henry appears to take Aristotle’s advice regarding effective persuasion: “there are some claims which, if [you] made about yourself, may excite dislike, appear tedious, or expose you to the risk of contradiction; and other things which you cannot say about your opponent without seeming abusive or ill-bred. Put such remarks, therefore, into the mouth of some third person” (Bk. III, ch.17). Henry uses a soldier’s dress to “objectively” comment on, and thus inspire, his hearers to believe in the king’s humanity even though this disguise compromises the king’s authority and works to erase his ethos. Henry-as-soldier embodies the perlocutionary uptake of Henry-the-monarch’s speeches which Henry intends for all of his soldiers to have; the impersonated soldier is an ideal soldier whose example of obedience and loyalty to the king (“Methinks I could not die anywhere so
contented as in the King’s company” [120-1]) as well as his sympathetic understanding of the king (“I think the King is but a man, as I am” [99]) are intended to encourage Williams, Bates, and Court of the same by winning their sympathy. Henry-as-soldier thus indirectly—and thus for Aristotle more effectually—builds Henry-the-king’s ethos.

The two direct statements (above) made by Henry-as-soldier are compounded by rhetorical devices instituted to persuade his hearers of the truth of his claims. The parallelism in “The violet smells to him as it doth to me; the element shows to him as it doth to me” (4.1.99-101) which immediately follows the ironic claim that “the king is but a man, as I am” (99) underlines the identification between soldier and monarch as well as their fundamentally shared humanness, via shared experiences, in order to strengthen the soldiers’ belief in Henry’s good will or eunoia.74 Moreover, Henry-as-soldier claims that the king’s fears “be of the same relish as ours are” (4.1.106) and that the king thus shares the same emotions as his men, even as Henry turns this identification into a prohibitive warning that “no man should possess [the king] with any appearance of fear, lest he [the king], by showing it, should dishearten his army” (4.1.106-109). The warning, a speech act that counsels Henry’s fellow soldiers to abstain from showing fear, logically undermines the king’s ethos for it places responsibility for the king’s condition on his men. The weight of Henry-as-soldier’s argument can be expressed as an enthymeme: A) The king is a man like his soldiers; B) the king’s fears are like those of his men; C) therefore no man should inspire the king with fear. This syllogistic reasoning is clearly an informal logical fallacy since the conclusion (C) does not follow from the two

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74 The ethos promulgated by Henry-as-soldier here is that of Ciceronian conciliare, which aspires to win over the hearers’ benevolentia or good will by appealing to their sympathy. Henry will later effectively use the same appeal to sympathy when highlighting the “brotherhood” between him and his soldiers in his St. Crispin’s day speech (4.3.18-67).
premises (A) and (B). What Henry-as-king presents is the fallacy of *ignoratio elenchi* (ignoring the issue) or an irrelevant conclusion which, in sidestepping the potential validity of the argument, deflects what ought to be the true conclusion (hereafter expressed by Bates) onto a tangential issue of responsibility. Bates logically completes Henry’s syllogism by making a proper conclusion follow the premises. In stating that “[the king] may show what outward courage he will, but I believe, as cold a night as ‘tis, he could wish himself in Thames up to the neck” (109-111), Bates’ modified enthymeme reads as follows: A) if the king is a man like his soldiers, and B) shares their fear, then C) the king would wish to be anywhere but on the battlefield. By turning Henry’s fallacy into a logically valid enthymeme, Bates reveals Henry’s sophistic logic which destabilizes the solidarity or communion that Henry seeks to establish between him and his men. Bates highlights the social hierarchy and unidirectional relationship between Henry and his soldiers, for the latter are to be used for the king’s benefit— to inspire his courage.

Henry, then, is really not a man like other men and his pronouncement that “the King is but a man, as I am” (4.1.99) is ironic not only due to his faulty logic but also due to the dramatic irony to which the audience is privy and which structures his exchange with the three soldiers. Henry is not the “man” he pretends to be because the audience knows that he is disguised by Erpingham’s cloak, which compromises his rhetorical ethos by erasing the authority invested in the king’s visible presence. Henry is, instead, the well-known impersonator reminiscent of the Falstaffian Hal, which may invite the audience’s suspicion that

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75 The enthymeme, as already noted, is the rhetorical variant of the logical syllogism. A syllogism is composed of three propositions: the major premise, the minor premise, and the conclusion, and “one premise must be a universal proposition, for from two particular premises no conclusion can be drawn” (Joseph 356; see Joseph 356-357 for a complete explanation of the rules governing the syllogism). The enthymeme, however, usually implies a major or a minor premise; it does not make this premise explicit. Henry’s suppressed premise is that all men are equal. Henry’s enthymeme, translated into a syllogism, would read: A) All men are equal; B) The king is a man, like his soldiers; C) Therefore if Henry’s soldiers are struck by fear, so is Henry.
Henry’s imitations could be self-serving. Moreover, while the Chorus to Act IV describes Henry as a vigilant, Christ-like monarch who circles among his men in order to boost the morale of the English camp outside of Agincourt, the Henry enacted on stage renders the Chorus’ claims questionable. Claiming that Henry’s sense of his communion with his men and his Christian altruism impel him to move among his “ruined band” (4.0.22) of “poor condemned English” (4.0.29) in order to instil in them confidence and comforting optimism for the battle ahead, the Chorus describes how Henry transmits his good cheer to his crestfallen men:

    That every wretch, pining and pale before,  
    Beholding him, plucks comfort from his looks.  
    A largess universal, like the sun,  
    His liberal eye doth give to everyone,  
    Thawing cold fear . . . (4.0.41-45)\textsuperscript{76}

However, prior to encountering his men, Henry appears discomfited and may even be commiserating with— rather than consoling— his band of men, as his speech to the elderly Erpingham seems to suggest: “A good soft pillow for that good white head/ Were better than a churlish turf of France” (4.1.14-15). Henry’s disguise, as his brief moralizing to Erpingham suggests, may instead serve to “ease” or cathartically cleanse his own mind of misgivings regarding the justice of the war, or it may serve to renew his faith in his cause (4.1.18-24).\textsuperscript{77}

Henry, therefore, seems to boost his own morale rather than sublimating his personal cares to

\textsuperscript{76} Anthony Brennan notes that the Chorus’ use of the sun simile is meant to reinforce Henry’s divinity: “As Christ came down to earth and took upon him the image of a humble carpenter’s son, so the King walks among his men disguised, dividing his thoughts with them, attending to the humble almost as though they were his flock and he their shepherd” (48). The king is thus “more than human” and has “miraculous restorative powers” (47).

\textsuperscript{77} Henry’s soliloquy registers not only his acknowledgment of his illegitimacy, but also his fearfulness: “Not today, O Lord./ O not today, think not upon the fault/ My father made in compassing the crown” (4.1.274- 276). Henry promises God that “More will I do,/ Though all that I can do is nothing worth,/ Since that my penitence comes after ill” (4.1.284-286), even though his promise— a request for absolution, really— carries no weight.
tend to others; the affability and courage which the Chorus claims Henry emanates are contradicted by Henry’s actions as a soldier. As a result, Henry’s persuasive argumentation fails.

Just as Bates pinpoints the fallacy of Henry’s reasoning, Henry himself—in his dialogue with Williams—undercuts the credibility of his own speech with his logical fallacies and illogical analogies. Henry clearly and naively states: “By my troth, I will speak my conscience of the King. I think he would not wish himself anywhere but where he is” (4.1.113-115) since “his cause [is] just and his quarrel honourable” (122-123), despite Williams’ direct (and Bates’ indirect) pronouncement that “That’s more than we know” (123). Williams holds that the king’s words are a means of rhetorical persuasion rather than direct expressions of his communicative intentions. Claiming that the king’s cause is “just and his quarrel honourable” (121-122) and thus that the king’s true character (i.e. his non-discursive ethos which precedes his speech) regulates his discursive speech (the one is deducible from the other), Henry’s subsequent red herring arguments and logical fallacies fail to prove the justice of the war or even address Williams’ point. Williams argues that the king, to whom his soldiers owe their allegiance and thus their duty, has a moral obligation to ensure that his soldiers “die well” (36-7), otherwise it would be a “black matter for the King that led them to it” (137): the king’s duty is to ensure that the war is just, and to do so would imply that Henry is answerable to a higher moral authority to which he, in turn, as a Christian monarch owes allegiance. If the king is truly Christian, his will would work in accordance with the divine Will so as to ensure his clear conscience (i.e. moral self-awareness). Moreover, reacting against Henry’s claim that the king’s “cause [is] just and his quarrel honourable” (121-122), Williams suggests that war itself is not “just” since the means of war (i.e. the soldiers’ inevitable deaths) can not justify its ends.
(i.e. the potentially successful outcome of the war). Williams thus implicitly questions the possibility of just war, for war disallows men to “charitably dispose of anything, when blood is their argument” (135-6) and to thus die virtuously.78

Henry’s retort, however, exposes his logical fallacy of ignoratio elenchi (fallacy of irrelevance) through his misuse of analogy. Henry compares the king and his men to both a father and his merchant son (139-142) as well as to a master and his servant (142-143): he claims that his soldiers are obliged to perform their duties like the father’s son and the master’s servant are. Although the analogies here are used as examples to inductively prove Henry’s point that “[t]he King is not bound to answer the particular endings of his soldiers” (146-147), the theme and the phoros in the analogies fail to correspond exactly because the servant and the son are not sent on errands where the chances of their deaths are highly probable, and because the king’s relationship to his men is not built on a blood bond like the father’s relationship to his son is. The correlations are thus tenuous as Henry attempts to minimize the king’s responsibility in war: by comparing the king to a father and a master, Henry makes death in war seem accidental rather than a necessity and by comparing his soldiers to sons or servants, he underlines that his men have free will and are thus responsible for their sinful or sinless actions since “[t]he King is not bound to answer the particular endings of his soldiers, the father of his son, nor the master of his servant, for they purpose not their deaths when they propose their services” (146-148).79 In thus deflecting his responsibility onto the soldiers

78 Williams would appear to endorse Erasmus’s statement that “[a] good prince should never go to war at all, unless, after trying all other means, he cannot possibly avoid it” (249).

79 It is interesting to note that Henry’s choices of master and father as his terms of comparison are also used by Erasmus, who compares the king to a father figure and the tyrant to a master: “there is the same difference between a prince and a tyrant as there is between a conscientious father and a cruel master. The former is ready and willing to give even his life for his children; the latter thinks of nothing else than his own gain, or indulges his caprices to his own taste, with no thought to the welfare of his subjects” (160-161). Henry’s application of both
themselves by highlighting their personal duty to their own souls (165)— whereas public duty and public justice are evidently at issue in the debate, as Williams points out— Henry fails to directly refute Williams’ point that the king is responsible for his soldiers’ deaths if they die in the prosecution of an unjust war. In turning Williams’ charge— that the king is the final cause (i.e. the one for whom the war is carried out) and that he should thus oversee the financial and material well-being of his men— into an argument that his men are the efficient causes (agents) of their own spiritual well-being, Henry distorts Williams’ argument by changing the subject. This logical misstep does not allow Henry to “refute [his] opponent’s thesis” (102), as Douglas Walton would aver, and marks his ignoratio elenchi.  

Not only does Henry’s fallacy of irrelevance fail to address Williams’ point but it moreover prevents Henry from “fulfill[ing] his primary obligation to prove the thesis which is supposed to be at issue in the dialogue” (Walton 18), which is that the king’s cause is “just and his quarrel honourable” (121-122). Henry argues that war is just for it provides punishment (in the form of death) for criminals who have “defeated the law and outrun native punishment” (156). Should the criminals survive, however, war would still be just for it would allow these criminals to “prepare” for their ultimate Christian deaths: “in him that escapes, it were not sin to think that, making God so free an offer, he let him outlive that day to see his greatness and to teach others how they should prepare” (169-172). In proclaiming that war is God’s means of punishment (“War is his beadle. War is his vengeance” [157-8]), Henry once again, with his trademark move, deflects responsibility onto God to show that vengeance is divinely metaphors to the king betrays his moral ambiguity as he places a Christian selflessness on par with an authoritative, Machiavellian selfishness.

80 According to Walton, the ignoratio elenchi fallacy is multi-faceted and includes the following: the failure to refute the opponent’s thesis in dispute; a distracting parallel introduced to change the issue; or irrelevance regarding the premises rather than the conclusion (104-5).
sanctioned. By thus rendering war an agent or efficient cause of God’s retributive justice, Henry deems war to be virtuous and thus justifies his decision to wage it. As in the scene with Scrope, Cambridge, and Grey, Henry here tacks on morality as an after-thought rather than as a cause that motivates his actions and appears to modify the *argumentum ad consequentiam* fallacy: there is no causal connection between war and virtue but Henry creates a causal connection by ascertaining that the end result of war (death or lack thereof) deductively proves the justice of war or the proposition that war is a means of good. In making war a standard-bearer for justice, Henry dodges the claim that death in war is unjust by substituting for it the question of the soldiers’ personal virtue. Henry’s premise (i.e. that the death of criminal soldiers is divinely ordained) fails to relate to his conclusion that war is just and thus marks his fallacy of *ignoratio elenchi.*

Henry’s fallacies, which neither logically prove that war is just nor disprove Williams’ claim that the king is morally responsible for his men’s lives, demolish Henry’s prudence (*phronesis*) and negatively affect his credibility as a just, wise, and virtuous ruler. While Henry strives to justify his cause by using analogies and alluding to God in his logical appeals, his argument diminishes the bidirectional responsibility that necessarily defines the relationship between a monarch and his subjects. Henry de-emphasizes the mutual obligation between ruler and ruled in order to emphasize the ruled subject’s responsibility toward himself/herself: “Every subject’s duty is the King’s but every subject’s soul is his own” (164-5). What underlies Henry’s argument for the moral nature of war is a half-submerged fallacy upon

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81 After learning of the number of slain men at Agincourt, Henry again exclaims: “O God, thy arm was here,/ And not to us, but to thy arm alone/ Ascribe we all” (4.8.100-102).

82 Walton states that *ignoratio elenchi* also occurs when “the link or relation required between the premises and conclusion in reasonable argument is lacking” (102).

83 A king’s subjects are required to remain loyal to him and the king is obliged to protect his subjects.
which his other fallacies are predicated. Henry’s logic is rooted in the following syllogism: If
the king (A) is a man (B) and all men (B) are responsible for their own souls (C), then the king
(A), too, is responsible only for his own soul (i.e. A=C). While the syllogism is logically valid,
it nevertheless ignores the crucial distinction between common men and the king, or more
precisely the difference between their social roles and statuses, and is thus a fallacy of accident
or dicto simpliciter—defined as the deductive application of a general premise to a specific
case (i.e. the king). Henry, however, uses the dicto simpliciter fallacy to absolve himself of
moral responsibility and to advance an action that is dictated neither by right reason nor
conscience. Henry uses this argument of similarity to persuade his men to fight even as the
argument ironically undermines the ethos that this persuasion hopes to build. Henry’s logical
fallacies show that the king is not the humble common soldier he claims to be, and that his war
is not just.

Moreover, Henry’s express order that “every soldier kill his prisoners” (4.7.37) in
response to learning of the renewed onslaught of the Frenchmen in the field further raises
doubts in the audience’s mind about the justice of the king’s war and of his Christian ethos.
Henry’s rash order leaves the audience musing as to whether Henry causes the French
prisoners to be killed strategically in order to frighten the French by a display of his power, or
whether the order for their deaths is a calculated retaliation against the French command that
the English luggage boys be killed, as Gower suggests (4.7.6-8). Henry’s lack of clemency

84 A third possibility is Henry’s rage: Pistol’s “Coup’ la gorge” (4.6.39) calls up his hot-tempered skirmish with
Fluellen during which Pistol used this exact phrase. However, only after Gower offers his interpretation of
Henry’s action does Henry claim that “I was not angry since I came to France/ Until this instant” (4.7.46-47) and
orders his men to cut the throats of the soldiers who have already— as the audience is made to believe— been
killed under his initial order that “every soldier kill his prisoners” (4.6.37) in the preceding scene. Despite the
confusing causal connection between events, Henry’s expression of anger is significant.
recalls his command to “cut off” Bardolph (3.6.98) as well as his cruelty toward Falstaff, and is exacerbated by Fluellen’s faulty analogy between Alexander the Great and the king: “As Alexander killed his friend Cleitus, being in his ales and his cups, so also Harry Monmouth, being in his right wits and his good judgments, turned away the fat knight” (4.7.37-40). Fluellen compares Henry’s “right wits” and “good judgments” to Alexander’s “ales” and “cups”; Henry’s “turning away” is comparable to “killing”. Ales and cups, which suggest rage and intoxication, contradict the mental properties (“right wits” and “good judgments”) that figure right reason. The discrepancy between Fluellen’s terms of comparison suggests that Henry’s renunciation (or “killing”) of Falstaff was motiveless and performed in a state of uttermost sanity, which thus makes it inexcusable. Moreover, Fluellen’s synonymic translation of the adjective “great” into “big” in referring to Alexander as “Alexander the Pig” (4.7.10) ironically undermines his encomium of Henry. The inadvertent irony of Fluellen’s speech frames Henry as a viciously destructive ruler and gives rise to the audience’s sense of his Machiavellianism. The audience is forced to question not only the morality of war but the morality of the actions involved in a purportedly “just” war.

Henry has thus far performed his ethos as a pious, Christian monarch in order to persuade his Englishmen to wage a war whereby he can “[w]ith blood and sword and fire, [] win [his] right” (1.2. 131) and thus legitimate his claim to the throne. His wooing of Catherine (5.2) similarly demonstrates Henry’s attempt to argumentatively persuade Catherine of his ethos but his rhetoric works against the logic that underwrites this attempt. Henry projects the ethos of an honest-speaking, plain soldier to persuade Catherine of his love for her to thereby secure her hand in marriage, but his argumentative rhetoric betrays his ultimate motive of procuring Catherine as a wife in order to consolidate his domination of France. Henry,
moreover, has already legally made Catherine his “capital demand, comprised/ Within the fore-
rank of our articles” (5.2.96-97), to which King Charles, immediately prior to Henry’s wooing, 
vows to subscribe after some deliberation (5.2.77-82). His wooing is nevertheless necessary, 
for the success of Henry’s ability to argumentatively persuade Catherine of his love for her 
would signal her goodwill towards Henry. This goodwill would in turn be an instrument 
through which Henry could discreetly enforce his power over her and by extension, France. 
The irony framing the wooing scene, once again, reinforces the audience’s sense of Henry’s 
Machiavellianism by exposing his affection for a Princess whom he sees as instrumental in 
augmenting his power: “No king of England, if not king of France” (2.2.189).

Although Henry claims to be a “fellow of plain and uncoined constancy” (5.2.149) who 
is unversed in the art of wooing, his persuasive rhetorical devices ironically undercut his 
proclaimed ethos as a virtuously humble and “plain soldier” (5.2.146) to betray the intention 
that shapes his logic. Henry clearly makes Catherine understand that what he speaks is devoid 
of hidden intentions; he exposes his humility and uses a modesty topos to suggest that his 
speech is not rhetorically deceptive: “my wooing is fit for thy understanding. I am glad thou 
canst speak no better English, for if thou couldst, thou wouldst find me such a plain king that 
 thou wouldst think I had sold my farm to buy my crown” (5.2.122-125). Henry’s humbleness 
as a soldier is duly noted in the Chorus’ anecdote which tells the audience that, upon Henry’s 
return from France, he resisted the public’s desire to see him parade “[h]is bruised helmet and 
his bended sword/ Before him through the city” (5.0.17-19). Henry, as per the Chorus’ claim, 
is “free from vainness and self-glorious pride” (5.0.20). His opening lines,

Fair Catherine, and most fair, 
Will you vouchsafe to teach a soldier terms 
Such as will enter at a lady’s ear
And plead his love-suit to her gentle heart? (5.2.98-101)

not only speak to his “plain and uncoined constancy” by requesting that Catherine “teach” him how to woo her, but they also urge Catherine to plainly communicate her innermost thoughts and feelings to Henry, much in the same way that Henry had previously urged Canterbury to truthfully communicate the Salic Law in 1.2. Henry’s request, however, is a performative utterance that works against the rhetorical plainness it aspires to convey: rather than attesting to Henry’s naïveté as a plain soldier, the diction that constitutes the request reveals Henry’s flattery of Catherine. Because the illocutionary force of the request counters Henry’s proclaimed roughness of speech, the request resembles a back-handed compliment and even strikes a note of self-flattery for a man who knows how to be obsequious to a “gentle” “lady”. The pun on “fair” (“fair Catherine, and most fair” [98]) suggests that Henry, as he did with Canterbury, values and praises the correlation between a fair appearance (beauty) and inner goodness (spotless moral character). In appealing to her “fairness” and thereby flattering her, Henry urges Catherine—just as he had urged the French ambassador in his court—to speak with “frank and uncurbèd plainness” (1.2.243); Henry later reiterates this when he says “Speak, my fair— and fairly, I pray thee” (5.2.161-2). However, the pun on “fair” instantly dismantles Henry’s ethos by the very virtue of its being a pun, since a pun indirectly conveys a second meaning which destroys Henry’s claim to plain-speaking. Henry thus intends to persuade Catherine of his love for her by openly undermining his ethos through the use of elaborate rhetorical ploys.

Henry’s equivocation on the word “like” additionally undermines his subsequent assertion of modesty. Henry turns the “like” in his question to Catherine: “do you like me,

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85 A pun is categorized as an equivocation and is one of Aristotle’s linguistic fallacies in his *Sophistical Refutations*. 
Kate?” (5.2.106), which clearly denotes affection, into a “like” that denotes resemblance, in his response to her (supposed) inability to comprehend English: “An angel is like you, Kate, and you are like an angel” (5.2.109). This deft rhetorical manoeuvring which terminates in a chiasmatic structure shows off Henry’s skill as an orator. In requesting Catherine’s aid to help him flatter her and in requesting that she speak her mind and confess her love to him, Henry’s requests grant Catherine the opportunity to exercise her agency and control her fate in an attempt to maximize her sympathy toward him. The requests also instantiate Henry’s persuasive tactics and the open flattery he uses to endear himself toward Catherine. Following his equivocation, Henry quickly recovers his ethos and states that he “must not blush to affirm” (5.2.114) that Catherine resembles an angel even though this statement, which is used to prop up his modesty, fails since his words have just drawn the image of Henry-as-courtier. In other words, contrary to what he claims, Henry has just “mince[d] it in love” rather than “directly . . . say[ing] ‘I love you’ ” (5.2.126-7). Nevertheless, Henry claims that this rhetorical “mincing” has no bearing on his actions and that his love is not to be measured by Petrarchan hyperboles, for “to say to thee that I shall die, is true— but for thy love, by the Lord, no. Yet I love thee, too” (5.2.147-8). His confession that his love for Catherine will not make him languish and perish upholds his posturing as a worthy and honest-dealing soldier, in spite of the fact that the persuasive force of his words undercut the ethos he proclaims to have.

Moreover, Henry’s self-negation is a modesty topos employed in the service of upholding his ethos of simplicity and plainness even as it ironically brings to the fore his self-conviction and discreet vaunting which destabilize his ethos. Henry claims that he has no ability to woo women or to give them pleasure either with his appearance or with his speech; he cannot “gasp out [his] eloquence” (5.2.140). Henry’s claim that he has a good heart which,
like the sun, “shines bright and never changes, but keeps his course truly” (5.2.158-9), is questionable due to the rhetorical figures he uses which clearly deviate from their “true” course of pragmatic communication and move toward persuasion. Not only does Henry neither have the physical attributes nor the eloquence to woo, but he also lacks the ability to dance: “I have no strength in measure— yet a reasonable measure in strength” (5.2.136). This antimetabole places Henry’s military prowess and physical fortitude (suggested by the second “strength”) on par with the skilful dancing he lacks (the first strength is glossed as “talent”). The device not only exhibits the eloquence he claims to lack but also promulgates the image of Henry as an honourable and puissant soldier whose attempts to woo Catherine (despite his denial of the same) approximate an intricate, linguistic “dance”— equivalent to his verbal assault of Harfleur— that describes a campaign to forcefully domesticate and lord over Catherine. Henry quickly turns his tactic of self-negation into self-affirmation by enumerating the eventual demise of the physical attributes he lacks (“a good leg will fall, a straight back will stoop, a black beard will turn white, a curled pate will grow bald, a fair face will wither, a full eye will wax hollow . . . ” [5.2.154-6]) in order to highlight the singularity and longevity of his inner, sun-like constancy and good-heartedness. Comparing himself to a sun that “shines bright and never changes, but keeps his course truly” (5.2.158-9), Henry suggests that his sun-like constancy is a ruling, eternal, and life-giving force of nature which is not subject to the natural laws of the physical universe. The climactic anadiplosis of the phrase “If thou would have such a one, take me; and take me, take a soldier; take a soldier, take a king” (5.2.159-60), which steadily escalates and attests to Henry’s verbal dancing, counteracts Henry’s enumeration of ephemeral physical attributes to convince Catherine that she will “take” or possess greater immaterial wealth if she accepts Henry’s hand in marriage. Henry’s modesty thus gives way to
a complacency attending his anticipated—and already contractual—achievement of Catherine as his wife.

Henry’s attempt to persuade Catherine of his moral qualities is reinforced by his statements which call for an equal partnership in a state of marriage even as this equality is quickly undermined by Henry’s logical fallacies, which expose his intention to enforce inequality. Henry proposes to Catherine that their offspring reflect the supposedly equal footing between French and English that his rule of France will instantiate: “Shall not thou and I, between Saint Denis and Saint George, compound a boy, half-French half-English, that shall go to Constantinople and take the Turk by the beard?” (5.2.193-196). Although Henry levels the differences between the French and English tongues in stating that “thy speaking of my tongue, and I thine, most truly-falsely, must needs be granted to be much at one” (5.2.180-2) since the parallelism of “thy speaking of my tongue, and I thine” clearly highlights their equality, the ambiguity of the adverbs “truly-falsely” imply a hierarchical and moral difference between the two tongues. On one level, Henry’s phrase suggests that he speaks French “truly” (i.e. he communicates his intentions honestly and directly; his words truly mirror his intended meaning) but he does so in a corrupt manner due to his imperfect or “false” French. On another level, the phrase suggests that Henry speaks French “falsely” in a true way or that he speaks dishonestly in an accurate (“true”) way that is in keeping with the falsity inherent to the French language and thus renounces his responsibility for what he says; he renders the French language, which distorts his otherwise “true” meaning, guilty of deception. This second

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86 The militant behaviour that Henry envisions his son inheriting additionally undermines Henry’s call for peace in his opening speech to Canterbury. Burckhardt notes that “Peace . . . is not a restoration but a continuing instauration, a never-ending conquest” (203).

87 On yet another level, the amphiboly suggests that Henry simultaneously conveys both truth and falsehood and that Catherine is guilty of the same.
interpretation thus renders French deceitful compared to a pure, plain, English language; it also follows Henry’s claim that French hangs “upon [his] tongue like a new-married wife about her husband’s neck, hardly to be shook off” (5.2.171-2). French, denigrated as feminine, prevents a liberty of expression and is merely ornamental rather than masculine and functional like English, which actively “does” things. In response to Catherine’s statement that all languages can be deceitful regardless of linguistic differences since language relies on its speaker’s intentions (i.e. “the languages of men are full of deceit” [5.2.119-120], my translation), Henry declares that “[t]he Princess is the better Englishwoman” (5.2.121): although she speaks the foregoing in a “false” French tongue, Catherine— according to Henry— is able to “truly” express a maxim and sees beyond linguistic deceit, which thus renders her English. Ironically, however, Henry’s declaration aligns the English tongue with deception, for the very fact that Catherine conveys her meaning implicitly rather than explicitly reflects what Henry has been and still is doing with his rhetoric. English and French, as Henry wishes to make known to the Princess, are equal (as is Henry’s and Catherine’s ability to speak the other’s tongue) even though superiority is evidently granted to English since it is claimed to be “true”: “By mine honour, in true English, I love thee Kate” (5.2.206-207). There is, additionally, an equivocation on the word “one”. Although Henry appears to be granting equality to both tongues (they are “one” or “alike”), he is also implying that these two tongues “must needs be one” in the sense of united, as the gloss suggests. The gloss renders Henry’s attempt at equality ironic, since the meaning of one as “united” brings to the audience’s mind Henry’s and King Charles’ predetermined contract and Henry’s eventual dominance.88 In requiring that Catherine “[b]reak

88 Henry’s verbal aside, denoted by hyphens (“If ever thou be’est mine, Kate— as I have a saving faith within me tells me thou shalt— ” [5.2.191-192]), clearly demonstrates his strategy: the aside, which showcases once more Henry’s Christian ethos and his faith in providence (“I have a saving faith”), is rendered ironic given the
[her] mind to [him] in broken English” (5.2.228) by telling (i.e. breaking to) Henry that she loves him in a manner that eerily recalls Henry’s ultimatum that he will either forcefully “bend [France] to our awe, / Or break it all to pieces” (1.2.224-225), Henry seems to forego his initial statement that Catherine retain her rights and speak her own language (“O fair Catherine, if you will love me soundly with your French heart, I will be glad to hear you confess it brokenly with your English tongue” [104-106]) in favour of exerting his power over her by “Englishing” her mind just as he has Anglicized her name (Kate) to domesticate her.  

Moreover, the antimetabolic structure of the phrase “when France is mine, and I am yours, then yours is France, and you are mine” (167-68), while seeming to promote equality founded on the logical principle of equivalence that reads A=B, B=C, therefore A=C, reveals instead the logical invalidity of Henry’s claim and his intention to rule over Catherine. The antimetabole is prefaced by Henry’s attempt to accommodate himself to Catherine by persuading her that he shares her values; he thus re-fashions himself not as France’s enemy but rather as its “friend” and declares his “love” for Catherine’s country to win her sympathy and eventually bend (or break) her toward him: “I love France so well that I will not part with a village of it, I will have it all mine” (166-167). Henry’s violent invasion of France, which peeps through his attempt to persuade Catherine of his love, renders this “love” ironically

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89 Grady notes that “Kate” is reminiscent of Katherine’s “pet name” (Kate) in The Taming of the Shrew (Shakespeare, Machiavelli, Montaigne 232).

90 The principle of equivalence in logic is applied to the premises (A=B and B=C) to arrive at a conclusion (A=C). The conclusion can only be valid if both premises are true.
aggressive. Additionally, Henry’s first premise (when France is mine) is false,\(^9\) which makes the conclusion (then yours is France) invalid for Henry suggests that Catherine’s possession of France is conditional on her loss of France to Henry, whereas Catherine already possesses France. Henry’s antimetabole is meant to illustrate that marriage would consolidate Catherine’s dominion over France just as it consolidates Henry’s dominion over Catherine; Henry’s domestication of France is a synecdoche for his domestication of his wife.\(^9\) The conquest implied by Henry’s argumentation, which dismantles his touting of marital equality, underlines his self-assured superiority and domination over Catherine as well as contributes to the audience’s sense of Henry as a rhetorical Machiavel.\(^9\)

Henry not only seems to promise Catherine equality but also seems to insinuate her dominion over him. Along with Catherine’s possession of France and Henry comes the privilege to “wear” Henry “better and better”, as Henry avers: “Thou hast me, if thou hast me, at the worst, and thou shalt wear me, if thou wear me, better and better” (5.2.216-17). The pun on “wear” suggests that Catherine will be able to display Henry ornamentally as a sign of her conquest—she will possess and enjoy him just as he possesses and enjoys her—but it also signifies Henry’s promise that she can wear him out (blunt him) into a better person, which

\(^9\) “When France is mine” is an unwarranted assumption, predicated on Henry’s anticipation that he will indeed gain the throne of France, as his contract clearly suggests. Unwarranted assumptions invalidate logical reasoning.

\(^9\) France, like the French tongue, is consistently feminized throughout the play. King Charles, moreover, metaphorically compares maids with cities; the latter “are all girdled with maiden walls that war hath never entered” (5.2.296-297), which evokes the tradition of the hortus conclusus and Catherine as the virginally enclosed garden. Henry’s invasion of France metaphorically reflects his “invasion” or deflowering of Catherine as he takes her for his wife. In doing so, Henry achieves “the world’s best garden” (Epilogue 7).

\(^9\) Henry reassures Catherine that their marriage will please her father through the use of modals: “Nay, it will please him well, Kate. It shall please him, Kate” (5.2.230-231). While “will” denotes Henry’s prediction (he believes that the announcement will please King Charles), “shall” is promissory and, for the audience, brings to mind Henry’s signing the fore-articles of peace. But the “shall” may also register Henry’s foreboding command, and may thus also recall Henry’s threats to the Dauphin.
implies that Henry may not be “good” but can become so. However, the conditionality of the statement (if thou hast me, if thou wear me) suggests that Henry may not easily submit to the power that he strives to persuade Catherine she will have, which throws a shadow of doubt over his ethos as plain-speaking and thus plain-dealing soldier. More significantly, Henry destroys his entire wooing enterprise by fallaciously attributing his rough appearance to his father who, Henry claims, “was thinking of civil wars when he got me; therefore was I created with a stubborn outside, with an aspect of iron” (5.2.210-12). The enthymeme that constitutes Henry’s utterance is a cum hoc ergo propter hoc logical fallacy, which necessitates a causal link between Bolingbroke’s thought of civil war and Henry’s physical appearance. The fallacy throws into relief Henry’s ambiguity and the fact that he may not be what he appears to be, since his war-like appearance (he claims) occludes an inner, sun-like goodness. Henry’s statement that courtiers “of infinite tongue, that can rhyme themselves into ladies’ favours, [ ] do always reason themselves out again” (5.2.151-3) ironically applies to himself, since he has tried to “rhyme” himself into Catherine’s favour by persuading her of his love while the argumentative logic that structures his rhetorical devices and spurs his fallacies “reasons” him out of his persuasion; in offering glimpses of his desire to forcefully subdue both France and Catherine, Henry’s argumentation thus undermines his ethos. The scene, framed by Fluellen’s attempt to shove a leek down Pistol’s throat in order to teach him a “good English correction” (5.1.70), renders Henry’s wooing of Catherine ironic by highlighting the violence latent in his

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94 The fallacy can also be called post hoc ergo propter hoc, which means that the chronological ordering of events implies their causality.

95 The fallacy is also another instance of Henry relegating responsibility to a third party (here, his father) for being misunderstood or misperceived by others.
utterances; this violence or aggression is actualized in Henry’s forceful kissing of Catherine as he urges her to “patiently and yielding” (255) give in to him as his bride-to-be.⁹⁶

In the Folio version of *Henry V*, the titular Henry is certainly the “mirror of all Christian kings” (2.0.6); rather than being an exemplar of Christian kingship himself, Henry is the reflection or copy of a Christian monarch, an ideal he strives to imitate and achieve both through political expediency and rhetorical persuasion. As a descendent of the usurping Lancastrians, Henry has no *a priori* claim to sovereignty through a divinely sanctioned right to rule and must “plod” like a man to “work, work” and win his right; his eloquent rhetorical performances, constantly gesturing toward a legitimacy that Henry does not possess, achieve their authority through their ability to persuade his audience of his ethos as a virtuous Christian king. Although Henry persuasively constructs his ethos as a meek, merciful, wise and forthright Christian king— as well as a humble and plain-speaking soldier— the argumentative force of his rhetoric betrays the instrumentality of his words which communicate his intention to go to war against France in order to legitimate his rule; Henry thus inadvertently exposes his illegitimacy even as he proclaims his legitimacy. The friction between Henry’s logos (reasoning)— registered in his use of modal verbs, in his argumentative rhetorical devices such as analogies, and in his (mis)use of logical fallacies— and his constative statements which serve to carve out the *arete, eunoia, and phronesis* that structure his rhetorical ethos as a plain soldier and Christian king, create in the audience the impression of Henry’s moral ambivalence. This ambivalence is strengthened by the dramatic irony which arises both from the juxtaposition of scenes and from the way that Henry’s rhetorical performances are framed in terms of political expediency; the latter suggests Henry’s Machiavellianism. Henry is not a

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⁹⁶ Henry’s wooing of Catherine is also figured as a verbal battle: Henry tells Catherine that “I get thee with scrambling” (193).
hypocritical Machiavel who uses God as a pretext to disguise his ulterior motives: his
Machiavellianism, instead, is a rhetorical effect arising from the conflation between what
Henry claims to be a finished product (his legitimacy as a king) and the ironic exposure of the
process of achieving this legitimacy (his invasion of France). In celebrating both Henry’s
political heroism as well as his heroic Christian virtues, Shakespeare does not, as Rabkin
claims, force his audience to “choose” one interpretation only to disclose the limitations of that
choice. Instead, Shakespeare illustrates the essential paradox that both the rabbit and the duck
are endemic to the king as orator and sovereign.

97 I agree with Grady, who makes a similar point: “the ‘insider’s’ view of king Harry’s public pronouncement
rather is the ideological ‘means of production’ by which . . . the produced public image is created: these are not
opposing, disparate points of view, but simply less and more complete views of a single ideology” (Shakespeare,
Machiavelli, Montaigne 212).
Conclusion

Falstaff’s, Cleopatra’s, and Henry V’s apparent ontological presence, as my dissertation has shown, is a linguistic effect produced by these characters’ pragmatic use of language in an interactive context with other interlocutors, in conjunction with the allegorical meanings that Shakespeare ascribes to his characters and dramatically transmits to the audience. The meanings of both “speakers”—Shakespeare’s and his characters—dialogically respond to, or at least play off of, each other. In other words, the characters’ illusory ontological presence is actually a theatrical presence. The character effects of Falstaff’s lifelike vitality in 1 Henry IV, Cleopatra’s sexual greatness in Antony and Cleopatra, and Henry’s moral ambivalence in Henry V are deliberately orchestrated by Shakespeare and conveyed through a careful selection of dramatic techniques.¹ Not only does Shakespeare shape audience response by juxtaposing (sequences of) scenes and speeches in the plays against one another and employing soliloquies and asides, but he also draws attention to the meta-theatrical moments in 1 Henry IV, Antony and Cleopatra, and Henry V to elicit dramatic irony that frames characters’ linguistic performances and allows the playwright, as well as the actors impersonating the characters, to speak directly to his audience.² This layering of enunciating voices—the character’s, the actor’s, and the playwright’s—contributes to the dramatis personae’s complexity by evoking an anteriority to their utterances. This anteriority displaces the supposedly a-historical, self-

¹ I am here in full agreement with Jean E. Howard, who claims that “Shakespeare’s plays are carefully crafted to control and shape what an audience hears, sees, and experiences moment by moment in the theatre and this verbal and visual orchestration is central to the effectiveness and meaning of every play” (Art of Orchestration 2).

² Howard notes that the playwright also controls audience response by subverting or manipulating the audience’s expectations of genre (“Figures and Grounds”), by having characters eavesdrop, and by producing nonverbal sounds onstage (Art of Orchestration). Kent Cartwright, referencing Lear, notes that Shakespeare also uses secondary characters as “response regulators” to “reframe[, alter[, and complicate[ a spectator’s emotional development” (5). These examples and the ones I mention above are not exhaustive. See also E.A.J. Honigmann’s collection of essays, Shakespeare: Seven Tragedies Revisited: The Dramatist’s Manipulation of Response.
contained, and idiosyncratic interiority attributed to character by critics and audiences. Falstaff’s conversational implicatures, Cleopatra’s instances of reportage, and Henry’s rhetorical argumentation certainly attest to these characters’ performative agency and allow them to react against or vie with the dramatic roles scripted for them by other characters and by Shakespeare himself. But these pragmatic performances are also tempered or coloured by the allegorical meanings of life (Falstaff), sex (Cleopatra), and rhetorical kingship (Henry) that Shakespeare has his plays convey.

Attending to characters’ pragmatic use of language makes it clear that Falstaff is more than a comical braggart, a dissolute knight, and a Puritan; that Cleopatra is more than a Roman prostitute and stereotypical female; and that Henry is more than both the conniving Machiavel and the ideal Christian monarch that the Chorus, as well as his own speeches, make him out to be. We see that these characters exceed their scripted roles as character-types and somehow seem to precede and control their self-presentation through language. Employed within a Renaissance theatrical context, pragmatics shows how speaker meaning— and by extension, the “roundness” or lifelikeness of Shakespeare’s dramatic characters— is dialogically constructed both through the onstage, contextualized interaction between characters and the characters’ interaction with the audience, as well as through the offstage and implicit interaction between the playwright and his audience. Shakespeare, a pragmatic user of language, “does things” with his historical and dramatic sources in order to convey his meaning through his play-texts to his audience. A character’s reality effect thus requires the presence of an audience, who actualizes or brings the character to “life” by participating in inferring the content (and thus communicative intentions) of Shakespeare’s dramatic and non-verbal utterances that are mediated through characters’ verbal exchanges and the discourses of
the play. If, as Jean E. Howard claims, “drama [is] [a] rhetorical art to move or engage an audience” (*Art of Orchestration* 6), then Shakespeare is most certainly an orator who uses language to inspire his audience to believe in the ontological reality of his dramatic characters. However, Shakespeare’s mimetic representation of character also affords the audience a certain pleasure that accompanies listening to and visually witnessing his enigmatic characters on stage. The audience feels as if they can relate to and commune with these lifelike creations which seem deceptively accessible and intimately human, at the same time that the unpredictability attending the linguistic performances of these “real people” creates in the audience the desire to further probe and decipher the unknown contours of character: it inspires inference of character. This duality of accessibility and evasiveness that creates a character’s effect of mystery and contributes to our fascination with them also invites the actor to “do things” with the character on stage: it invites a multiple array of histrionic interpretations and performances.

However, regardless of what the contemporary actor “does” with his impersonation of character, modern audiences seem to be no longer able to detect the scripted roles such as Christian king, Puritan, or Vice, that underwrite Henry, Falstaff, and Cleopatra. These fully fleshed out dramatic creations, which all have rich and variegated performance histories, seem to have ironically become scripted roles for the audience; a modern audience tends to compare any given impersonation of Cleopatra, Falstaff, or Henry to previous iterations of the character rather than to the social or literary types to which they allude. Yet despite this perceived migration of character in contemporary performance, Shakespeare’s larger-than-life characters remain fluid, open-ended, and susceptible to change and evolution. To borrow Enobarbus’
phrase, “[a]ge cannot wither, nor custom stale/ [Their] infinite variety” (2.2.240-241), for these enticing characters are inexhaustible.

A pragmatic approach to dramatic Shakespearean character neither exhausts these characters nor other interpretive possibilities, but helps to bring these characters’ multifaceted variety to the fore. Pragmatics exhibits, in a tangible way, how speakers in drama speak to the audience and how the “conversation” between onstage and offstage speakers and hearers gives rise to a diverse array of linguistic meanings; pragmatics serves the purpose of explicating how character effects are produced and maintained through dialogue. Although I have used pragmatic theories and principles to account for character effects, the pragmatic method is not deductive and does not offer a definitive or complete theory of dramatic Shakespearean character. It does, however, provide insight into how the audience’s sense of a character’s reality is distinctively fashioned for—as well as by—each of the three characters chosen as case studies. My work stretches or moves toward a theory of dramatic Shakespearean character that does not delimit, fix, or define character as an analytical object but rather acknowledges the synergy and open-ended potentiality that structures quasi-allegorical persons. The particular pragmatic strategies used by these characters allow them to turn their allegorical meanings into dynamic processes that call for audience participation.
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