# 'In Order When Most Out of Order':

# Crowds and Crowd Scenes in Shakespearean Drama

By

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# 'In Order When Most Out of Order': Crowds and Crowd Scenes in Shakespearean Drama

## Abstract

This thesis investigates the representations of crowds and crowd scenes in Shakespearean drama. Contrary to the assumption that the crowd's character in early modern drama had a peripheral role, this thesis argues that Shakespeare's crowd is a complex "character" in its own right, and that the playwright's use of it in his drama reveals its dramatic importance. On the stage the crowd was not dangerous because its role was scripted. This study further proposes to view the character of the crowd from a perspective that has not been applied before in reading Shakespeare's drama. It employs Martin Buber's concept 'I-Thou', aiming to demonstrate that Shakespeare's dramatic characters should be perceived as "dramatic items", and examined through their relations, dramatic and theatrical. Furthermore, this thesis introduces the concept of 'the space of the character' which, unlike the term 'character', refers to theatrical relations that shape "dramatic identities" during the theatrical production. This thesis argues that our understanding of the dramatised hero and the crowd is only fully accomplished when we understand, and acknowledge, the relation between them, and that the relation is not only apparent, but inherent to crowd scenes. It is this non-tangible outcome of interaction between staged characters, and the network of these different theatrical relations, that constitutes the 'theatrical' effectiveness of the crowd scene. This thesis further argues that the crowd scenes are always political in nature, and that they focus not only on the interaction between the crowd and the authority figure, but also on the interaction between the stage and the audience. The key point is that the role of the audience in theatre has been widely debated and recognised, and yet the role of crowd scenes has not. This study insists that a crowd scene should be seen as a dramaturgical device or a theatrical trope that utilises the presence of the audience in such a way that no other scene can. It can incorporate *the audience* in the theatre and simultaneously give them voice on the stage. Through his dramatisation of the character of the crowd Shakespeare reforms our views about crowds. He reminds his audience that the "crowd" is not a many-headed multitude at all times, but that it consists of individuals with different view points. Shakespeare's crowd is thus meaningful and always 'in order when most out of order'.

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## Introduction: Crowds and Crowd Scenes

I become through my relation with *Thou*; as I become *I*, I say *Thou*
Martin Buber, *I and Thou.*

(Eng. tr., Edinburgh, 1937)

As a drama now published not only in the 'Revels' series of plays but also as part of the major 'Arden Shakespeare' series, while also being included fully in the revised second edition of the Oxford *Complete Works of Shakespeare*, the collaborative play, *Sir Thomas More* (*c.* 1593) seems securely anchored in the Shakespeare canon, with the playwright's contribution as Hand D receiving continued attention in terms of its overall significance.[1] On one level, the manuscript of this play contains perhaps the only example of the Bard's handwriting in a dramatic context, showing us the playwright "at work" in a way that disrupts 'the image of Shakespeare as a dramatist available only in print and in isolation from the agency of theatre', giving us instead 'Shakespeare as neither revered bard nor postmodern author function, but as dramatic author marking the paper with strokes of ink'.[2] On another level, the manuscript of *Sir Thomas More* reveals not only more about Shakespeare the professional writer, and one who certainly did blot his lines, it also provides an invaluable perspective into theatrical and collaborative practices in Elizabethan England. In particular, it discloses some of the obstacles and pitfalls that accompanied producing such a collaborative piece, the most important being epitomised in the name of Edmund Tilney, the play's official censor.[3] To this Master of the Revels we are actually indebted because, due to his comments and especially his instruction to leave out *More*'s 'insurrection scene' (2.3), William Shakespeare was commissioned to (re)write this famous

[1] See Anthony Munday and others' *Sir Thomas More* in *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor and others, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); see also John Jowett's edition of *Sir Thomas More* (London: Arden, 2011). For Jowett's discussion of "Hands", or the play's contributors, see pp. 18-29. It is generally accepted that the play has been written by Anthony Munday with additions contributed by several authors – Thomas Heywood (Hand B), Thomas Dekker (Hand E), Henry Chettle (Hand A), and as noted above, Shakespeare (Hand D); for more on the issue of authorship see Vittorio Gabrieli and Giorgio Melchiori's Introduction to *Sir Thomas More* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 12-24 (esp. p. 24).

[2] Jowett's Introduction to *Sir Thomas More*, p. 8. See also John Jones, *Shakespeare at Work* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 7-35.

[3] See Jowett's Introduction to *Sir Thomas More*, p. 5, and p. 26-7. As Jowett notes, the manuscript 'demonstrates more aspects in the making of an early modern play than any other extant manuscripts', p. 5.

scene: a heavily tense interaction between Sheriff More and the London citizens in which More quells a rebellious crowd and rescues the city from further destruction.[4] However, given that few scholars have paid attention to the type or genre of scene contributed by such a highly estimable playwright, our question must be not just why Shakespeare, but why the crowd scene in *Sir Thomas More*?

Interestingly, 'the play was revised in ways that took limited account of Tilney's requirements', because, of course, 'the playwrights were concerned also with other matters, such as ensuring greater dramatic cohesion in the middle scenes. They retained the insurrection episode, albeit in altered form', and even more importantly, 'one of the revisers,' Shakespeare, 'had already established his skill in writing *acceptable scenes* showing *popular unrest*'.[5] The implication here is that crowd scenes were actually considered to be of a "sensitive political" nature and that they required a sophisticated and experienced hand to construe them and make them acceptable even when depicting an organised riot, as in *More*. It seems safe to conclude, then, that even by the early-to-mid-1590s Shakespeare must have been well-known for an ability to handle crowd scenes (as in *Henry VI*, for example) and so it comes as no surprise perhaps that he was asked to contribute this one. Indeed, his addition to *Sir Thomas More* seems to indicate that there may have been something of a professional link between Shakespeare and stage crowds, and between Shakespeare and crowd scenes in his own dramatic art and its development. When in need of a sensitively plotted crowd scene, it was Shakespeare to whom his would-be collaborators could turn in *Sir Thomas More*, his reputation perhaps preceding him in this, as in so much else, presumably.

Yet this connection between Shakespeare and the crowd scene is often overlooked by scholars. Indeed, to my knowledge Shakespeare's choice as the dramatist to call upon specifically for the crowd scene of *Sir Thomas More* has not yet received due attention in scholarly debates. For, although much has been written about Shakespeare's involvement in *Sir Thomas More*, the fact that he was commissioned to compose the crowd scene in

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[4] See Jowett's Introduction to *Sir Thomas More*, p. 5.

[5] Jowett's Introduction to *Sir Thomas More*, p. 6-7 (my italics). On the aspects that make the insurrection scene 'distinctively Shakespearean' see Jowett's Introduction to *Sir Thomas More*, p. 19. 'Compared with the rest of the play', Jowett adds, 'the passage is exceptionally dynamic, poetically resonant and vividly etched', and 'the play speaks with more urgency here', p. 21. Another 'important point of contact between Shakespeare and *Sir Thomas More* lies in the name and role of Doll, Falstaff's mistress in *2 Henry IV*', see Jowett's Introduction to *Sir Thomas More*, p. 30.

particular, and the implications drawn from that, has not been explored.[6] Perhaps we should not be too surprised by this absence of interest, though, given that, more broadly, the dramatic input and importance of Shakespeare's crowd scenes has been largely under-estimated by critics. It is the aim of this thesis to ask potentially more sophisticated and deep-searching questions about Shakespeare's crowd scenes, and to read them – including that of *Sir Thomas More* – as deserving of more critical attention. This thesis suggests, in fact, that Shakespeare's crowd scenes are loaded with dramatic tension, and because they often offer a solution or resolution to a play's major problem, they can be seen as the "climax" of a play's dramatic action.[7] Crowd scenes, in other words, whether 'staged' or 'reported', should be considered as an important aspect of Shakespeare's dramaturgy. This thesis offers, then, a fresh approach to Shakespeare's crowd scenes aiming to show that they have a seminal dramaturgical role because they carry a great dramatic weight in "articulating" a play's most tense and important moments and concerns while remaining, without exception, always political in nature (even *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s reported barge scene in 2.2). These crowd scenes give us a better understanding of how Shakespeare creates his dramatic characters, and they embody what a theatrical occasion in essence is: a place of interaction between the stage and the audience. As such, as a theatrical composition the crowd scene consolidates the audience's imperative presence.

What stands out as essential to Shakespearean crowd scenes is that they always depict an interaction between an individual and the crowd, usually a figure of authority confronting a crowd of common people. For instance, *More*'s 1.1, which introduces the London citizens (Doll, Lincoln, George, and Sherwin) and their grievances, does so by having them addressed by the singular figure of More himself (and yet this moment has never been referred to as a "crowd" scene). Similarly, *Coriolanus*'s 2.3, in which three citizens debate whether they should give their voices to Coriolanus just before the play's hero enters in his gown of humility, has not, to my knowledge, been considered as a "crowd" scene either. The crucial ingredients in a dramatic crowd scene, then, are an individual and a crowd, and the interaction between them. In order to truly understand the

[6] The majority of critical studies focus on the issue of authorship, Shakespeare's contribution, and the dating of the play. See for instance MacDonald P Jackson's 'Deciphering a Date and Determining a Date: Anthony Munday's John a Kent and John a Cumber and the Original Version of *Sir Thomas More*', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 15 (2011) p. n. a.; Thomas Merriam's 'The Misunderstanding of Munday as Author of *Sir Thomas More*', *Review of English Studies: A Quarterly Journal of English Literature and the English Language*, 51 (2000), 540-81.

[7] For instance, consider *Coriolanus*'s crowd scene (3.1), *More*'s crowd scene (2.3), or *Julius Caesar*'s crowd scene (3.2).

workings of Shakespeare's crowd scenes, this thesis argues, we need to understand this vital interplay between the individual and the crowd, particularly through Shakespeare's dramatisation of what Martin Buber, in an important quotation cited as the epigraph to this Introduction, refers to as their 'relation'. Indeed, Martin Buber's words here could have been "articulated" by almost any Shakespearean character in any Shakespearean performance, for implicit in any staged character's "life" is the idea that they only exist truly in 'relation' to others, both on and off or beyond the stage.

This concept of 'relation', then, is the central premise of this study and, it should be emphasised, the object of this thesis is not simply the examination of "character" but of dramatic and theatrical relations.[8] As such, this thesis argues that William Shakespeare's characters cannot be viewed in isolation, but only through their *dramatic* relations with other stage characters and through their *theatrical* relation with the members of the audience. In this way, this study offers a fresh perspective not just on Shakespeare's crowd scenes but on the early modern audience, and on Shakespeare's characters – that is, the characters both of individuals and of crowds – by reading them through their dramatic and theatrical *relations*, as a form of dialogue between the stage and the audience.[9] Crowd scenes can no longer be neglected in our reading of early modern plays. Moreover, our critical enquiries should consider the fact that theatre audiences, especially early modern audiences, have a different experience of both individual characters and crowds from that of the reader, if only because in the theatre any individual watching a play, by default, is a part of the crowd: the audience. To recognise the complexity inherent in this concept of 'relation' is, in effect, to recognise Shakespeare's importance as a playwright in the world of theatre.

## Relation: *I and Thou*

Let us begin by defining some of our basic terms. According to the early modern understanding the word 'crowd' referred particularly to those members of the society who were 'of non-gentle status', that is, plebeians, also referred to as 'the commons' or 'the

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[8] With "dramatic relations" I refer to relations among characters in the play, and with "theatrical relations" I refer to the relation between staged characters and the audience in the theatre.

[9] Of course, I do not suggest we can have a complete understanding but rather a conditional understanding of crowd scenes as this area is yet to be researched. To start with, we need to pay attention to how and why crowd scenes are composed, and try to answer the question for what dramatic effect?

*plebs.*'[10] As Tim Harris indicates, they were 'those who were neither actively involved in the [formal] process of governing nor had any say in choosing those who would rule over them'.[11] However, the use of the word 'people' in early modern Britain was different to our modern usage. Today it refers to 'the mass of people in a country' who are 'not having special rank or position'.[12] According to Christopher Hill, in early modern Britain there were 'distinctions' [...] 'between people and people' and the word itself was politicised.[13] In particular, he indicates that in the seventeenth century the word 'people' did not include 'the poor'.[14] So, the 'people' were 'those between the gentry above them and the permanent poor below them from whom they are in process of distinguishing themselves.'[15] Moreover, the term 'people' had political connotations, whilst 'the poor' did not; as Hill indicates, 'the poor' were the disfranchised: 'the unpropertied', those who had no right to vote.[16] Moreover, the poor were seen as 'the multitude', those who were '*incapable* of representing anybody'.[17] As we shall see, on the early modern stage the poor (the 'rightless, helpless, illiterate') were not only given a voice, but could even represent something more.[18] On the stage the characters representing the lowest members of society also had a *dramatic part.*

Nevertheless, whilst with 'crowd' I will refer to the common people, I will also refer to the early modern audience - as a crowd in the theatre that consisted of both elite members of the society, like the Inns of Court men, lords and earls, and of the ordinary people, apprentices, tradesmen, artisans, merchants, and yeomen.[19] In chapters discussing

[10] Andy Wood, '"Poore men woll speke one daye": Plebeian Languages of Deference and Defiance in England, *c.* 1520-1640', in *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, ed. by. Tim Harris (Basingstoke: Palgrave Publishers, 2001), pp. 67-99, (p. 74-5).

[11] Tim Harris, Introduction to *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Publishers, 2001), p. 1.

[12] *The Oxford Compact English Dictionary*, ed. by Della Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 740.

[13] Christopher Hill, 'The Poor and the People in Seventeenth-Century England', *History From Below, Studies in Popular Protest and Popular Ideology*, ed. by Frederick Krantz (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp. 29-53 (p.34).

[14] Hill, 'The Poor and the People in Seventeenth-Century England', p. 31.

[15] Hill, 'The Poor and the People in Seventeenth-Century England', p. 43.

[16] Hill, 'The Poor and the People in Seventeenth-Century England', p. 44 and 31; 'the exclusion of women, children, servants and prentices from the vote', Hill explains, 'was justified on the assumption that they were "virtually represented" by the head of their household', p. 39.

[17] Hill, 'The Poor and the People in Seventeenth-Century England', p. 36 and 39.

[18] Hill, 'The Poor and the People in Seventeenth-Century England', p. 41.

[19] 'The nobles and gentry comprised all social ranks below the monarch down to' the gentlemen like 'members of the Inns who wrote plays', see Andrew Gurr's *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 60; the ordinary people comprised 'tailors, tinkers, cordwainers (shoemakers or leather-workers) and sailors', see Gurr's *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (p. 77); these

the representations of popular protests in early modern plays, I use the term 'mob' to denote an unruly crowd of a monarch's subjects and will argue that this type of crowd can include those subjects of 'gentle' status, too. As my use of the term 'crowd' includes people of different classes and levels of society, I will clarify the use of it in each chapter.

It is also important at this point to clarify why I focus in this thesis on the relation between the crowd and the individual. From now on, however, and purely for practical reasons, I will use the term 'hero' to denote any *individual character* in the crowd scene who bonds and *interacts* with the crowd. This is because the dramatised crowd is often depicted in relation to a character commonly *perceived* as 'heroic' for possessing qualities such as courage and eloquence, and who is reputable among the populace and famed for outstanding achievements (such as king Henry V, Thomas More, Bolingbroke). Some characters such as Coriolanus, Cleopatra, Brutus, and even Jack Cade, who do not fall into the category of 'hero' can be heroic in a different sense, as 'dramatic heroes', a matter that will be addressed in the section 'Crowd, Audience, and Dramatic Hierarchy'. I propose that the dramatisations of heroes and of their *relation* to crowds in crowd scenes, testify to the importance of the character of the crowd. For, as I will argue, crowd scenes demonstrate that a hero cannot exist and define him or herself without a crowd (an example being Cleopatra in the reported crowd scene, more commonly known as 'the barge scene' of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act 2.2).

Robert Weimann's rendering of the 'elements of Shakespeare's greatness' supports my view of the importance of theatrical relations in the crowd scene: 'the manifold elements of Shakespeare's greatness are to be found [...] at a point in the development of culture and literature that fostered a newly complex, but nonetheless balanced, relationship between individual creativity and communal activities'.[20] This study, therefore, puts a great emphasis on the interplay between heroes and crowds and on their *relationship*. Martin Buber's philosophical treatise *I and Thou* has been a driving thought behind this idea, and

were 'audiences of "stinkards"' (Gurr, p. 77), of the lowest in the social scale: 'cutpurses', harlots, the illiterate audience (Gurr, p. 78). See Annabel Patterson's *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 2 on conceptual and ideological division between the social classes in Shakespeare's England.

[20] Robert Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, ed. by Robert Schwartz (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p. xvii.

the philosophical cornerstone of my thesis.[21] Although Buber is not considered among cutting-edge critics, and might not be considered "fashionable", nevertheless, his concept 'I-Thou' is extremely helpful in reading Shakespearean drama.[22] It has been used in literary studies, but mainly in readings of poetry, and, to my knowledge, in Shakespeare studies Buber's notion of 'I-Thou' relation has been underestimated, and is yet to be acknowledged.[23] What is invaluable in Buber's treatise is its insight into human relations. Buber acknowledges and verbalises what, to my understanding, is fundamental in any type of human interaction, with the theatre being no exception: we exist and ultimately perceive ourselves in-and-within "relations". Buber's *I-Thou*, I must stress however, is not my theoretical tool. I consider it a timely work of "recognition" of what human beings are in essence. This is exactly how I understand Buber's his work and how it speaks to me: it utters what is salient, yet often taken for granted and, therefore, left unacknowledged.

Indeed, as Richard Allen Miller indicates, Buber was greatly influenced by 'the work of Ludwig Feuerback' which reminds us that 'the essence of humanity cannot be derived from understanding humans as individuals but rather as understanding humans in

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[21] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, tr. by Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937). There is a new translation of *I and Thou* by Walter Kaufmann (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1970), however, I use the original one because it is more poetic and clearer.

[22] Buber's concept 'I-Thou' has been used and applied widely and across various scholarly fields: conversation theory, see Richard Allen Miller's 'The Rehabilitating Role of Martin Buber's I-Thou Relationship In Rhetoric and Composition Studies' (doctoral dissertation, Bowling Green state Univ., 1999; abstract in UMI Microform 800-521-0600); psychotherapy, see for instance David J. Wallin's *Attachment in Psychotherapy* (New York: New York Guilford Press, 2007); Anne H. Bishop and John R. Scudder's *The Practical, Moral, and Personal Sense of Nursing – A Phenomenological Philosophy of Practice* (Albany: New York State University Press, 1990); literary and religious studies, see Jeffrey B. Berlin's 'Response and Impression: Encountering Concepts of Judaism and Zionism in the Unpublished Correspondence between Martin Buber and Stefan Zweig (1902-1931)', *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift*, 50 (2000) 333-60; Michael D. Oppenheim's 'Loving the Neighbor: Some reflections on Narcissism', *Modern Judaism*, 27 (2007), 47-71; David Forman-Barzilai's 'Agonism *in* Faith: Buber's Eternal Thou After the Holocaust', *Modern Judaism*, 23 (2003), 156-79 (esp. pp. 160-1 and 170); The fact that Buber's treatise influenced various scholarly reading, and continues to do so, testifies for its enduring momentum and independence, as it were, from trends in scholarly debates.

[23] Maurice M. Friedman, 'Martin Buber and Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogue of Voices and the Word That Is Spoken', *Religion and Literature*, 33 (2001), 25-36 (p. 25); Friedman focuses on the 'relation between Buber and Bakhtin', accounts for similarities and differences in their approaches, and argues that Bakhtin was influenced by Buber more than it has been acknowledged, p. 25. See also Ladislava Khailova's 'The Spiral Movement of the Old Woman's Rocking: Influence of Buber's Philosophy on Roethke's "Meditations of an Old Woman"', *ANQ*, 17 (2004) 45-53; Elizabeth Sargent and Garry Watson's 'D. H. Lawrence and the Dialogical Principle: "The Strange Reality of Otherness"', *College English*, 63 (2001), 409-36. Kris Salata's 'Toward the Non-(Re)presentational Actor: From Grotowski to Richards', *TDR: The Drama Review: A Journal of Performance Studies*, 52 (2008), 107-25; Marina Paola Banchetti-Robino's 'Hiroshi Kojima's Phenomenological Ontology', *Philosophy East and West: A Quarterly of Comparative Philosophy*, 58 (2008), 163-89 (esp. pp. 170-73).

relation'.[24] Buber's concept 'I-Thou', therefore, can help us better understand Shakespeare's dramatisations of the crowd scenes, and indeed his construction of his dramatic characters. Buber's *I-Thou* is relevant for us because its basic premise is that the fundamental form of reality is *the relation*, that everything exists within relation, and that the 'I' only truly exists in dialogue. According to Buber, our world and attitude is 'twofold', and these two are in accordance with two primary words, '*I-Thou*' and '*I-It*'.[25] These two primary words, Buber emphasises, are *combined* rather than isolated words: and the dash in both cases means 'affecting'.[26] Both words, he continues, 'do not signify things, but [...] relations' so that 'if *Thou* is said, the *I* of the combination *I-Thou* is said along with it', which means that when I say *Thou* I automatically say *I* -or when I acknowledge the other I acknowledge myself.[27] Therefore, only 'when a primary word is spoken the speaker enters the word and takes his stand in it.'[28]

Furthermore, these two primary words are different in that *I-It* is about experience, whilst *I-Thou* is about relation, and the relations he means are our relation to nature, with men and with 'the intelligible forms'.[29] As an example he suggests to consider a tree as an object. While we are watching and considering it, we 'become bound up in relation to it. The tree is now no longer *It*' because we 'have been seized by the power of exclusiveness'.[30] Most importantly, it is 'the *relation* [my italics] in which' we stand that 'is real, for it affects' us, and we affect it; paradoxically, then, to be in a relation is to be juxtaposed to something and *affected* by it.[31] Thus, 'man meets what exists and becomes as what is over against him.'[32] I suggest that this is partly Coriolanus' problem. As I shall argue in Chapter 1, his denial of the relation with the people, his rejection of words, accompanied by his inability to internalise his feelings, are what makes him a tragic figure. He does not recognise his *Thou*, which *is* the people, and denies that he is composed of his

[24] See Miller's 'The Rehabilitating Role of Martin Buber's I-Thou relationship in Rhetoric and Composition Studies', p. 46.
[25] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 3.
[26] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 22.
[27] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 3.
[28] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 4.
[29] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 6. Of course, it is commonly known that Buber's primary concern is man's relation to God. However, this does not affect my reading and application of his 'I-Thou' concept because Buber does not underestimate other more "mundane" relationships. In other words, in Buber's treatise *I and Thou* this essential relationship, between man and God, does not negate the existence and significance of other "worldly" relationships. Regardless of the fact whether we are aware that we exist and function within relations, they are a key part of the world we live and function in. My focus is on these relations.
[30] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 7.
[31] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 10.
[32] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 32.

relations with others. Paradoxically, however, with his denial he acknowledges that relation, and the people's impact upon it. This illustrates why Buber's idea is especially useful for our reading of crowd scenes.

When applied to the theatrical setting (a performance witnessed by an audience) it suggests, of course, that staged characters are *only* realised, and therefore recognised, 'in the lived relations', that is, during the performance. When it is further narrowed down to the crowd scenes, we realise that our understanding of the dramatised hero and crowd is only fully accomplished when we understand, and acknowledge, the relation between them. So, the relation as Buber understands it, is not only apparent, but inherent to crowd scenes. It is this non-tangible outcome of interaction between staged characters, and the network of these different theatrical relations, that makes up, so to speak, the 'theatrical' DNA of the Shakespearean crowd scene. As such, this study invites viewing a crowd scene through its relations, and as a form of a dialogue between the stage and its 'Thou', which is the audience. As Buber puts it, 'I become through my relation to the *Thou*; as I become *I*, I say *Thou*'.[33] That is, the play is a play only when it is performed and witnessed by an audience. It lives only in the moment of the performance, that is, when it is in *relation*. This all implies that there is an analogy between a theatrical occasion and a crowd scene, and between the stage and the audience. A crowd scene can thus be seen as an embodiment par excellence of the dynamics and the dialogue between the stage and the audience.

The implication behind this approach is that 'knowledge comes about, a work is achieved, and image and symbol made, in the midst of living beings': 'the nature of the act of knowledge [... is] real and effective *between* men".[34] The performance, therefore, is the dash of the '*I-Thou*' relation; it is 'effective' when it is shared '*between* men'. Thus, this in-between-space, the space of relations, is our key point of interest in analysing crowd scenes. Moreover, if we take *Thou* to be the audience, and 'the world of *It*' the performance, we recognise that through our response to the performance (watching it) we bind ourselves to it, and we participate in it; and the recognition that the audience acquires in a crowd scene is that they are part of it. More will be said of this effect later. For now, we need to remember that a crowd scene is more than just a dramatisation of an encounter between a crowd and a hero. It is the moment of confrontation between the stage and the

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[33] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 11. Buber sees 'I-Thou' as 'the primary word' and argues that 'the primary word *I-Thou* can be spoken only with the whole being. Concentration and fusion into the whole being can never take place through my agency, nor can it ever take place without me', p. 11.

[34] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 41.

audience. It is built upon an intricate web of relations, internal (those that the play portrays between crowd and hero) and external (those that the theatrical occasion provokes, between the members of the audience and the performance). This brings me to the crux of my argument, which is that crowd scenes function primarily as *theatrical spaces*, or *contexts*. In these spaces, a character's uniqueness and dependence on social and political relationships is made known, reviewed and scrutinised. The crowd scenes set up, too, *a context* in which the audience directly converses with the stage. This pronounced emphasis on the interactive aspect of the crowd scenes, examined through the representations of the relationship between people and individual, further illustrates why crowd scenes remain relevant and deserve further, detailed examination.

## Crowd Scene In and As Theatrical Context

We all have an experience of being a part of a crowd (as a crowd in a theatre, a crowd of protesters, or a football crowd); we all exist in and through relationships (with our friends, family, and partners); we define ourselves, and our uniqueness through our relation to other human beings and through their responses to us. Finally, we all have witnessed the momentousness of crowd scenes in our own day. One example is the recent Inauguration Day of the American president Barack Obama, which most of us witnessed by watching it on television. This moment of public confirmation of power is witnessed by a huge crowd of people; entertainment is provided for the crowd and for the newly elected president; the president directly addresses the crowd confirming his promise to serve the country and the people, and the crowd responds with cheers, and of course with their presence. The presence of millions of people gathered together is important on a symbolic level: it conveys the popular approval of the current government and the president. This, I hope to demonstrate, is similar to what happens in early modern public ceremonies and spectacles.[35] The dynamic between the crowd and the hero, indeed, bears witness and authenticates the importance of the people in the political arena. This will be discussed in detail in relation to representations of early modern public spectacles in Chapter 3.

[35] As Steven Mullaney indicates in *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), early modern spectacles 'whether royal, civic or ecclesiastic' were spectacles of power, too, p. 24; for more see 'Toward a Rhetoric of Space in Elizabethan London': *The Place of the Stage*, pp. 1-26. This will be a main concern of Chapter 3.

Furthermore, the American election campaign trail that precedes the election and inauguration is an example of the importance of maintaining good and healthy relations with the people. Without public support the candidate will not succeed in gaining power. Of course, whilst modern day voters constitute an 'electorate', early modern people did not; and yet 'the fact that early modern England was not a democracy should not lead us to conclude that it was non-participatory'.[36] The presence of the common people in a public spectacle, such as Queen Elizabeth I'st annual progresses, had a *symbolic* significance. Nevertheless, the people's hope and approval of the president's governance is confirmed on the Inauguration Day. The day, therefore, illustrates a modern crowd scene, which is as theatrical and as important a political manoeuvre as was any public spectacle with a political agenda, covert or overt, in early modern England. As Harris notes,

> both central and local authorities frequently called on the people to occupy public space in order to endorse their acts and to confirm the legitimacy of their rule. Crowds would be invited to celebrate the accession of a new monarch, royal coronations, political anniversaries, hear royal proclamations, witness royal entries or civic inaugurations, watch public executions, and even participate in imposing justice on convicted criminals[37]

To assert their power, therefore, kings required a 'stage' and auditorium. They needed the presence of the people, or the crowd. This crowd of course included the ordinary people, which implies that the common men had some power in the political arena. Harris argues that contrary to the opinion that the common people had but a peripheral or in fact no role in politics, they did play a part: they were 'politicised' and not entirely 'excluded' from politics.[38] The way in which the people were able to exercise power, he suggests, was for example through access to 'the political press' (some common men were literate, but those who were not, he indicates, were informed of the current politics and policies by word of mouth). Furthermore, the people accessed politics also by attending sermons, as well as

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[36] Harris, Introduction to *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, p. 11. For more see Mark Goldie's 'The Unacknowledged Republic: Officeholding in Early Modern England' in *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, ed. by Tim Harris (Basingstoke: Palgrave Publishers Ltd., 2001), pp. 153-95.
[37] See Harris's Introduction to *The Politics of Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, p. 13
[38] See Harris's Introduction to *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, p. 8-9.

through rumours and libels, and they also had their say in public protests 'such as anti-enclosure riots'.[39]

John Walter's meticulous study of the early modern crowds and their role in politics, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, supports the view that the ordinary people were not entirely excluded from politics, but indeed participated in it.[40] He insists, rightly, that scholarly debates on crowds should not be 'dependent on the (mis)perceptions of their elite contemporaries', but should focus on the crowds' local/provincial actions, or the 'smaller-scale actions'.[41] Walter indicates how creative and inventive the crowds were in their manipulation of, or relation to, the authority. For instance, with their use of the 'skimmington', a 'ritualised shaming action', they attempted 'to shame magistrates to enforce the laws by returning to them the grain that the people had prevented being moved out of the region'.[42] Hence, in order to grasp fully 'the political meaning of crowd action' and 'the exercise of a popular agency' in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Walter suggests to pay attention to crowds' 'smaller-scale actions' and protests.[43] Interestingly, he also indicates that in their protests (for food, or agrarian reforms) crowds did not necessarily fight against their monarchs, and that they in fact did not question their *obedient* position.[44] This will be a key concern of Chapter 4. John Walter, and Mike Braddick, argue that crowds in fact 'were negotiating the terms, rather than the fact, of their subordination.'[45] That is, crowds did not seek to change the hierarchical system but were, as Walter's study shows, petitioning to the Crown and magistrates for

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[39] See Harris's Introduction to *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, p. 9. For a detailed account see *The Politics of the Excluded.*

[40] John Walter, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

[41] Walter, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, p. 6.

[42] Walter, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, p. 23-24; Walter explains: 'the skimmington was an English variant' of the ritualised shaming action 'the *charivari*' introduced through 'the works of historians Martin Ingram and Natalie Zemon Davis', p. 23.

[43] Walter, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, p. 9 and 6. Walter adds: 'The label "riot" is itself a reflection of the fact that it was usually authority that was the first and [...] often the only, "historian" of protest', p. 8.

[44] Walter, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, p. 2.

[45] Michael J. Braddick and John Walter, Introduction to *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy and Subordination in Britain and Ireland*, ed. by Michael J. Braddick and John Walter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 42. In *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, Walter points out that 'the crowds derived [legitimacy] from their powerful expectations about the proper exercise of authority from the "good king" or within the discourse of "good lordship"', p. 16. Riotous crowds represented, therefore, a potent reminder of the authorities' responsibilities to the people, and in their actions demanded 'a public acknowledgment of the responsibilities of power', p. 10.

their rights.[46] They 'claimed an agency to police the worlds in which they lived and to interrogate the exercise of power. Not only did they represent an attempt to negotiate the exercise of power over their lives locally, but the terms by which they did so, drawing on public transcripts for their legitimation, reflected a larger political awareness'.[47] Whilst this information is valuable for our understanding of what role the ordinary people played in early modern society (specifically for Chapter 4, which discusses the representations of the mob), our concern, nevertheless, remains with the *symbolic role of the crowd* in *public encounters*, and particularly, how it was dramatically rendered on early modern stage.

In these encounters, the people's physical presence in large numbers was important because it declared power, both theirs and that of the royal figure. By this I mean that actual 'numbers' accounted for the *amount* of public support for the king. Their physical presence empowered both the king and the people. Specifically, the monarch had power already, but he or she required confirmation. So, the fact that the people were 'asked' to confirm it with their presence conveyed their symbolic power, to approve or disapprove. Nevertheless, such 'public rallies in support of the government - even if they were carefully orchestrated (or at least sponsored) from above [...] served to offer confirmation that those in power were fulfilling their divinely ordained task'.[48] Most importantly, 'encouraging crowd celebrations could be a form of propaganda, in other words, a way of announcing to the nation at large that the government had public opinion on its side, even when it perhaps did not'.[49] As much as these public encounters were meaningful in the politics of early modern society they were significant in theatrical occasions. In other words, whilst real life crowd scenes had a symbolic role, dramatic crowd scenes had a substantial dramaturgical role. What this thesis will insist on is that crowd scenes *confirmed* and *celebrated* the presence of the audience and in doing so they stated the audience's role and *authority* in the theatre, during the theatrical performance.

**Crowd: In Retrospect and Context**

[46] Walter, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, p. 2. For detailed examples of crowds' petitions, see Walter's 'Popular Culture and Popular Protest': *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, p. 20.
[47] Walter, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*, p. 11.
[48] Harris, *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, p. 13-14.
[49] Harris, *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, p. 14.

Before we engage with this debate, however, we shall look back at the historical discourse on crowds, as well as critical interpretations of crowds in early modern theatre, and examine how far early modern attitudes to crowds are mirrored in their representations on the early modern stage.[50] Throughout history, crowds were commonly scorned and humiliated for their fickleness and changeable nature. In *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti*, J. S. McClelland talks rather factually about 'the careful cultivation of patrician contempt for the common people [or the *plebs*] as a spineless crowd or a deluded mob'.[51] He explains,

> the medieval church was always quick to remind itself that the crowd had freed Barabbas and condemned Christ. From the Renaissance onwards, the defence of the idea of the republic was linked to a deconstruction of Livy's account of the Roman people as a rabble roused by demagogues; this tradition is clear through Machiavelli, seventeenth-century English republicanism, through Montesquieu right up to the revolutionary period in Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century, though the story of the transition from King Mob to revolutionary crowd is a complex one.[52]

C. A. Patrides's '"The Beast with Many Heads": Renaissance Views on the Multitude' gives a concise account of negative attitudes towards the crowds, but Partrides stresses that, nevertheless, he is 'not persuaded that Shakespeare entertained an excessive "hatred" of the multitude'.[53] The late sixteenth and seventeenth century writings echo the traditional antagonism towards the common people. *Of Wisdome* written by a French doctor of law Pierre Charron, illustrates a typical anti-crowd discourse:

> THE people [...] are a strange beast with many heads [...] inconstant and variable, without stay, like the waves of the sea; they are moved and appeased [...] they runne alwaies one contrary to another [...]. To conclude, the people are a savage beast [...]. the mother of ignorance, injustice, inconstancie, idolatrie, vanitie, which never yet could be pleased [...] their mot is, *Vox populi, vox Dei; The voyce of the people is the voyce of* God: but we may say,

[50] My title for this section was inspired by Lewis Mumford's title 'Retrospect and Prospect': *The City in History* (London: Pelican Books, 1973), p. 655.
[51] J. S. McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 2
[52] McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 2.
[53] See C. A Patrides's '"The Beast with Many Heads": Renaissance Views on the Multitude', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 16 (1965), 241-46, p. 243.

> *Vox populi, vox stultorum; The voyce of the people is the voyce of fooles.* [54]

Another typical example of the age is the estimation of the renowned French scholar and 'great' sage of the modern world, Michel de Montaigne.[55] He cannot, it seems, but look down upon the common men. For instance, in his essay 'On the inequality there is between us' he argues that rather than clothes or degree, it is intelligence and wisdom that separates us as human beings.[56] Noteworthy here is that whilst arguing what qualities can make an individual, intellectually and as a human being, superior 'miles above kingdoms and dukedoms', Montaigne in fact calls attention to the crowd.[57] To put his point across he decides to contrast the man who possesses admirable qualities such as wisdom and self-control with the mob: 'Compare with him the mass of men nowdays, senseless, base, servile, unstable, continually bobbing about in a storm of conflicting passions which drive them hither and thither, men totally dependent upon others: they are farther apart than earth and sky'.[58] The individual man's self-control is directly contrasted with the crowd's 'senseless' behaviour and 'conflicting passions', all what the author abhors. However, whilst in this comparison Montaigne clearly articulates hostility towards a crowd and its 'base' and 'servile' nature, intentionally or not he signals its momentum. He implies that we would not be able to recognise the perfection of this paradigmatic individual if there was not this base 'mass of men'. Again, this example highlights the fact that our opinions are based on and reside in relations. More importantly, it demonstrates the significance of the presence of the crowd. In other words, Monataigne's exemplary individual can be distinguished, or acknowledged only when it is opposed to, that is, *set in relation* 'to the mass of men'.

Another critical study which acknowledges the importance of (dramatic, theatrical) *relations* is Bryan Reynolds' *Becoming Criminal: Transversal Performance and Cultural Dissidence in Early Modern England.* It specifically seeks 'comprehension of the

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[54] Pierre Charron, *Of Wisdome three bookes written in French by Peter Charro[n] Doctr of Lawe in Paris*, tr. by Samson Lenard (London: Edward Blount & Will: Aspley, 1640), p. 208 and 211.
[55] M. A. Screech, *Michel de Montaigne, The Complete Essays*, tr. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. xiii.
[56] *Michel de Montaigne, The Complete Essays*: 'On the inequality there is between us', tr. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Books, 1991), pp. 288-99.
[57] *Michel de Montaigne, The Complete Essays*: 'On the inequality there is between us', p. 290.
[58] *Michel de Montaigne, The Complete Essays*: 'On the inequality there is between us', p. 290.

subject matter's fluid, plural, and evolving relationships to its own parts and to the greater environments of which it is part', and examines the early modern criminal culture employing a method that Reynolds calls the 'investigative-expansive mode'.[59] More importantly, the mode operates 'according to transversal theory, that pursues comprehension of the *relationships* [my italics] between the things [...] rather than an absolute meaning or an absolute cause'.[60] Thus, as 'an alternative to the methodology characteristic of most dialectical argumentation' Reynolds offers 'this analytical approach [that] first breaks its subject matter into constituent parts and then categorizes and examines those parts with the goal of reassembling them into a unified and accountable whole'.[61] My approach in this study relates to Reynold's in that it distances itself from critical approaches that are based on 'dialectical argumentation'. Instead, it puts an emphasis on *relationships* between the parts, but the parts that I will focus on are those of crowd and hero, and most importantly, stage and audience. My focus on these specific parts resides in my interest in crowd scenes, which I view as dramatic contexts. As such my research invites critical enquiry into the dramatically rendered crowd as a figure that is not and cannot be easily categorised, but which needs to be understood through its relations and *dramatic part.* Crowd scenes, indeed, demand this approach.

As Annabel Patterson points out: 'Elizabethan underclasses were [not] deliberately represented in the plays as ignorant groundlings [...] dependent clowns in courtly households, and unsavory crowds in the street'.[62] In relation to this issue, it must be pointed out, this thesis reconsiders the conventional view that early modern drama was the product and instrument of a culture of repression and class war. In 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion' Stephen Greenblatt argues that once 'intention, genre, and historical situation' are 'engaged in a living work of art', they 'cannot be neutral – "pure," free-floating signifiers – for they are already, by their very existence, specific points of view on the world'.[63] Thus, when representing a rebellion, Greenblatt explains, 'it

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[59] Bryan Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal: Transversal Performance and Cultural Dissidence in Early Modern England* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2002), p. 5.
[60] Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal*, p. 126. Reynolds points out that he developed this mode of analysis 'with the help of cognitive neuroscientist James Intriligator', p. 4.
[61] Reynolds, p. 4. Moreover, Reynolds insists that the 'history' he pursues 'is that of the relationships between the criminal culture's representation, the processes of identity formation and subjectification with which the populace had to cope, and the general circulation of socio-political power that made this period in English history so exceptionally innovative and transformational' p. 8.
[62] Annabel Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 5.
[63] Stephen Greenblatt, 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion', *Representations*, 1 (1983), 1-29 (p. 13-14).

is in the context of this hatred [between the poor and the rich], and of its ally, fear, that we must attempt to understand the frequent representations in Elizabethan literature of the victory of the forces of property, order, and true religion over the many-headed monster'.[64] Naturally, then, this implies that an early modern work of art will reflect this fear and accordingly portray the rebellious "multitude" as the main source of fear, thus always in a negative light.

This assertion is true to an extent, for, the artists of the time, including Shakespeare, did echo this fear in their portrayals of rebellious crowds (for instance, the crowd in *Julius Caesar* provokes precisely such fear). Nevertheless, as Andrew Hadfield acknowledges, 'few would dispute that powerful groups dominate cultural production, but', he rightly points out, 'it does not follow from this that they can determine consciousness as straightforwardly. Everyone exists within ideological formations, *but* [my italics] there is still room for argument, including political argument'.[65] Moreover, Julie Sanders's study into debates about 'republicanism' in early modern England is invaluable for this study; Sanders convincingly argues that 'the crucial role of the populace was acknowledged by certain schools of political thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', and this issue was, directly or indirectly, reflected and explored by dramatists such as Shakespeare and Jonson.[66] In addition, what Sanders says about Jonson can be applied to Shakespeare. She writes:

> He was not producing dramatic calls to arms aimed at the London populace who would see his plays; that much is clear. Like his political mentor Justus Lipsius, he dealt with republican issues on a largely theoretical and hypothetical basis. Jonson's plays are not manuals for political activism, but neither are they royalist

[64] Greenblatt, 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion', p. 15. Greenblatt adds: 'Instead of depicting the ordinary operation of the law [...] English artists most often narrate events at once more menacing and more socially prestigious, events colored by the feudal fantasies in which the sixteenth-century gentry dressed their craving for honor. Thus instead of the assizes and a hempen rope, we have tales of mass rebellion and knightly victories' (p. 15).

[65] Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 9. In this persuasive study of republicanism in Shakespeare's time, Hadfield argues that Shakespeare was 'a highly politicised and radical thinker, interested in republicanism', p. 13. For more on Shakespeare's republicanism see for instance Hadfield's 'Introduction II: Shakespeare's early republican career': *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, p. 102. Hadfield suggests that Shakespeare was 'a radical author all the more likely to produce exciting theatrical works that challenged received conventions and analysed topical subjects', p. 101.

[66] Julie Sanders, *Ben Jonson's Theatrical Republics* (London: Macmillan Press, 1998), p. 28.

> propaganda that dismissed the politics of the masses (as might be believed from the readings produced by Goldberg and others)[67]

As Greenblatt also points out, we cannot 'rule out this possibility, one that satisfies a perennial longing since Romanticism to discover that all great artists have allied themselves, if only indirectly or unconsciously, with the oppressed and revolutionary masses'.[68] This in fact is not a minor point and demands attention. Whether Shakespeare 'allied' himself with 'the oppressed' is less significant. What matters more and what is latent in Greenblatt's words, is that the representations of the crowds in early modern drama could have moments in which they, the 'oppressed', the dramatised 'multitude', were not represented as beasts and as a source of fear. This thesis is interested in these moments. 'The demonised elements in Elizabethan culture – for example, masterless men – are, quite precisely, *identified* as such in order to ratify the exercise of power, but once identified they are also there as a force to be self-identified'.[69] This thesis argues that 'the demonised elements of Elizabethan culture' simply could not have been demonised in every single dramatic representation.[70] As dramatic characters, they have a dramatic

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[67] Sanders's *Ben Jonson's Theatrical Republics*, p. 27; Sanders here refers to Jonson's representation of the crowd scene in *Sejanus* (act 5); nevertheless, her point that 'the politics of masses' in early modern drama cannot be dismissed is of course relevant for any crowd scene which features a dangerous and violent crowd. Indeed, Jonson was interested in the role of the populace just as Shakespeare was. Sanders and Hadfield's studies, therefore, implicitly point to the missing link in the literary studies of early modern drama: 'the political multitude' and, indeed, their dramatic part on stage (Sanders's phrase in *Ben Jonson's Theatrical Republics*, p. 28).

[68] Greenblatt, 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion', p. 11.

[69] Jonathan Dollimore's Introduction: 'Shakespeare, cultural materialism and the new historicism' to *Political Shakespeare: New essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), p. 12.

[70] As Hadfield reminds us: 'there is a danger that the dominant-subordinate model tends to fix political positions as "pro" or "anti" the establishment when they may not fit into this binary model so easily', see Hadfield's *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, p. 10. See also Alison Thorne's 'There is a history in all men's lives: reinventing history in *2 Henry IV*': *Shakespeare's histories and counter-histories*, ed. by Dermot Cavanagh, Stuart Hampton-Reeves, and Stephen Longstaffe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 49-66, in which Thorne gives us an insight into 'the status of rumour and its relation to recorded history' (p. 53), and informs us of alternative 'recordings' of history: of the 'imaginative reshapings of the past' and 'the fictional narratives we invent in order to make the past intelligible (and palatable) to ourselves' (p. 64). She explains: 'the memory from which oral history was woven were usually high selective in what they retained or discarded from the past; they embodied an idiosyncratic perspective on bygone ages *that rarely coincided with establishment views* [my italics] and that tended to become further distorted and embellished in the process of oral transmission. In this sense, popular historical narratives were never bound by the same protocols as their written or printed counterparts' (p. 55). What is implicit here, then, is the idea that not every perspective, every representation or every form of cultural recording was "shaped" by the culture of repression. Indeed, this is reflected, more than anywhere else, in Shakespeare's representations of crowds and common men.

function on the stage, not only 'to ratify the exercise of power', but also to represent crowd as it is (consisting of individuals).

Furthermore, 'artistic form itself', Greenblatt argues, 'is the expression of social evaluations and practices'; and 'theatricality [...] is not set over against power but is one of power's essential modes'.[71] And yet, if it were true for every dramatic representation – if early modern drama was an instrument of oppression at all times - then there would be in fact no need to examine Shakespeare's representations of the crowd. Indeed, had Shakespeare simply reflected the authorities' discourse about crowds, then every play would feature the same type of crowd – such as the violent and ignorant multitude of *Julius Caesar*. Hadfield's following remark could help us better understand this point; he writes: 'Cicero's point is that if the language of monarchy is accepted as valid currency, then the arguments will start to shift in that direction and away from the freedoms that the republic worked so hard to introduce'.[72] If we apply this logic and take the official discourse about crowds in Shakespeare's time as the only existing crowd-discourse on the social and cultural platform (including drama, of course), then we run the risk of underestimating the only institution of the time which still could exercise some liberty in its representations: the public theatre.[73] Inevitably, then, we would overlook the *dramatic input* of some of the most important of Shakespeare's characters: crowds of subjects and rebels without whom kings would not be kings, and without whom heroes could not be perceived heroic. In short, Shakespeare's crowds were not and simply could not have been a mere replica of how the authorities portrayed them.

Shakespeare, of course, was not a politician, but a dramatist and an artist whose representations of crowds could not always coincide with those of the authorities. 'Radical subversiveness', as Dollimore indicates, 'is defined as not merely the attempt to seize existing authority, but as a challenge to the principles upon which authority is based'[74]. The

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[71] Stephen Greenblatt, 'Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and Its Subversion, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*', in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp. 18-47 (p. 33).

[72] Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, p. 162.

[73] The role of the theatre and theatrical setting in the playwright's representations will be discussed in detail in the section 'Crowd, Audience, and Dramatic Hierarchy' on p. xxv.

[74] Dollimore, Introduction: Shakespeare, cultural materialism and the new historicism, *Political Shakespeare: New essays in Cultural Materialism*, p. 13. Sanders sees the public theatre plays as texts which 'contain [...] *potential* [my italics] for more radical and subversive social and political critique', see Sanders's *Ben Jonson's Theatrical Republics*, p. 2. Indeed, even if this 'potential' critique is not realised or overtly articulated, it is present and therefore potent, and cannot be ignored. 'The language(s) of republicanism

point is that at times Shakespeare does challenge the authorities' portrayals of crowds in a simple but effective way: by representing *different* types of crowds. Indeed, his dramatisations of crowds show that not all crowds are (and not every member of a crowd is) devoid of sense or humanity. This will become more clear with our discussion in chapter 5.

As an artist Shakespeare may have been either prompted by need to make all his characters, including crowds, appealing to the audience, and worthy of their spot on the stage – to make us laugh, or to think, and so on. He might also have been prompted by a desire to represent the world around him as close as possible to what it was: multi-dimensional. In doing this through his dramatisations of crowd, he indeed subtly challenged the conventionally demonic representations of crowd. Finally, his representations of crowds, and his tendency to grant this multi-dimensional aspect even to the character of the crowd, are invaluable in that they give us an insight in his artistic style. Shakespeare was systematic and almost scientific in that he analyses and evaluates the parts of the body (i.e. members of crowd, individuals in crowds) to help us better understand how the whole body works. His way of characterisation indicates that the staged crowd is a complex character, and a complex social and cultural phenomenon. Shakespeare was not a "revolutionist" or a "radical" in a real sense of the word, and not in a political sense, but as an artist as a creator of his characters he was a "creatively reactive": true to his vision and his understanding of the world around him, experimental, thoughtful and thoroughgoing. By intuition and conviction he was an avant-garde author for his time (rather than being merely the authorities' mouthpiece).

Sanders and Hadfield's studies of 'republicanism' in early modern drama are crucial for our reading of crowds in that they seem to imply that the interest of dramatists (such as Jonson and Shakespeare) in ideas and language of republicanism reveals also, or inevitably, their interest in the populace and its role in politics. What is, then, emerging, or becoming apparent in literary discussions about state, politics and society, is that the character of the crowd is now of vital interest, and that literary discussions of early modern drama should be more, to use Sanders's phrase, 'populace-aware' or 'populace-orientated'.[75] Literary

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offered not a viable political alternative but a means of discussing potential alterations and improvements that might be made, both politically and socially', see Sanders's *Ben Jonson's Theatrical Republics*, p. 7.

[75] Sanders, *Ben Jonson's Theatrical Republics*, p. 16 and 14. Stephen Longstaffe draws a link between the and representations of crowds and the early modern political life. He rightly points out that literary studies on 'early modern English radicalism' has been centred 'on its rationality, mindful of the persistence of *hostile*

studies, nevertheless, have been engaged with the question of whether Shakespeare's representations of the populace reflected the attitudes of his time, whether he was sympathetic towards the common men, or conversely, rather adverse. In 'Literature and Social Disintegration' Thomas Brents Stirling notes that 'traditional criticism has done its best to find' Shakespeare's 'view of the populace either humane and wholesome or else judicious because it followed convention'; however, he notes, that the dramatist's view 'was conventional cannot be questioned, except for the reminder that some other dramatists were more generous to the common people'.[76] My position on this is that neither is the case, nor should it be our main concern, because as we shall see, rather than a one-sided portrayal of the people, Shakespeare's is always a complex one, and this complexity is always related to the dramatic purpose of the crowd and the crowd scene. Moreover, my reading aims to demonstrate that the nature of crowd scenes *rejects* biased representations, and binary interpretations which read the character of the crowd as either positive or negative, likeable or not likeable. In other words, rather than dwelling on the question whether the playwright liked the people or not in his private life, what is relevant for us is how Shakespeare used the crowds and utilised their presence in his onstage debates.

Taking all this into account, therefore, I suggest that it is unlikely that we can ever discern what Shakespeare's 'real' standpoint towards crowds was; only after reading one play that stages the crowd, such as *2 Henry VI*, do we realise that there is no straightforward answer.[77] A simple vindication is not possible because the people are not merely good or bad, but they simply *are*, and our concern is what they represent on the stage. Thus, whatever the playwright's intentions might be, his representations of the crowd scenes demonstrate that he is not judgemental and his approach is not polarised towards one side only, either aristocratic and elitist or common and popular. His mind does not engage simply with the dialectic between good or bad, between one and many, but rather with the *interaction* between the two (or more), and with subtle nuances that affect and create this

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*representations of the commons-in-politics as crowd or mob* [my italics]', thus overlooking a 'more utopian side' of the plebeian 'festive culture': 'the symbolic nature of some of its permitted actions encompassed inversion, parody, doubleness and travesty', and consequently overlooking the significance of the 'relationship between the carnivalesque and commons political action [...] for the history play'; see Stephen Longstaffe's 'The commons will revolt: *Woodstock* after the Peasants' Revolt', in *Shakespeare's histories and counter-histories*, ed. by Dermot Cavanagh, Stuart Hampton-Reeves and Stephen Longstaffe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 135-51 (p. 136).

[76] Thomas Brents Stirling, *The Populace in Shakespeare* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), p.182.

[77] 'Not only were his plays hardly a direct expression of Shakespeare's innermost convictions, they were also often written in collaboration with other writers'; Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, p. 230.

dynamic between them. As a consequence, his characters on stage, including the character of the crowd, defy any type of categorisation or polarisation. So, Shakespeare was in tune with the reality, a reality which, indeed, is not different from our own, and which meant that people can be not only violent, but also just - that their (re)action, for instance in the form of popular protest, can be justified, as in the case of the plebeians' food riot in *Coriolanus*. Shakespeare, therefore, does not have a uniform attitude towards the crowd. His crowd, as we shall see, emphatically resists generalisation. Indeed, even though early modern writings disdained crowds because of potential threats to public order, the fact is that we also have early modern accounts which record events that portray the common men who were not of one mind and who were even able in skills of eloquence to match their superiors; my discussion of Act 4.1 in *Henry V* will demonstrate this.

One such example, noted by Andy Wood in 'Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye': Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640' is the plebeian resistance in Lavenham in May 1525.[78] He writes, 'a crowd of some thousands, composed of weavers, farmers and labourers' gathered, in a resistance to grants required by the authorities 'for the furniture of' Henry VIII's 'foreign adventures'.[79] When the representatives of Lavenham's 'folk' met with the noble authority, 'a large number of them came to meet the lords, and began, with the characteristic indiscretion of the ignorant, to speak all at the same time like a flock of geese in corn'.[80] Typically, the 'folk' are given animalistic attributes and depicted as a 'flock' of noisy geese. By early modern standards this depiction of the people was not overtly derogatory. The protesters, nevertheless, 'chose to accord' and submit in the end.[81] The lords invited the angry men to explain their grievances, and a weaver, named John Grene responded so eloquently that in the end the commons were forgiven. According to Griffith's record Grene was 'an articulate man, who so impressed one attorney present at Lavenham that he informed Griffith that "no four of the ablest lawyers in the kingdom,

[78] See Wood's '"Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye": Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640'.
[79] First and third quotation is from Wood's '"Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye": Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640', p. 67; and the second is from R. Holinshed's *Chronicle of England, Scotland and Ireland*, 6 vols (London, 1807-8), III, p. 709.
[80] In '"Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye": Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640': *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, Wood notes that this is based upon 'Griffith's account' (p. 68): see *HMC, Welsh MSS*, I, ii-iv, supplemented by E. Hall, *Chronicle of the History of England during the Reign of Henry IV and the succeeding Monarchs, to the end of the Reign of Henry VIII* (London: Printed for J. Johnson and others, 1809), pp. 696-702; R. Holinshed, *Chronicles: England, Scotland and Ireland*, p. 709-10.
[81] Wood, '"Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye": Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640', p. 68.

even after a week's consultation, could make an answer so meet as did the weaver within less than two hours' space"'.[82]

The significance of this account for us is that it demonstrates that common men and demotic colloquialism do not always go hand in hand. More importantly, Shakespeare's representations reflect this as well. He, too, portrays individuals in the crowd who show Grene's skills in persuasion and argumentation, which is the subject of the last two chapters in this thesis. Moreover, because of its dramatic role, Shakespeare's crowd does not always have 'one mind' and is not always homogenous. This aspect cannot be underestimated and, as I shall argue, precisely for dramatic purposes crowds in Shakespeare's plays are often split (not unified) and individualised (individual members of the crowd can be identified by their name, by number, or by their dissident opinions). This study, therefore, calls for a detailed examination of the dramatist's reasons behind this aspect of his drama, and as such its goal is to unravel the dramatic purpose of staged crowds. Put simply, Shakespeare's representations of crowd show that he was impartial towards the 'commonality'.[83] In fact, even when he was using typical early modern vocabulary about crowds, Shakespeare was able to challenge and subvert it. This is particularly examined in chapter 4.

Wood's study illustrates further early modern attitudes towards the people:[84]

> Hierarchical categories simultaneously distinguished the gentry and nobility from 'the *plebs*', and validated that distinction. The gentry believed themselves to be discriminated by their honour, civility, rationality and culture because they knew 'the commons' or 'the *plebs*' [...] to be collectively devoid of those qualities. In its most extreme manifestation, patriarchalism led gentlemen to attribute animalistic qualities to those beneath them, especially when in rebellion. At its least extreme, it encouraged a set of paternal images: the gentleman as a kindly father; tenants and labourers as occasionally unruly children [...]. Gentle complainants to the Jacobean Court of Star Chamber combined hauteur and fear in their description of rioters: "a multitude of the common people" [...] "the

[82] In '"Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye': Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640': *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, p. 69, Wood quotes Hall, *Chronicle*, p. 700. Griffith gives Grene's response as follows: 'they knew no captain other than Poverty, which caused them to rise and do that which was not lawful for them to do': *HMC, Welsh MSS*, I, iv.

[83] That is, his representations of the crowd on the stage were *impartial*, but whether the dramatist was impartial, antagonistic or sympathetic towards the crowd we do not know.

[84] Wood, '"Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye": Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640', p. 72.

> rude and ignorant multitude"; "the basest and unrulye people"; the "vulgar sort".[85]

What is interesting here, however, and which is also common in early modern writings, is that when the people are discussed they are more often than not talked about as a *crowd*. This term, as is the case with the term 'mob', 'multitude', 'many headed monster', was derogatory but also revealed a fear of their 'collective voice': it posed a threat to authority and public order, and accordingly elites sought 'to prevent subordinates from acquiring' it.[86] In the theatre the situation was different, however; and Weimann's point on why the representations of 'terror' on the stage was acceptable can also explain why the staged crowd was acceptable, too. 'Terror', he writes, when 'playfully experienced acts as a charm against real terror, or at least reduces some of its more formidable dimensions'.[87]

The term 'crowd', then, came to symbolise disorder, disobedience and threat to everything rational; ultimately in the eyes of the authority it posed a danger to hierarchically ordained society. Shakespeare, as we shall see, is not immune to this problem, or to the accepted perception of the crowd: he did not approve of violence and of violent uprising and violent crowds, but this does not necessarily mean that he was anti-populist. What needs to be emphasised is that he does not have much sympathy for those who create chaos and disorder, whether the authority figure or the ordinary people. His dramatisations of crowds, however, show that he does not prevent crowds from having a voice. The characters representing the common people such as 'the simple countrymen, the nurse, the clowns, and fools, were figures not altogether of the past, but, at least in part, of the present, not entirely of the fiction of the play but also of the reality of the theatrical experience'.[88] The point is that Shakespeare's crowd always has a role other than being just the crowd 'of the basest and unrulye people'. As this study aims to demonstrate, the playwright tailors the character of the crowd according to the needs of the play in question and to his vision. This is discernible from a play like *2 Henry VI* which portrays a popular uprising, and in which the people appear as a violent many-headed multitude, but also as people who are able to reason, and who are not always easily manipulated. As Weimann

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[85] Wood, '"Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye": Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640', p. 75.
[86] Wood, '"Poore Men Woll Speke One Daye": Plebeians Languages of Deference and Defiance, *c.* 1520-1640', p. 71.
[87] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, p. 72.
[88] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, p. 244.

rightly suggests: 'The social consciousness behind the Shakespearean vision was not destructively aimed against plebeian narrowmindedness and inconstancy, but usually served as a means of conquering or challenging the kind of "Ignorance" that was the source of both'.[89] My reading insists, therefore, that in the context of theatrical performance the role of the crowd, and the representations of it are varied. Rather than having a marginal role, once on the stage the crowd can have a major role, particularly at times when it represents the audience.

**Crowd, Audience, and Dramatic Hierarchy**

The lay-out of an Elizabethan public theatre, such as the Globe, not only allowed interaction between the stage and the audience, but also dictated freedom from categorisation. That is, on the stage the crowd could be represented differently from how they were usually portrayed and discussed in early modern England, and this changed the role of the crowd significantly - in the theatre the status of the crowd is different. They are not simply a threat, a nuisance, a beastly figure, but a character on the stage. I suggest that this is because public theatre as an institution had its own hierarchy, what we might call a hierarchy of dramatic importance, which meant that each character had an input in the performance, and that in crowd scenes the crowd's character was not peripheral but central to the dramatic import of the scene. Thus, at times, as we shall witness in the discussion of *Henry V*, the crowd could even be honourable, perceived as heroic, even whilst heroes are fallible individually. In other words, dramatic hierarchy demands *dramatic heroes*, who are not necessarily likeable figures with whom we would tend to identify, but nevertheless, figures that have charismatic qualities. For instance, even beastly Caliban can speak in verse and win us over, or a murderer like Brutus, whose despicable act of murdering Caesar we would despise in normal life, we can even sympathise with, for he confides in us. We are thus *related* to him, and consequently to his deed. As witnesses of his act we become his accomplices too, and therefore, we play a part in his performance.

[89] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, p. 215. Further he elaborates, 'it is not simply the plebeian status associated with the gravediggers in *Hamlet*, the porter in *Macbeth*, or the gaoler in *Cymbeline* that is significant; rather, out of their own "sportfulnesse" these clowns challenge or complement some of the basic values in the play as a whole', p. 239. Implicitly he is saying that the (staged) crowd, often has a profound role on the stage.

Most important for us is to recognise that both the theatrical occasion and dramatic hierarchy create a space even for those who were politically excluded in the society – that is, for the members of the audience commonly referred to as 'groundlings' – those watching the play from the cheapest section in the theatre, the low and the base, who had little or no authority in real life: 'the poorest, the groundlings'.[90] 'The Globe experiment [the reconstruction of the New Globe] has shown that the common playgoers standing in front of the stage are more important in the dramatic process than most theatre historians had acknowledged. Their ability to move around freely, interject and participate in the action, as well as show approval and disapproval, reveals the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre to have been a relatively democratic public space, certainly when compared to a modern theatre'.[91] In theatre, therefore, as members of the audience they, too, had authority – to approve or disapprove of the performance. More importantly, as we shall see, they were also given a voice on the stage, either overtly or covertly.

The early modern state demanded subordination and imposed a hierarchically ordained society, and consequently a hierarchically ordained way of thinking. Anti-theatricalists like Phillip Stubbes were at pains in trying to promote such hierarchy condemning public theatres and indeed the crowd. He warns, if

> playes, tragedies and enterluds [...]. being vsed (as now commonly they be) to the prophanation of the Lord his sabaoth, to the alluring and inuegling of the people from the blessed word of God preached, to Theaters and vnclean assemblies, to ydleness, vnthriftynes, whoredome, wan*n*tones, drunke*n*nes, and what not; and which is more, when they are vsed to this end, to maintaine a great sort of ydle Persons, doing nothing but playing and loytring, hauing their lyuings of the sweat of other Mens browes, much like vnto dronets deuouring *the* sweat honie of *the* poore labouring bees, than are they exercyses (at no hand) sufferable.[92]

Stubbes's use of the phrase 'vnclean assemblies' to describe public theatre sums up his anti-theatricalism. The phrase implies that the theatre is a place that encourages public

[90] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 5.

[91] Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism*, p. 3. Moreover, Sanders suggests that 'the republicanism [was in fact] inherent in the dramatic genre itself with its co-production of meaning between writer, director, actors and audience. This is no absolutist medium [...] playscripts belonged to acting companies and not to individual authors', see Sanders's *Ben Jonson's Theatrical Republics*, p. 7.

[92] Philip Stubbes, *Philip Stubbes's Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth, A. D. 1583*, ed. by Frederick James Furnivall (London: New Shakespeare Society Publications, 1877), 1, pp. 1-112; the quotation is from 'A Preface to the Reader' (p. x-xi).

gatherings of the 'vulgar', the 'breath of garlic-eaters'.[93] Moreover, with his use of the phrase '*the* poore labouring bees' Stubbes insinuates that the theatre authorises those who are the lowest on the social ladder (such as the poor, vagabonds, thieves) who do not contribute to society (either through work, or in the political arena). Stubbes does not, however, only fear that theatre is a waste of time and that they are 'ydle persons' and parasites living off the 'poore *labouring* [my italics]' members of society, but that it empowers precisely those who otherwise have no right to exercise formal power. For him, wearing rich attire is a statement of power, and he does not want to see the inferior sort empowered in any way, not even on the stage. Naturally, then, only the nobility should wear opulent clothes. As Philoponus the traveller and the main character of Stubbes's treatise says, the nobility is permitted to 'vse a rich and preciouse kynd of apparell (in the feare of God) to innoble, garnishe, & set forthe their byrthes, dignities, functions and callings', 'to demonstrat and shewe forth the excelency and worthines of their offices and functions', but more importantly, 'thereby to strike a terroure & feare into the harts of the people to offend against the maiesty of their callings'.[94] He justifies this, of course, by saying that this is a service to the Lord, that it is permitted 'to shew forth *the* power, welth, dignity, riches, and glorie of the Lord'.[95]

However, Stubbes's treatise is all but a praise of the Lord. What is actually underneath Stubbes's discourse is a fear of the power of ordinary people displayed through this dressing up, and acting on a stage. He humbly asks his patron, therefore, to assist him in his struggle to rescue his country. He is 'most hu*m*bly beseaching your good Lordship', his patron, 'not onely to admit this my Book into your honours patronage and defence, but also to persist the iust Defender thereof against the swynish crew of rayling ZOILVS and flowting MOMVS, with their complices', that is, against the 'vnclean assemblies' that 'maintaine a great sort of ydle persons'.[96] This all insinuates that Stubbes actually petitions against two crowds: first, the actors, and second, against their 'complices', implicitly the audience watching the actors on the stage.[97] Not only does Stubbes suggest that the people are the accomplices in this 'prophanation of the Lord his sabaoth' because they witness the

[93] William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, ed. by R. B. Parker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), see 4.6. 102.
[94] Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, p. 33-4.
[95] Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, p. 35.
[96] Stubbes, 'The Epistle' to *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, p. ix and xi.
[97] 'Like lepers', Mullaney writes, and we may say crowd, too, 'players were without a place among traditional callings or social categories [...] they were also viewed by a wide body of Elizabethans [...] as spectacles of human deceit, incontinence, and general depravity', see Mullaney's *The Place of the Stage*, p. 34.

performance, but paradoxically he also infers that the audience has a role in the theatre. For, Stubbes, the actors are the social outcasts, and along with them is the audience. In short, Stubbes's discontent could have been related to (to use Mullaney's words) 'the unruly and profligate *theatricality* of the Liberties'.[98] In addition, 'it was not only the theater's role as a pretext for unlawful assembly that bothered the authorities, but the clear possibility that plays, by raising public consciousness, could organise popular feeling'.[99]

By default it seems public theatre posed a challenge to the authorities: 'a number of public theatres were erected by entrepreneurs in the Liberties, an area just outside the jurisdiction of the city of London'.[100] It was a suburban area where most of 'the unemployed' (vagrants, vagabonds, the 'afternoon men', a 'euphemism for a drunkard') lived, 'where the playhouses were, since they were the poorest parts of London'.[101] Steven Mullaney's study 'into the situation of the stage in relation to the society', *The Place of the Stage*, is vital for our understanding of the implications of the location of marginalised theatres, those outside the city walls.[102] The Liberties that were the 'places of cultural commentary' occupied a territory, he writes, of 'No Man's Land', 'where the powers of city, state, and church came together but did not coincide', that is 'on the threshold of authority'; indeed, where 'the law could be felt and witnessed in its most extreme forms and also at its furthest limits'.[103] The suburbs were marginal not only geographically, but 'in a textual sense'.[104] He examines 'the ways in which popular drama appropriated such [cultural] license to achieve [...] an ideological liberty of its own'.[105] However, the 'subversive potential' of the playhouses, he stresses, 'had remained latent'.[106] What is

[98] Mullaney, *The Place of The Stage* p. 47.
[99] Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 37.
[100] Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal*, p. 131.
[101] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 63.
[102] Mullaney, *The Place of The Stage*, p. 6.
[103] Mullaney, *The Place of The Stage*, see p. 58, 39, 21, 134, and 21. Mullaney clarifies this saying that 'the Liberties were free or "at liberty" from manorial rule or obligation to the Crown, and only nominally under the jurisdiction of the lord mayor. While belonging to the city, they fell outside the purview of the sheriffs of London and so comprised virtually ungoverned areas over which the city had authority but, paradoxically, no control', p. 21. Moreover, 'the public playhouses [...] were manned by companies of players, licensed by the Court despite the incessant objections of the city', p. 53.
[104] Mullaney, *The Place of The Stage*, p. 38. Mullaney notes that 'No Man's Land' was a common reference to a 'communal cemetery' in the Liberties, p. 39.
[105] Mullaney, *The Place of The Stage*, p. 9. He explains this relative independence or symbolic autonomy of the stage -and the authorities' relative lack of control- saying that 'with a license, one can take license or liberties; issuing a license is at once an assertion of authority and a declaration of its limits', p. 44; he specifies: '"liberty" was not a political or juridical concept but a geographical domain', p. 57.
[106] Mullaney, *The Place of The Stage*, p. 47. As Patterson notes, Shakespeare 'was capable of grasping, not only the relation between the material conditions of life and those of its intelligibility (human self-consciousnes), but also the function of all those practices that [...] we loosely denote as aspects of "culture"',

interesting to note here is that the popular theatre and the crowd in fact have something in common: both are marginalized. My interest is in how Shakespeare, and popular drama that was 'effectively banished from the city', appropriates and takes advantage of this peripheral aspect of the popular stage, particularly with regards to the representation of the crowd.[107] I would propose that at least for the duration of the theatrical performance, those marginalised by the society were no longer in a marginal position: the on-stage crowd had a dramatic part and the off-stage crowd had an implied part in the theatre.

Thus, the location of public theatre was symbolic. I suggest that it had its own hierarchy of (dramatic) importance. It rejected generalisations about crowds, and what the anti-theatricalists feared, it encouraged the crowd. As such, public theatre personified the figure of an outlaw and a rebel. As Mullaney puts it, the Liberties formed an 'underworld officially recognised as lawless; they stood in a certain sense outside the law', and were 'places of exile'.[108] This peculiar aspect of the Liberties is sensed in the theatre, and in the actual space of the performance: 'evoking the visceral world of ordinary living, the *platea* [...] helped incorporate what was a marginal region in contemporary London', and I would add, it helped incorporate those who were otherwise marginalized (in terms of involvement in the formal government) in the society: the crowd that consisted of the unemployed, the illiterate, the rightless, but alongside, mixed with decent folk.[109] In sum, we have the 'crowd of artisan "understanders" [... mixed with] city madams and gallants'.[110]

Nevertheless, there were of course limitations in terms of production of the performance. As Weimannn says, 'the real decisions-choice of plays, procurement of costumes, distribution of roles, etc.- must have been arrived at by agreement within the troupe of actors and shareholders [The Chamberlains, later the King's Men]'; and yet we also need to bear in mind that 'neither the city nor the Court could hope to exert *full* [my

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and even more importantly, she adds, nothing encouraged 'a social critique' more than the public theatres; see Patterson's *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (p. 9-10).

[107] Mullaney, *The Place of The Stage*, p. 23.

[108] Mullaney, *The Place of The Stage*, p. 21-22.

[109] As Mullaney indicates in *The Place of The Stage*, 'the theatres in the Liberties were: The Theatre (erected in 1576), the Shoreditch Theatre (1577), the Curtain and the Rose (1587), the Swan (1595), 'and the Globe refashioned from timbers of the original Theatre', p. 27. The quotation is from Weimann's *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice: Playing and Writing in Shakespeare's Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 195.

[110] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 12; as Gurr points out, 'the plays were composed for a tight grouping of people, a more immediate and readily recognisable social entity than the individuals who might buy a printed text', p. 3.

italics] control over its own cultural performances'.[111] The theatre, therefore, had some form of freedom: it not only permitted becoming something other than what you are allowed to be according to your position in the society, as Reynolds indicates, but more importantly we can say that it allowed, and perhaps encouraged, freedom from a hierarchically ordained *way of thinking*.[112] Of course, we cannot underestimate the effect that censorship had 'upon the development of the drama' (it continued to be very strict 'until at least 1640'); however, the subtleties in Shakespeare's representations show that the playwright could 'get away' with his presentations if he chose to do so.[113] Thus, some form of freedom was allowed, which becomes apparent from his dramatisations of a crowd who are not always the stereotypically ignorant and base multitude.[114] The dramatically rendered crowd (as a character on the stage) was, therefore, not marginal but acceptable, and as dramatically important as any other character. Most importantly, by being contained within the walls of theatre it was now also permitted to be, and on the stage to act, like a crowd (disorderly, threatening), because within the walls of the theatre it did not pose a real threat. It was not dangerous because its role was scripted. This resembles ways of controlling crowds in ancient Rome where the emperor Nero '"brought midnight riots into fashion"' and 'encouraged riots in the theatre'.[115] Moreover, 'the Roman people [...] were no longer even necessarily spectators at the main events, the theatre was a substitute, where the common inferior populace loitered away their time'.[116]

Thus, it can be said that public theatre controlled and protected the crowd, both the on-stage crowd and the off-stage crowd, the audience. It was in a sense, the only pro-crowd space, a refuge for dissident thought, and one conditioned by and subjected to the

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[111] The first quotation is from Weimann's *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, p. 214; and the second one from Mullaney's *The Place of the Stage*, p. 24. 'Lacking a professional army and even the rudiments of a paid bureaucracy, Elizabeth wielded little real coercive force' (Mullaney, 24).

[112] See Reynolds' *Becoming Criminal*, specifically 'State Power, Cultural Dissidence, Transversal Power (p. 20-21), and 'Antitheatrical Dicourse, Transversal Theater, Criminal Intervention' (p. 127-31). In *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function,* Weimann indicates that 'the playgoers did not determine the nature of the plays, for although the latter certainly responded to the assumptions and expectations of the spectators, the audience itself was shaped and educated by the quality of what it viewed', p. xii.

[113] Arthur McGee, *The Elizabethan Hamlet* (London: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 24.

[114] Mullaney righly points out that 'it was a freedom, a range of slightly eccentric or decentered perspectives, that gave the stage an uncanny ability to tease out and represent the contradictions of a culture it both belonged to and was, to a certain extent, alienated from [...] It was a liberty that was at once moral, ideological, and topological', see *The Place of the* Stage, p. 30-31.

[115] McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1989), pp. 34-60, (p. 52).

[116] McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 53.

crowd, the audience. Moreover, 'outside the jurisdiction' of real life now the crowd's common beastly image could be transformed and 'humanised' (as a civilised, and dignified figure). My point is that contrary to contemporary derogatory portrayals of crowds, the dramatic crowd could even deserve and receive the audience's respect. 'The "understanders"', or 'the yard's standers [who] were always the lowest level of the society' on the stage were not 'always the lowest level of the society'.[117] The crowd could become more than a just a crowd of 'the commons' – it could represent the entire audience in the theatre, the nobility and the base sort. In other words, the dramatic crowd transgressed the public image of the real life crowds–a gullible multitude with no mind and no power. Even an unruly and violent crowd like the mob in *2 Henry VI* could represent something different, a critic of its own business, which is the subject of chapter 4. In short, the early modern theatres gave new meaning to the word 'crowd'.

In the theatre, then, the crowd could be transformed. Annabel Patterson acknowledges that a staged crowd can 'change into something different', that Shakespeare's representations of the people were not necessarily, or by default negative. In *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* she points out that 'at least ninety-five per cent of the population [...] were excluded by law and practice from any voice in the major affairs of the state', but in his representations of the people, Patterson indicates, for instance in *Coriolanus*, how Shakespeare meditates on 'an alternative political system – the early Roman Republic'.[118] That is, his crowd now is in the state of 'becoming' what it is not in real life: a politically powerful body. Moreover, she suggests, 'classical republicanism, [is] the only conceptual system known to Shakespeare for incorporating the popular, by formal representation, into the state', which is an example of how Shakespeare actually includes and gives voice to the people.[119] Looking back at critical approaches to the people, she indicates that a 'shared belief in a populist Shakespeare' was abandoned with Samuel Taylor Coleridge's interpretation of Shakespeare's attitude towards the people as, in Coleridge's words, 'affectionate superiority'.[120] Contrary to this interpretation, Patterson suggests that Shakespeare 'himself the son of a country glover [...] was unlikely to have

[117] Gurr's phrases, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 21.
[118] Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 3.
[119] Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 4.
[120] See Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Lecture 1 in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Lectures 1808-1819: On Literature*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, ed. Kathleen Coburn, 2 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), pp. 273. For a detailed account and explanation of why literary criticism for so long considered Shakespeare 'firmly aristocratic' and 'conservative' see Patterson's *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 5-11 (esp p. 7).

unquestioningly adopted an anti-popular myth as his own'.[121] Indeed, Patterson notes, the dramatist could not have 'knowingly insulted a large proportion of' his audience which was 'the popular audience – the "groundlings"'.[122]

Patrides, however, adopts a different stance; he agrees with Coleridge's point, and with James Emerson Phillips's, Jr who writes: 'towards the common people acting in their appointed vocations, Shakespeare shows tolerance and sympathy', but 'when a commoner, alone or in a mob, seeks to meddle in politics and government, he becomes the object of some of the dramatist's fiercest scorn'.[123] My research challenges the latter assumption, specifically in Chapters 3 and 5. It addresses this concern, but distances itself in that it does not attempt to 'defend' Shakespeare's sympathies towards crowds, but rather to acknowledge the playwright's emphasis on his crowds' (dramatic) presence in their most natural domain: the crowd scene. In summary, the marginal role of the common people in early modern society is not necessarily reflected on the Shakespearean stage: for dramatic reasons, the playwright does not marginalise the crowd. In addition, Shakespeare's treatment of crowds is in no way different from that of heroes. He treats both with thoughtfulness and an understanding of what they are and what as characters they may come to *represent* on the stage.[124] Most importantly, he renders both crowd and hero as figures dependent on each other and highly defined by one another.

Scholarly debate, nonetheless, has underestimated the importance of the crowd as a dramatic figure, or as a character on the stage, and this is apparent from the fact that up to this date the only two comprehensive and extensive studies into the representations and role of *crowds* on early modern stage are Ian Munro's study *London: The City and Its Double*, and Paul Daniel Menzer's thesis 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance

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[121] Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 1.

[122] Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 3.

[123] James Emerson Phillips's, Jr., *The State in Shakespeare's Greek and Roman Plays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), p. 154; Phillips adds, 'if he is not their champion, he is certainly aware of their rights', see Phillips's *The State in Shakespeare's Greek and Roman Plays*, p. 154

[124] In terms of understanding Shakespeare's dramatic rendering(s) of the crowd Weimann's distinction between 'presentation' and 'representation' comes useful: 'while the former derives its primary strength from the immediacy of the physical act of histrionic delivery,' he writes, 'the latter is vitally connected with the imaginary product and effect of rendering absent meanings, ideas, and images of artificial persons' thoughts and actions' (*Author's Pen and Actor's Voice*, p. 11). Shakespeare, we shall see, not only 'presents' (that is, exhibits, features) crowd as an *extra* on the stage, but he uses the crowd's character to 'represent' (that is, symbolise or embody something). His crowd is not simply a background to other characters and events portrayed on the stage, but is meaningful more than it has been recognised in the literary studies of early modern period, with exception to Munro's *London: The City and Its Double*, a matter addressed below.

Stage'.[125] Not surprisingly, I will refer to these studies throughout my thesis.[126] Menzer's thesis focuses 'on dramatic *representation*, the specific dramaturgical problems and meanings of staged crowds, the interaction between actors and crowds, and the significance in staging crowds during a period in which a population boom was straining London's resources'; and specifically on 'the representation and control of the multitude'.[127] Menzer argues that *Sejanus*, *Coriolanus* and *Julius Cesar* 'reflect in the represented career of the protagonist the actual experience of the actor putting his body on the line before an audience hungry for entertainment'.[128] Whilst Menzer centres on the relationship between the actor and the stage, Munro's attention is on 'the *crowded* space of the city', and specifically on the relation between *the city and people*.[129] Within this Munro draws our attention to 'the phenomenological implications of population growth in the city', and argues that 'the crowd operated as the visible manifestation of an increasingly incomprehensible city'; moreover, 'the crowd was a powerfully contradictory presence, symbolising conflicting aspects of the city through metonymy [...] and metaphor'.[130] 'This interplay between event and discourse produces', what he calls 'the *space* of the crowd, a multivalent space that supplements the space of the city'.[131] Finally, Munro's reading demonstrates 'the *function* of the crowd: as a dramatic motif, as a theatrical manifestation, and as a social presence'.[132]

My analysis extends this debate by revisiting the ways in which crowds are represented in drama, but contrary to Munro and Menzer, my focus is, for the reasons already mentioned, on the playwright's dramatic-rendering of the *relationship* between people and hero. My study insists that a crowd scene as a theatrical trope utilises the presence of the audience in such a way that no other scene can. No other scene can incorporate *the audience* in the theatre and simultaneously give them voice on the stage. Menzer's suggestion that 'the crowd's absence from the stage speaks for their relative lack

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[125] See Ian Munro's *London: The City and Its Double*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Paul Daniel Menzer's 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Univ., 2001; abstract in UMI Microform 3027458).

[126] I will especially refer to Munro's study as it is more comprehensive. Menzer's study covers only three Roman plays: *Coriolanus, Julius Caesar* and *Sejanus.*

[127] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 2-5.

[128] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 15.

[129] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 5.

[130] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 4 and 1. Vital to his approach, as Munro points out in *London: The City and its Double*, is this 'figural opposition [...] between metaphoric and metonymic crowds and between the crowd as discourse/ subject and the crowd as event/ context', p. 5.

[131] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 1.

[132] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 2.

of impact upon the changes in leadership dramatised in Shakespeare's early works', needs reassessment.[133] Unlike Menzer's and Munro's studies, my thesis focuses particular attention on Shakespeare's strategy of dramatising crowds. It considers the playwright's choice to "stage" or "report" the crowd, and examines the dramatic effect of these strategies. It argues that the crowd scenes, both reported and staged, can be seen as a dramaturgical device by which Shakespeare gives us an insight into the "crowd's" mind, and makes us question what "crowd" in Shakespeare's drama means. More importantly, it argues that the crowd scenes are always political in nature, and focused not only on the interaction between the crowd and the authority figure, but also on the interaction between the stage and the audience. The key point is that the role of the audience in theatre has been widely debated and recognised, and yet the role of the crowd scenes has not.

In her study *Talking to the Audience: Shakespeare, Performance, Self*, Bridget Escolme's concern is 'the potential meaning of direct encounters between actors and' the playgoers, 'and the illusions of presence that both permit to occur during those encounters', and she argues 'that the cracks and fissures in dominant thought that cultural materialism has sought in the early modern drama are to be found at moments when the illusion of a being *face to face* [my italics] with fictional presences in the theatre is at its strongest[134]. 'This illusion', she explains, 'is produced "outwardly" in the encounter between performer and audience'.[135] Specifically drawing attention to the relation between actor and character, Escolme infers that 'Shakespeare's stage figures have another set of desires and interests, inseparable from those of the actor; most importantly for us it is that 'they want the audience to listen to them, notice them, approve their performance', and I would add, to be in relation to them.[136] By doing so, they invite the members of the audience to take *part* in the performance, and this is most prominent in the crowd scenes. Indeed, 'both *platea* and *locus* are related to specific locations and types of action and acting, but each is meaningless without the functioning assumptions of the other'.[137] 'Their effectiveness', Weimann rightly points out, 'results from the principle of *complementarity* [my italics]',

[133] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. i.
[134] Bridget Escolme, *Talking to the Audience: Shakespeare, Performance, Self* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), p. 9 and 11.
[135] Escolme, *Talking to the Audience: Shakespeare, Performance, Self*, p. 11.
[136] Escolme, *Talking to the Audience: Shakespeare, Performance, Self*, p. 16.
[137] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, p. 81. 'The *platea*', Weimann explains, 'becomes part of the symbolic meaning of the play world, and the *locus* is made to support the dialectic of self-expression and representation', p. 83. The terms will be of great importance in my introduction of the concept the 'space of character', Chapter 1.

and the crowd scene, I would suggest, is a dramatic verification of this.[138] Moreover, what Mullaney says about the stage can be applied to the crowd scene, too; he writes, the stage could be seen as a 'potent *forum* [my italics] for the reformation as well as the recreation of its audience'.[139] Symbolically, the crowd scene can be seen as a forum since 'forum', according to *The Oxford Compact English Dictionary*, is a 'place of or meeting for public discussion', historically, a 'public square or market place in an ancient Roman city'.[140]

Due to the physical proximity between the stage and the audience the relationship and the interaction between the two is established. As Weimann says, a 'flexible use of the main stage, surrounded on three or perhaps even four sides by spectators, reflects the constant efforts of the Elizabethan dramatist and actor to keep the play in close touch with the audience's response'.[141] The audience is set, therefore, in an intimate relationship with the stage and the performance.[142] Through this relation, too, it becomes part of the 'creation' process. Buber defines the 'instinct to creation' as setting 'up things in a synthetic, or [...] analytic way'.[143] In our reading it means *reacting* (through empathy, or laughter) to what is happening on the stage. This 'instinct to "creation"', according to Buber, 'is [...] determined by this inborn *Thou*', and this 'inborn *Thou*' is our instinct for relation, so that now '"a personification" of what is made, and a "conversation", take place.'[144] This instinct for relation and conversation is especially prominent in the theatre. Even the physical lay-out of the theatre, it seems, creates relation between the members of the audience and the stage, and allocates a role to the audience, too. Weimann who is particularly interested in the dynamics of actor-audience relationship rightly points out that the relationship is 'not only a constituent element of dramaturgy, but of dramatic meaning as well'.[145] Discussing the interplay between *platea* and *locus*, he writes: 'such an interplay accommodates action that is both nonillusionistic and near the audience [...] and more illusionistic, localised action sometimes taking place in a discovery space, scaffold, tent, or

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[138] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, p. 84.
[139] Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage*, p. 95.
[140] *The Oxford Compact English Dictionary*, p. 387-8.
[141] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, p. 210.
[142] This is also because 'the Elizabethan theatre offered a location where authority could not be of an exclusively literary provenance', see Weimann's *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice*, p. 30.
[143] Buber, *I-Thou*, p. 28.
[144] Buber, *I-Thou*, p. 28.
[145] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the* Theater, p. 7.

other *loci*'.[146] What is significant in his study, and important for ours, is that Weimann views theatrical *relation* (specifically the actor-audience relationship) as 'a dynamic and essential element of *dramaturgy* [my italics]'.[147] The relation between the character-audience will, nevertheless, be a focus of this study.

It must be noted at this stage that my research aims to contribute to 'character study' with the intention of showing that it is precisely *dramatic relation(s)* that should be our focal point when attempting to reconstruct and understand Shakespeare's characters.[148] Chapter 1 is a key discussion in this thesis as it introduces a concept of the "space of character" which will be used in order to help us better understand the role of dramatic relations in the mechanics of, and in the making of Shakespearean characters. David Mamet's controversial work *True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor* – with its main premise that "character" does not exist – unintentionally directs our attention to the importance of dramatic relations, specifically between the stage and the audience: 'There is not a wall between the actor and the audience. Such would defeat the very purpose of the theatre, which is communication and communion.'[149] 'There is not a wall' because stage "character" mediates between stage and audience: dramatic character is an outcome of the relations established in the theatre. *Shakespeare and Character*, edited by Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights, a relatively recent move back to 'character study', and probably one of the most influential studies on '"character" as a valid analytic category', testifies to the importance of and the need to really understand the essence of dramatic

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[146] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, p. 212. For more on *locus* and *platea* see 'Platea and Locus: Flexible Dramaturgy', p. 73-83, and also Weimann's 'Space (in)dividable: *locus* and *platea* revisited': *Author's Pen, Actor's Voice*, pp.181-208.

[147] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, p. 213.

[148] For a recent take on 'character study', *Shakespeare and Character: Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons*, ed. by Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), a convincing and truly inspiring reading. Furthermore, as Emma Smith writes, 'character study was to be the dominant theme of Romantic criticism of Shakespeare, and it had one of its earliest exemplars in Maurice Morgann's *An Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff* (1777)' whose 'close analysis of a single aspect of a play was something new – and also expounded a controversial proposition', see *Shakespeare's Histories*, ed. by Emma Smith (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p. 17. 'Other character studies by William Richardson (1784) [...] and by Thomas Whately (1785) [...] set the scene for work by Coleridge and Hazlitt' (Smith, *Shakespeare's Histories*, p. 18).

[149] David Mamet, *True and False, Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), p. 58. Moreover, he writes, 'there is no character, there are just black marks on a white page – it is a line of dialogue' p. 60 – so here Mamet entirely denies the "marriage" of these lines and the body that delivers them, an actor. He instructs actors saying: 'The character is not *you*, it is not *anybody*, it exists only in the lines of dialogue on the page', p. 89. However, Mamet interestingly also writes: 'The actor [...] creates his *own* character; he forges character in himself. Onstage. And it is this character which he brings to the audience, and by which the audience is truly moved', p. 22.

'beings'[150]. It signals that there is much more work to be done within this critical approach, and my study argues that one of the key aspects of 'character study' is dramatic relations.[151] 'Character is the organizing principle of Shakespeare's plays [... and] the principal bridge over which the emotional, cognitive, and political transactions of theater and literature pass between actors and playgoers or between written texts and readers'.[152] After all, 'the object the audience hears in a human voice is character', and 'it is by coming face to face with characters [...] that playgoers and readers can think feelingly about social life and the ideological shaping of the human'.[153] 'The actor', Mamet writes, 'creates his *own* character; he forges character in himself. Onstage. And it is this *character* [my italics] which he brings to the audience, and by which the audience is truly moved'.[154] That is, it is with "character" that the audience, most naturally, establishes a *relation*.

On the role of the audience in the theatre Weimann writes: 'the actual audience was both a challenger and the challenged [...]. As late as in *Henry VIII* (V, 4) the actual audience was identified with the undifferentiated mass of curious spectators [...]. In this way the fictive spectators and the actual audience merged and became a vital link between play and real life'.[155] Moreover, he infers that the 'links between the world of the play and the audience's world of experience are further extended in prologue, chorus, and song'.[156] The fourth component, I will argue, should be the crowd scene. Indeed, 'the audience

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[150] Yachnin and Slights, Introduction to *Shakespeare and Character*, p. 3. Vital to our perception of dramatic characters is precisely the setting: theatrical setting. As Yachnin and Slights point out, 'attention needs to be paid to the contributions made by the theater and performance environment as we attempt to re-articulate a notion of character in the twenty-first century' (*Shakespeare and Character*, p. 3.).

[151] 'On the stage', Mamet indicates, 'it is the progress of the outward-directed actor, who behaves with no regard to his personal state, but with *all* regard for the responses of his antagonists, which thrills the viewers' (*True and False, Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor*, p. 13). I. e. it is precisely the relationship between the characters that the audience relates with, and within the relationship "character" exists and becomes "real" during the performance. Within this network of theatrical relations, then, staged "character" is defined. For more on the discussion on how "real" we perceive or experience staged characters see Michael Bristol's 'Confusing Shakespeare's Characters with Real people', in *Shakespeare and Character: Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons*, ed. by Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 21-40, Trevor Ponech's 'The Reality of Fictive Cinematic Characters', in *Shakespeare and Character: Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons* (see Bristol above), pp. 41-61, and William Dodd's 'Character as Dynamic Identity': *Shakespeare and Character: Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons* (see Bristol above), pp. 62-82.

[152] Yachnin and Slights, Introduction to *Shakespeare and Character*, p. 6-7.

[153] The first quote is from Bruce R. Smith's *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 245; and the second is from Yachnin and Slights' Introduction to *Shakespeare and Character*, p. 12.

[154] Mamet, *True and False, Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor*, p. 22

[155] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, p. 213.

[156] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, p. 214.

inhabits the theater on its own accord, and therefore consents to its sovereign, whether consciously or not. The theater's sovereign reigns over its own dissident space'.[157] Beside this, even the noise the audience constitutes a mode of participation. Reynolds explains:

> the vocal apparatuses of the actors and audience and the musical instruments used during performances, operating in space and time, all contributed to harmonic variations on any fundamental note produced. Each member of the audience experienced incorporation and assimilation into the acoustic instrument of the theater, both through his or her own sound effects (cheers, claps) as well as by just being present. By occupying space within the public theater, and thereby producing, absorbing, and reflecting sound waves with their bodies, the audience members became functioning components of that theater's acoustic structure and, one might add, were therefore influenced by the molecular changes within that space[158]

Apart from these three components noted in Reynolds's quotation - the *presence* of the audience, the *noise* (laughter, applause, shouts) they produce, and the fact that theatres as '*architectural structures* [my italics...] were acoustic instruments themselves' – it is important to stress again that the crowd scene should be considered as another key component that instituted the role of the audience.[159] Here the audience was given its most prominent *dramatic* part: participation on the stage. Put differently, the crowd scenes often invited the audience to imagine themselves as the crowd on the stage and thus indirectly superimposed on them an active role in the theatre. As such the crowd scenes transformed the members of the audience from spectators to players.

In this thesis what I want to investigate is the implications of those 'face to face' encounters at its *dramatic peak* in a crowd scene, and to argue that a crowd scene embodies a union between the stage and the audience. Moreover, the crowd scene is a micro-theatre in which the roles of both 'performers' and 'spectators' are enacted, questioned, often radically repositioned, but their relationship is always *manifested.* This unique, and shared aspect among crowd scenes has not received its due attention. Critical studies approach

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[157] Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal*, p. 130-31.
[158] Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal*, p. 135.
[159] See Reynolds's *Becoming Criminal*, p. 133-5. As Bruce R. Smith points out, 'the South Bank amphitheatres were, in fact, instruments for producing, shaping, and propagating sound', see Smith's *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-*, esp. pp. 206-46 (p. 206). Interestingly, as Gurr notes, 'the sitters in the galleries matched the reactions of the crowd on its feet in the yard', see *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 52.

each crowd scene, so to speak, as a scene that has its own identity. This is reflected in the way these scenes are commonly referred to: the crowd scene in *Anthony and Cleopatra* (2.2) is known as 'the barge scene', the crowd scene in *Julius Caesar* 'the Forum scene' (3.2), the crowd scene in *Sir Thomas More* as 'the insurrection scene'. However, by drawing a binding line among all these scenes, I aim to draw attention to the crowd scene as a dramaturgical body in its own right, and to its quality as the most engaging moment with the audience. In sum, I use 'crowd scene' here as an egalitarian term rather than a political one, because the term itself suggests that it is the people's and the audience's scene – a fact that carries with it a politics of its very own.

**The Structure of this Thesis**

Two points need to be clarified. Firstly, this thesis does not examine Shakespeare's representations of crowds and crowd scenes in chronological order, because it does not offer an account of how the dramatist's representations of crowds and crowd scenes developed or changed throughout his career. Each chapter introduces a theme or an issue which is then further explored in the subsequent chapter. The intention is that each new chapter links thematically with the preceding one and gives a better insight cumulatively into Shakespeare's depiction of crowds. Secondly, although this thesis analyzes Shakespeare's crowds and crowd scenes, one particular non-Shakespearen play simply had to be included in this thesis: Ben Jonson's *Sejanus His Fall.* Its crowd scene not only invites a comparison with Shakespeare's crowd scenes, but, as it will be demonstrated, Jonson's depiction of the crowd supports my argument that staged crowds are not only represented as a 'many-headed multitude', but also have an important dramatic role on early modern stage.

Chapter 1: 'When Two Authorities are up, and Neither Supreme': Coriolanus, Crowd, and the Audience' sets Buber's concept 'I and Thou' in the context of the theatrical occasion and examines it through the representation of the relation between Coriolanus and the plebeians. To explain this dynamic I introduce the concept of the 'space of the character'. Furthermore, I shall argue further that Coriolanus' character embodies anti-theatrical attitudes, and as such his character on the stage *addresses* the crowd and crowd issues. That it is paradoxically the space of his character that helps us understand the role of

the crowd, but also the play's relation with the audience, and the shared authority within the theatre, is what this chapter ultimately aims to demonstrate.

Chapter 2: 'The Echoing Rhetoric of Hostility: *Sejanus*'s Noble and Beastly Crowd' focuses on the issue of the role of the audience in the theatre through an examination of Ben Jonson's play *Sejanus, His Fall*'. First, it looks at the author's relationship with the audience and how it is represented, and the audience's part in the theatre. Secondly, I examine the relationship between the people and the hero, and the dramatic representations of the populace. I shall argue that the printed version of the play (the subsequent text) is challenging the public, or the popular hostile reception of the original production, that there is an analogy in the representations of the hero and of the people, and that the representation of the violent Roman mob becomes a dramatic representation of the audience.

Chapter 3: 'Crowds in Spectacles, and Representations of Body Politic and Body Divine: *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II*' will address crowd scenes in *Anthony and Cleopatra* and in *Richard II.* I will consider specifically how Shakespeare represents crowds in relation to the representations of the royal Body Divine in public spectacles; and what the effects are of representing the crowd in *second-hand accounts*. I refer to these scenes as the reported crowd scenes and I shall consider why Shakespeare implies the people's presence in description rather than in action. I shall argue that he does this for a dramatic purpose and that reporting crowd scenes becomes an effective device in the representation of political power and in the representation of the people's role in it.

Chapter 4: 'To and Fro': Representations of Mob and Mutiny: From Public Rebellion to Public Subjection' reviews the representations of the *staged crowd scenes* and Shakespeare's dramatic rendering of the mob in *Julius Caesar, 2 Henry VI* and *Sir Thomas More*. I shall argue that the unifying line among the crowd scenes in these three plays the issue of obedience and position of subject in early modern England. In addition, this chapter places an emphasis on the meta-theatrical import of crowd scenes, such as the way they can 'stage' questions of audience gullibility and responsibility, and it argues that the crowd scene is a micro-theatre in which the roles of both 'performers' and 'spectators' are enacted, questioned, and often radically repositioned.

Chapter 5: '*Henry V*'s Honourable Crowd and the "Semi-Crowd" Scene' engages with the question of what in fact a *dramatic crowd scene* is, and argues that 4.1 should be considered and examined as a staged crowd scene. In addition, this final chapter challenges

the link between staged crowd and demotic colloquialism, and argues that in this play Shakespeare renders a very different crowd: an honourable crowd. Ultimately, it confirms that it is in the crowd scenes that we find the dramatist most imaginatively and politically engaged in the theatrical representation and staging of the crowd.

## 'When Two Authorities are up, and Neither Supreme': Coriolanus, Crowd, and the Audience

It may seem unusual to begin this thesis with a discussion of one of Shakespeare's latest – perhaps even his last – tragedies: *Coriolanus*.[1] The reasons for beginning the thesis here are manifold. It might seem paradoxical that Shakespeare's dramatic rendering of Coriolanus as a highly individualised, and solitary 'hero' has directed my attention towards the crowd, but whilst analyzing the crowd and his character I realized I could not set them apart. This has generated questions such as - where is Coriolanus's antagonism towards the crowd coming from? What does it tell us about the crowd and its dynamic in early modern theatre? The answers to these questions, I propose, cannot be given or even contemplated without reviewing closely the *relation* between Coriolanus and the people in the play, and in particular the dramatisation of it. If we neglect this relationship, we cannot begin to understand either Coriolanus or the crowd, or the role each plays. Walter Kaufmann, who translated Martin Buber's *I and Thou* in 1970, accurately delineates the repercussions of our underestimation of relations. Men, Kaufmann writes, 'like to be told that there are two worlds and two ways. This is comforting because it is so tidy. Almost always one way turns out to be common and the other one is celebrated as superior'.[2] Nothing, indeed, could have better expressed traditional approaches to crowds and heroes. The traditional view of crowds more often than not rests on this dialectic, in which the 'common' is of course never heroic but craven and simple.

It must be stressed that in this study I am not interested merely in the play's representations of the crowd, but emphatically in the dynamics and the dramatisation of the relation between the crowd and the hero. Buber's *I and Thou* is concerned primarily with men's 'relation to God', and with men's 'relation to one's fellow-men', but I would suggest, there is nothing to hinder us from applying his concept to the theatrical performance. [3] In fact it becomes almost self-evident given that theatrical performance is an interactive event, grounded in *affecting* and *relating to* either the stage (i.e. the author, actors and staged characters) or to the members of the audience, which is conditioned by

[1] William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, ed. by R. B. Parker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
[2] Walter Kaufmann's 'I and You': A Prologue to Martin Buber's *I and Thou* (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1970), p. 9.
[3] Martin Buber, Afterword to *I and Thou*, tr. by Walter Kaufmann (Edinburgh: T& T. Clark, 1970), p.171.

one's role in the theatre (the actor, the author or the member of the audience). My study aims to give a recognition to these processes. In analysing both the crowd and the hero, it maintains that the two are inseparable, and should be considered as a dramatic item. Further, this research will insist on viewing dramatic characters not as identities in their own right, but as embodiments and outcomes of relations that are established and displayed *during* the performance. This will be examined by applying Buber's concept 'I and Thou' in the theatrical performance. In short, this opening chapter will argue that dramatic characters are manifestations of theatrical relations. It will aim to demonstrate that only with the insight into dramatic relations can we understand the role of the crowd, Coriolanus's character and the dramatic function of the crowd scene. So, only by acknowledging the ongoing relations in the crowd scene can we understand not only Coriolanus's attitude towards the plebeians, as an aspect of the complexity of his character, but indeed the complexity and the importance of the crowd in any stage production. This chapter will demonstrate that the crowd is present even when it is not actually staged, and this aspect will receive particular attention in Chapters 2, 3 and 5 and Shakespeare's treatment of the crowd in the *reported* crowd scenes, as opposed to the staged crowd scenes.[4] In *Coriolanus*, nevertheless, the crowd is present and implied in Coriolanus's character, that is in its relation to his character. Paradoxically, even when he dismisses the people, we shall see, he acknowledges their presence. This itself points out to the dramatic importance of the 'Coriolanus-People' relationship. My goal is to show that Coriolanus's disposition towards the plebeians is not simply based on contempt, but rather that it is complex due to the *roles* that Shakespeare bestows on his character - in the 'space of his character' – a concept which will be clarified in the next section. Coriolanus in a sense is inseparable from the play's crowd, as well as from the audience and the ambiance –the theatre. Such relationships will be examined in the discussion of the crowd scenes in 2.3 and 3.1 - 3.3 of *Coriolanus*.

**Space of the Character**

We shall focus on Coriolanus' character because, as we shall see, his character is affected and construed by different crowds. What I mean by this is that his character, as any other, is

[4] Therefore, *Coriolanus*'s reported crowd scene (2.1. 201-17) will be examined in Chapter 3.

depicted primarily through his relations with other characters.[5] The word 'crowd' as well as 'citizens' and 'people' here refers to *the plebeians*, or the common people of Ancient Rome.[6] However, 'crowd' will also refer to the early modern audience in the theatre, whose presence is implied in the space of Coriolanus's character as well.[7] I shall argue that the presence of the crowd is often *implied* and rendered in Coriolanus's figure, and more importantly, that the symbolic significance of the crowd can be inferred in the *relation* to Coriolanus and in the space of his character. By 'the space of character I am referring essentially to a character's dramatic identity which is rooted in its dramatic and theatrical relations. Thus, unlike "character", the "space of character" refers to a symbolic space of the relations. Throughout this study I will consistently use this concept, because it will allow us to understand how dramatic characters are composed and indeed what role the audience has in its construal.[8] Staged characters are defined by their dramatic and theatrical relationships. A staged character can, therefore, embody not just his individual persona but also other, more complex attitudes. These attitudes can be defined, for example, by that character's relationship with a crowd or multitude. No matter whether that relationship is defined through an opposition to the crowd or by a clear identification with it, or both, the *relationship* is always the most definable component of the character. The dramatist creates a dramatic space in which a character is able to perform himself (as an individual character) and yet also have a role broader than this, as defined by his or her relationship to a crowd - whether as a figure in opposition to or representative of more collective concerns. I suggest that this is apparent specifically in the characterisation of heroes and rulers on the early modern crowd scenes, with heroes/leaders both representing the 'people', on one level, and yet being 'above' them, on another (an individual character in Shakespeare's plays can sometimes be both an individual figure/persona and yet have a broader, more complex

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[5] However, Coriolanus's relationship with the crowd will remain central in this study.

[6] 'Based on Latin *plebs plebis* "the common people"'; *Oxford Compact English Dictionary*, ed. by Della Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 768.

[7] Some scholars are not convinced of this type of reading of the role of the audience on the early modern stage. For instance in *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2004) Andrew Gurr writes: 'Some recent critics have resisted the circular argument that finds audience response written into the plays, and makes easy assumptions from what it finds there.' p. 95. Gurr further clarifies: 'very few accounts of playgoing by Elizabethans exist, and the writers of those few accounts did not feel obliged to make much more than a few jottings about the plays they saw. There were neither theatre reviews nor journals to publish them in, so the best accounts are either from personal diaries written to remind the writer what he or she witnessed, or letters about a current stage sensation sent to entertain their recipients', p. 130.

[8] The final chapter is an exemption, because its discussion focuses entirely on Shakespeare's appropriation and dramatic rendering of the crowd scenes.

'collective' identity in relationship to any particular 'crowd').[9] Robert Weimann acknowledges the 'interplay between role and actor and between actor-role and audience', however, I would suggest that what we mean by the 'role' requires reconsideration, for two reasons.[10] First, we need to take into account that the character can have more than one role on the stage, and secondly, that these roles are determined by both the theatrical and dramatic *relations*: the character's role in the *platea*-world can differ to its role in the *locus*-world. The concept of the 'space of the character', I shall argue, encompasses both worlds, and helps us understand how staged characters operate and, indeed, 'live' (act, interact, and relate to the audience) on the stage. As Weimann's excellent study shows audience-actor relationship in early modern theatre cannot be dismissed, but my thesis invites a reconsideration of the character-audience relationship.[11] What we need to take into account, however, is also the *character*'s (not only the actor's) relation to the real world of the performance, thus not only to the play world. In other words, the 'space of the character' is a concept that refers to a *network of relations* that the character has, and that take place in the stage production, and most importantly, which are at their pinnacle in the crowd scene. Therefore, rather than focusing on 'character' this research places an emphasis on the *spaces* that the character occupies, which are conditioned by the *relations* that make up his character.

## Critical responses to *Coriolanus*

A number of scholarly discussions on *Coriolanus* convincingly make links between Shakespeare's depiction of the Roman plebeians' grievances in *Coriolanus* and 'the 1607 rising' in the Midlands 'against enclosures'.[12] E. C. Pettet suggests, thus, that 'Shakespeare was adapting Plutarch's story to give it the topicality on the recent events'.[13] In 'Against the

[9] This aspect will be specifically addressed in Chapter 3.
[10] Robert Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function*, ed. by Robert Schwartz (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p. 223.
[11] Moreover, writing about 'the joint actor-audience perspective of the play world' which 'involves a mutual extension of awareness', Weimann indicates: 'such awareness reflects and interconnects both the social quality of the *actor*'s relation to the real world and the imaginative and spatial dimension of the *character*'s relation to the play world, his implicit insight into and criticism of the action of the play'; see Weimann's *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, p. 259.
[12] See E. C. Pettet's '*Coriolanus* and the Midlands Insurrection of 1607', *Shakespeare Survey*, 3 (1950), 34-42 (p. 34). For more on 'The Midlands Uprising 1607-8' see also R. B. Parker's Introduction to the play, p. 34-7.
[13] Pettet, '*Coriolanus* and the Midlands Insurrection of 1607', p. 37.

Grain: Representing the Market in *Coriolanus*' Richard Wilson finds 'analogies between ancient Rome and contemporary Stratford' and the 'chronic problem of grain distribution'.[14] He infers that 'the play stands as a signpost of the emerging market' in which the common people are 'presented so equivocally': 'like corn or malt' - 'the commodities in this economy'.[15] Coriolanus's 'tragedy', he continues, 'is that he cannot dominate the marketplace as he monopolises the field'.[16] According to Pettet, 'while some of the plebeians have their moments of simple and touching good nature, of humorous self-depreciation, there is throughout the play the familiar representation of the mob as fickle and unstable', concluding with: 'Shakespeare paints a worse picture of the common people than Plutarch does'.[17] Yet, in relation to Shakespeare's representations of the plebeians, we should not be simply concerned whether Shakespeare portrays a more, or less favourable picture of the plebeians, but with the dramatic input that Shakespeare bestows on them: their dramatic function in the play, especially in relation to Coriolanus.

Unsurprisingly, literary scholars have been fascinated with Coriolanus's character.[18] Their discussions engage with the crowd as well, but none so far, apart from Ian Munro's, has taken its figure seriously, which perhaps explains the lack of interest in the dramatic significance of the relationship between the hero and the crowd. Rita Banerjee argues, in 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', that in the play 'the phenomenon of war is judged [...] with respect to the republican ideal of the common good and is seen to serve only

[14] See Richard Wilson's *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), p. 95 and p. 88. He adds, 'the relations of the early modern market are inscribed in the Shakespearean text', *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority*, p. 90.
[15] Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority*, p. 106, p. 90, and p. 87
[16] Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority*, p. 97.
[17] Pettet, '*Coriolanus* and the Midlands Insurrection of 1607', p. 38. Moreover, regarding Shakespeare's divergences from Plutarch's account Pettet writes, 'they make more sense if we regard them as, to a large extent, the natural reactions of a man of substance to a recent mob rising in his country. [...] it is fairly certain that' the playwright 'must have been hardened and confirmed in what had always been his consistent attitude to the mob'; he explains: 'to have been faced in real life with an actual choice of loyalties [...] would sharpen and bias the attitude of any writer', '*Coriolanus* and the Midlands Insurrection of 1607', p. 39.
[18] Culturally and in the literary criticism Coriolanus is treated both with sympathy and disdain, analogous to how he is treated by the characters in the play. Coriolanus' character is seen either as a proto-type of a tyrannical figure or as a proto-type of an ideal leader; so for instance in the 1930s when the 'overtly left-wing interpretation began to appear [...] in the communist countries of Eastern Europe', and Coriolanus was being criticized 'as a proto-dictator, a would-be "superman who has detached himself from the people and betrayed them"', see Parker's Introduction to the Oxford edition of *Coriolanus*, p. 127. In Nazi Germany his character was used to authorize Hitler's dictatorship: 'the Nazis [...] adopted *Coriolanus* as a schoolbook to demonstrate to Hitler's Youth the unsoundness of democracy and to idealize Martius as an heroic *führer* trying to lead his people to a healthier society', see Parker's Introduction to the Oxford edition of *Coriolanus*, p. 123-4.

sectional, that is, absolutist, oligarchical, or ecclestiastical interests'.[19] With respect to the common people, who, she says, 'are the most exploited by the practice of war, [they, nevertheless] appear as its most articulate critics', the play, indeed, concerns itself 'with the political rights of the subject and the citizen'.[20] Moreover, she argues that the play 'seems to invite a debate on the issue of limited participation of the people in the government' and foregrounds 'the issue of rebellion and popular power'.[21] With regards to the representation of the people Banerjee indicates that they are 'far from being represented unfavourably' but are 'shown to possess much good sense. They understand the antagonism of the patricians against the plebeians', and 'have sufficient common sense to understand the patrician design of sending them to war'.[22] What Banerjee overlooks is their broader, or symbolic role on the stage. Further, Banerjee touches upon, however covertly, the relationship between the people and Coriolanus in that she mentions that Shakespeare not only emphasized 'distress of the masses' but also 'the antipeople attitude of Coriolanus' as it is the case with the majority of critics.[23] Banerjee does not openly acknowledge, or consider the implications of this bond (between the hero and the crowd) and its representations in the theatrical production. In another discussion, 'The Belly Politic: *Coriolanus* and the Revolt of Language', Arthur Riss examines 'how the play enters an ongoing discourse about the authority of the body politic in order to enable the ideologically charged image of the communal body to accommodate emerging discourses of individualism and personal autonomy', and concludes by saying that 'the play filiates the inauguration of the Roman Republic, the emergence of an excessively enclosed, individualistic hero, and the collapse of the traditional transaction between the vehicle and tenor in the metaphor of the body politic', in which the plebeians 'are incorporated into both the political and the discursive order of Rome'.[24] They are thus given their voice through the Tribunes and with this 'a role

[19] Rita Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', *Comparative Drama*, 40 (2006), 29-49. (p. 31).

[20] Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 31.

[21] Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 43.

[22] Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 42.

[23] Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 41.

[24] Arthur Riss, 'The Belly Politic: *Coriolanus* and the Revolt of Language', *ELH*, 59 (1992), 53-75 (p. 54 and 67).

in the government'[25] Interestingly, once given the role, 'the plebs', Riss infers, 'participate *politely* [my italics]' and their 'politeness [...] is political'.[26] We shall see later in the discussion that it is Coriolanus's lack of political politeness, or rather his rejection of the plebeians' politeness, and ultimately his rejection of this 'polite' political relation, that results in his fall. Further, in his Introduction to the Oxford Shakespeare edition of the play Parker more or less centres the debate around Coriolanus's character, and with respect to the citizens he suggests that 'the plebeians are certainly presented more favourably than rebellious crowds in' other Shakespeare plays.[27] More significantly for us, however, he addresses the relationship between Coriolanus and the plebeians: 'Coriolanus is never really self-sufficient. He cannot bear the actual solitude of exile, but needs constantly to see himself opposed to other people. Thus, the central, recurrent image of the play is Martius against the rest. He lacks almost any developed sense of comradeship [...]. Such an absence of relationship is awe-inspiring', or rather, as I would argue, it is the actuality of the relationship that is insightful and thought-provoking, despite the fact that it is oppositional and overwhelming in this sense - albeit a negative one.[28]

Further, in his study on the representations of the crowd in *Coriolanus* Ian Munro looks at them in two different ways. First, he focuses on 'the triangular relationship' in which the figure of the crowd 'mediates among the theater, the audience, and the city', and explores 'a set of symbolic correspondences between collective violence, theatrical power, and urban meaning through an analysis of the discourse of the crowd as a "many-headed monster."'[29] Within this he points out that 'the source of the theatrical power of the state [...] comes from the audience, and furthermore suggests a population for whom the line between political and commercial theatrical displays, between ritual and entertainment, is blurred'.[30] Equally, he suggests that 'given the necessity of staging to the common multitude in the large amphitheatres [...] the real dynamic at play is the theater's relationship not to its *immediate* audience but to the larger urban multitude, the absent and

[25] Riss, 'The Belly Politic: *Coriolanus* and the Revolt of Language', p. 67.
[26] Riss, 'The Belly Politic: *Coriolanus* and the Revolt of Language', p. 67.
[27] See Parker's Introduction to the Oxford edition of *Coriolanus*, p. 46.
[28] See Parker's Introduction to the Oxford edition of *Coriolanus*, p. 56-7.
[29] Ian Munro, *London: The City and Its Double* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 106 and 105.
[30] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 131; 'and in this blurring', he clarifies, 'is the possibility of reversing the metaphor, and imagining political power as an analogue for the shifting and unstable power and position of the theater in the city. In the figure of the giddy, many-headed multitude we can see the theater's urban audience, who misinterpret, who continually judge by emotion, who are wayward, who make demands, who gape for innovation, who show no reason in their theatrical appreciation', p. 131.

imaginary audience that cannot be grasped, that have the power to make or break a theatrical venture': that is, the implied urban crowd.[31]

Contrary to Munro, my study focuses on the theatrical relationship between the character and the audience. In fact, I make a distinction between actor-audience relationship and that of character-audience relationship.[32] My focus is on the character's relation to the audience because it is the character, not the actor that affects us during the performance.[33] After all, the theatre stages or represents the character not the actor. 'The traditional readiness and ability of the audience to be drawn into the play [...] is as noteworthy as the willingness of author and actor to speak directly to the audience and to acknowledge basic agreement with its tastes and ideas'; and yet what is also noteworthy is the fact that author and actor speak to the audience *through* the character.[34] The character, then, implicitly speaks to the audience, too. As such, during the performance the character, it can be said, is not entirely in 'possession' of either actor or author. It possesses some exclusivity, perhaps we can even say, a degree of 'independence' from its creator and its re-presenter. This independence, we shall see, is partly due to its relation with the audience.

Even though going to the cinema is a different type of interaction to that of early modern playgoing, there still is a similarity. Whilst watching a film, for example *Gone with the Wind*, we do not relate to Clark Gable or Vivien Leigh but to 'Rhett Butler' and 'Scarlet O'Hara', the characters that these actors represent. I shall argue that the *staged character*, like Coriolanus and the crowd, seek not only the audience's approval but its understanding, too.[35] This is why I suggest that it is also necessary to consider the *staged character* as an

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[31] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 131-2.

[32] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 133-4. For detailed discussions on 'actor's part', however, see Tiffany Stern's *Making Shakespeare: From Page to Stage* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), pp. 62-91 and 113-37. For instance, she indicates that 'as players seem to have been cast in similar kinds of role during a theatrical season, and were generally cast in parts that matched their actual personalities, there was less need for any actor to work on issues of characterisation: kingly types would usually be kings, "braggarts" (proud, boasting types) would play braggarts, and the clown would be the clown', p. 64.

[33] I do not underestimate the unique type of relationship between the actor and the audience in early modern theatre – the 'familiarity' between them', but I wish to draw attention to the importance of the relationship between the character and the audience *during* the theatrical performance. The phrase is from Andrew Gurr's *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 126.

[34] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, p. 214.

[35] *Gone with the Wind*. Dir. Victor Fleming. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). 1939. [on DVD-ROM]. Weimann rightly points out that 'actors were expected to [...] impersonate characters [...] *and* to persist in presenting characters [...] rather than creating any life-like illusion for the play at large', and agrees with Alexander Leggatt's point in *Jacobean Public Theatre* that 'in the latter case the player continued to stand "as it were beside the character, showing it off, commenting on it, explaining it', see *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice: Playing and Writing in Shakespeare's Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 132.

agent on the stage who *speaks* and *relates* to the audience. Talking about King Lear, Weimann does point out that 'the man behind the actor [the staged character] speaks directly to his fellow man in the audience'.[36] In this sense, the actor, then, is the theatrical tool who gives *life* to the character, and for the duration of the performance we relate to and are drawn to the character, as it were, to the 'living thing' that is staged to us. This is because Shakespeare has the ability to show empathy to his characters by trying to understand who they are and how and why they might react in a particular situation. This is ultimately what the dramatist demands from his audience.

On a further level, Munro's focus is on the 'overdetermined association between the plague and the urban crowd'.[37] He argues that 'the crowd occupies a complex and contradictory relationship with the plague, figured as both antithesis and source of urban infection' and that 'the presence of plague mirrors the crisis of urban meaning'.[38] More significantly, when situating his research in recent criticism he writes,

> *Coriolanus* is famously a play about the one and the many, and this basic division has driven the two schools of criticism of the play: psychological and psychoanalytic investigations into what authors Coriolanus's actions and words, and political interpretations of the social implications of the world the play presents. This critical split duplicates the binary grammar of plague literature; because of the social aspect of the disease, to write of the plague is inevitably to create divisions between private and public and between the individual and the society. Plague, however, creates such categories only in order to transgress them; the oppositions cannot be held separate and always collapse into each other.[39]

This basic divide between 'the one and many' needs serious re-thinking and reconsideration. The division between the individual and the crowd needs to be reconstructed, or viewed through-and-as a *dramatic relation* precisely because 'the oppositions cannot be held separate and always collapse into each other'. Nowhere this is more true than in the play's immediate theatrical context. My methodology, however, rests neither on psychological nor on psychoanalytic interpretations, nor does it exclude them. It cannot be confined solely to the performance theory: first because the importance of the

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[36] Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*, p. 220.
[37] Munro, *London: The City and Its* Double, p. 178.
[38] Munro, *London: The City and Its* Double, p. 178.
[39] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 192.

relation is not specific to readings of (early modern) *plays* only –the relations are relevant in readings of works in any other literary genre; and second because my thesis does not offer a 'theory'.[40] Its goal is to give ground for and consequently call for the wider literary/critical acknowledgment of the theatrical *relations* and how these affect the play and its characters. These relations exist and are evident in any theatrical production; they are not a theory. My research appropriates 'I and Thou' in the theatrical setting of the early modern stage, in which, I stress, the actuality and authenticity of the theatrical relations cannot be denied and should not be overseen. Indeed, the figures of Coriolanus and that of the crowd, as we shall see, epitomise it.

Whilst Munro reads *Coriolanus* 'as an *urban* parable' he does note Coriolanus's complex relationship with the people, and 'Coriolanus's attempts to avoid the contagiousness of that relationship' because 'the crowd [...] threatens to infect Coriolanus, and by doing so, to disfigure him'.[41] Paul Daniel Menzer focuses on the play's bodily trope and 'chronicle[s] the play's preoccupation with anatomical and medical imagery', exploring 'Martius's contempt for acting in physiological terms examining the peculiar hygienic revulsion that mass bodies trigger in the play's protagonist.'[42] He argues that Coriolanus's 'failure [...] to turn his body into a mitigating political signifier invites contempt and violence from the play's populace, who resolutely fail to ever coalesce into an audience'.[43] Moreover, he argues that 'exposing himself and his wounds to the crowd – quite literally the unveiling of the body's interior – Coriolanus' physical self threatens to melt from its hard-forged masculinity'.[44] The relationship between Coriolanus and the *plebs*, however, needs re-assessment, and an enquiry that goes beyond the bodily idiom. It is its dysfunctional nature that defines them as characters, but even more importantly, the relationship reveals to us how dramatic characters come into being.

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[40] According to *The Oxford Compact English Dictionary*, ed. by Della Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), the word 'theory' refers to 'a supposition or system of ideas explaining something, esp. one based on general principles, *independent* [my italics] of the particular things to be explained'; it is 'the sphere of abstract knowledge or speculative thought', p. 1074.

[41] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 193, 195 and 196.

[42] Paul Daniel Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage' (doctoral dissertation, Virginia Univ., 2001; abstract in UMI Microform 3027458), p. 142.

[43] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 17. In addition, Menzer suggests that Coriolanus has 'a fear of physical corruption by the audience, [and] a misunderstanding of acting itself', p. 166, and that his aversion to acting is to be found in his 'aversion to the crowd and its threat', p. 160.

[44] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 171.

C. A. Patrides's reading of Coriolanus and the crowd looks at both closely, but the relation between them is not addressed.[45] Writing on 'Coriolanus's vitriolic denunciations of the multitude', however, Patrides wisely notes that 'to equate Coriolanus' violent outbursts with Shakespeare's own sentiments would, of course, be sheer folly; for the outbursts occur not in a treatise, but within the context of a dramatic situation'.[46] Not only the context of the 'dramatic situation' but that of the theatrical situation needs to be re-considered. In this reading of the play, it must be noted, the first situation denotes events and relations that take place on the stage, and the latter denotes the actual occasion and the presence of the audience. The relation between the stage ('the dramatic situation') and the audience ('the theatrical situation') will be closely looked at and examined through the lens of Coriolanus's relation with the people.

In relation to the audience's part in the stage production, whilst reviewing Shakespeare's ways of manipulating the audience's response in 'Figures and Grounds: Shakespeare's Control of Audience's Perception and Response', Jean E. Howard argues that 'the theatrical experience of his [Shakespeare's] plays remains rewarding in large part because the scripts establish *internally* the grounds or contexts against which foregrounded events are highlighted and because they set up *internally* the expectations and assumptions subsequently open to manipulation'.[47] Rather than focusing on the text, she focuses on 'the playscript' as 'a blueprint for production which always demands [...] an awareness that it finds its fulfilment only upon a stage and that the strategies by which it operates upon its implied audience are the strategies of the theater', and she sees 'the design of the playscript as the *dominant* factoring determining responses in the theater'.[48] Howard usefully examines this issue in relation to *Coriolanus* and focuses on 4.4, suggesting that Shakespeare desires 'to provide a very particular context for Coriolanus's re-entry into the play [his arrival at Antium], a context which will in part govern the audience's response to the hero at this point'.[49] Her argument that the dramatist is in control of the audience's response is plausible to an extent. However, what needs to be taken in consideration is that

[45] C. A Patrides, '"The Beast with Many Heads": Renaissance Views on the Multitude', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 16 (1965), 241-46.
[46] Patrides, '"The Beast with Many Heads": Renaissance Views on the Multitude', p. 242.
[47] Jean E. Howard, 'Figures and Grounds: Shakespeare's Control of Audience Perception and Response', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 20 (1980), 189-99 (p. 189-90).
[48] Howard, 'Figures and Grounds: Shakespeare's Control of Audience Perception and Response', p. 187, and note 7 p. 188.
[49] Howard, 'Figures and Grounds: Shakespeare's Control of Audience Perception and Response', p. 191.

his control is conditioned by the audience's expectations too, which further suggests that the ultimate response is a result of this implied interaction between the author and the audience. Put simply, it is a result of a theatrical *relation*. This and the dramatisation of the relation between the crowd and the people will be examined in the following section.

***Coriolanus*'s Crowd Scenes: Act 2.3 and 3.3**

I have a kind of self resides with you<br>But an unkind self that itself will leave<br>Troilus and Cressida. 3.2. 138-9.

We shall start this debate looking at the crowd scenes in 2.3 and 3.3 because these scenes are the key moments of the confrontation between Coriolanus and the people of Rome. These crowd scenes, I propose, reveal the roots of Coriolanus's tragedy, which is his dysfunctional relationship with the people. More specifically, I shall argue that Coriolanus's predicament originates in his denial of any relation to the people. His character does not recognise his *Thou*, which *is* the people. With this he denies not only that he is composed of his relations with others, but he denies his own existence as a social being. Buber's concept 'I-Thou' will be, therefore, vital in this discussion, and will help us understand the dynamics of Coriolanus's relation with the people, and the role of the people in the crowd scene.

In 2.3 the Senate praises Coriolanus for his victory over Volscians and plans to award him the office of consulship. In order to make this happen, Coriolanus, the Senators advise him, has to face the public in the toga of humility and ask for the people's support (2.2). Coriolanus appears in the market-place '*in a gown of humility*' (2.3), and Third Citizen remarks to his peers: 'He's to make his requests by particulars, wherein/ *every one of us has a single honour* [my italics] in giving him our/ own voices with our own tongues' (2.3. 41-3). Not only does Third Citizen state that the plebeians have significant political power (in this instance to approve or disapprove Coriolanus's consulship), but significantly, he attempts to defend the image of the crowd. Therefore, in order to challenge a proposition which states that 'the peculiar enthusiasm with which Shakespeare went out of his way to "blacken" the multitude without warrant from Plutarch' we need to pay attention to Third

Citizen's words.[50] His character implicitly makes a statement at this point that the people should not simply be seen as a many-headed multitude with one mind, as they are usually seen. He stresses the fact that as the crowd consists of individuals, Coriolanus should address them so, not as a crowd. This is why he complains that Coriolanus 'himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude' (2.3. 15). Thus, the people have a problem with how Coriolanus, and the audience, perceives them. The fact that Shakespeare opts to stage this debate confirms this. So, in their defence and in an attempt to restore some dignity for the common men, Third Citizen points out that this multitude consists of *individuals* who might have different opinions. Hence, he also emphasises that *each one* of them has to be convinced that Coriolanus is worthy of their voices. More importantly, by disclosing the fraction within this multitude (displayed in their different opinions) the dramatist implies that the people are not simply stupid and easily led, and that Coriolanus, and the audience, must not see them merely as crowd, but also as respectable individuals and worthy members of Rome's body politic. Similarly, in Act 1.1 the dramatist does not let the crowd be easily taken over by Menenius's piece of oratory, the belly-tale (l. 93-152), and throughout Menenius's speech they constantly question him and his fable. As First Citizen tells Menenius, 'you must not/ think to fob off our disgrace with a tale' (l. 90-1), thereby also addressing the audience and reminding it not to underestimate their suffering, intelligence and their mutiny. Far from going 'out of his way to blacken the multitude' Shakespeare not only challenges Coriolanus's perspective of the people but with it the audience's, that is, the attitude of those who might share Coriolanus's views.[51]

Shakespeare's 'interest in the powerfully and obsessively individualistic hero' does not, then, necessarily exclude the crowd.[52] Indeed, his interest in the image of the crowd and in their relationship with Coriolanus is apparent in Act 2.3. Here he stages the plebeians' concern as to how they are publicly esteemed, in particular by Coriolanus. Three citizens thus debate Coriolanus's potential promotion as consul, and in the process they reflect upon their relationship with him. They recognize that their political bond with the patrician is complex, for they know that despite his contempt towards the common people

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[50] Patrides, '"The Beast with Many Heads": Renaissance Views on the Multitude', p. 243.

[51] Indeed, as did the margins, or the Liberties, the 'areas that fell "betwixt and between" the categories and norms prescribed by law, custom, and cultural convention' so did the staged crowd, at times, defy cultural conventions. The quotations are from Steven Mullaney's *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 37.

[52] Riss's phrase, 'The Belly Politic: *Coriolanus* and the Revolt of Language', p. 56.

they have to support him because of his good service for the country (l. 1-3). More importantly, however, the citizens are aware that their power in state politics is conditioned: 'We have power in ourselves to do it [to dismiss Coriolanus], but it/ is a power that we have no power to do' (l. 4-9); that is, they have a right to disapprove of him, but they cannot dismiss him as long as he follows the protocol (shows hid wounds in the gown of humility). However, when they do dismiss him in the end, they comment: 'we willingly consented to his banishment, yet/ it was against our will' (4.6. 153-4), which does not seem to make sense, and yet it does confirm not only that their power is limited, but that they consciously allowed themselves to be manipulated. Despite this, however, these examples are highly significant because they also demonstrate that the people are capable of judging (in terms of acknowledging their own faults), and because they imply that the people's power is also limited by the laws and customs of the city of Rome. In other words, if Coriolanus follows the custom and shows them his wounds, their hands are tied, they cannot stop him becoming a consul. In this sense, their hands are tied by the customs of Rome just as Coriolanus is.[53] The implication behind this notion is that the laws and customs of Rome *are* the ultimate authority to the people, and, as we shall witness, to the patricians too. It is Rome that both the people and Coriolanus ultimately have to obey. *Coriolanus's* Rome thus represents a myth, in that it is a thing of the past, not only to us modern day readers and to its early modern audience, but, I shall argue, to Coriolanus's character as well. His attitude to Rome, or rather his disobedience to Rome, will be discussed later.

Nevertheless, concerned about their reputation, Third Citizen reasons further: 'Ingratitude is monstrous, and for/ the multitude to be ungrateful were to make a monster/

[53] For further reading on the representation of Rome, the myth of the city, see R. B. Parker's Introduction to the play, p. 11-13; Robert S. Miola's *Shakespeare's Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 11-17; for Miola, for instance, Rome 'is sometimes metaphor, sometimes myth, sometimes both, sometimes both, sometimes neither [...]. Rome is a palpable though ever-changing presence. The city serves not only as a setting for action, but also as central protagonist. Embodying the heroic traditions of the past, Rome shapes its inhabitants, who often live and die according to its dictates for the approval of its future generations. These Romans, capable of high courage and nobility, struggle with a city that demands them to be both more and less than human', p. 17. Further, see Paul A. Cantor's *Shakespeare's Rome: Republic and Empire* (London: Cornell University Press, 1976). According to Cantor, Rome means foremost the Republican Rome; for, it is 'this complex of austerity, pride, heroic virtue, and public service [...that] constitutes Romanness in Shakespeare', p. 37. Moreover, 'in the Republic [...] the city is a third party [...] a mediator in the affairs of its citizens', p. 46-8. The mediator or 'a third term' is actually 'the communal voice of Rome' p. 46; therefore the citizens are Rome. 'The situation in the Empire is truly an absence of mediation in the conflicts of men', p. 49. In short, it is the name of Rome that empowers the people and commands obedience, and which Coriolanus, we can say, finds illegitimate.

of the multitude, of which we, being members,/ should bring ourselves to be monstrous members' (l. 9-12). The citizen in fact makes a parody of the patricians' view of the people as the monstrous multitude: for, his playful and comic comment shows him as a witty representative of the multitude, and, therefore, it indirectly subverts the patricians' charges of the people's monstrosity. What is important to notice also is that the citizens criticize and contemplate their input in politics, but more importantly, Shakespeare's choice *to stage* their discussion is dramatically important. Shakespeare exposes, even dissects, the crowd in order to affect the audience and their views. It seems as though he wants the audience to re-consider their own attitudes towards the crowd. So, the purpose of this scene is to make the members of the audience take the people's character seriously (or with a pinch of good-humoured tolerance), and not to rely on Coriolanus's perspective. Moreover, reacting to First Citizens's remark about the people being seen merely as the 'many-headed multitude' (l. 15) Third Citizen adds:

> We have been called so of many, not that
> our heads are some brown, some black, some abram,
> some bald, but that our wits are so diversely coloured;
> and truly I think if all our wits were to issue out of
> one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south, and
> their consent of one direct way should be at once to all
> the points o'th' compass (l. 16-22).

That their 'wits are so diversely coloured' means that individuals in the crowd have different opinions and intellectual capacities; and yet it bothers him that they are still perceived as fickle and stupid, defined with one word, 'multitude'. What troubles him even more is the realization that the people may in fact need 'one direct way' and this could refer to a guidance, or a figure to represent 'their consent'.[54]

That the dramatist is concerned with the way the crowd is perceived is evident, moreover, in the opening scene introducing Coriolanus and the plebeians (1.1), providing an insight into the nature of their relationship, and into the crowd's psyche, or to use Gurr's phrase, its 'mental composition'.[55] In this scene Coriolanus is portrayed by the citizens as the 'chief/enemy to the people' (1.1. 7), and 'a very dog to the commonality' (l. 26)

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[54] Possibly, Shakespeare uses his character to acknowledge the people's need for a true leader, a royal figure.
[55] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 95.

because he dismisses the people and their problems. More significantly, in this scene Shakespeare stages the crowd that despite having the potential of turning into a mob (due to their conflict with the patricians about the price of grain) is not portrayed merely as a mob. This is apparent from the fact that at this point this crowd is not gullible and does not have one group mind, but is skeptical and divided in their opinion: First Citizen acknowledges Coriolanus's good service to the country, but also deems him 'partly proud [...] even to the altitude of his virtue' (1.1. 26-39, and 36-7) and suggests that he has 'faults, with surplus, to tire in/ repetition' (l. 42-3). Contrary to this citizen, Second Citizen seems more perceptive and even defends Coriolanus: 'What he cannot help in his nature you/ account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is/ covetous' (l. 38-40). What we need to acknowledge here is that by showing this division in support for Coriolanus Shakespeare not only does not want his audience to condemn or sympathize with Coriolanus, *but* he does not let them view the staged crowd merely as a multitude with one beastly mind either. He wants the audience to reserve its judgment. Most of all, however, he wants to make the audience aware that one cannot be considered without the other. The plebeians and Coriolanus as the representative of the patricians, form the 'I and Thou' of the political world in the early republic of Rome. The fact that the play foregrounds their problematic relationship, therefore, commands our attention from the outset.

Shakespeare depicts Rome in the transition period from the Age of Kings to the republic, in the aftermath of the tyrannical king Tarquin, thus the early stage of the Republic.[56] Coriolanus's antagonism towards the plebeians, we shall see later, is related to the power that the republican state gives the plebeians. The scene when they encounter 'worthy Menenius Agrippa' (1.1. 48), who attempts to calm the mutiny using the famous belly-tale (l. 86-152), cannot be taken for granted because it shows that this crowd is not entirely gullible and easily manipulated, but clever, eloquent and powerful. Thus, First Citizen reminds Menenius that the Senate was aware of their discontent and remarks: 'They say poor suitors have strong breaths; they shall/ know we have strong arms too' (l. 57-8). The implication behind this is that the citizens are displeased because the Senate did not respond to their demands; more importantly, however, it shows that the citizens of republican Rome have a significant input in politics. According to Livy's account of the history of Rome to 386 BC, 'the expulsion of the kings taught the Romans to love liberty,

[56] See J. S. McClelland's *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 46-50.

so that rule by Consults and Senate became irksome to the people because the Consuls enjoyed all the powers of the expelled kings'.[57] In the early republic, McClelland notes, 'the people put forward [their] demands'.[58] In fact they had power to 'refuse the call to arms at a time when the city is surrounded by enemies' and 'once in the field, they can mutiny'.[59] Moreover, 'they can secede from the city [...] or they could elevate one of their leaders to tyranny or even bring back the monarchy '; and 'as a last resort the people could become a mob and get their way by violence'.[60] McClelland explains, 'the early days of the republic are its great days; the people have their part to play; occasionally they get out of hand and threaten the balance of liberty, but Livy at least finds their agitations understandable'.[61] Shakespeare's representation of the people conveys this.[62]

Whilst we would perhaps most naturally sympathise with the people, and their grievances about the price of grain and famine (1.1), Coriolanus, however, does not. For him they are the lowest in the society because they retreat from the battle (1.5. 1-13; 1.6. 1-8; 1.7. 42-4). He is the hero who single-handedly brought victory to Rome (1.5. 23-4), a great warrior (1.5. 29-33; 2.2. 84-119), indeed a man of action for whom martial valour is the chiefest virtue: what makes a person a respectable citizen of Rome. He also distinguishes himself -and becomes Coriolanus- after single-handedly facing the people of Corioli alone. In other words, his victory in battle in this play is a stark reminder, or emblem of his antagonism towards 'crowds'.[63] He faces the Volscians alone – and defeats

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[57] See McClelland's *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 46.
[58] McClelland, *The Crowd: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 46.
[59] McClelland, *The Crowd: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 46. 'So deeply was the country divided by its political differences', between the people and the Senate, as Livy inform us, that when 'a Volscian army was marching on Rome' the people 'went about urging their friends to refuse military service' (2.24), see Livy's *The Early History of Rome*, tr. by Aubrey de Sélincourt, ed. by R. M. Ogilvie (London: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 131.
[60] McClelland, *The Crowd: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 46.
[61] McClelland, *The Crowd: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 47.
[62] For discussions on Shakespeare's attitude to republicanism and his appropriations of it see Andrew Hadfield's *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), and 'Shakespeare and Republicanism: History and Cultural Materialism', *Textual Practice*, 17, (2003), 461-83, in which he suggests that Shakespeare was a 'highly politicized and radical thinker, interested in republicanism', indeed, in 'political systems [that] seemed to hold out the prospect of greater liberty and stability than the English monarchy (although whether many writers were seriously advocating republicanism or doing more than gesturing towards another political order is open to doubt)', p. 465. Undisputedly, Shakespeare was interested in republican ideas, but it is unlikely that he was 'advocating' them given the age and circumstances (censorship, patronage) he lived in. It is plausible to say that the dramatist treated the topic from a distance, that is, from an outsider's, or observer's perspective. He demonstrated and debated it, shown its advantages and disadvantages but, quite understandably, never sided with it, or entirely against it. He left that choice to his audience. All we can say with certainty, therefore, is that Shakespeare was *thinking* the matter, but what his *personal* stand or *opinion* was, we are unlikely to find out.
[63] Indeed, Coriolanus was praised by 'all the young men and almost all the rich men [...] in so much they rang it out that he was the only man, and alone in the city who stood out against the people'; see Appendix B to the

them. His character, then, clarifies his deep-rooted contempt towards the people, and articulates what sounds like a typical anti-crowd discourse of Shakespeare's time:

> He that will give good words to thee will flatter
> Beneath abhorring
> [....]
>                                  He that trusts to you,
> Where he should find you lions finds you hares,
> Where foxes, geese
> [...]
>                              Your virtue is
> To make him worthy whose offence subdues him,
> And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness
> Deserves your hate, and your affections are
> A sick man's appetite
> [...]
>                                       He that depends
> Upon your favours swims with fins of lead
> [...]
>                                               Hang ye! Trust ye?
> With every minute you do change a mind,
> And call him noble that was now your hate
> (1.1. 164-80)

Like many early modern views in print, his character emphasizes that the common people are not trust-worthy, but hypocrites, cowardly and dangerous. For instance, Montaigne says, 'can anything be more stupid than to value collectively those whom we despise as individuals' because for him 'nothing is less worth esteeming than the mind of the many': 'My judgement', Montaigne asserts, 'is that, even when a deed is not actually base, it cannot be entirely free from baseness when it is praised by the mob'.[64] Barnaby Rich writes about the multitude in 1606: 'The multitude of the people, the greatest part of them, are ignorant of the best things; they are euermore desirous of chaunge, hating still what is present: amongst whome the counsaile of the wise were neuer heard without daunger, neither can there be any thing profitably ordain'd by the confused fury of the multitude.'[65] It is with this mind-set, then, that Coriolanus approaches the citizens in 2.3 to ask them for the

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Oxford edition of the play, Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, tr. by. Sir Thomas North, p. 371.

[64] Michel de Montaigne, 'On Glory': *The Complete Essays*, tr. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Classics, 1991), p. 709.

[65] See Barnabe Rich's *Faults Faults, and Nothing Else But Faults* (London, 1606), fol.42v, in *Early English Books Online* <http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk > [accessed 11 November 2011].

approval of the Senate's decision to make him a consul. As it was demonstrated, the playwright is determined not to show the plebeians as a multitude with one mind. Hence he makes Coriolanus confront them in small *groups*, and confronting them at all is already too much for Coriolanus.

Accompanied by his friend Menenius, Coriolanus faces the first three citizens (2.3), and when Third Citizen asks him what is his purpose, Coriolanus replies he comes against his own will for ''twas never my desire yet to trouble/ the poor with begging' (2.3. 66). He hates the fact that he has to bargain with the people (ask for their 'price o'th' consulship', l. 70) because he should automatically have their approval. This is why he does not want to have his 'nothings monstered' (2.2. 74), that is, his deeds dishonoured by speaking about them.[66] The wounds on his body that become him in the battle are the manifestation of his heroic deeds (He 'brings a/ victory in his pocket/ the wounds become him', and 'rewards/ His deeds with doing them').[67] Now, however, they are like monetary means used in the bargain of power. So, to display them in the public is to belittle his act and who he is; it is 'to surcease to honour' his 'own truth' (3.2. 123). It is as if he is saying, as Montaigne puts it, 'virtuous deeds are too noble in themselves to seek any other reward than their own intrinsic worth, and especially to seek it from the vanity of human judgements'.[68] He despises the people's power because it is conveyed in words, and says: 'Let deeds express/ What's like to be their words' (3.1. 134-35).

More than this of course, Coriolanus does not want to let the citizens indulge in the glory after the moment the glory was created (for, 'alone he entered/ The mortal gate of th' city [...] Now all's [glory] his').[69] The emphasis on his solitary act (the fact that he 'alone' fought in the battle) again is a reminder that he does not want to see himself in relation to the people: he is the *hero* and as such he believes he stands out from the crowd. 'Indeed the name [Coriolanus] only *remaineth with me* [my italics]', says Plutarch's Coriolanus.[70] However, Coriolanus does not understand that to 'stand out from the crowd' means being a part of it, too. He thinks it is a nonsense and utterly degrading to celebrate the deed and not the doing, to celebrate the outcome rather than the process ('I had rather have my wounds

[66] He is required to show the wounds on his body because they are a tangible proof of his service to his country and to his people. If Coriolanus wants to become a consul he has to pay a price, and the price is to show his wounds.
[67] 2.1. 119-20 and 2.2. 125-6.
[68] Montaigne, 'On Glory', p. 715.
[69] 2.2. 108-12.
[70] Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, p. 372.

to heal again/ Than hear say how I got them'.)[71] For him, it seems, this is a plagiarism of the original. The moment of his becoming -when he actually receives these wounds in the battle- indeed turns into a parody. This suggests that Coriolanus has his own 'reality', the battle-field. For him, then, this public moment (in the market place where he is meant to expose his wounds and in a sense revive his victorious moment) represents a post heroic moment or an anti-climactic moment in which he is asked to *share* (symbolically of course) his own victorious moment, with the people. He does not feel comfortable in the post-heroic moment. What is underneath the surface, however, is that Coriolanus opposes this interaction with the plebs because he opposes any politicised relation with them. In other words, he flees words in part because the people's power is manifested through words, and he does not wish to become a 'word' – an object exposed and debated about in the market place. To make the matter worse for Coriolanus, Third Citizen reminds him that his place in the society is conditioned by his relation to the people: 'You must think if we give you anything/ we hope to gain by you [.... and our] price [for consulship] is to ask it *kindly* [my italics]' (2.3. 68-71). To ask 'kindly', or 'with a gentler spirit' (3.1. 57) means to flatter them, to play their rules and be politically polite –obedient to the people.

Yet Coriolanus and the people have a dysfunctional relationship primarily because their attitudes to Rome are fundamentally different: it is not just a matter of style, but a critical difference in their views of Rome. They speak a different language. The people represent the republic, and Coriolanus rejects it. Specifically, they clash in their understanding of what 'virtue' means in Rome. As it was demonstrated above, for the people 'virtue' means one's ability to speak in public and please, or flatter them. For Coriolanus, however, 'virtue' not only refers to martial valour, but to honesty, too. He contends another two citizens, and when Fourth Citizen accuses him for not loving 'the common people' (2.3. 89), Coriolanus responds:

> You should account me the more virtuous
> that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir,
> flatter my sworn brother the people to earn a dearer
> estimation of them. 'Tis a condition they account
> gentle. And since the wisdom of their choice is rather
> to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the in-
> sinuating nod and be off to them most counterfeitly;

[71] 2.2. 68-9.

> that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some
> popular man, and give it bountiful to their desirers.
> (2.3. 90-99)

His overt self-estimation is accurate. Not only has he power to define himself but now also he has power to identify his relationship with the crowd. It is based on mutual contempt and dependency. He recognizes he needs the people to secure his place in the city, or on the political stage. They give their support, he gains consulship. However, the implication is that he does not want to identify with them - become 'common', that is, just another anonymous face. Above all, he does not want to publicly acknowledge their power (over him). Furthermore, to be 'common' in his love, is a peculiar expression. At first glance it suggests that he finds one's need to have the common people's affection rather pitiful ('a sick man's appetite'). However, paradoxically, it also insinuates that the patricians, such as for instance Menenius in 1.1 (l. 62-75), are 'common' in their love; that is, *dishonest* when they say they love the people.[72] In this sense the word 'common', as Coriolanus uses it, comes to mean 'hypocritical'. He despises the people's fondness of flattery because it is their *conscious* choice to accept false expression of affection rather then honest words.[73] Interestingly, in 2.2 Second Officer recognizes this power:

> Faith, there hath been many great men
> that have flattered the people who ne'er loved them;
> and there be many that they have loved they know not
> wherefore, so that if they love they know not why, they
> hate upon no better a ground. Therefore for Coriolanus
> neither to care whether they love or hate him mani-
> fests the true knowledge he has in their disposition
> (2.2. 7-13)

It is the crowd's self-chosen ignorance (or oblivion) that the Officer and Coriolanus disapprove. Coriolanus emphasizes that his virtue is speaking truth and he wants the people to acknowledge this as a virtue, rather than demand honeyed words. We shall examine shortly what this means in relation to the character's 'I and Thou' relationship with the audience. However, his refusal to be 'common' not only means that he does not want to

[72] According to *Oxford English Dictionary* "common" often refers to 'common woman: a harlot; so common prostitute'. <http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk> [accessed 15 November 2011].

[73] Indeed, by making the choice to accept or deny Coriolanus's words the people show (exercise) their political power.

identify with them, and that he despises their falsehood, but again that it is an example of his rejection of their political power (over him). Indeed, the power of the people of Rome is displayed and confirmed in the patricians' obligation to please the crowd and account their actions and political moves to them. This is why Coriolanus refuses to be 'common' in his love and the 'sworn brother' to the people. He has a different understanding of what it means to be Roman, and he, therefore, acts as if he is simply outside and beyond any 'communal' identification. He refuses, I would suggest here, to be distinctly Roman, and being distinctly Roman in the republic means *sharing power* with the plebeians. This reveals why he does not want to be part of this political 'I and Thou' relation. Hence, even in words he refuses to acknowledge the people's part in politics of Rome, or *politicize* the crowd. Indeed, he refuses to be politically polite despite the people demanding it. In other words, he refuses to relate to the people because he does not want to acknowledge their power in the body politic of Rome.

True to himself, then, he bursts out when another three citizens confront him:

> Here come more voices. -
> Your voices! For your voices I have fought,
> Watched for your voices, for your voices bear
> Of wounds two dozen odd; battles thrice six
> I have seen and heard of; for your voices
> Have done many things, some less, some more.
> Your voices!
> (2.3. 121-27)

In other words, he asks how dare they ask him to beg for their support. The repetition of the phrase 'your voices' is of course ironic and derogatory, and suggests that he did not fight in the battle for their approval in the first place. It disembodies them as a recognized body politic: he refuses to recognize them as 'bodies' and just as 'voices' of consent and approval.[74] He does not want their approval because, as he says, 'being pressed to th' war,/ Even when the navel of the state was touched,/ They would not thread the gates./ This kind

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[74] It is interesting that in Plutarch's account it is Coriolanus who fears that the Senate, or the patricians, are disembodied, i.e. disempowered or weakened by the people. He, thus, addresses the Senate: 'we should, if we were wise, take from them their Tribuneship, which most manifestly is the embasing of the Consulship and the cause of the division of the city; *the state* [my italics] whereof, as it standeth, is not now as it was wont to be; but becometh *dismembered in two factions*, which maintains always civil dissension and discord between us, and will never suffer us again to be united in one body. See Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, p. 371.

of service/ Did not deserve corn gratis' (3.1. 124-7); and we know from Livy's account that in the republic the people had a right to reject to go in the war.[75] By invalidating this right Coriolanus invalidates or dishonours Rome. Significantly, however, despite Coriolanus's irony the citizens decide to turn a deaf ear to it, and for having 'done [so] nobly' they 'let him be consul' (2.3. 128-30). This is because the plebeians are not concerned whether their relationship is based on mutual sympathies. They know that they, too, embody the law of Rome –are part of the body politic, and they want this to be confirmed in public, in Coriolanus's words.

At this point the play seems to turn against the people: it shows them, after all, as an unreliable multitude closely monitored, 'lessoned' (2.3. 174), and manipulated by their own spokesmen, Brutus and Sicinius. The tribunes, in fear of Coriolanus acquiring power, manage to set the citizens again against Coriolanus, and whilst First Citizen at least tries to find some good in Coriolanus and give him the benefit of the doubt (l. 156), Second and Third Citizen suddenly realize that Coriolanus's speech was mere mockery (l. 153-69). Brutus subsequently convinces them that Coriolanus poses a threat to *their power* in the state, reminding them that he always 'spake against/ Your liberties and the charters that you bear/ I'th' body of the weal' (l. 175-7), and that he will be 'a consul that will from them take/ Their liberties' (l. 211). Moreover, with this he insinuates that Coriolanus is ambitious, almost a reincarnation of the tyrannical Tarquin, and if they give him their voices he will thus become 'fast foe to th' plebeii' (l. 180). True to his name, then, this Brutus thus uses exactly the same argument as Brutus in *Julius Caesar* when he tries to convince the mob that Caesar was ambitious and tyrannical (3.2). The tribunes are, of course, reluctant to give up the power, which they have only recently acquired. They represent the people's victory in their conflict with the patricians; as Banerjee indicates, 'the people's answer to the authorities' measures in the play is the bid for a voice, the tribunate, and they win it'.[76] Put simply, then, they fear that with Coriolanus's promotion they will lose their political power. Therefore, they are willing to get him out of the political equation. Indeed, their conspiracy against him conveys their rejection of their relation.

[75] For more see Aubrey de Sélincourt's translation of Livy's *The Early History of Rome*, p. 131.
[76] Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 44.

Nevertheless, even though some citizens were willing to accept Coriolanus's performance, the majority decides to act against Coriolanus's consulship, as the Tribunes 'fore-advised' (l. 188) and now have lectured them. Sicinius and Brutus in fact instruct them what to say and how to argue their case against Coriolanus (l. 214-48), as Sicinius puts it: 'this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,/ Which we have goaded onward' (l. 259-60). Unlike the opening scene (1.1) in which Shakespeare does not let the crowd be easily taken over by Menenius's piece of oratory, this scene (2.3) does not give a favourable picture of the plebeians.[77] It reveals them, indeed, as an easily manipulated multitude, and their representatives, the Tribunes, as deceitful, cunning and as skillful in their political intrigues as any patrician or politician: it, then, fulfils the stereotype at this point. If Coriolanus is not a friend of the people, evidently the Tribunes are not either. All of this demonstrates that Shakespeare cannot be said to be either sympathetic or unsympathetic towards the people in *Coriolanus*. His portrayal of the crowd is not straight-forward or biased, and indicates that the figure of the crowd is complex and cannot be seen through one lens only. Moreover, even though Shakespeare is sympathetic towards their initial problem, he also seems to infer that having power rest in the hands of the people is not desirable. Therefore, the republican state does not seem a desirable option, we might conclude. Indeed, the play denounces the political engagement with the people, and this is related to their relation with the Tribunes. Coriolanus finds them responsible for 'prank[ing] them with authority' (3.1. 24), of giving an illusion that the people have power. When he faces the Tribunes he shows that he understands their games, and says 'have you not set them [the people] on?' (l. 39); 'It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot' (l. 40). To Menenius and Cominius he then turns and says:

> the mutable, rank-scented meinie,
> Let them regard *me* [my italics], as I do not flatter,
> And therein behold themselves. I say again,
> In soothing them we nourish 'gainst our Senate
> The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,
> Which we ourselves have ploughed for, sowed, and
> scattered
> By mingling them with us, the honoured number
> Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that

[77] As First Citizen tells Menenius, 'you must not/ think to fob off our disgrace with a tale' (1.1. 90-1) which reminds him, and the audience in the theatre, not to underestimate the people's suffering, intelligence and their power.

Which they have given to beggars.
(3.1. 69-77)

He warns not only Menenius and Cominius that this unreliable multitude cannot be trusted and should not be in power, but the audience who are watching the play as well. For this reason he refers to the people as 'measles' (l. 81) to the society, that is, a danger to the body politic of Rome, and infers that their horridness could be contagious and affect the public good. Coriolanus thus identifies the word 'crowd', or 'multitude', with chaos and disorder, and more importantly, with political instability.[78] 'By mingling them with us' he not only discards the idea of the shared authority but also points out the ultimate threat that Rome can become simply one large multitude, a city where chaos and violence rather than peace and hierarchical order reigns. In addition, Coriolanus also suggests that he is the only true friend of the people (and of the audience) in that he does not lie or flatter to them ('Let them regard me, as I do not flatter'). More significantly, his character suggests that he exposes to the audience who the plebeians really are, 'the mutable, rank-scented meinie' (l. 69) in order to help them understand the danger they can find themselves in when 'mingling them with us'. First, he infers that the plebeians are not capable of exercising power; they are not trustworthy and their loyalties are 'mutable'. Second, he implies that they can actually mirror, or reflect on themselves *in his words* and find truth there, and that by speaking candidly he is doing them a favour (l. 70-1). Most significantly, however, by saying 'let them regard in me' Coriolanus infers not only that the 'multitude' can 'behold themselves' in him, but implicitly that *he* beholds himself in them. Symbolically, then, Coriolanus is their mirror and the people are his mirror: he reflects them and they reflect him. In short, in his words Coriolanus betrays a key sense of connection: he acknowledges his relation with the people.[79]

What Coriolanus does not recognize, nonetheless, is that even by speaking about the plebs he in fact publicly confirms that he is in a political relation with them. Indeed, as Buber puts it, 'if *Thou* is said', the *I* of the 'combination', that is of the *relation*, 'is said

[78] Coriolanus's words also indirectly depict the patricians as a "crowd" (l. 72, 74, 75). This is significant and we shall return to this point and examine it in the section 'The Plebeian Crowd and the Patrician Crowd' in Chapter 2.

[79] The phrase 'let them regard me [...] And therein behold themselves', we could say, is possibly directed towards the audience, indirectly of course, and specifically those members of the audience who might identify themselves with the plebeians of Rome, the groundlings, therefore. This is an important point and to which we will return in the section 'Coriolanus versus the Groundlings'.

along with it'.[80] That is, by addressing them -even with abusive terms- he reveals that he is *affected* by them (which is obvious from his anger). With this, therefore, Coriolanus in fact endorses the existence of his relationship with the people. Hence, even though he thinks he does not 'experience [or relate to] the man [in Coriolanus's case, the crowd] to whom' he says Thou, he still takes his 'stand in relation to' the crowd.[81] Indeed, as Buber explains, this is because 'relation is mutual. My *Thou* affects me, as I affect it'.[82]

Coriolanus's relationship with the crowd exemplifies this relation. It is based on mutual disapproval and opposition, and though it is dysfunctional it is still a relationship. Without this 'rank-scented' multitude Coriolanus would not have an opposition with which he could contrast himself. Indeed, the 'feeling of exclusiveness' Coriolanus is, therefore, 'able to find only in relation'.[83] Again, he can only *stand out from the crowd* by being a part of it. This is especially evident in Act 1.8 when Coriolanus is back in Rome as a victor. We witness the only happy moment between him and the people[84], the only moment when they are accord. Celebrating his victory, the people thus '*take him up in their arms and cast/ up their caps*' (1.7), and Coriolanus taken by the euphoria exclaims: 'O, me alone!' (1.7. 77), and adds, 'a certain number-/ Though thanks to all-must *I select from all* [my italics]' (1.7. 81-2). Implicitly, his character acknowledges that in order to be able to say 'alone I did it' (5.6. 116) -to be unique- he needs the presence of 'all' (the crowd). In this scene the crowd reflects his joy and becomes his mirror. He cannot escape the relation because he needs the people to recognize his uniqueness, even when 'he seeks their hate with/ greater devotion than they can render it him, and leaves/ nothing undone that may fully discover him their op-/ posite' (2.2. 17-20). Thus, even in his denial of his 'I-Thou' relationship with the people, he acknowledges it. As Munro suggests in his reading, 'by calling plague upon the crowd [using the metaphor of 'measles' in Act 3.1. 97] Coriolanus identifies the crowd with the plague', and 'yet to speak of this relationship in terms of the infection of the individual by the city is to maintain a distinction that the play pervasively undermines. Coriolanus is not disfigured by the plague; rather, he is *figured* by it [my italics]': 'He is marked by the discourse himself'; he 'speaks plague and it speaks him'.[85]

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[80] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, tr. by Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937), p. 1.
[81] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 9.
[82] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 15.
[83] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 30.
[84] See 2.1. 201-17 and 2.1. 258-64.
[85] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 196-7.

By saying that their presence is infectious Coriolanus is inferring that he is *affected* by their presence, and to be affected means that he *relates* to them. So, although latently, Munro's reading points out to the reality of the relation and to Coriolanus's paradoxical approach to it. Simply by speaking to the people and about their contagious effect on him, he recognises the existence of the relation. However, as we shall witness soon, it is Coriolanus's underestimation of this relationship, or his undermining of the impact of the people on his own existence, that ultimately causes his downfall.

**The 'Absolute Shall' Versus the 'Peremptory Shall'**

It is apparent that Coriolanus has a fear not only of the crowd's power, but also of the republican state. This might seem paradoxical because Coriolanus helped the established government keep the tyrannical Tarquin overthrown (2.2. 85-93), and 'received in the repulse of Tarquin/ seven hurts i'th' body' (2.1. 145-6). His speech below, however, demonstrates Coriolanus's doubt about Rome's decision to establish a republican state:

> O good but most unwise patricians, why,
> [...] have you thus
> Given Hydra here to choose an officer
> That, with his peremptory 'shall', being but
> The horn and noise o'th' monster's, wants not spirit
> To say he'll turn your current in a ditch
> And make your channel his? If he have power,
> Then vail your impotence; if none, awake
> Your dangerous lenity. If you are learned,
> Be not as common fools; if you are not,
> Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians
> If they be senators, and they are no less
> When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste
> Most palates theirs
> [...].
> By Jove himself,
> It makes the consuls base, and my soul aches
> To know, when two authorities are up,
> Neither supreme, how soon confusion
> May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take
> The one by th'other.
> (3.1. 93-113)

There are a few important points here. Obviously, Coriolanus disapproves the Senate's decision to give to the people their 'officer[s]', or the tribunes, who are the distributors, or 'the ministers' of 'dreaded justice' (3.3. 99). Even more, he 'fears a decentered Rome that escapes the hierarchical structures of society'.[86] Most importantly, with the phrase the 'peremptory shall' he mockingly refers to the people's authority, provided by the republic of Rome. 'Peremptory shall' suggests that the people expect to be obeyed without a question, and he finds it laughable. I would like to suggest, however, that with his rejection of the people's authority in Rome Coriolanus implicitly rejects the present. Obviously discontented with the current state of affairs in Rome, with regards to the shared power in the city, his words insinuate that he is nostalgic about the Rome of the recent past. By this I mean that the Rome he believes in, and fights for is Rome during the Age of Kings which did not recognize the people as the authority. To borrow Buber's phrasing, Coriolanus indirectly repudiates not only the people's power, but 'what is contemporary' (thus, the republican Rome) and by doing so he implicitly accepts 'what is past', which is the Imperial Rome.[87] This is apparent from the fact that he refutes a political engagement with the people, and most of all, refuses to be conditioned by the *relation*. Shakespeare, therefore, exposes the dynamics of the republic and juxtaposes it with Coriolanus's anti-republican stance, and in doing so gives his audience a chance to review its *pros* and *cons*.

Beside this, Sicinius's imperative 'shall', which irritates Coriolanus so much, not only conveys the people's part in the political decision-making, but it implicitly refers to the laws and customs of Rome (indeed, apart from 'voice(s)', 'shall' and 'custom' are the most recurrent words in the crowd scenes.)[88] It forms the political vocabulary of the people. That the people *are* the city (3.1. 199) underlines the fact that they too embody the law of Rome. I would suggest, then, that they are partly the creators of the myth in which Coriolanus does not believe.[89] By having a power to demand Coriolanus's presence at the market-place and ask for his 'political performance' they project their vision of Rome and what a Roman should be or should present. What needs to be acknowledged is that whilst Coriolanus rejects the people's share in power, he automatically rejects and indeed

[86] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 108.
[87] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 37.
[88] For instance, 'Custom' meaning law occurs in: 2.2. 135, 2.3. 113, 2.3. 114, 2.3. 164; and 'Shall' as a confirmation of the people's part in: 2.2. 143, 2.3. 75, 3.1. 90 and 92, 94, 96, 3.3. 108.
[89] To clarify, by rejecting the people's part in politics, Coriolanus treats republican Rome as myth.

disobeys Rome *and* its laws and customs, too. As Sicinius puts it, 'he hath resisted law' and 'the severity of the public power,/ Which he so sets at naught' (l. 269-72). So, it is not simply the people's power, but it is now the power of Rome. Moreover, it is the 'absolute "shall"' (l. 92) - the power of the *custom* - that Coriolanus so categorically discards. He relates it to the people, and like a Machiavellian 'new prince' (a man of extraordinary skills) he opposes the custom and rebels against the 'existing legitimatory system', which in Coriolanus's case involves the plebeians.[90] Unlike a Machiavellian 'prince', however, he fails to pull the levers of the popularity to exert power. Indeed, Shakespeare sets Coriolanus in a situation in which the *identity* of Rome politically is undergoing transformation, with power given to the people. Hence, what Rome means is now different. Contemplating the custom of asking the people for their voices he, thus, says: 'What custom wills, in all things should we do't,/ The dust on antique time would lie unswept' (2.3. 114-5). Both irony and surrender seem to surface here. The irony is in that even though he momentarily succumbs to the custom he eventually dismisses it. Coriolanus, thus, disobeys Rome and the people. As Sicinius puts it, the people 'had a taste of his disobedience' (3.1. 321) to *their authority* and to the authority of Rome.[91] Coriolanus's stubbornness and foolishness, his desire to be unique, his rejection to politicize the people, his uncompromising self, his 'absolute shall' now stands against the 'absolute shall' of the citizens and of Rome.[92] Put simply, he resists the people for wanting to corrupt or politicize his virtue, both as a warrior but also, I would argue, because 'virtue was closely linked with the distinctively *republican* character'.[93] So,

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[90] John Greville Agard Pocock's phrase, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 161. It must be noted that I do not infer that Shakespeare's Coriolanus represents a figure of a Macchiavelian 'new prince', but rather that he has some characteristics of the 'new prince': He is an innovator and a rebellious figure, he is dangerous, possesses extraordinary skills, disobeys and fights against the rules/customs of the establishment. Nevertheless, he lacks the key component, which is charisma - the ability to win the masses. And yet, as *a character on the stage*, he has it in abundance.

[91] On Coriolanus's rejection of the people's power Banerjee writes in 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*': 'his contempt for the masses is so infinite that it is impossible for him to subscribe to the principle, which is almost the fundamental tenet of republicanism', p. 41; and adds, 'the hero's oligarchical denunciation of the people and their empowerment in the play are of central significance in the contentious issues of warfare', p. 45.

[92] Indeed, as Plutarch writes in *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, 'he would, and did nothing but what he listed, neither passed for any obedience to the Consuls, but lived in all liberty, acknowledging no superior to command him', p. 370. This aspect of Coriolanus is, then, explored and, as the examples illustrate, further developed in Shakespeare's Coriolanus.

[93] Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 2. As previously mentioned, for more on Shakespeare and republicanism see Andrew Hadfield's *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), especially 'Forms of republican culture in late sixteenth-century England', pp. 17-53.

'it is this civic virtue that Coriolanus lacks', that is, 'the cardinal virtue of a republican'.[94] His sense of virtue is martial *and* individualistic.[95] Pocock writes, 'Civic Humanism' which identified 'the good man with the citizen, [has] politicized virtue and rendered it dependent on the virtue of others'.[96] Coriolanus not only rejects politicisation of his virtue (his martial valour) in these terms, but more than anything he rejects it as dependent 'on the virtue of others', the people. This all confirms that Coriolanus indeed rejects *his reality* -the republic and with it the people of Rome. 'The real, filled present, exists only in so far as the actual presentness, meeting, and relation exist', and Coriolanus's political relation with the people does exist, despite his disapproval of it.[97] Thus, Coriolanus rejects his *political relationship* with the people, and in doing so discards the rules that the republican Rome imposes on him. 'I would they were barbarians,', he says, 'as they are,/ Though in Rome littered; not Romans, as they are not,/ Though calved i'th' porch o'th' Capitol' (3.1. 237-39). That is, they are not part of *his* Rome, but of a Rome that he refuses to recognise and rejects. Again, he rejects his reality.

Moreover, this is may be 'the biggest threat of the mulitude: not to overpower the other attributes or classes by rebelling against them, but to make them one with itself'.[98] To 'mingle' with the crowd, in other words, is to become part of it. It is to add to their number and make the crowd even more powerful. 'We do it not alone' (2.1. 32), Brutus says, and Menenius replies, 'I know [...] for your/ helps are many' (l. 32-3). The power of the people is, therefore, also conveyed in their number. In the republic, to separate oneself from the people, as Coriolanus does, means to put oneself in a vulnerable position.

Furthermore, for Shakespeare's Coriolanus republican Rome is *but* 'a widely held' and 'false notion' by definition a *myth.* [99] For, had he accepted the people's role in the politics, he would have accepted *his reality*. However, he does not. This is because his character is represented to believe in the supremacy of the patricians' class, and this explains why 'when two authorities are up, [and]/ Neither supreme' is an unbearable situation for him: two contesting authorities can create political tension, and therefore,

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[94] Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 44-5.
[95] For more on this see Banerjee's The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 44.
[96] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, p. 157.
[97] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 12.
[98] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 110.
[99] *The Oxford Compact English Dictionary*, p. 658.

chaos and confusion, and destruction, too. Hence, Coriolanus's character warns the audience that when the authority is shared, there is danger of 'confusion' as to who *is the* authority, and ultimately the power struggle ensues. Coriolanus's words on shared authority indicate that his character disapproves of such a political system because it destabilizes and de-harmonises the society. In fact *Coriolanus* demonstrates this in the dramatization of its protagonist's fate: the power struggle between the plebeians and the patricians results in the banishment of Coriolanus, and Coriolanus's mutual banishment of Rome results in the threat of the potential destruction of the city. Pronounced a 'viper' (3.1. 265), or a traitor, he is banished from Rome, whereupon Menenius remarks: 'our renowned Rome, whose gratitude/ Towards her deservèd children is enrolled/ In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam/ Should now eat up her own!' (3.1. 293-96). He is destroyed in this 'gap' of 'confusion' which is created by the Tribunes, who influence the people into thinking that they are the authority and Coriolanus an enemy of the state. In other words, Coriolanus's fears come to pass. Hence, his character's latent message is that the only solution and possibility for preserving stability is when power is centralized, or supreme. As Riss puts it, 'the lack of a commanding political voice divides Rome'.[100] The 'gap' that Coriolanus refers to, then, points to the vacuum created in the lack of a supreme power, of the head of state. Without this supreme power, he indicates, the people can turn into a mob, nourish 'disobedience' and thus feed 'the ruin of the state' (3.1. 118-19), 'win upon power and throw forth greater themes/ For insurrection's arguing' (1.1. 217-18). What is also implicit in Coriolanus's rejection of the plebeians is that his character also rejects the 'absolute power' (3.1. 117) of custom, ultimately of *the myth* of Rome.[101] Indeed, his combat with the plebeians is generated by his rejection of their power over him. By treating Rome as myth he mistreats his present, his own existence, but also in doing so he attempts to de-authorise the plebeians. In the remaining part of this chapter I shall argue that Coriolanus's problem with the myth of Rome is that it is maintained and celebrated in words and rhetoric rather than in deeds, in that it is related to acting, role-playing and theatricality, and worst

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[100] Riss, 'The Belly Politic: Coriolanus and the Revolt of Language', p. 71.

[101] For specific discussions on the myth of Rome in Shakespeare's plays see Robert S. Miola, *Shakespeare's Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 11-17; Paul A. Cantor, *Shakespeare's Rome: Republic and Empire* (London: Cornell University Press, 1976), p. 9-51; and for further discussions on the republican Rome see Pocock's *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, p. 157-67; J. H. M. Salmon's 'Stoicism and Roman Example: Seneca and Tacitus in Jacobean England', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 50 (1989), p. 199-225.

of all, to pleasing the crowd.[102] By default it seems this myth is one of a Republican Rome and is always related to the crowd, the auditorium.

**Coriolanus Versus the 'Groundlings'**

In this remaining section we shall look closely at Coriolanus's relationship with the audience. I shall argue that Coriolanus's character can be seen as an embodiment of anti-theatrical and anti-crowd attitudes of the early modern period. Since Coriolanus is an anti-populist figure, it is not surprising at all that Shakespeare uses the space of his character to address the anti-theatrical prejudice of his time. For Shakespeare, it seems, Coriolanus's figure is a goldmine: a perfect 'territory' through which he can depict, explore and challenge anti-theatrical and anti-crowd attitudes of the time.[103] In short, we shall examine the character's *theatrical relation* again through the application of Buber's 'I and Thou' concept. That is, we shall examine and situate the concept in a *theatrical context.* Coriolanus's relationship with the audience is a key point of interest because it will help us more fully to understand how his character is construed, in particular why he rejects any link with the people, and finally what looms behind his antagonism towards the theatrical. As it has been discussed, Coriolanus does not want to interact with the people because he does not want to acknowledge their part in the politics of Rome. In the previously quoted speech, specifically lines 109-13, Coriolanus says his 'soul aches/ To know, when two authorities are up,/ Neither supreme, how soon confusion/ May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take/ The one by th'other'. Unlike Weimann who suggests that 'the denotation [here] is strictly political', I propose to view these lines not just in a political sense but also in the

[102] Concluding his discussion on Machiavellian 'new prince' *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition,* Pocock writes, 'men in the world of innovation live in the present. [...] a world which they see and experience as action [...] rather than as tradition and legitimacy'; for the new prince 'action is more exciting than custom, it holds the attention and stirs up the emotions'; the '*virtu*' of the new prince is 'functioning where rational and traditional authority are both absent - is a kind of charisma', p. 178-9. To an extent, this can be applied to Coriolanus.

[103] As Plutarch's account in *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* illustrates, Coriolanus's troubled relationship with the people, and his unpredictable choler, was indeed an ideal 'material' that allowed Shakespeare to address the character's relationship with the audience and the crowd. Coriolanus, Plutarch tells us, was an impatient and 'stout man of nature, that never yielded in any respect, as one thinking that to overcome always and to have the upper hand in all matters was a token of magnanimity and of no base and faint courage, which spitteth out anger from the most weak and passioned part of the heart', p. 370. Enraged that the Senate allowed the corn to 'be given out to the common people *gratis*', Coriolanus expresses his anger and fear of the people: 'they [the people] will rather judge we give and grant them this as abasing ourselves, and standing in fear of them, and glad to flatter them every way', p. 370-1.

context of the theatrical setting.[104] That is, we can consider the stage as one authority and the audience as another, bearing in mind that the latter is a divided authority. Gurr suggests, 'there were', indeed 'two kinds of playgoer divided according to the priority of eye or ear', that Shakespeare's '"audience" was always a hearer' and that 'spectators were the groundlings that Hamlet looked down on'.[105] I shall argue that Coriolanus looks down on this audience as well. Moreover, his character implicitly addresses the role of the audience in the theatre and discloses his uneasiness about it, which is, I suggest, related to the presence of the members in the audience that are commonly referred to as groundlings.

The commoners were divided in two groups: 'the citizens' or 'the respectable [...] people - servants, apprentices, workers' and 'the meaner sort', that is, 'beggars, vagabonds, masterless men, whores, panders, thieves, cozeners, rioters, and troublemakers of every kind'.[106] Coriolanus's 'soul aches', it might be said, because of the presence of this type of the people not only in Rome but also in the theatre, who it seems by default are ignorant: in particular, 'it is the ignorance that relies more on eyes than ears'.[107] Coriolanus's words imply that he addresses the common men in the audience as, to use Gurr's phrase, 'thoughtless spectators'.[108] Indeed, what Coriolanus says about the plebs as a multitude seems to be applicable to the groundlings. For instance, the groundlings could perhaps find themselves in Coriolanus's words in which he comments that the people of Rome are but 'woolen vassals, things created/ To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads/ In

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[104] See Weimann's *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice: Playing and Writing in Shakespeare's Theatre*, ed. by Helen Higbee and William West (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p. 47. In relation to this, in Weimann also points out that 'there was also, in Shakespeare's theatre, a "gap" between political and cultural articulation; between them "two authorities [were] up" and, in resulting "confusion" continuity, let alone congruity, was not as a matter of course available. Concurrence between them was impossible to achieve when each in its making pursued a different mode of legitimation. While in Elizabethan politics authority was prescribed or simply given, in the theatre the dramatic representation of authority could often enough undermine any imaginary sanctions of its bulwark', p. 47-8.

[105] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 111 and 114.

[106] See Ann Jennalie Cook's *The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London, 1576-1642* (Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 218. Cook argues that the presence of the privileged playgoers was by far more dominant than that of the less privileged; that the playwrights wrote specifically for the rich and educated members of the audience. She claims that this is due to the practical reasons (such as lack of money, or working hours) that the plebeian playgoers in fact could not have been regularly attending the performances in the public theatres, and in great numbers, p. 216-71; 'However appreciative of Shakespeare or Jonson or Marlowe', Cook concludes, 'the masses simply did not follow a pattern of existence that fostered playgoing, except on rare occasions', p. 273. This question of which type of playgoers was present in *greater* numbers, nevertheless, is irrelevant for my research. That the less privileged were *present*, even if in lesser numbers, and that they were *addressed* by the characters on the stage (as we shall witness with Coriolanus's character), too, is more than a reason enough to take them into consideration like their better-off theatre-peers.

[107] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 110. See also Cook's 'Violence in the Audience' and Playwrights' Complaints': *The Privilaged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London, 1576-1642*, p. 258-68.

[108] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 111.

congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder' (3.2. 9-11).[109] If these members of the audience - the plebeians - identify themselves with the play's plebeians, then it is to be expected that they will not look favourably on Coriolanus. Shakespeare is aware of this and concerned, therefore, whether these members of the audience can actually apprehend Coriolanus's character. Put simply, he is worried whether their dislike of Coriolanus may overshadow their better judgment of the staged Coriolanus.[110] His use of Coriolanus's character demonstrates this conflict (Shakespeare wants his character to be accepted, but he also wants him to be accepted for what he stands for –an anti-populist figure). It must be noted, however, that Shakespeare does not identify with Coriolanus's antagonism towards the common people (there is no reason to think that Coriolanus's insults are his personal), but he uses the space of Coriolanus's character to address the issue of why the common people in the audience should not automatically dismiss Coriolanus from their sympathies. That Coriolanus's character is antagonizing the audience is a part of the irony in Shakespeare's dramatic technique. The dramatist, then, it could be argued, abuses Coriolanus's character: by showing him as an anti-populist figure

Coriolanus's character is annoyed that these 'vulgar wisdoms' (1.1. 213), this 'breath of garlic-eaters' (4.6. 102) have the *authority* in the theatre, as much as in Rome, to approve or disapprove his character and the whole performance respectively. Hence, he asks: 'how shall this bosom multiplied digest' the play's 'courtesy', and indeed, 'account' his character 'more virtuous,/ that' he has 'not been *common* [my italics]' in his love? Contemplating his situation earlier in the play, Coriolanus discloses his reasons *to the audience*:

Most sweet voices,

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109 In the Introduction to the Oxford edition of the play Parker indicates that showing bare heads was 'a mark of respect and subservience', p. 266. The phrase, however, might be also a contemporary allusion to the '"understanders" in the yard' (Gurr's phrase in *Playgoing in Shakespeare*'s *London*, p. 21). As Gurr points out, a 'social distinction between the groundlings and their superiors' (p. 24) was conveyed not only by one's position in the theatre (yard, or seats), but also by distinguishing whether and what type of hat one is wearing: 'generally, the higher your status the higher your hat' (p. 46), and it is plausible to assume, then, that the groundlings were the bare-headed members of the audience whom Coriolanus seems to address.

110 A "staged character" evidently consists of two components: the "staged" and the "character", in which the former denotes the dramatic *role(s)* that the character has on the stage, and the latter depicts the "*real*" figure: in case of Coriolanus we can say, then, that his role on the stage is to address and embody the anti-theatrical and anti-crowd attitudes, whilst his "character" represents that of the historical Coriolanus, whom Shakespeare and the audience recognise from Plutarch's account. Again, in this thesis I argue that the "staged" and the "character", and the *relations* they have in the theatrical setting, are expressed in the "space of the character".

> Better it is to die, better to starve,
> Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
> Why in this wolvish toge should I stand here
> To beg of Hob and Dick that does appear
> Their needless vouches? Custom calls me to't.
> What custom wills, in all things should we do't,
> The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
> And mountainous error be too highly heaped
> For truth to o'erpeer. Rather than fool it so,
> Let the high office and the honour go
> To one that would do thus. I am half through.
> The one part suffered, the other will I do.
> (2.3. 108-20)

His character displays a meta-theatrical awareness, for he implicitly asks the audience to accept him for what he represents. Moreover, at this point his character is alone on the stage, which suggests that the words he speaks are directed to the audience. With 'most sweet voices' he addresses the people watching him, and therefore acknowledges their role in the theatrical occasion. They are now the 'sweet voices' whose 'vouches' he needs. The phrase 'most sweet voices' not only ironically refers to the plebeians (the citizens of Rome), it might seem, to the common men in the audience (l. 113) too, that is, to any 'Hob and Dick' watching the performance. Indeed, this phrase is 'an Elizabethan equivalent of the modern "every Tom, Dick and Harry", i.e. every common nobody: "Hob" was a vulgar diminutive of "Robert"'.[111] This insinuates that Coriolanus's character does not want to beg the common men in theatre to *like* him either. He does not need 'their needless vouches'. What his character, or the dramatist, desires is that they try to *understand* where Coriolanus's contempt towards the plebs is coming from (as it is indicated mainly in their ingratitude, 1.1. 164-80). Hence, he does not desire to 'crave the hire' for what he 'first deserve[s]': the audience's appreciation of his character. He would rather be consistent to himself (l. 17-19) and not even attempt to please or flatter them. Moreover, he does not want to be false and stand thus 'in this wolvish toge', which debases him, makes him '"look like a wolf in sheep's clothing"'.[112] Symbolically, Coriolanus's warlike image is implied in the metaphor of 'wolf'. He is a warrior, a dangerous creature: 'He carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears./ Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm dothe lie' (2.1. 154-

[111] See Parker's note on the expression, p. 237.
[112] See Parker's note on the expression, p. 237.

6). This great warrior, he insinuates, is now forced to act, to wear this 'wolv*ish* [my italics] toge'. The inflection 'ish' suggests that acting negates the real thing, so to wear this 'wolvish' gown, for him means to make a parody of himself and his heroic deeds. What is also apparent is that Coriolanus thus reveals to the audience that he is not comfortable being on the stage. What is implicit in Shakespeare's characterization of Coriolanus, then, is that staged Coriolanus seems to have an uncomfortable awareness of himself as a staged being (which is analogous to the play's Coriolanus who is not comfortable appearing *in public*, on the market-place, and *in front of the crowd*). With this Coriolanus tries to clarify to the audience why he wants to step out of his role and his 'I-Thou' relationship with them as much as with that of the plebeians of Rome. It is degrading for him 'to fool it' that he is anything else but Coriolanus. As such Coriolanus expresses here a meta-theatrical anxiety. For, his character betrays an awareness of the fact that he has a role on the stage, which is to address the crowd in the theatre, including the common men.[113] Hence, Coriolanus is justifying to the audience his rejection to comply with the rules imposed upon him and asks them to accept him for who he is. This is why he is in a constant battle with pleasing the crowd.

We must, then, somehow separate the staged Coriolanus from Coriolanus the figure in the play. In this light I further suggest that the staged character cannot be entirely identified with the figure in the play. My reading, thus, differentiates the *staged character* from the character *on the page*. This is because once the character is performed in the theatre, he establishes an important and additional relation, with the audience. He is no more simply Coriolanus, but as we shall witness, he is an agent on the stage.[114] Weimann's concepts of *locus* and *platea* are useful here. The former denotes the abstract space ('the imaginary world-in-the play') and the latter 'the open stage, that is not isolated from the audience', or 'the playing-in-the-world of early modern London'.[115] It is precisely in *locus*-

[113] It is plausible to say that his character betrays a 'meta-theatrical sub-consciousness': for his character expresses a great discomfort in being on the stage, and yet he does not know that this is because he has a greater role than being just Coriolanus. We know that in the space of his character Shakespeare embodies tensions that take place in the theatrical performance, but Coriolanus does not. This will be addressed shortly in relation to Coriolanus's anti-theatricalism.
[114] See Weimann's remark on 'the concept of "agency"' in his Introduction: *Author's Pen, Actor's Voice*; he writes, 'institutions like the early modern theatre are subject to discursive as well as non-discursive circumstances; their workings are dominated by parameters of profit, desire, production, consumption, and power – practices that constitute, and are served by, agencies', p. 13.
[115] Weimann, the Introduction: *Author's Pen, Actor's Voice* p. 12.

like space that I situate Coriolanus, and in *platea*-like space the staged character.[116] This suggests an interesting division in the concept of Coriolanus's character. On the stage, our sense of his character could become complicated by his meta-theatrical anxiety and antagonism towards crowds (i.e. the audience) in a way different for an individual reader. The individual reader might identify with Coriolanus and a theatrical audience with the multitude, or both. It also suggests a reversal of the hero's wooing of the crowd (the audience). The individual reader has a different experience of Coriolanus to that of the audience. Whilst the reader can perceive Coriolanus as a heroic figure, the audience might not. This implies that the dynamics and nature of the character's relationship with his audience is, then, also determined by the 'type' of audience (either a theatrical, or a reading-audience) that the character relates to. A close physical proximity between the stage and the audience creates a different type of interaction to that of reading, and I would suggest, it is in the *platea*-like world in which the staged character and the audience engage.

Coriolanus's character is concerned that Coriolanus will be perceived by the plebeians in the audience the way he is perceived by the Roman plebeians. 'Shakespearean audiences [...were] expecting chiefly "a literal representation of individual characters and actions that were meant to be interesting and moving in their own right"'.[117] Hence, Coriolanus's character expects to be misjudged and misunderstood by the plebeian crowd in the theatre. Again, that he is addressing this specific crowd in the theatre is apparent from his choice of words, such as the 'woolen vassals, things created/ To buy and sell with groats' (3.2. 9-10) in which the word 'groats' refers to 'English four penny pieces', 'merely petty traders'.[118] Simply, Coriolanus's character insults and despises these members of the audience because perhaps he expects they will despise him. Further, Coriolanus not only looks down upon them, just like he looks down upon the Roman plebeians, but more importantly, he sees them as well as a dangerous and base multitude, and as a *potential mob*:

[116] These two spaces, then, can also be seen as two authorities that operate in the theatrical performance: Coriolanus's character is the case in point: for he displays unease operating, as it were, in both of these worlds (the imaginary and the stage world). Put simply, he has to perform the play's Coriolanus and the Coriolanus on the stage (who has a different role to that of the play's Coriolanus), hence this brings in the confusion as to which world he belongs to (which is expressed in his lines 'When two authorities are up/ Neither supreme').
[117] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p. 137.
[118] Parker's note in the Oxford edition of the play, p. 266.

> This double worship,
> Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
> Insult without all reason, where gentry, title, wisdom
> Cannot conclude but by the yea and no
> Of general ignorance, it must omit
> Real necessities, and give way the while
> To unstable slightness.
> (3.1. 144-50)

With 'this double worship' Coriolanus's character makes a clear-cut division among the audience: one is the men of 'wisdom', as Cook puts it, the privileged playgoers, 'the nobility, the gentry, the wealthier merchants, and the professionals (advocates, clerics, teachers, military officers, and an occasional physician), together with their wives and children', and the other is of course 'the yea and no/ Of general ignorance'.[119] The presence of this 'general' auditorium he finds troublesome because, he implies, it 'insult[s] without all reason' both the gentile members in the audience and the performance indeed.

Reading the representation of the multitude in Plato's *The Republic* Munro illustrates the author's depiction of the multitude and its threat towards the individual, 'in the scenes in which Plato explicitly stages the one against many', and more importantly, 'in a context that gives too much power to the corporeal multitude'.[120] The section he uses from *The Republic* is more than relevant for our discussion:

> *they object very noisily* [my italics] to some of the things that are said or done, and approve others, in both cases to excess, by shouting and clapping [...]. During such a scene what is the effect on the young man's psyche, as they say? What private training can hold out against this and not be drowned by that kind of censure or approval, not be swept along by the current whithersoever it may carry it, and not declare the same things to be beautiful or ugly as the crowd does.[121]

Implicitly this passage reveals a danger of being the individual leveled with the crowd, becoming one of them, which is Coriolanus's worst fear. Plato, thus, condemns the crowd's noisy reactions. Coriolanus, too, maligns particularly 'the horn and noise o'th' monster' and its 'unstable slightness'. He implies that their disrespect and discourtesy might likewise

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[119] Cook, *The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London, 1576-1642*, p. 16.
[120] Munro, *London: The City and its Double*, p. 111.
[121] Plato, *The Republic*, tr. by G. M. A. Grube (London: Pan Books, 1974), p. 171. See Munro's *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 111.

insult the play and his character.[122] This 'unstable slightness' creates chaos and confusion and makes Coriolanus's 'soul ache'. This is because the common people ('the general ignorance') literally can produce such noise and prevent the more noble ears from hearing what is being said on the stage, and consequently 'to conclude' their opinions on the performance. In other words, Coriolanus's character stands in an antagonistic relationship to the common people in the audience for they, he indicates, are also potentially a mob: an unruly crowd, disrespectful potentially to the authority of the stage. As such for Coriolanus they do not represent a worthy authority: thus, like the Roman plebeians, the audience too seems to receive Coriolanus's contempt.

What emerges from this all is that Coriolanus's relationship with the plebeians seems analogous to his character's relationship with these members in the audience. Indeed, as much as Coriolanus is uncomfortable facing the crowd in the market-place, his character is uncomfortable playing in front of this audience, too. Now it is plausible to say that the 'gap' he fears, symbolically refers to a specific space of Coriolanus's character - the one which depicts the way he is perceived and judged by the popular audience. In other words, this gap symbolically depicts his *dramatic Thou,* his relationship with the audience. Put simply, Coriolanus's character shows his concern that this audience might see him through the Tribunes' perspective. By addressing this concern he, or rather the dramatist, in fact tries to take control over how Coriolanus is perceived. Shakespeare redresses the balance by showing to the audience, as it were indirectly, that they can also 'behold themselves therein' in Coriolanus's words, in the space of his character, in their relation to him. Shakespeare's dramatic rendering of Coriolanus serves to show to the audience that they are not immune from the events and representations of the stage. By default the audience is attached to, affected by and related to the stage. Additionally, I suggest here that Shakespeare uses Coriolanus's character as a dramatic space through which he is able to acknowledge that there is inherent tension in the relationship between the stage and the audience. The strain in this relationship is manifested in Coriolanus's hostility towards playing a role that the people and Rome expect from him: to show his wounds from the battle. Simultaneously, I suggest, his character is implicitly hostile towards the audience because, he assumes, they too would expect him to play a role which he does not want to play -the people pleaser. Moreover, he expects the audience will banish him from their

[122] He is not talking about the audience directly, of course, but in a way that might be applied to them.

sympathies just like the plebeians in the play, hence his complaint that he deserves 'no better entertainment/ In being [acting] Coriolanus' (4.5. 9-10).

In revolt, then, Coriolanus throws away the rules of expectations bestowed upon him, and resolutely says, 'I play/ The man I am' (3.2. 15-16). Nevertheless, by adopting 'I am' into 'I play' he turns the situation in his favour. In doing so, his character indicates to the audience that he is a soldier and a patrician who *does* hate the common people, but he desires to be accepted even for this, because only in this role is he consistent and truthful to himself. His consistency is thus set against the multitude's inconsistency. With Coriolanus's insistence, to remain true to himself Shakespeare makes his audience, if not like, than at least accept his character. With this the playwright, I suggest, gives his audience the responsibility of being fair judges. He demands from them to show tolerance, not ignorance, to be open-minded and receptive rather than prejudiced and dogmatic in their opinions. It is almost as if he suggests that Coriolanus's 'rough, unswayable, and free' nature (5.6. 25) is a reason why we should like him, too. He is perhaps one of the least understood and esteemed of Shakespeare's characters, commonly perceived as an anti-populist figure, but what is so admirable about him is the fact that he is the only character in the play who shows some true feelings, be it anger, contempt, or even hate: he is a character rooted not just in singularity but in sincerity. Unlike any of his fellow Romans on the political stage, he speaks passionately and with raw emotion, and we cannot but admire him for this. As Volumnia articulates it, he is 'too absolute' (3.2. 42), or stubborn in his persistency to be himself despite the fact that this is precisely what 'looks/ With us to break his neck" (3.3. 28-9) as Brutus triumphantly remarks. His act is himself, and his condition is to play himself. His character, therefore, demonstrates not only self-awareness, but a meta-theatrical awareness in which he recognizes that he is a character on the stage too. More importantly, he seems to be aware of the implied power of the crowd in the theatre, which is their judgment over his character.

Shakespeare, therefore, translates Coriolanus's rejection to perform in the market-place into his character's anti-theatricalism –his antagonism towards words, acting and specifically towards the crowd. By refusing to play a game according to the *rules* of decorum imposed upon him, and by pointing out that he wants Coriolanus to be remembered through his *deeds*, as the figure of a warrior, man of action, not in words. Coriolanus's character is given an anti-theatrical position. He 'has been bred i'th' wars [...]

and is ill-schooled/ In bolted language' (3.1. 323-24). He hates theatricality because public speeches and oratorical skills are alien to him, and for him words are 'but bastards and syllables/ Of no allowance to' his 'bosom's truth' (3.2. 57-9). As Barish indicates, 'the whole [of Plutarch's] conception [of Coriolanus] seems to represent a debased version of Plato's views of mimesis, including an unexamined preference for "deeds" over "words" [...]. He, or his spokesman, simply makes this brute assumption that since "deeds" precede in time the "words" about them, they therefore enjoy some mystical superiority'.[123]

More significantly, however, pleasing both the crowd and the audience means implicitly recognizing their power in the theatre. As Coriolanus says,

> Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,
> The tongues o'th common mouth. I do despise them,
> For they do prank them in authority
> Against all noble sufferenace.
> (3.1. 22-25)

Coriolanus steps again into the space of his character that is determined by his relationship with the audience. He despises the fact that 'the tongues o'th common mouth' might have any say not just in politics but in the theatre. It is, here, then, that his character articulates anti-theatrical and anti-crowd attitudes of the early modern society. Underneath anti-theatricalists' condemnation of public theatres was a fear of empowering the common men.[124] 'According to Gosson, Greene, and Rainoldes, if the performance is convincingly naturalistic, the spectators will lose control of their moral sensibility and blindly become what they see on the stage'.[125] Coriolanus's character is against theatres and acting, then, for it allows the common men to assume even this power to imagine themselves in different roles. That is, he condemns the common men, and the theatre as an institution that 'prank[s] them in authority', giving an illusion to the plebeian crowd in the theatre that they are allowed to assume such power, even for the brief duration of the performance.

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[123] Jonas Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (London: University of California Press, 1981), p. 34-5.

[124] 'The affective powers of the stage were a source of apprehension for the learned as well as the ignorant; at least where the antitheatrical opposition was concerned, those powers were neither doubted nor embraced, but were instead branded as illegitimate, unlawful, even sacrilegious', see Mullaney's *The Place of the Stage*, p. 98.

[125] Bryan Reynolds, *Becoming Criminal: Transversal Performance and Cultural Dissidence in Early Modern England* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2002), p. 137.

Recognizing his part on the stage Coriolanus exclaims: 'Well, I must do't./ Away, my disposition; and possess me/ Some harlot spirit!' (3.2. 112-14). 'Some harlot spirit' is not simply a reference to the politicians as actors, it may seem, but also a reference to the ordinary people in the audience: which included people like beggars and prostitutes, too.[126] For him acting is the 'most inherent baseness' (l. 124), because he is forced to ask with 'a beggar's tongue' (l. 119) for the audience's vouches, sympathy, and he 'would [rather] not buy/ Their mercy at the price of one fair word' (3.3. 91-2). It is feasible to say that it is the relationship established through this bargain in the theatrical occasion that he rejects. More than this, however, I suggest that his latent anti-theatricalism is related not only to acting but to acting *for the audience*. It is precisely what the anti-theatricalists such as Philip Stubbes condemned: the *authority* and *power* that the theatre as an institution gives to the ordinary members of the society. For instance, Stubbes fears the power of aesthetics because, like rhetoric, beauty has the power to manipulate and deceive, because the sin of 'Pride of Apparell [is] co*m*mitted [...] By wearyng of Apparell more gorgeous, sumptuous, & precious than our state, callyng, or condition of lyfe requireth'.[127] The danger of this sin is that it 'remayneth as an Example of euyll before our eyes, and as a prouocatiue to sinne'.[128] 'To commit a sin' for Stubbes means to wear beautiful clothes inappropriate for one's class, that is, to 'prank' the common people 'in authority'. Stubbes, it seems, takes Plato as his guardian. In *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* Jonas Barish writes, according to Plato 'it is the job of the state to reinforce these genetic differences, and to build solid walls between the social classes, since an oracle has predicted that "when a man of brass or iron guards the State, it will be destroyed" (415c).[129] 'The end result, then, is that', Barish quotes Plato's words,

> this interchange and this meddling of one with another is the ruin of the State [...]. Seeing, then [...] that there are three distinct classes, any meddling of one with another, or the change of one into another, is the greatest harm to the State, and may be most justly termed evil-doing.[130]

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[126] Parker's note, see the Introduction to the Oxford edition of the play, p. 273.
[127] Philip Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth,* Part 1 (London: Richard Iones, 1583), pp. 1-112 (p. 29).
[128] Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth,* p. 30.
[129] Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice*, p. 23-4. See also Plato's *Republic*, tr. by Prof. Benjamin Jowett (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2004), p. 113.
[130] Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice*, p. 24. See Jowett's translation of Plato's *Republic*, p. 134.

As Munro confirms, 'using the city as a conceptual tool, Plato both explains the allegedly inherent differences between social classes and justifies the subjection of the many to the rule of the few'.[131] For Stubbes, rich attire is a statement of power and he does not want to see 'the inferior sorte' empowered, or being given an illusion of having power. As for Coriolanus, so for Stubbes too, 'this meddling of one with another' represents 'the ruin of the State'. The nobility, he indicates, should wear excessive clothes, for, as the main protagonist of Stubbes's treatise, the experienced world traveler Philoponus says, the nobility is permitted to wear excessive apparel '(in the feare of God) to innoble, garnishe, & set forthe their byrthes, dignities, functions and callings','to demonstrat and shewe forth the excellency and worthines of their offices and functions'.[132] What Stubbes has in mind is 'thereby to strike a terroure & feare into the harts of the people to offend against the maiesty of their callings'.[133] He justifies this, of course, by saying that this is a service to the Lord, that it is permitted 'to shew forth *the* power, welth, dignity, riches, and glorie of the Lord'.[134] However, his book is all but a praise of the Lord. What is actually underneath Stubbes' worries about such abuses is a fear of power of ordinary people displayed through acting on a stage. This is related to Coriolanus's fears, for in the public theatre the plebeian crowd have power to approve or diapprove his character. Coriolanus's fear of shared authority, ('When two authorities are up, Neither supreme'), would horrify Stubbes as it does Coriolanus. According to Stubbes, men may be equal in the eyes of God, but not in attire; different attires are needed to differentiate the nobility from the ordinary men despite the fact, as Stubbes himself indicates, that 'Dame *Nature* bryngeth vs all into the worlde after one sorte, and receiueth all againe into the wombe of our mother, I meane the bowelles of the earth, al in one and the same order and manner, without any difference or diuersitie at all'.[135] Men need to be distinguished by their clothes otherwise there will be 'a

[131] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 109.
[132] Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, p. 33-4.
[133] Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, p. 34. Interestingly, whilst Plutarch's Coriolanus arrives 'with great pomp' to the market-place to confront the people, Shakespeare's Coriolanus evidently does not. The playwright leaves out this detail because his Coriolanus is meant to dislike any theatricality (with political agenda) or public display which serves the purpose of pleasing and winning the crowd; see Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, p. 369.
[134] Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, p. 35.
[135] Stubbes *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, p. 29. As Peter Stallybrass and Ann Rosalind Jones point out, in *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2000), pp.175-207, 'the sumptuary laws, ineffectual as they usually were', were meant to regulate 'what specific classes could wear', p. 187; moreover, Stallybrass and Jones note that 'before the repeal of the sumptuary laws in 1604, it could be a risky undertaking to wear "unsuitable" clothes, particularly in church or the workplace [...]. The sumptuary laws in England were more honoured in the breach than the

great confusion, & a general disorder'.[136] What Stubbes is worried about is not the abuses of pride or of apparel, as he terms them, but the loss of hierarchical order and supreme power. 'Stubbes wants clothes to place subjects recognizably, to materialize identities for onlooker and wearer alike. But he is forced to recognize what he deplores: that clothes are detachable, that they can move from body to body. That is precisely their danger and their value: they are bearers of identity, ritual, and social memory, even as they confuse social categories'.[137] Stubbes fears the public theatre where authority (during the performance) is shared, but he also fears the power of the theatre to affect the audience's way of thinking. Stubbes' anti-theatricalism, therefore, originates here. The people are implicitly empowered in the public theatre; and he sees it as a potential threat to the rule and the establishment.

The play, thus, presents the public theatre as a place where Stubbes' hierarchy does not work, or at least is not as straightforward, as demonstrated through the crowd's and Coriolanus's characters. 'In portraying the crowd, the theater does not rebut the anti-theatricalist position; rather, it appropriates it, incorporates it, mimicking its tenets and demonstrating its effects', and at times it refutes the typical anti-crowd discourse as it is the case with 2.3 in which the citizens offer the audience another perspective of the crowd.[138] For Coriolanus, however, the theatre embodies his fears. For, it is on the stage where words, not his deeds define him. Words and not swords are the actor's ammunition. For this reason, he betrays a meta-theatrical anxiety of being on stage. However, his character is created for a stage. By speaking about it he recognises that a theatre is an authority which he can hardly oppose. He is its agent on stage and his character represents a domicile of tensions that the play depicts (in the relation between him and the plebeians, between his character and the audience). The stage gives him a space in which he does not feel comfortable to be, and since his character is created by this shared authority, he despises it. It is as if Coriolanus is born out of this 'confusion', or out of this disorder, for which he ultimately blames the shared authority in the theatre: the collaboration of the divided authority in the theatre produces, as it were, the confusion in which his character resides.

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observance, but they were not completely without teeth', p. 187-8. For more on Stallybrass's and Jones's discussion on the 'constitutive function of clothes in the Renaissance' see *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, pp.175-207.

[136] Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, p. 34.

[137] Stallybrass and Jones, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, p. 5.

[138] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 135.

As it has been indicated, part of Coriolanus's anti-theatricalism is his honesty and integrity. As Menenius says, 'His nature is too noble for the world./ He would not flatter Neptune for his trident/ Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth' (3.1. 257-59). He is 'too absolute' and 'too noble for the world' to 'repent'. As he says he 'cannot do it to the gods' (l. 40) let alone to the people. More importantly, like anti-theatricalists, he opposes transformation and exchange of roles, and thus acting what one is not.[139] From a political perspective, we have seen, Coriolanus is foolish, as Cominius says, 'more cruel to' his 'good report than grateful' (1.10. 54). Moreover, his anti-theatricalism with regards to the crowd in the theatre relates to the fact that he thinks that 'any Hob and Dick' do not have intellectual capacities to understand him. When Volumnia says, 'Action is eloquence, and the eyes of th'ignorant/ More learned than the ears' (3.2. 77-8), she makes a division between the passive spectator and the active participant, whereby the common men in the audience by default seem to be regarded as ignorant 'spectators'. As Coriolanus's, Volumnia's character, too, shows contempt towards the 'the ignorant' because they are affected by what they 'see' rather than by what they 'hear'. In other words, Volumnia implies that they are ignorant because their opinion is based on physical gestures rather than on the content of what is being said. However, given that she insists on Coriolanus playing his role, she implies that the customs in Rome are built around pleasing the crowd. Applied to the theatrical occasion, her character not only stresses the importance of pleasing the audience but with it she confirms their part in the theatrical occasion.

There is a paradox, however, in Coriolanus's refusal to act. For, his character also demonstrates that he *is* created on the stage, that 'this mould of Martius' (3.2. 105), is framed and *defined* in the moment of theatrical transaction between the stage and the audience. More precisely, Coriolanus's character demonstrates that he exists in the *dramatic relation* between the two authorities, and that for the duration of his performance (for the time when he is on the stage) he becomes the embodiment of this relation. Menenius's words suggest this: 'The wounds [that] his body bears, [...] show/ Like graves i'th' holy churchyard' (3.3 48-9). This odd image of Coriolanus, we shall see shortly, suggests how his character comes into being. The image, nevertheless, suggests that he has a number of wounds and Menenius clearly wants to emphasize this as a token of Coriolanus's valour. They are trophies from the battle of survival, and each one is an

[139] See Reynolds's *Becoming Criminal*, p. 138.

enemy's grave. They are a token of a number of deaths, therefore, a number of relations Coriolanus has *lived* through. Munro finds an interesting 'parallel between the stigma of plague spots and Coriolanus's own stigmata, the scars and wounds' on his body and says, 'like plague tokens, Coriolanus's cicatrices [...] connote the destruction of the cities' and more than this - these 'cicatrices' (2.1. 144), I suggest, can be seen in fact as inscriptions or marks on Coriolanus's *dramatic body*, and a symbolic evidence of the creation of the character through the relation between the stage and the audience.[140] Given that a character is also a mark on a page denoting a letter, Coriolanus's scars, then, write his character through their own characters. What I mean by this is that, to use Weimann's phrase, 'the author's pen' places these imaginary marks on Coriolanus's dramatic body and the audience is meant to visualise, experience and relate to them in their imagination.[141] Symbolically then the wounds are the words that are exchanged between Coriolanus and the crowd, and between the stage and the audience, during the performance. Together they form a network of relations in the space of his character. They stand for and create the *relation* in which the staged Coriolanus comes into being. In other words, the staged character, to use Buber's wording, 'takes his stand in [his and other characters'] speech and talks': that is, it exists to us 'from there'.[142] Symbolically, the wounds on his body testify that he is born not only just on the battlefield but also out of the relation between the shared authority in the theatre, the stage and the audience. In this play, we can deduce, therefore, that resisting the relation means resisting the shared authority.

As we have seen, this relation is precisely Coriolanus's burden. He does not want to be in the relation, because for him being in the relation is a sign of a loss of self, a symbol of the lost battle, hence his urge to stand out 'alone' as the master of himself. He experiences the wounds as 'scratches with briers,/ Scars to move laughter only' (3.3. 48-9) also because he expects the audience to dislike him and banish him from their favours, just as the plebeians in the play banish him. However, we cannot dismiss Coriolanus. The dramatist makes us and his early modern audience accept this exceptional stage figure, and desires us to understand him in all his complexity. With Coriolanus he wants to make us aware that his characters, just as real-life people, are construed through *relations* and should not be viewed from one perspective only, but, indeed, as multidimensional figures.

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140 Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 197.
141 Weimann, *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice*, p. 34.
142 Buber, *I-Thou*, p. 39.

The same, we have witnessed, is true with regards to the playwright's dramatization of the people. As was illustrated earlier, Shakespeare does present some aspects of the crowd's 'multitudiness' such as gullibility and fickleness, and a potential to turn into a violent mob. However, he still does not want the audience to see them in this light only, but offers a reason why we can still sympathise with them. For instance, in Act 4.7 the citizens debate their decision to banish Coriolanus and realize they made a mistake. 'Against the rectorship of judgment' (2.3. 201) they allowed themselves to be influenced by the Tribunes:

> FIRST CITIZEN For mine own part,
> When I said 'banish him' I said 'twas pity.
> SECOND CITIZEN And so did I.
> THIRD CITIZEN And so I did, and to say the truth so did
> very many of us. That we did, we did for the best, and
> though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet
> it was against our will.
> (4.6. 148-53)

Again, not only does this imply that their power is limited in that they can 'willingly' consent to something which is 'against' their 'will', or that they consciously accept to be manipulated by the Tribunes, but again this example illustrates that the citizens are aware and at least able to acknowledge their ignorance. These lines are ambiguous (despite them seemingly not making much sense) and subvert rather than convey the crowd's supposed stupidity: by *recognizing* their own gullibility the citizens paradoxically show that they are not every inch ignorant. Their self-estimation at this point is exact. Shakespeare wants the audience to take this into account. They can clearly reason and analyse their act, and most of all, in their regret and bad conscience, they demonstrate that they are not a blood-thirsty beast. In a way these words could be taken as a definition of the play's representation of the crowd. In *Coriolanus* Shakespeare gives an oxymoronic image of the crowd. The fact that the crowd consists of individuals who have the ability to think, judge, and speculate is juxtaposed with the fact that these individuals *consciously* permit the tribunes to manipulate and influence them. The dramatist does not want to give his audience one simplified image of the crowd as a many-headed multitude, and in doing so he challenges the typical anti-crowd discourse of his time. In the discussion of Act 2.3 he, therefore, stages the citizens and shows that they are concerned with the way they are perceived. He wants us to treat the crowd as a complex character, not simply as crowd. As Buber writes, wee 'must practice a

kind of realization that I call *embracing* [my italics]', which means both empathising and understanding.[143] Put in the theatrical context, and above all in reading of the crowd, this suggests that we should 'embrace' their character from different perspectives, and resist any automatic and complacent response. This we are asked in 2.3, the scene in which the citizens attempt to regain dignity and the public estimation, and indeed defend the image of the crowd. With this the citizens, therefore, also respond to Coriolanus's allegations that they are 'th' herd' (3.2. 33) of 'stinking greasy caps' (4.6. 139), 'the clusters' (l. 137), 'fragments' (1.1. 220), but they indicate to the audience that they are not ignorant but 'have their 'worth/ Of contradiction' (3.3. 26-7) as well, like Coriolanus. They too do not want 'to hear' their 'nothings monstered' (2.2. 74) on the stage. Implicitly then the citizens of Rome on the stage stand up for the low class members in the audience, and against the anti-theatrical attitudes of the time. Their role is to make the audience aware that the common men watching the play are not merely a many-headed multitude of spectators, but that they are worthy members of the audience. Thus, both the staged crowd and Coriolanus indirectly ask the audience to leave the myth, the prejudice and the traditional view behind, and see them for who they are in their totality. As Buber says, 'we should do justice with an open mind to the actuality that opens up before us'.[144]

**Theatrical 'I and Thou': Afterthought**

Despite Coriolanus's denial of the relation, the play suggests that in the public theatre two authorities are at work, interact, and therefore *relate*. The dramatisation of his relationship with the plebeians shows that they are a dramatic force. This is analogous to Coriolanus's relationship with the audience, and it explains how staged characters come into being. 'Characterisations' are always 'taken out from representations of incidents and situations that are specifically *relational* [my italics]'.[145] Staged character epitomises this fact. Indeed, the stage (the author, the acting company) work with the audience by assimilating them and their attitudes in the performance and by direct or indirect address. This forms an intricate network of authorities and indicates that the construction of the character occurs in collaboration, that the character is not created by one supreme authority but is a result of

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[143] Buber, Afterword: *I and Thou*, tr. by Walter Kaufmann, p. 178.
[144] Buber, *I and Thou*: Afterword, p. 173.
[145] Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 19.

the collaboration -the relation- among these agencies. Hence, the moment of confrontation with the audience gives Coriolanus substance. What Buber says about a person can be said for the staged character; a person is 'by definition an independent individual and yet also relativized by the plurality of other independent individuals'.[146] So, even though Coriolanus refuses to accept that the audience is his dramatic 'Thou', through the dramatic relation he *becomes* a product of it. He cannot escape it because it is innate to his staged part. 'As if a man were author to himself' (5.3. 36) remains simply wishful thinking for Coriolanus. In his denial of the relation he authenticates it, because denial does not negate but validate.

This all points out to the fact that in the space of the character Shakespeare is able to juxtapose conflicting realities of creating and staging a character, and within it address conflicting issues that both Coriolanus and the crowd represent. It is the theatrical occasion itself and performance that dictate and condition the space of the character. Additionally, we have seen that when Coriolanus's reality and the reality of the dramatic moment clash, he is in turmoil. What he resists is power exercized over him by the people. He is aware of the power of the audience in their interpretation of his character, for, as Aufidius puts it, 'our virtues/ Lie in th'interpretation of the time' (4.7. 49-59), that is, in the myth that the audience creates. It is as if Coriolanus incorporates, unwillingly yet inevitably, (to use Mullaney's phrasing) 'the gaze of the Other [i.e. the Roman people and the audience] turned upon his radically discernable self'.[147] We can say that Coriolanus, then, has an 'acute and apprehensive sense', and unease, 'of being observed - of having been always and already observed'.[148] When Ulysses says to Nestor, 'I have a young conception in my brain;/ Be you my time to bring it to some shape' (1.3. 308-9), it is as if the playwright asks the audience to recognise their input in shaping the character, and the performance.[149]

Coriolanus does not want to be part of the myths that circulate within the play, but he wants be accounted 'virtuous' for what he is. Thus, he does not want to deceive the audience - 'mountebank their love' (3.2. 134) - hence he asks them not to demand from him to 'capitulate/ Again with Rome's mechanics' (5.3. 83-4), that is, to bargain himself for their approval. When he opposes to play under the rules of Rome, thus, he refuses to play under the rule of the theatre, the institution which empowers the audience. He embodies

[146] Buber, *I and Thou*: Afterword. p. 181
[147] Mullaney's phrase, *The Place of the Stage*, p. 111.
[148] Mullaney's phrase, *The Place of the Stage*, p. 111.
[149] William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 81.

anti-theatrical attitudes in that he rejects the people's authority in the theatre; and yet, on one level his anti-theatricalism is justified, it is almost personal because it comes from his consistency to remain who he is. By *staging* him we can say that the play abuses him, undermines the sense of who he is, even while he is a character empowered and celebrated by the theatre. He is given a space to be himself, and even allowed to disdain the stage. His coming into being through this relation is most tangible in the crowd scenes, the role of which the second part of this thesis will address in detail (in Chapters 3, 4 and 5). Coriolanus bridges the gap between the text and the performance, and it is in this gap that 'imaginary forces' (*Henry V*, 1.0. 18), which exists in minds of those who see the play, are at work.[150] This is the role of the audience in the construction of the character. Put more simply, the character's role is defined in the moment of the performance and through the relationship with the audience. This is *the implied power of the crowd* in the theatre.

On the imaginary stage of the city of Rome Shakespeare plays with tensions that originate in the moment of the confrontation of the opposing parties, and he bestows these tensions on Coriolanus's character. Paradoxically, it is through the rejection of his 'Thou' that he indeed acknowledges the existence of the *relation*. Coriolanus validates himself not just in the battles, but in words, too. While destroying his enemy he assimilates (symbolically in the wounds on his body) this enemy into himself and into his victory. This process itself is analogous to the theatrical occasion, when addressing the audience both Coriolanus's and the crowd's character assimilates them in their presence. Most of all, the staged Coriolanus assimilates the crowd's or the audience's presence in the space of his character. As such he epitomises the existence of the theatrical 'I and Thou' relation. In the next chapter we shall examine how this works in Ben Jonson's *Sejanus, His Fall* and what this author's relationship is with his audience.

[150] William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, ed. by. T. W. Craik (London: Arden, 1995).

**The Echoing Rhetoric of Hostility:**
***Sejanus*'s Noble and Beastly Crowd**

In terms of our discussion of theatrical 'I-Thou' relations so far in this thesis, Ben Jonson's *Sejanus, His Fall* will prove a natural sequel to our discussion of *Coriolanus*.[1] The 'I-Thou' relationship - between the Roman patricians and the people of Rome - is not dysfunctional in *Sejanus*, but almost non-existent: the plebeians of Rome are barely mentioned until the last act (Act 5) which accounts for Sejanus's end.[2] That Jonson chose to exclude the people entirely until the end of the play, it will be argued, is important on a dramatic level. In relation to this, I propose that the crowd scene in Act 5 of *Sejanus* betrays a troubled relationship between the author himself and his audience, especially his difficult relationship with the theatre crowd we know as the groundlings, the popular audiences. In Gurr's terms these are the 'understanders', or in Jonson's terms, the 'ignorant gapers': those who do not apprehend and appreciate Jonson's work.[3] Jonson's attitude towards the audience has been widely debated. However, the role of the *reported crowd scene* in the dramatisation of the author's relationship with the audience and the audience's symbolic input in shaping the character has not been recognised. I shall argue that both are evident in the space of the crowd's character in this play.

What complicates our reading of *Sejanus*, however, is the play's textual history. The text that we have today is most likely not the original text of *Sejanus*. In his Introduction to the play Philip J. Ayres indicates that the original text may have been written two years prior to its first production by the King's Men 'between 25 March 1603 and 24 March 1604', and that the performance of the play at the Globe later in 1604 'was greeted by the hostility of its audience'.[4] The *Quarto* text of the play, on which Ayres's

[1] Ben Jonson, *Sejanus, His Fall*, ed. by Phillip J. Ayres (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990).
[2] Prior to the play's climax, which is the reported crowd scene in Act 5, the common people of Rome are only mentioned as a passing reference: for instance, in Act 1. l. 538; Act 2. l. 359, l. 492 and l. 498; Act 3. l. 557, l. 576 and l. 605; Act 4. l. 194, l. 209, l. 345 and l. 508; and in Act 5. l. 12, l. 28, l. 34, l. 60, l. 79, l. 213, l. 221, l. 263 and l. 715/16.
[3] Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 21. Jonson uses the phrase 'ignorant gapers' in *Timber, or Discoveries* in *Ben Jonson: The Poems, The Prose Works*, ed. by C. H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, viii (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 587.
[4] Philip J. Ayres, *Sejanus, His Fall* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 9.; the play 'was entered in the Stationer's register by Edward Blount on 2 November 1604', p. 1.

edition is based, appeared in 1605, and the *First Folio* in 1616.[5] Notably, the *Q* text (1605) appeared after the play's failure at the Globe (1604), and in it Jonson adds his address 'To the Readers'. His address, as we shall see, implies that Jonson revised the play after its public failure in 1604.[6] What is striking is that Jonson addresses 'the *Readers* [my italics]', which implies that Jonson did not intend the revised *Sejanus* to be performed, but read, which also makes our reading of *Sejanus* problematic. The evidence that that the text we read today is a revised version of *Sejanus*, however, is implicit. As such this discussion of the play, and any other, which relies on accurate dating remains inevitably hypothetical, but not altogether improbable.

With the evidence that is available I shall argue, therefore, that the revised version might have been written in the light of the public rejection of *Sejanus* at the Globe in 1604, and that this is also implicit in Jonson's dramatisation of the crowd scene in Act 5.[7] I also suggest that Jonson's attitude towards the people has some similarities with Shakespeare's Coriolanus: the author, too, sees himself in a clear opposition to the vulgar multitude. After all, he is an exceptionally educated man and in terms of knowledge, an elite member of the society and the people in the theatre's yard are in this sense his opposite: as Gurr puts it, the 'thoughtless' and illiterate spectators among those standing in the yard.[8] According to Jonson, Gurr indicates, 'the vulgar and adulterate brains thronging the amphitheatres are debarred from judging poetry which only learned ears can apprehend'.[9] In addition, I shall argue that Jonson's attitude towards the multitude does not exclude the 'learned ears': they can also be a part of the ignorant multitude.

Further, I suggest that even though Jonson sees himself *above* and *apart* from this multitude in the theatre, he cannot deny his relation with them: by staging his play he is inevitably bound in the relation. The base and the ignorant *are* members of his audience, and they, too, relate to his play even when disapproving of it. Unlike Shakespeare's Coriolanus, Jonson, of course, does not hate words and theatricality: he embraces and produces them. My concern in this chapter, therefore, is Jonson's attitude to the multitude and mob. What makes mob a mob, or what *is* a mob according to Jonson? Is it defined

[5] Ayres accepts the authority of *Q*, but he also uses *F* 'selectively where substantives are concerned, normally incorporating what seem to be authoritative changes and additions (but not the self-censorship)', p. 7.
[6] The *First Folio*, Ayres points out 'omitted "To the Readers"', p. 6.
[7] Ayres's edition does not have a scene division, but act divisions only.
[8] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeares London*, p. 111.
[9] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeares London*, p. 104.

politically or mentally? These are questions that Shakespeare does not pose, and will be closely examined in the second half of this chapter.

As in the discussion of *Coriolanus*, our main interest is not simply the representation of the crowd, but the dramatisation of the relations during the theatrical performance that shape the mob's character, and the implicit dramatisation of Jonson's troubled 'I and Thou' *relationship* with his audience. As it has been demonstrated in Chapter 1, it is hard to discern Shakespeare's personal attitude towards the people, because his voice is not necessarily articulated through his characters. He gives different perspectives and leaves a responsibility of judgement to his audience. Jonson's voice and authority is always heard and expressed. He comes across at times as an arrogant author, even aggressive; and, it will be demonstrated, he believes rightly so. It is in terms of Jonson's dramatic strategies and representations, then, that we shall examine the playwright's use of the dramatic space that I refer to as the 'space of the character'. I shall argue that Jonson, unlike Shakespeare, utilises this symbolic space to 'stage' himself: that is, to express and clarify *his* opinion on the matter. Finally, my discussion of *Sejanus* will draw an analogy between the 'author-audience' relationship and the 'plebeians-Sejanus' relationship.

With regards to the vocabulary used when referring to the ordinary people, in this chapter I focus on the representations of the disorderly crowd in the play's final act, and, therefore, I predominantly use the term 'mob'. The term 'people' will only be used when referring to the *plebs*, or the citizens of Rome prior to the crowd scene. By 'mob', then, I refer to a crowd of Roman plebeians in the time of Tiberius's rule, a time in which they in fact had no political power: 'Rome was then a true *res publica*', but, McClelland writes, 'under Tiberius and his successors it "differs in nothing from a monarchy" [...] under the new constitution men resigned their rights and lived like aliens in their native country while the city itself became "a theatre of horror"'.[10] This, we shall see, is evident in Jonson's representation of the mob in the crowd scene. In this chapter, then, we deal with a very different crowd of plebeians to that of *Coriolanus*. What has a dramatic importance, however, is that Jonson uses this historical fact about the *plebs* to reflect upon the members in the audience who dismissed *Sejanus* in its first production. As this chapter will show, he

[10] J. S. McClelland quotes from Tacitus's *Annals* (4, 33) and *The History* (1,1), see Tacitus's *Historical works*, 2 (London: Everyman, 1908); see McClelland's *The Crowd and the Mob: from Plato to Canetti* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p.52.

portrays them as intellectual 'aliens' in their native theatre, and the stage itself, in Jonson's experience, becomes a 'theatre of horror'.

## Critical Responses to *Sejanus*

Much criticism of *Sejanus* focuses on the contemporary references in the play, the issue of a 'second pen', Jonson's use and appropriation of classics, and his use of prefatory material.[11] Paul D. Cannan suggests that 'Jonson may be displacing his criticism from the playscript [of *Sejanus*] to the prefatory matter in an effort to maintain authorial control'.[12] My chapter consults Jonson's prose texts, such as *Timber, or Discoveries* and *Sejanus*'s 'To the Reader', in relation to Jonson's dramatic rendering of the crowd scene in *Sejanus*, and insists that the scene demonstrates not only Jonson's 'technique of authorial self-presentation', but also that it indirectly speaks of the author's theatrical 'I-Thou' relationship with the audience, a matter that will be closely examined in the section 'Redemption in Reflection: Jonson, Apicata and the Mob'.[13]

In terms of Jonson's interest in the audience, and 'the theatrical realisation of *Sejanus*', Brian Woolland's '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?' offers important insights.[14] Focusing of Arruntius's character, his 'dialogue with the audience' and 'the complexity of' Arruntius's 'role', Woolland argues that 'Arruntius becomes the character who engages our interest in the play' and 'may be central to our perception of the

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[11] For contemporary parallels in *Sejanus* see Phillip J. Ayres, 'Jonson, Northampton, and the "Treason" in *Sejanus*', *Modern Philology*, 80 (1983), 356-63 (p. 356). See also R. P. Corballis, 'The "Second Pen" in the Stage Version of *Sejanus*', *Modern Philology*, 76 (1979), 273-77; David Farley-Hills, 'Jonson and the Neo-Classical Rules in *Sejanus* and *Volpone*', *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, 46 (1995), 153-73 (p. 153). For more on Jonson's life and career see Leah S. Marcus's 'Jonson and the Court': *Ben Jonson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 30-42. As Marcus infers, Jonson 'had a strong thirst for public acclaim along with a continuing appetite – no doubt fuelled by envy – for the excoriation of artistic vice', which brought him before the Privy Council in 1603-4, p. 34.

[12] Paul D. Cannan, 'Ben Jonson, Authorship, and the Rhetoric of English Dramatic Prefatory Criticism', *Studies in Philology*, 99 (2002), 178-201 (p. 193).

[13] See also David Riggs's 'The Author's Due: Printing and the Prehistory of Copyright/ Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship', *Shakespeare Studies*, 32 (2004), 389-92; and Douglas Brooks's 'Dramatic Authorship and Publication in Early Modern Britain', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 15 (2002), 77-97; Brooks indicates that *Sejanus* is 'the first drama in early modern England to benefit from the individualizing authorial potential of transgression' and that Jonson's littering of 'each page of the published text [in 1605] with marginal quotations of classical sources' shows that he 'was desperate to demarcate the page from the stage' and explains: 'The printing house offered him an opportunity to erase the play's shared, communal origins in the theater and to transform it into an individualized, authorial scholarly work', p. 81. Cannan's phrase, p. 183.

[14] Brian Woolland, '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?', *Jonsonians: Living Traditions* (2003), 27-41 (p. 27).

events of the play'.[15] Most importantly, Woolland considers 'how issues of theatricality illuminate political readings of the play', asking why it 'has been so seldom performed' and argues that this all 'relates closely to our perception of Arruntius'.[16] Regarding the representation of the plebeians in the play, Woolland writes: 'Jonson does not give us even a glimpse of the Plebeians, but the "popular rage" is immensely powerful'.[17] Moreover, Woolland rightly 'encourages a shift in emphasis away from Sejanus and those in positions of power towards those on the margins of this profoundly corrupt society, towards those affected by the power struggles of those at the top of the hierarchy', however, the dramatic role of 'those on the margins of' the society still needs further examination.[18] Thus, commending the 'shift' that Woolland proposes, and focusing on the play's crowd scene, my study offers a close analysis of Jonson's representation of Roman plebeians in *Sejanus*, and more importantly, it examines the playwright's dramatisation of Roman *plebs* in relation to those 'at the top of the hierarchy'. The aim of this discussion is to give us a new perspective and understanding of the dramatic significance of a crowd scene - as a type of scene which gives us the best insight into the dynamics of early modern theatre, the role of the audience, and the playwright's relation with the audience.

In 'Visualising Jonson's text' Richard Cave rightly argues that in *Sejanus* Jonson is 'denying audiences [...] the right to experience theatre as escapist'.[19] Further, in an early but excellent study, 'Sejanus and the People's Beastly Rage', John Gordon Sweeney III deduces that 'in relation to his audience Jonson was alternately a son, seeking fatherly approval but aware [...] that such approval is a sign of weakness, defect, defeat, and a father sensing that any challenge to his authority requires uncompromising aggression in response'.[20] Sweeney, however, pays very little attention to the mob, which is surprising given that the title of his article foregrounds the people and Sejanus. What he does suggest

[15] Woolland, '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?', p. 32 and 31.
[16] Woolland, '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?', p. 28.
[17] Woolland, '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?', p. 33.
[18] Woolland, '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?', p. 27.
[19] Richard Cave, 'Visualising Jonson's Text', in *Ben Jonson and Theatre: Performance, Practice, and Theory*, ed. by Richard Cave, Brian Woolland and Elizabeth Schafer (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 31-42 (p. 34).
[20] John Gordon Sweeney III, '*Sejanus* and the People's Beastly Rage', *ELH*, 48 (1981), 61-82 (p. 80-1); for more on Jonson's relationship with the audience see Sweeney's *Jonson and the Psychology of Public Theater* (Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1985); Katharine Eisaman Maus's *Ben Jonson and the Roman Frame of Mind* (Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 111-51, in which she suggests that Jonson 'conceives his relationship to his audience in terms of Roman moralist social assumptions, as a relationship between more-or-less like-minded people', p. 143. For more on the author's relationship with the audience see Stanley Fish's 'Authors-Readers: Jonson's Community of the Same', in *Representing the English Renaissance*, ed. by Stephen Greenblatt (London: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 231-65.

is that 'the "rude multitude" [...] is represented as the embodiment of Fortune's power', and this power he suggests is 'the emperor's mistress'.[21] The implication in this statement, however, is significant for our reading and will be recalled in the section 'The Plebeian Crowd and the Patrician Crowd', which argues that both the Senate and the mob are dramatically rendered as a crowd.

As this brief overview of scholarly discussions of Jonson' work shows, not much has been said about Jonson's representation of the crowd in *Sejanus*. Ian Munro's *London: the City and Its Double*, and Paul Daniel Menzer's 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage' are exceptions.[22] Menzer focuses on Jonson's 'staging of the crowded first act', and 'the way that staging [...] anticipates Sejanus's dismemberment by an offstage crowd'.[23] He rightly suggests, 'it is not Sejanus but instead those figures nearer the frame [...] who loom largest in the audience's sight'[24]. His observation that 'the mob's jarring introduction late in the play [...] underscores the limited role they play in this political drama' is plausible.[25] However, when we take into account the dramatic role of the reported crowd scene, we begin to understand Jonson's preference for presenting them offstage. Woolland argues that 'those aspects of the play which are most problematic', nevertheless, 'are also a key to understanding how it might work effectively in the theatre of the twenty-first century'.[26] 'This apparent anti-theatricality', he explains, 'has the potential to be highly productive of theatrical meaning', and a great example illustrating this, significantly, is Jonson's dramatisation of the crowd scene through report rather than staging.[27] The purpose of 'this relative absence of spectacle', Woolland rightly points out, 'results in a play which focuses to a large extent on reaction', and further it suggests that the play relies on the audience's imagination to visualise a scene such as the horrific spectacle of the mob's cruelty in the play's crowd scene.[28] Menzer's estimation that 'to hold center stage is, to some degree, to wield power over the audience's attention' is

[21] Sweeney III, '*Sejanus* and the People's Beastly Rage', p. 77-8.
[22] See Munro's chapter on *Sejanus* in *London: The City and Its Double* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 143-73; and Paul Daniel Menzer's is from 'Crowd Control: The Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Univ., 2001; abstract in UMI Microform 3027458).
[23] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 106.
[24] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 103.
[25] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 132-3.
[26] Woolland, '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?', p. 29.
[27] Woolland, '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?', p. 29.
[28] Woolland, '*Sejanus his Fall*: Does Arruntius Cry at Night?', p. 30.

correct.[29] I will argue that the reported crowd scene in Act 5 symbolically 'hold[s]' center stage' in the whole performance.

Ian Munro is concerned 'with the theater audience but [also] with the complex theatricalities of the crowded city', and his argument that 'what happens to Sejanus might be best seen as a commentary on what happened to the play' concurs with mine, although my object of enquiry differs from his in that I focus on the relation between the hero and the crowd, rather than on the city and the crowd.[30] Unlike Munro's and Menzer's study, my reading puts an emphasis on the theatrical 'I-Thou' relationships and Jonson's use of the space of his characters.[31] More importantly, it foregrounds a question of whether reporting a character, rather than staging it, affects the dramatist's use of his characters' dramatic space, and the audience's relation to the reported character.

*Sejanus,* as we know too well, continued to be unpopular for centuries. Ayres documents that the only recorded modern production since 1603/4 took place in 1928, by William Poel.[32] In January 2006, however, I was delighted to discover that the RSC was running a production of *Sejanus.* The performance I saw was at Trafalgar Studios in London; the auditorium consisted of people who were, it seems, from different backgrounds, and whom we perhaps might call the modern popular audience.[33] The play on this occasion was received with everything but hostility. The production, however, did not receive entirely favourable reviews. Reviewing the RSC production of the play at the People's Theatre in Newcastle (2005) Peter Lathan writes: 'The play fails to grip, partly [because] it is a little too long and partly because few of the characters engage our sympathies'.[34] Reviewing the RSC production of *Sejanus* at the Trafalgar Studios in London Philip Fisher acknowledges the same problem.[35] Focusing on the theme of violence, nevertheless, Fisher finds some solace, remarkably so in the play's final act: 'In a

[29] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 103-4.
[30] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double,* p. 161-2.
[31] For more on Jonson and the audience see also Martin Butler's 'Jonson's London and its theatres', in *The Cambridge Companion to Ben Jonson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 15-29 (p. 23). Furthermore, in 'Jonson's London and its theatres' Butler documents Jonson's relation to the city of London through his relation with the city's theatres, and says: 'For all Jonson's disrespect towards the contemporary theatre, his dramaturgy was brilliantly attuned to its resources', and as it has been often noted, his 'towards the theatre [...] remained deeply defensive', p. 26.
[32] See Ayres' Introduction to *Sejanus* in the Revels edition of the play, p. 38.
[33] My estimation is based merely on observation, and then on a short conversation, during the interval, with some members of the audience: a student, my friend who is a social worker and the theatre-attendant.
[34] Peter Lathan, '*Sejanus: His Fall*', *The British Theatre Guide* (2005).
<http://www.britishtheatreguide.info/reviews/RSCsejanus-rev.htm> [accessed 30 July 2009].
[35] Philip Fisher, '*Sejanus: His Fall*', *The British Theatre Guide* (2006)
<http://www.britishtheatreguide.info/reviews/RSCsejanusPF-rev.htm> [accessed 01 August 2009].

horrifying effort to persuade his audience that even the worst of men can deserve sympathy, Ben Jonson describes his [Sejanus's] beheading and then the way in which the mob rent the body limb from limb [...]. If that were not enough, the rape and murder of his little children before the populace come to their senses should chasten the most bloodthirsty'[36]. Similarly, in a review of the performance at the Trafalgar Studios, Zoe (whose surname is not disclosed), writes: 'as the vacillating public that had previously worshipped Sejanus begin to torture his dead body, no-one's left feeling particularly good about themselves'.[37] Like Fisher's and Lathan's, this quotation not only conveys or corresponds with the sense of unease that the original audience might have felt after the final act, but it also points out what an impact the crowd scene, despite not being staged, leaves on the audience even today.

### *Sejanus*'s Reported Crowd Scene: Act 5

Jonson's canon, as we shall see, reveals that the author was increasingly concerned with the multitude, both in the theatrical and political setting. In Chapter 1 we looked at Shakespeare's use of the space of *staged* character, but in this chapter, we examine Jonson's use of the space of the *reported* character, specifically that of the crowd. In order to understand that the character of the crowd is a product not only of the dramatic but also of theatrical relations, we will review *Sejanus*'s crowd scene in the light of Jonson's revision of the play after its unsuccessful performance in 1604.

Munro rightly observes that 'within the report, the populace and its affections are a mystery', indeed, in that its act is incomprehensible.[38] This section explores the dramatic effect of 'staging' the crowd through a *second-hand account* and argues that the strategy of report empowers the multitude while also leaving Jonson's authorial control intact. Further, Munro argues that '*Sejanus* also repeats *Poetaster*'s split between a maladjusted aristocratic society and a marginal, invisible multitude, except that the multitude are now, in some ways, given greater presence [...] the crowd [... in Act 5 is] kept at bay only in being reported rather than staged. Given these points of contact, it is possible to read *Sejanus* as a

[36] Fisher, '*Sejanus: His Fall*', *The British Theatre Guide* (2005).
[37] Zoe, 'Stage Whispers: *Sejanus His Fall* by Ben Jonson', *Londonist: London News* (19 January 2006) <http://londonist.com/2006/01/stage_whispers_3.php> [accessed 24 June 2009].
[38] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 164.

rethinking of the questions of the populous', but, as I aim to show, we can read the play as Jonson's covert and perhaps fortuitous contemplation of theatrical relations.[39]

In Act 5, after the Senate murder of Sejanus, his body is thrown on the streets of Rome, and his friend Terentius relates Sejanus's demise as follows:[40]

> Lend your soft ears to hear, and eyes to weep
> Deeds done by men, beyond the acts of furies.
> The eager multitude, who never yet
> Knew why to love or hate, but only pleased
> T'express their rage of power, no sooner heard
> The murmur of Sejanus in decline,
> But with that speed and heat of appetite
> With which they greedily devour the way
> To some great sports, or a new theatre,
> They filled the Capitol, and Pompey's Cirque;
> Where, like so many mastiffs, biting stones,
> As if his statues now were sensitive grown
> Of their wild fury, first they tear them down;
> Then fastening ropes, drag them along the streets,
> Crying in scorn, 'This, this was that rich head
> Was crowned with garlands and with odours, this
> That was in Rome so reverencèd! Now
> The furnace and the bellows shall to work
> The great Sejanus crack, and piece by piece,
> Drop i'the founder's pit
>
> *Lepidus.*: O popular rage!
>
> *Terentius.* [....]
> The rout, they follow with confusèd voice,
> Crying, they're glad, say they could ne'er abide him;
> Enquire, what man he was? What kind of face?
> What bear he had [.... they] Protest [...]
> They never thought him wise nor valiant [....]
> And not a beast of all the herd demands,
> What was his crime? [....]
> 'There came', says one, 'a huge, long, worded letter
> From Capreae against him.' 'Did there so?
> O!' – they are satisfied; no more.
> (5. 768-808)

That Jonson uses Terentius's character to report the mob's gruesome act is an obvious choice: Terentius is Sejanus's loyal friend and his grief for Sejanus is understandable. In his

[39] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 159.
[40] The actual murder of Sejanus is not described.

description of the crowd Terentius uses a typical rhetoric of hostility to portray the fickle crowd: 'the eager multitude', 'their wild fury', 'the rout', 'the beast', 'the herd' and so on. This itself is not remarkable, but Jonson's strategy of describing the mob rather than staging it is.

In Terentius's speech Jonson emphasises the terror that the mob creates (l. 779-86 and 817-35), their inclination to act arbitrarily (l. 796), and in doing so is able to depict much more effectively the threat and danger that is often associated with the crowd: chaos and disorder. Commonly it is the gods that are beyond representation and are talked of as a fearful force: 'how small a whisper do we hear of him!/ But the thunder of his power who can understand?'.[41] It is the unknown –the unperceivable- that creates fear, and Jonson wants his audience to be aware of and fear the multitude. In *Coriolanus*, by contrast, the staged crowd somewhat loses a key component: anonymity. As we have seen, by representing the individual voices in the crowd (identified by numbers such as 'First Citizen', 'Second Citizen') *Coriolanus*'s crowd is not always represented as a crowd with one voice; their individual voices are distinguished. The crowd in 2.3 of *Coriolanus* figuratively, then, is dissected - exposed to the audience from the inside- and, therefore, no longer an anonymous and unified body.[42] As it has been demonstrated, the citizens of *Coriolanus* clearly express different opinions. Moreover, as Menzer observes, 'to be onstage is to be exposed, observed, and therefore vulnerable'.[43] Staging a character can also make it a mockery: when exposed inside-out a character is less of a mystery, and more open to scrutiny. Coriolanus's refusal to expose himself in a market place to the plebeians of Rome illustrates this. Moreover, I suggest that since *Coriolanus*'s crowd is staged and exposed to the audience from the 'inside', it portrays a less threatening crowd than that of *Sejanus*.

Jonson, of course, does obey classical norms of decorum, but he is being more than Senecan, paying tribute to antique tragedy and its methods, and excluding violence from stage realisation. In 'Ben Jonson and the Legacies of the Past', Mark Bland notes that Jonson 'privileged the presence of the word over the image', which might be an explanation of his choice to report the crowd rather than to stage it, and another is the

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[41] *The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version: The Book of Job 26. 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 445.
[42] As it has been demonstrated, the citizens of *Coriolanus* clearly express different opinions.
[43] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 104.

logistics of the theatre.[44] However, the author also seems deliberately to exclude the crowd from the stage in order to portray their act as a force beyond human understanding, and because the effect of it through narration shows the crowd's power through their physical absence. This powerful lack of physical presence seems intended to invoke a greater fear of and disgust in the 'multitude': not just of Rome's, but implicitly of the theatre's. The fact is that Jonson suddenly turns to the Roman plebeians in the final act, and in it gives a particularly intense representation, and this is peculiar to say the least. As Maus puts it, 'the moment of public judgment becomes climactic';[45] and Sweeney rightly notes that 'the conflicts in the plays mirror' Jonson's 'relation with his audience'.[46] Before we discuss this matter further, however, we need to examine why the play seems to have been revised in the light of the public rejection during its first performance in the Globe in 1604, for as Munro rightly points out, *Sejanus* 'cannot be separated from its reception because the play that we know comes *after* that reception'.[47]

That Jonson responds to violence inflicted on the play, and to him as author of it, is well documented in *Sejanus*, recollected in Jonson's prose writings (as we shall see for example in *Timber, or Discoveries*) and echoed in the words of his literary peers. In 'To the most understanding Poet', Ev. B (whose identity has not been confirmed with absolute certainty) writes in Jonson's defence and gives an account of the audience's reaction:[48]

> When in the Globe's fair ring, our world's best stage,
> I saw *Sejanus*, set with that rich foil
> [....]
> when I viewed the people's beastly rage,
> Bent to confound thy grave and learned toil ,
> [....]
> My indignation I could hardly'assuage.
> [....]
> They, for their ignorance, still damnèd be[49]

[44] Mark Bland, 'Ben Jonson and the Legacies of the Past', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67 (2004), 371-400 (p. 372).
[45] Maus, *Ben Jonson and the Roman Frame of Mind*, p. 126.
[46] Sweeney III, '*Sejanus* and the People's Beastly Rage', p. 66.
[47] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 162.
[48] In the Revels edition of the play, Ayres notes that Ev. B. is 'not, as generally assumed [...] a misprint for "Ed. B.", *i.e.* Edmund Bolton [...] who wrote commendatory Latin verse for *Volp.* Collation in fact shows that Ed. B. was altered at the press to Ev. B.- the error was picked up at an early stage. "Ev." could be a contraction of Everard (Everard Digby and the catholic martyr Everard Hanse are two contemporary examples), though', as Ayres points out, he has not been able 'to trace an Everard "B"', p. 69.
[49] See Ayres's edition of the play, p. 68-9.

Not only does Ev. B scorn 'their ignorance' and injustice towards Jonson's 'learned toil', he implicitly also puts an emphasis on 'the people's beastly rage': the audience's. Similarly, Terentius reports that in 'their wild fury' the people are 'transported with their cruelty'. The fact that Jonson prefaces these Ev. B's lines and other similar 'voluntary labours of my friends' indicates that the popular audience's disapproval of the play might have influenced Jonson's intense representation of the mob in the crowd scene, and that Sejanus's fate symbolically represents the fate of *Sejanus.*[50] Moreover, in 'To the Readers' Jonson writes, 'I would inform you that this book, in all numbers, is not the same with that which was acted on the public stage'.[51] Writing to his patron, 'the no less noble by virtue than blood: Esmé L. Aubigny', Jonson develops the analogy between the fate of the character and the fate of the play.[52] He suggests that this 'poem' is a 'ruin', or rather that the play he is sending now was ruined, the first production being censored, '*suffered no less violence from our people here than the subject of it did from the rage of the people of Rome*', but that this new version will be even greater than the first one '*as (I hope)* [to] *merit: for this hath outlived their malice, and begot itself a greater favour than he lost, the love of good men* ').[53] The play as a 'poem' may as well imply that it was unstageable, but perhaps even more that it was not 'understandable' to those unskilled to understand it. He flatters Aubigny by saying that the play now '*begot itself a greater favour than he lost, the love of good men*'.[54] The 'good men' are the learned men and the moral elite, as well as the generous men, as is his, desirably generous benefactor.

As a building in ruins, then, this 'Poem', becomes a metaphor of the play: as Jonson puts it, 'The Fall of Sejanus [....] is a poem' and a surviving 'ruin' that he took up and put the pieces together (re-wrote it). The revised text of *Sejanus* embodies, then, the ruin of the original play - its short-lived performance history. This means that Jonson's portrayal of the mob in *Sejanus*'s crowd scene may implicitly reflect the dramatist's anger towards the 'violent popular/ ignorance'.[55] However, that the crowd in the Globe's theatre in 1604 did not like the play might be partly due to the fact that throughout the performance of *Sejanus*

[50] See '*To the Readers*' in Ayres's edition of the play, p. 50.
[51] He clarifies: 'wherein a second pen had good share; in place of which I have rather chosen to put weaker (and no doubt less pleasing) of mine own, than to defraud so happy a genius of his right by my loathed usurpation', see *Sejanus His Fall: Ben Jonson*, p. 52.
[52] Jonson's address to his patron Esmé L. Aubigny in Ayres's edition of *Sejanus His Fall*, p. 49.
[53] Jonson's address to his patron Esmé L. Aubigny in Ayres's edition of the play, p. 49.
[54] Jonson's address to his patron Esmé L. Aubigny, p. 49.
[55] *Coriolanus*, Act 5.2. 40 in R. B. Parker's edition of the play (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

the common men in the audience do not have a character in the play (representing a Roman plebeian) with whom they can identify –until, that is, the crowd scene. Sejanus is the key figure in the play, and besides there is little action: the play's plot is more an intellectual debate, and its climax (the crowd scene) does not take place on the stage, but by report only.

By excluding the mob from the stage Jonson is, moreover, able to depict them as a dreadful, merciless and powerful force. The mob's careless response 'O!' (5. 808) upon Tiberius's 'huge [...] worded letter/ From Capreae' (5. 806-7) is perhaps one of the most telling moments in the representation of the mob: it is possibly a dramatisation of the merciless Globe's crowd who dismissed *Sejanus*. As if responding in one single sound, the mob's language is reduced to one single letter, which is reminiscent of beasts incapable of speech. '*Speech*', as Jonson writes, 'is the only benefit man hath to expresse his excelencie of mind above all creatures', and the mob in this scene does not have such 'excelencie of mind': they seem to represent the Globe's audience that altogether dismissed *Sejanus*'s speeches.[56]

What we need to bear in mind, however, is that, as a consequence of reporting the crowd's character, the audience now relates to or encounters the crowd second-hand: through Terentius's character. Firstly, with this, I suggest, Jonson is perhaps attempting to manipulate not only the audience's perspective of the crowd, but indirectly the audience's 'I-Thou' relationship with the crowd: he tries to control how the audience *relates to* and *is affected* by his representation of the Roman crowd. Since the crowd in this scene is not staged, its character, then, occupies a *locus*-like world, or the imaginary world of the play.[57] The question is whether we, then, relate to the reported character differently to that of the staged character? Does physical immediacy affect our relation with character? I suggest that reported character, as that of the crowd, can be treated as a character staged-by-implication because its presence is conveyed in the words of the staged character, and also that its physical absence from the stage does not undermine its dramatic role, but rather enhances the character's impact on the audience.

The mob's power and terror, then, is conveyed through Terentius's words, which is similar to Tiberius's in Act 5 (l. 545-67, l. 637-58): the Herald reads out the Emperor's

[56] *Timber, or Discoveries* in *Ben Jonson*, ed. by C. H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, viii (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 620-21.
[57] Weimann's terms '*locus*' and '*platea*', see Chapter 1 in this thesis, p. 36.

letter which informs the Senate of the Emperor's decision to punish Sejanus. His voice and body on the stage convey the Emperor's presence and power. Hence, even though Tiberius's physical presence is implied, and his absence from the stage emphasises his power. The senators are powerless, and their comments do not matter because Tiberius cannot hear them and the decision has already been made. Again, both Tiberius's and the crowd's physical presence are implied through words alone. It is manifested in the letter itself: the letter becomes the embodiment of the body, and of his tyrannical power. This is exactly what the mob rejects with their careless 'O!' in Act 5 (l. 808). They are given a chance to speak and learn the content of the letter but they refuse it entirely: in a sense, then, they enact Tiberius's will. Their response also explains an analogy to the multitude's response to the play: Jonson offers them his masterpiece but they reject it entirely. For dramatic effect, therefore, the playwright decides not to give the plebeians a direct speech, because they are not meant to talk but to act beastly – to examine 'without relation': to act, devour and destroy, and finally, to represent the multitude of 'the ignorant gapers' who disapproved *Sejanus.*[58] Symbolically, then, these people reject rhetoric and speech as an act, and at the same time they are acting at the whim of politicians. Finally, when seen from Jonson's perspective and his relation with the multitude, their 'O!' becomes not only the public rejection of his play, but for Jonson, a rejection of true value and of reason.

By choosing to report about the crowd's act Jonson thus empowers them: their act is a part of history, and what is disturbing about it is that their actions cannot be changed. This is precisely how the technique of report empowers them as it empowers Tiberius: they cannot be answered and their malice cannot be stopped. Likewise, in this sense, the reported crowd scene becomes a statement of an irretrievable situation. In terms of Jonson's experience with the reception of *Sejanus,* the damage to its reputation is already done. He finds himself in a situation that is often referred to as 'Catch 22': 'a circumstance from which there is no escape because of mutually conflicting or dependent conditions'.[59] Jonson knows that he cannot turn back time, that the audience, who rejected *Sejanus*, is immune to his response: because their right to judge his work has already been exercised. Although his report of the audience's violent reception does not change the past, it is as though Jonson is trying to prevent further misunderstandings between him and this audience, which will be

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[58] The expression to examine 'without relation' Jonson uses in *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 586.

[59] *Oxford Compact English Dictionary*, p. 149. The phrase is also a 'title of a novel by J. Heller (1961) featuring such a dilemma', p. 149.

illustrated later in our discussion.[60] In short, through the *report* of Sejanus's end in the hands of the bloodthirsty 'beast', the reading audience is not only expected to visualise a typical violent and chaotic mob in action, but possibly to associate this crowd with the plebeians in the Globe's audience who condemned the play. Hence, we can say that the reported crowd scene in Act 5 seems to reveal a dysfunctional relationship between the intellectual and elite figure -Jonson himself - and the illiterate and the base: the plebeian members in the audience.

Not only this, but Jonson's personal investment in his dramatic rendering of the multitude, also testifies that the character, even a reported one as the crowd's, comes into being through relations during the theatrical performance, and that these relations are displayed and operate within the space of its character. As I have argued in Chapter 1, the staged character is the embodiment of theatrical relations: those between characters in the play, and between characters and the audience. In the case of the dramatisation of *Sejanus*'s reported crowd scene this idea is even more complex: the audience now relates not simply to the crowd's character, but to Terentius's *representation* of the crowd. In fact, now that the audience relates to Terentius's *relation* with the crowd, which is, obviously, a negative one.[61] For, Terentius depicts them as a crowd with which no decent human being, including himself, can associate with: 'a thousand heads,/ A thousand hands, ten thousand tongues and voices,/ Employed at once in several acts of malice!' (l. 821-23). He stresses the fact that 'the rude multitude' (l. 818) is not merely stupid and fickle but violent and disloyal, for they 'never yet/ Knew why they love or hate' (l. 769-70). Having once worshipped Sejanus, they now 'protest' that 'they never thought him wise nor valiant' (l. 799-801). Terentius clearly distances himself from the mob and yet, what needs to be recognised, and what the crowd scene shows, is that his character on the stage cannot entirely detach himself from this crowd. Even though Terentius does not play a part in 'the rout['s]' cruelty, he *witnesses* it and is *affected* by it. Terentius, therefore, relates to the mob through his disapproval of their 'popular outrage', just as Coriolanus relates to the crowd through

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[60] Again, our reading of the play is complicated by the fact that Jonson most likely revised it for publication; and yet *Sejanus* is still a play that might have been performed even after its failure at the Globe. As I have noted earlier, it was revived in 2005-2006, and this itself allows us to read the revised play as a play in performance, i.e. bearing in mind what an effect it can, or could have on the audience.

[61] As I have suggested earlier, it is most likely that Jonson revised *Sejanus* for print, which suggests that he did not intend the play to be performed. We have no evidence that it was performed any time soon after his revision, but the absence of evidence is not necessarily a proof: it might have been performed after all. *Sejanus*, even in revised form, is still a play, and as such may affect the audience in the way that my discussion suggests.

his disapproval of their part in politics. At the same time another relation is established - between the audience and the crowd: inevitably, by witnessing Terentius's report the audience is also indirectly included in and affected by his report.

Unlike in *Coriolanus* where the audience is set face-to-face with the staged crowd, in *Sejanus*, the audience encounters the crowd through Terentius's perspective. By talking about the crowd, then, Terentius's character implicitly conveys that the crowd is his dramatic 'Thou', and that his character is also shaped through his relation with the Roman mob. This relation is implicit in his speech: by speaking about the mob - his 'Thou' - he establishes the relation. Again, as Buber indicates, 'if *Thou* is said, the *I* of the combination *I-Thou* is said along with it', and the relation, then, is established.[62] As such, the reported crowd's character becomes the outcome of Terentius's *relation* to the play's crowd and vice versa. As a consequence, the audience, or rather the readers of *Sejanus* do not, therefore, relate simply to the crowd but actually to Terentius's 'I-Thou' relation with the crowd. When Terentius addresses the senators asking them to 'lend' their 'soft ears and eyes to weep/ Deeds done by men', he not only draws the senators' attention to the bestiality of 'the eager multitude', but implicitly his character draws the audience's attention to it: it is meant to be moved and outraged by it. Terentius's audience, therefore, includes the on-stage characters but also the off-stage auditorium.

In the space of Terentius's character, then, Jonson indirectly authenticates the relationship between Terentius and the audience, and the audience and the play's crowd. If Jonson's portrayal of the mob in the Quarto of 1605 does depict the audience's reaction during its unsuccessful performance in the Globe in 1604, then this would confirm that beneath Terentius's words we may in fact detect Jonson's voice: Terentius becomes a mouthpiece for Jonson's own antagonisms. He uses the space of Terentius's character to insert himself that is, his view of the mob, and through this he attempts to manipulate the reading audience's response. He wants his theatrical 'Thou', the audience, to relate to the events on the stage. What is crucial and needs to be acknowledged at this point is that the reported character such as the crowd', still embodies and is shaped by theatrical relationships. This verifies my suggestion that *Sejanus*'s reported crowd not only occupies the *locus*-like world of the play, but indirectly, through Terentius's character, the *platea-*

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[62] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, tr. by Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937). p. 3.

like world of the stage, the moment of interaction with the audience. The reported crowd, indeed, is not merely an extra.

By speaking about the multitude and covertly criticising it through Terentius's character, Jonson also attempts to distance himself from it, but in doing so he indirectly confirms his 'I-Thou' relationship with the multitude. Using the space of Terentius's character Jonson also suggests that to be in a relation with the play the audience needs to work and cooperate with the author, but not vice versa. More precisely, the audiences work consists of attempting to understand what he has written. What I must stress here is that Jonson does not attack the multitude's illiteracy and their unfortunate social conditions and circumstances.[63] Rather, as it will be demonstrated in the following section, he implicitly criticises their lack of motivation to learn or to be instructed. Again, the mob's refusal in *Sejanus*'s crowd scene to listen to the letter explaining Sejanus's crimes symbolically depicts the audience's refusal to be instructed by Jonson's play. Having his play performed right in front of their eyes, according to Jonson, is an opportunity for them to try to learn and expand their horizons. Indeed, in order to be competent to judge his work, Jonson believes, one needs to be educated to a certain extent: 'there are [persons] that profess to have a key for deciphering of everything; but let wise and noble persons take heed how they be too credulous [...]. As for those that will (by faults which charity hath raked up or common honesty concealed) make themselves a name with the multitude, or, to draw their rude and beastly claps [...] may they do it without a rival, for me'.[64]

Criticising the vulgar taste in *Timber, or Discoveries* Jonson uses the language of feasting, appetite and consumption: 'the vulgar', he writes, 'more greadily reade', 'feast' and indulge a low type of entertainment provided by a low type of author, the 'rayling, and tinckling *Rimers*'.[65] Jonson uses almost identical vocabulary in the crowd scene; Terentius comments on the Roman multitude saying 'with that speed of appetite' the multitude 'greedily devour the way/ To some great sports, or a new theatre' (5. 774-6). What Jonson indirectly points out in these examples, however, is that the writing of any play in fact encodes the multitude, and that the audience is an aggressive type of consumer rather than what he wants them to be: disciples of an educational and enlightening text that he, through

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63 For more on the circumstances and 'the conditions of playwriting' in Jonson's time see Butler's 'Jonson's London and Its Theatres', specifically p. 24-5.

64 Ben Jonson, 'Epistle': *Volpone: Or the Fox*, ed. by R. B Parker (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), p. 72-3.

65 Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*. p. 572-6.

his work, offers. Ann Jennalie Cook indicates that 'in a competitive business, every dramatist hoped for success, but public taste did not dictate his poetry nor even the true merit of his creation, as Jonson and Webster testified when their work went unappreciated'.[66] Jonson knows that an author's 'reputation' is, unfortunately, dependent also upon his audience and that authors have to negotiate terms with them: they have to relate to their taste, too. This 'I-Thou' relationship for Jonson is unbearable, then, because he cannot compromise his beliefs in what he as an author should do with popular expectations and demands. This explains, then, why in the printed text – the Quarto of 1605 – Jonson includes marginal, explanatory notes in Latin, in a language only the educated could understand.

As an author Jonson sees himself as a Sovereign in the theatre. However, unlike his educated readers he realises that his subjects in the theatre (his audience) is not ready to obey or blindly accept his work. Accordingly, he blames the multitude, not himself for *Sejanus*'s failure in the Globe production 1604. In *Timber, or Discoveries*, written much later than *Sejanus*, Jonson again criticises the multitude, now in relation to their Monarch, and within it indirectly reveals his judgement of the audience in relation to him: '*The vulgar* are commonly ill-natur'd; and always grudging against their *Governours*', they are as 'any other beast' and they 'have more heads [...]. There was not that variety of beasts in the Arke; as is of beastly natures in the multitude; especially when they come to that iniquity, to censure their *Soveraign's* actions'.[67] In other words, Jonson is not ready to accept the fact that the audience has a right to 'censure' his actions: that is, implicitly play a part in the theatre. Coriolanus's statement 'when two authorities are up/ neither supreme' for Jonson is not even theoretically possible: for him there is one supreme authority in the theatre and it is always the author. By censuring 'their *Soveraign's* actions' the 'vulgar' disobey Jonson, but according to him, they are not meant to challenge but accept his work as it is presented and learn from it. What bothers him, then, is that 'the vulgar' in the audience whom he considers subservient to his genius are in fact judges of his work. It is feasible to say that, unlike Shakespeare, Jonson does not ask his audience to acknowledge their input in shaping the character and the performance. On the contrary, he suggests that he is the sovereign authority in the theatre, solely responsible for his work. He refuses to

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[66] Ann Jennalie Cook, *The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London, 1576-1642* (Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 7.

[67] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 593. The text was 'first printed in the Folio of 1640' and 'is dated 1641 in the imprint', p. 557.

comply with the popular audience's demands, and yet he responds to them through his critique. What testifies against his belief in his sovereignty in the theatre, therefore, is his own work, specifically his dramatisation of the crowd scene: it shows that in shaping his characters Jonson inevitably relies on his theatrical relations even with his vulgar 'Thou'. This, again, explains why the Quarto version of the play is meticulous in its appeal to the noble reader.

In the space of Terentius's character, then, Jonson not only authenticates the relationship between Terentius and the audience, and the audience and the play's crowd, but indirectly and almost accidentally inaugurates and confirms a theatrical relationship between himself - the author - and the audience. Precisely by acknowledging, albeit indirectly, how the Globe's audience may have affected him, Jonson acknowledges their input in creating the crowd's character in *Sejanus*: as such his dysfunctional 'I-Thou' relationship with the crowd becomes the driving force, perhaps, behind his portrayal of the mob in the crowd scene. In the theatre absolute authorial exclusivity is not possible, and we have seen that in both *Coriolanus* and in *Sejanus* to resist relation means to resist authority. But the printed page offers other possibilities for a more secure 'I-Thou' identification. The key to Jonson's troubled 'I-Thou' relationship with the multitude in the theatre, however, is that it is affected by intellectual inequality between the two and this inequality creates tension. In the theatrical setting Jonson, unlike Shakespeare, is not a democrat, but believes in hierarchy: in the hierarchy of the theatre he treats 'the ignorant gapers' like beasts, who 'gape' (stare, or watch) rather than participate through understanding. This will be closely examined and illustrated in the following section which argues that Jonson's definition of the 'ignorant gapers' does not only refer to the 'vulgar' members in the audience, but the noble, too. What Jonson wants to see in the theatre is the moral elite.

According to Jonson, then, violence is not only the foundation of Rome's society, but also a cruel reality in which the author operates: a reality in which the audience can react violently (i.e. disapprovingly) even towards a masterpiece such as his *Sejanus*. The last three lines in Terentius's speech (5. 840-42) are touching, and may well reflect Jonson's outpouring of grief at what happens with his play: 'Now torn and scattered, as he needs no grave;/ Each little dust covers a little part/ So lies he nowhere, and yet often buried'. The horrific image of the Roman mob running, 'quite transported with their cruelty' and 'mounting at his [Sejanus's] head, these at his face,/ These digging out his eyes, those with his brain,/ Sprinkling themselves, their houses, and their friends' (5. 827-

30) is not only meant to show symbolically what happened to *Sejanus* ('the wide hall/ Of huge Sejanus'; l. 432-33) in the 1604 performance, but it is there as a warning that violence deforms human beings. The mob is the embodiment of violence and the ultimate threat to the civilised society. Jonson's overt political philosophy is hostile to tyranny and *Sejanus*'s crowd scene in Act 5 indicates that the reaction of the crowd is senseless and tyrannical. His appeal: 'Lend your soft ears to hear, and eyes to weep/ Deeds done by men, beyond the acts of furies' (l. 767-8) is also his appeal to the audience not to become like the mob: this *is* the manifesto of *Sejanus*'s crowd scene. The scene shows that Jonson is hostile to their hostility: to anything irrational, but he knows that he cannot avoid and deny the presence of the irrational, hence there are no words, no language, no rationality from the enraged mob but a final sordid sound 'O!'.[68] In short, Jonson's dramatisation of the crowd in *Sejanus* implies his attitude towards the mob, and allows us to delineate what the 'multitude' is according to Jonson: a violent and ignorant crowd. Indeed, Terentius's speech implies that most of the Senate and all of the mob represent merely different forms of the same de-humanised content.

### The Plebeian Crowd and the Patrician Crowd

[68] In Revels edition that I am using the line ''Did there so?/ O!' is edited with inverted commas indicating that this is a citizens' direct speech (although reported by Terentius). This has prompted my reading and interpretation of the line and of Jonson's dramatic representation of the citizens and the whole scene indeed. However, it varies from edition to edition. For instance, in The New Mermaids edition to the play, ed. by W. F. Bolton (London, 1966) Bolton adds the 'O' to Terentius's concluding words, so the citizens question/comment with a rhetorical interrogative'"Did there so?"', and Terentius concludes with "O, they are satisfied, no more". The Quarto text (1605, the British library) does not have inverted commas at all. The issue of editing of these lines, however does not make a difference in the interpretation, and it does not affect my reading. Even if the 'O' belongs to Terentius's line, it simply follows the citizens words. What I mean here is that here 'O' is an echoing sound capturing the mob's euphoria, and the atmosphere of the whole event: Terentius is commenting and miming them. In this case it, becomes an extension of the citizens' 'so?'. Now they all (senators and the mob) merge into one scene of chaos, epitomised in Terentius's potential 'O'. The letter becomes then, a symbol of violent language and violent reaction of the whole populace of Rome. As an echoing sound it gives a proper closure to the speech in which one party *sounds* like the other (Terentius/ the Senate like the mob). It mixes Terentius's commentary ('O' equals 'so',) with a real sense of what the crowd actually said (Really? A letter? So what?). This is the crowd who does not say one single thing but which talks excessively. It says lots of things in one line that epitomises rumour and silly gullible excitement. See Bruce R. Smith's inspiring interpretation of 'O' on the early modern stage in *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999). Smith writes, for instance, '[o:] happens to be, relatively speaking, the most intense phoneme in English: typically it strikes a listener's ear at a pressure about 1,000 times greater than the least pressure the human ear can detect', p. 8. Moreover, 'As a burst of energy from within, [o:] has the effect of undermining the traditionally admired power of literary language to create visionary presence', Smith, p. 14.

This section will expand upon the significance of Jonson's representation of the mob in political ways, and argue that Jonson makes a link between tyranny and corruption of the Senate and the mob's tyranny, which culminates in the reported crowd scene.

*Coriolanus* prompts an idea, which has not been discussed in Chapter 1, but will be elaborated in this section: that the patricians in the play, and in *Sejanus*, are also indirectly treated, or rendered as a crowd. For instance, in Act 3.1 of *Coriolanus*, in his discussion with the Senators, Coriolanus refers to the plebeians as 'the mutable [...] meinie', or multitude, and then referring to the Senate he says: 'In soothing them *we* nourish 'gainst *our* Senate [...] insolence, sedition,/ Which *we ourselves* have ploughed for [...] By mingling them with *us*, the *honoured number* [my italics]' (l. 69-75).[69] What is striking in this example is that when referring to the patricians, Coriolanus implicitly refers to them as one body and as the opposition to the crowd of plebeians: he juxtaposes the plebeians with the patricians as 'them' versus 'us'. There is a clear opposition between the two, but more importantly, the implicit similarity drawn between them is that both parties are spoken of as crowds: one is the vulgar crowd –the 'rank-scented meinie'- and the other is the noble crowd -'the honoured number'. This representation of the patrician class as a crowd, I propose, is even more prominent in *Sejanus*.

Unlike in *Coriolanus*, in this play the citizens of Rome are not represented as a powerful political body to which the Senate is accountable, but rather, as an extension of the Senate's political decisions: the Senate kills Sejanus (5. 815-16) and the mob on the streets massacres his body. The politics of violence in the Senate is, then, only echoed in the last act in which it reaches *dramatic* proportions at the hands of the mob. Indeed, as Silius comments: 'all/ This boast of law, and law, is but a form,/ A net of Vulcan's filling' (3. 243-45). Now I shall argue that there is a correspondence in the representations of the Senate and the citizens: that the Senate, too is indirectly rendered as a violent crowd. We shall examine in detail Jonson's representation of the play's protagonist, Sejanus, and the ways in which his character resembles the narratively rendered mob. This is necessary because it will reveal that the play not only demonises the Roman mob, but it indirectly depicts the Senate as a merciless crowd, or as a powerful political body that, like the mob, does not have any dignity.

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[69] Other instances in which the patrician class in *Coriolanus* is referred to as one body and a noble crowd are: Act 1.8. 63; Act 2.2. 48; Act 2.3. 150-1 and 110; Act 3.1. 135-7 and 305; and Act 4.6. 129.

The rhetoric of hostility does not spare the people, but neither does it spare Sejanus, who is a victim of the Senate's violent policy but also its worst embodiment: he is the emperor's favourite whom, Arruntius says, '*we* [my italics] have raised [...] from/ obscure and almost unknown gentry', and Senators add, 'to the highest and most conspicuous point of greatness' (5. 572-5). Sweeney points out that in Act 2 during Sejanus's 'first interview with Tiberius' Sejanus 'has spoken "their voice," the voice of Tiberius's own thoughts'.[70] The latent implication in this statement, which Sweeney does not seem to recognise, cannot be overlooked: it implies that Sejanus is part of Tiberius's noble 'we', and of the Senate's' 'we'. As such, the patricians' body – the noble crowd – is implied in Sejanus's character. As Jonathan Goldberg rightly suggests, 'the manifestation of power resides outside' Tiberius, 'in the extension of his body into the body politic - to Sejanus his head, and then to Macro, his machine, fully obedient', and finally, I would add, to the citizens; 'the extensions of Tiberius', Goldberg infers, 'make *all* [my italics] others part of his body politic - [...] and the final dismemberment of Sejanus and his family occurs at the hands of the dismembered bodies of Rome [...] the hydra headed beast, the multitude, the body politic, the furthest reach of the imagined "confederacy" of Arruntius. The emperor extends into these heads, tongues, voices; they represent the final working out of [...] the dead letter'.[71]

The multitude, together with Sejanus, then, are part of Caesar's political crowd. When Sejanus's statue in the Pompey's theatre 'sends forth/ A smoke as from a furnace, black and dreadful' (5. 29-30) and attracts the crowds, Satrius the eyewitness, reports to Sejanus that the head 'is ta'en off [...] and, at op'ning, there leapt out/ A great monstrous serpent!' (l. 35-7). Interestingly, he is using a vocabulary that is typically used to describe the common people as a monster. Sejanus's character then mockingly questions Satrius about the details of this monstrous appearance: 'Monstrous! Why?/ Had it a beard? And horns? No heart? A tongue/ Forkèd as flattery?' (l. 37-9). Sejanus is ironic and scornful of this implicit prodigy, but more importantly, he too, and with him the Senate, is indirectly described as a monster. He is Tiberius's right hand, and as such embodies all that Tiberius is. As Arruntius says, Tiberius 'is our monster [...] An emp'ror only in his lusts [... who]

[70] Sweeney III, '*Sejanus* and the People's Beastly Rage' p. 73.
[71] Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and Their Contemporaries* (London: John Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 182-4. Goldberg adds, 'Caesar withdraws to reinvest himself in others' bodies; hence, he may lop off his "dearest head and still survive', p. 183.

doth study murder as an art;/ And they are dearest in his grace that can/ Devise the deepest tortures' (4. 373-91).

Sejanus, then incarnates the monstrosity of Tiberius and the Senate: the noble and violent 'We'. Furthermore, Macro calls him 'Thou insolent monster [....] th' ingrateful viper [....] so meriting a traitor [....] wretch [....] so proud and huge a monster' (5. 679-95). Although this description refers to Sejanus, one cannot overlook the tone and the similarity with Terentius's description of the mob. In fact, these words can perhaps be used as a summary of Terentius's words about the mob: 'ingrateful' monster. Another of Sweeney's points implicitly reinforces my argument: he identifies 'the Emperor with Fortune' and also suggests that the multitude is 'represented as the embodiment of Fortune's power, subject to her caprice and her incredible wilful violence', and that Fortune is 'the emperor's mistress, who masks herself as the civic anima of Rome'.[72] Symbolically, then it may be said that the multitude, Tiberius's violent inamorata, is his and Rome's partner in crime. In the space of the mob's character we, therefore, find a reflection of Tiberius and the Senate: i.e. the mob's character does not only represent the mob, but is dramatically shaped through its relation with the Emperor. This political 'I-Thou' relation between the vulgar and the noble crowd, then, is established and based on violence and destruction: the mob is a manifestation of Caesar's corruption. There is, as a result, a politics behind Jonson's depiction of the mob: not just a personal vendetta against the audiences of the Globe, but an implicit criticism of Tiberius's tyranny and regime.

After explaining his plot to get rid of Drusus, Sejanus expresses the same kind of anger we find in the description of the people in the crowd scene. This is Sejanus's 'O!' moment in which he says he has 'an incensèd rage/ Whose fury shall admit no shame [...]. Adultery? It is the lightest ill/ I will commit. A race of wicked acts/ Shall flow out of my anger [...] things [... shall] Carry the empty name, but with the prize.' (2. 148-57). Similarly, when the citizens seize Sejanus' trunk, 'a race of violent acts/ [...] flow[s] out of' their anger, and they show what they think of their politicians:

> not content
> With what the forward justice of the state
> Officiously had done, with violent rage
> Have rent it limb from limb. A thousands heads,
> A thousand hands, ten thousand tongues and voices,

[72] Sweeney III, '*Sejanus* and the People's Beastly Rage' p. 79, 77 and 78.

> Employed at once in several acts of malice!
> (5. 818-23)

In this apocalyptic vision the speechless 'tongues and voices' communicate through their 'acts of malice' and, 'employed at once in several acts of malice', become one body. 'A thousands heads,/ A thousand hands, ten thousand tongues and voices' in rage becomes a metaphor for violent words in the Senate: body parts or fragments become words. Rome is, after all, the tyrannical state full of spies and over-hearers in which words are used as a means of violence. These thousands of bodies in rage symbolically become 'the violent ear' of the audience: they hear violently (through their ignorance) and echo violently (through their deeds and reactions). Jonson, then, complicates and plays with the idea of the body politic here. For the people are not talked about only as hands, but as mouths, and ears: they act as head, too. This is their place in the body politic metaphor. They are not merely spectators of the political stage but they are the players in it: they mirror violence in the Senate. In this way the dramatist shows that there is a working homology in representations of the people and the Senate.[73]

In Act 5 (l. 684-714) after Sejanus is condemned, the situation in the Senate becomes chaotic and violent: a prelude to the crowd scene. Before Sejanus is taken out Macro, now expresses his 'rage of power' (5. 772): 'If I could lose/ All my humanity now, 'twere well to torture/ So meriting a traitor [Sejanus]' (5. 689-91).[74] He gives orders and stirs the senators saying: 'kick, 'tear', 'play' (5. 685-6), that is act like a beast, torture Sejanus. Cotta, Trio and Haterius continue the violent thought:

> *Cotta*: Let all the traitor's titles be defaced.
> *Trio*: His images and statues be pulled down.
> *Haterius*: His chariot wheels be broken.
> (5. 707-9)

It is, then, as if Macro's words are echoed and intensified in the crowd scene. The reported crowd scene simply continues this chaos, and the reputation of the Senate - with its 'most

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[73] Another analogy that comes out of this, and needs to be discussed, is the analogy between the many-headed body on the stage and the many-headed body in the audience. The fact that Jonson positions different crowds, within the Senate, means that the Senate is treated, and can be seen as a 'multitude' with a thousand hands, thousand voices. This also complicates the matter of identification with character on the stage. In this way Jonson is punishing the audience; he is playing with their expectations and punishing for the same.

[74] In his introduction to the play, Ayres indicates that Macro was 'Guard Prefect and the man chosen by Tiberius to undermine Sejanus. His taunting of Sejanus in the Senate in Act V is Jonson's invention', p. 74.

reverend monsters' (4. 222), and the city is handed over to the citizens of Rome. Again, not only the citizens, but the Senate is represented as the monster, too. When Terentius informs Sejanus that his statue is put in Pompey's theatre, he says: 'I meet it violent in the people's mouths,/ Who run, in routs, to Pompey's theatre/ To view your statue' (5. 28-30), and Sejanus remarks: 'Some traitor hath put fire in', 'some slave hath practised an imposture/ To stir the people' (5. 31-33). Whereas the earlier example (5. 679-95) depicts Sejanus as a 'traitor', this one depicts the mob as such.

The Rome that Jonson portrays, then, appears to be inhabited by two monstrous crowds: the plebeians and patricians. Munro makes an interesting point in this respect, suggesting that in their act of dismembering his body, the crowd becomes Sejanus: 'If the dismembered body is the crowd, figuring the dispersed multiplicity and heterogeneity of the urban populace, it is also the city itself; Sejanus now pervades Rome, lying nowhere and everywhere, made to circulate almost invisibly through the streets and alleys.'[75] Rome is united through violence, its 'we' is coined in blood.

In *Sejanus*, especially in the crowd scene, Jonson focuses on the monstrosity of ignorance, and treats the audience the same way he treats the Roman populace in the play, as passive spectators who seem to have little power over the course of events. In Act 3 Sabinus comes to inform Arruntius and Gallus that Drusus, heir to the throne, is dead, and that his father, the emperor Tiberius will not come to the Senate's meeting. Upon Gullius' question 'what should the business of this Senate be?' (3. 14), the senator Arruntius remarks: 'We,/ That are the good-dull-noble lookers-on,/ Are only called to keep the marble warm. [...] Our ignorance may, perchance, help us be saved/ From whips and furies' (l. 16-21) but, the implication is, it cannot help Rome. Commenting on his rise, Sejanus's response confirms Arruntius's recognition: 'All Rome [... and]/ The Senate sat an idle looker-on' (5. 256-7). The mob's oblivion (expressed in their one letter 'O!') leads to a similar conclusion: these beastly 'looker's-on' on the streets of Rome not only cannot rescue the city but seem to only to deepen its fall, from greatness to self-destruction. The whole of Rome seems to choose to turn a deaf ear to what is going on in the higher order. Ignorance is a prerequisite for survival and the best defence strategy: it is not a matter of choice but of necessity. Both 'the good-dull-noble lookers-on' and the base, then, seem to be consciously ignorant, and ignorant from precaution.

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[75] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 169.

Some characters, like the general Silius and Sabinus, the knight, refuse to participate in the Senate's business and be associated with its violent policy. Silius remarks: 'This place is not our sphere' (1. 3). As soldiers they do not want to get involved in the corrupt political scene, and more importantly it is a battle-scene in which words, rather than martial skills, are used as weapons. Their sphere is a battlefield, and thus reminiscent of Coriolanus' attitude towards politics and stage. With irony Sabinus adds: 'We are no guilty men, and then no great' (1. 12), therefore, not corrupted: the irony is that they are still part of 'this place' because violence and fear are the things the political stage and a battlefield have in common. More importantly, with their reasoning Jonson covertly addresses the audience suggesting that they too are a part of 'this sphere', the theatre, and indirectly are accomplices in the performance: the audience's 'I-Thou' relationship with the stage, then, is indirectly depicted in the space of the mob's character. Again, this supports my argument that the character on the stage cannot be understood without taking into account the relations its character is shaped by, including the relationship with the audience. Butler rightly comments, 'Jonson's audiences saw games being played out on stage in which they too were implicated, so that in judging his characters, they were passing judgement on themselves'.[76] Jonson criticises 'the ignorant gapers' who do not recognise their role in the theatre, and remarks: 'It is lesse dishonour, to heare imperfectly, then to speake imperfectly. The eres are excus'd, the understanding is not'.[77] So, in *Sejanus* the rhetoric of hostility portrays negatively not only the people, and the politically powerful body -the Senate- but also implicitly *Sejanus*'s audience.

When Arruntius remarks: 'Would I have my flesh/ Torn by the public hook, these qualified hangmen/ Should be my company' (2. 415-17) he indirectly sets the Senate (the 'qualified hangmen', or the figure authorised by the Senate that gives order to kill) side by side to the Roman plebeians (implied in the phrase 'the public hook') and indirectly responds to Silius and Sabinus's denial of their part in Rome's violent politics. Arruntius's remark in fact can be seen as a synopsis of the play's representation of the relationship between the plebeians and the patricians: they are part of the same monstrous body, Rome, especially given the 'I-Thou' relationship between crowds and Tiberius. The plebeians are

[76] Martin Butler, 'Jonson's London and its theatres' in *The Cambridge Companion to Ben Jonson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 15-29 (p. 23).
[77] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 587 and 612.

not worse than their superiors: they are simply the exaggerated and disfigured reflection of the Senate and its politics.

When Silius enquires about the conspiracy: 'What wisdom's now i'th'streets? I'th'common mouth' (2. 494) we get the most common illustration of the people as chaos embodied: 'fears, whisp'rings, tumults, noise, I know not what' (2. 493). 'Th'common mouth' again reinforces the idea of the people being perceived as an indulging, consuming body, and as such the phrase could relate to Jonson's perception of the vulgar audience, figuratively: as a consumer's body focused on consumption for the entertainment sake rather than for the sake of learning. Munro argues that *Sejanus* 'makes any sort of connection [with the theater audience] impossible" and says, 'whoever the "we" who see (or perhaps more importantly, read) this play are, we are not part of the Roman multitude'.[78] What I would add is that the play alerts us not to become, symbolically of course, the multitude. This gives Jonson distance from the audience: by dissociating himself from or above the audience and multitude, he is not exercising the authority of Tiberius – he is not a tyrant of letters – but a civilised man of letters: a sovereign not a tyrant, and a man of reason, not of violence.

The way that Jonson indirectly portrays the Senate, then, as a monstrous crowd, albeit noble, and the plebeians as a vulgar crowd, seems to be analogous to how he divides or perceives his audience. As Sweeney points out, Jonson 'distinguishes between "attentiue auditors" who "come to feed their vnderstanding parts" and "monstrous fellows" who have "neither arte, nor braine"'. I suggest, however, he does not make a division between the gentry and 'the grounded men' in social terms: both are or can be in 'the multitude'.[79] The following passage from *Timber, or Discoveries* illustrates this point, as well as Jonson's anti-multitude or audience sentiment:

> *Indeed*, the multitude commend Writers, as they doe fencers, or Wrastlers; who if they come in robustiously, and [...] with a deale of violence, are received for the *braver-fellowes*: [...]. But in these things, the unskillfull are [...] judging wholly by the bulke, thinke rude things greater then polish'd; and scatter'd more numerous, then compos'd: Nor thinke this only to be true in the sordid multitude, but the neater sort of our *Gallants*: for all are the

[78] Munro, *The City and Its Double*, p. 165.
[79] See 'William Fennor on the reception of Sejanus, 1616' in *Ben Jonson*, ed. by D. H. Craig (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 97.

> multitude; only they differ in cloaths, not in judgement or understanding.[80]

Remarkably, Jonson does not assign the quality of 'multitude-ness', or ignorance and vulgar taste, merely to the base members in the audience, but suggests that both - 'the neater sort' and 'the sordid' sort in the audience - can be a part of 'the unskillfull' multitude: for, 'all are the multitude' who 'onely [...] differ in cloaths', not in their taste. He also indicates that the audience treats authors as entertainers, and that it is almost like a Roman mob expecting to watch gladiators. Violence, however, has a political meaning in this context: in Tiberius's Rome it is a means to exercise and display power; and we have seen that through violence the Senate displays its power and authority. By removing Sejanus from the political stage, the Senate led by Tiberius confirms who is the ultimate authority in Rome. Similarly, the representation of the mob's violence in the crowd scene exemplifies and conveys their power, or the power of the mob's rule: by rejecting altogether to hear the letter that outlines Sejanus's crimes, the mob states its power to disobey. The link between violence and power, however, extends to the theatrical context: that 'the multitude commend Writers, as they do fencers' reveals their power over the author: their demands put pressure on Jonson but, as he puts it, he is not interested in providing 'a deale of violence' for the entertainment sake only.

So, ignorance stands in the way between this multitude and *Sejanus*: that is, between them and Jonson. Even in his scholarly treatise, *English Grammar,* Jonson uses this example to illustrate a grammatical point: '*Ignorance is the mother* of *errour.* [...] *So that it proveth well therefore, The strength* of *man is sone lore*'.[81] Ignorance, then, is not only a sin of the ordinary people but can be also of the elite (gentry, nobility, other authors). Jonson does not despise ordinary people nor does he address them as a 'multitude', but those with no sense of moral values and who *violate* their position, like critics and censors: '*Criticks* are a kind of Tinkers; that make more faults, then they mend ordinarily. See their diseases, and those of *Grammarians* [...]. And the *multitude* [my italics] of *Physicians* hath destroyed many sound patients, with their wrong practise'.[82] By talking about 'the multitude of *Physicians*' who mistreat their patients, again he indirectly criticises the

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[80] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*. p. 583.
[81] *The English Grammar* in *Ben Jonson*, ed. by C. H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, viii (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 530.
[82] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 642.

multitude of '*Critic*[s], or *Censor*[s]' who 'make [...] faults' when judging a work of art, the 'common torturers [...] whose noses are ever like swine spoiling and rooting up the Muses' gardens'; the 'Nation of Barkers, that let out their tongues to lick other sores'.[83] This crowd also includes the writers, those 'rayling, and tinckling *Rimers*, whose Writings the vulgar more greadily reade'.[84] All are, then, the ignorant crowd that 'utter[s] all they can thinke, with a kind of violence, and *indisposition*; unexamin'd, without relation [...] and the more wilfull, and stubborne, they are in it, the more learned they are esteem'd of the *multitude*'.[85] This precisely, in Jonson's words, prompts him 'to stand off from them'.[86]

Given that Jonson desires the audience's participation it is paradoxical, then, that he is astonished that in the case of *Sejanus* the audience has suddenly become judgemental - i.e responsive as opposed to passive. He does not seem to accept that the popular audience might in fact be justified in their disapproval of the play. Again, in *Sejanus* he does not provide a typical hero with whom the audience would identify, but Sejanus: a charismatic character, but still a villain that lacks a human element, a redemptive moment in the play, and an ability to see beyond himself and his own interests: 'He comes to personify [...] forces which disrupt natural social processes [and] as he reconstructs from the chaos he creates a new, perverse social order'.[87] The only violence the audience does get to see is in their imagination - in the reported crowd scene- and this violence is repulsive and has everything but an entertaining quality. Indeed, Jonson clearly separates himself from 'all [the ignorant and violent] multitude'.

Nevertheless, given that a crowd, or the multitude, is commonly said to be innately fickle and disloyal, it seems paradoxical that in *Sejanus* it is portrayed to hate disorder and favour hierarchy, legitimacy and habit. For instance, when Sejanus reveals that he wants to marry Livia, in order to strengthen his position against Agrippina (3. 515-29), Tiberius asks him whether he really thinks Livia would marry him who is 'born but a private gentleman of Rome?' (3. 554); and more importantly, he asks Sejanus whether he believes that 'the Senate, or the people [...] will endure it?' (3. 556-9). Jonson, thus, juxtaposes the Senate and the people, and hands them both some share in power games: both have power in the

[83] The first quote ('*Critic*[s], or *Censor*[s]' who 'make [...] faults') is from *Timber, or Discoveries*, p 642; the second quote is from 'To the Readers', *Sejanus His Fall*, p. 51, and the third quote is from *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 604-5.
[84] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*. p. 572.
[85] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 586.
[86] Jonson, 'Epistle': *Volpone*, p. 74.
[87] Sweeney III, '*Sejanus* and the People's Beastly Rage', p. 71.

state's decision making. He adds that people already 'murmur' (3. 561) about Sejanus' 'greatness; and the nobles/ Stick not, in public, to upbraid [... his] climbing/ Above our father's favours' (l. 561-63). The implication behind all this is that the people will not endure Sejanus's supposed marriage with Livia and allow him to climb even higher because this disrupts the established order of things.

What this seems to imply is that the crowd in *Sejanus* is represented as innately conservative and reactionary, and after all not inconstant in their loyalties to hierarchically ordered society. Like Coriolanus, Sejanus is perceived as proud and arrogant, and this becomes his doom. Some people find Sejanus's 'public severity/ to be particular ambition', as Tiberius writes in his letter, 'to be our/ son-in-law' (5. 594-602). That the people do not approve of this ambition confirms that they prefer the established order as it is. In addition, as much as the mob echoes the Senate's politics of violence, some members of the Senate seem to echo the crowd's conservative stance, too. Sabinus, a knight and supporter of Agrippina's faction, remarks: 'A good man should and must/ Sit rather down with loss, than rise unjust -/ Though, when the Romans first did yield themselves/ To one man's power, they did not mean their lives,/ Their fortunes, and their liberties should be/ His absolute spoil as purchased by the sword' (4. 165-70).[88] Ayres suggests that these are 'crucial lines' displaying Sabinius's regret that 'the "old liberty" [with the end of the Republic] has been lost for good'.[89] However, what Sabinus seems to stress in these lines is that no man should have ambitions to rise to power if he has no *right* to do so, for when Rome received their first ruler he was not meant to have an absolute power; he was given a role with which he was to serve the people and the State, not his own desires.

The play, then, does not only makes us hostile and appalled by the citizens but with the Senate as well. The Senate's cruel policy creates this anger and causes the people's violent outburst. It is a member of the Senate, Sejanus' loyal friend Terentius, that relates to us the incident and his depiction could be one-sided. However, it is evident that when he talks about the people, he indirectly talks about their government as well. As it has already been stated, the people merely echo the Senate's violent policy. What matters most is the representation of bestiality and bloodshed of the mob as it is representative of Tiberius's corrupt regime as a whole.

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[88] See Ayres's note on Sabinus, p.73.
[89] See Ayres's Introduction, p. 34.

In the Senate, violence takes a sophisticated form: it is performed through language. Almost all the characters make sarcastic comments upon rhetoric and flattery, but the paradox is that most of them flatter and use rhetoric since to speak the truth in Rome is equal to suicide (assuming that to speak rhetorically means to lie). Because of the 'violent ear' the best and the safest way to live in Rome is to live in ignorance, or diplomatic silence. So it is, it seems, in Jonson's Britain. Indirectly reflecting upon the issue of freedom or liberty of speech, Lepidus's character recommends how to live safely: 'Arts', he says, 'None, but the plain and passive fortitude/ To suffer, and be silent; never stretch/ These arms against the torrent; live at home/ With my own thoughts [...] Not tempting the wolves' jaws: these are my arts' (4. 293-98). Words are better unspoken because in Rome they have a subversive power, and are violent. Lepidus's survival strategy is silence, a response to 'the wolves' jaws'. 'The violent ear' turns into 'the wolves' jaws', a shift which indicates that Lepidus's theory of survival collides with the people's rejection of speech and of the written word and also demonstrates that both the people and the politicians are talked about as dumb beasts, or mute animals.

Indeed, while Terentius speaks of the citizens as vultures, Arruntius speaks of the flatterers in the Senate as 'the palace rats [...] worse than ravens, that devour/ The quick, where they but prey upon the dead' (1. 427-29). The difference between the representation of violence in the Senate to that of the mob's on the streets is that the actual act of killing (in the Senate) is never described in detail: we are given only references which we give no further thought. Terentius does not directly condemn the Senate for killing Sejanus but only mentions that Sejanus was 'sentence[d] by the Senate,/ To lose his head – which was no sooner off', and, then, he follows describing in detail how 'th'unfortunate trunk' was 'seized/ By the rude multitude' (5. 815-18).

Of course, it can be objected that no violence done by the patricians can be compared with the morbid spectacle provided by the mob. Again, this differentiation points to the fact that the citizens' reaction is portrayed as the extension of the Senate's policy. For, otherwise, how could one explain their rage? Their appetite for violence and their wrath must have a reason. Terentius's comment that 'what cannot oft be done is now *o'erdone* [my italics]' (5. 837) suggests that the Roman plebeians are powerless in politics, frustrated citizens and above all can be seen in the worst incarnation of mob. It is not surprising that even though they followed Sejanus and worshipped him as a god, '[he] came on as gazed at and admired', 'had men's knees as frequent as the gods' (5. 721-26) and

'made the general voice to echo' (5. 752) his own, in the crowd scene he becomes a scapegoat of their anger, and his dead body the embodiment of the deformed and dehumanised figure of the Senate. Their anger seems beyond understanding, but, again, this might be the case if through their character Jonson caricatures the reaction of the popular audience towards *Sejanus*.

Furthermore, we may say that Sejanus is both present and absent from the stage in the crowd scene – he is physically absent but 'present' in the speech and in our minds - and as such the representation of his character suddenly becomes analogous with the representation of the people. The following example supports the idea that in *Sejanus* Jonson also represents the citizens using the space of Sejanus's character. Sejanus is said to poison the people (4. 353-55) with his breath, and in Jonson's address to the readers, 'the vncapable multitude' is the audience who 'poison' the play with their ignorance and bad taste. The analogy is a complex one: it works as a mirror mirroring another mirror, and this is important for an understanding of how the characterization process works in the theatre. The representations of Sejanus mirror the representations of the mob in the crowd scene; or we can also say, the mob's violence mirrors Sejanus's. For instance, after hearing that Drusus is imprisoned, and Agrippina 'confined', Lepidus questions the people's power to do anything: 'But yesterday, the people would not hear/ Far less objected, but cried, Caesar's letters/ Were false, and forged; that all these plots were malice;/ And that the ruin of the prince's house/ Was practised 'gainst his knowledge. Where are now/ Their voices? Now, that they behold his heirs/ Locked up, disgraced, led into exile?' (4. 345-51), and Arruntius responds, '[they are] hushed./ Drowned in their bellies. Wild Sejanus' breath/ Hath, like a whirlwind, scattered that poor dust/ With this rude blast' (4. 352-54). This is not merely a typically inconstant and ignorant multitude, but also powerless ('poor dust'), silenced ('hushed'), and more surprisingly, a multitude content even in their ignorance ('drowned in their bellies'). Ayres notes that 'Lyly and Jonson seem to have greed in mind here - conscience is "drowned" in the juices of the belly, whose demands are more insistent than those of the "head".[90] The expression 'drowned in their bellies' juxtaposes a negative state and a kind of primary satisfaction, which implies that the people are gratified and even indulge in their oblivion, and symbolically, contaminate the play with their vulgar presence. It also suggests a carnal kind of introversion, a self-consumption, or a drowning within

[90] See Ayres's edition of the play, p. 197.

themselves and their own appetites – a deformity that comes with their consent to live in oblivion.

The corruption of the higher order, depicted through the metaphor of Sejanus's poisonous breath, thus contaminates the whole city: the people breathe in this poisonous breath, and as they breathe it out, they reflect it. Symbolically, then, in the crowd scene the mob *is* also Sejanus seen through a magnifying glass: through their exaggerated reaction. In the characterization process, then, we have a mirror within a mirror: they reflect Sejanus and Sejanus reflects them. Their dramatic relationship brings them into being. This is why the concept of the space of the character is useful: it does not refer to the character-in-isolation, but to the *relations* that take place in the character's dramatic space, and define it. It is this in-between space of reflection or relation that creates both, Sejanus and the mob respectively. This in-between space is even more complex because Jonson uses it not only to portray the relationship between the two, but also his relationship to the Globe's audience in 1604 performance.

The relationship between the plebeians and the patricians, then, is firmly anchored in their mutual hatred and dependency, even though the citizens of Rome (and by implication the audience) are not directly involved in the Senate's political intrigues (by implication the performance), they are still a part of it. The crowd act out externally the politicians' rhetoric. To explain further how the characterization process in the theatre works, we shall focus now on the representations of the people through one figure. In this case a figure, or symbolically, a mirror that reflects the Roman people in a different way is that of Sejanus's widow, Apicata.

**Redemption in Reflection: Jonson, Apicata and the Mob**

It is remarkable that it is only a Roman woman who can stop this chaos in the streets of Rome. It could be argued that this is not a real chaos since the destruction of Sejanus has been entirely directed by Tiberius, and stage–managed by Macro and then by spies, agents of the emperor. The Senate is a part of the Emperor's noble 'we', and yet in terms of decision-making its power is limited: Tiberius has the ultimate say (as the letter scene in Act 5 demonstrates). In this 'I-Thou' relationship, then, symbolically Tiberius is the dominant 'I' and solely in charge of the 'affecting' part (which is denoted with the dash). Tiberius's directing of the events, nevertheless, stops exactly at this point. The mob follows

the Senate's act of murder with a massacre and a violence which no longer has anything to do the with the Senate: it cannot be controlled. It has now a life of its own, of the worst mob imaginable. The unsuccessfully tamed beast is now faced by a woman, whom Sweeney sees as a 'representation of "natural" womanhood in its traditional sense of beauty and nurturing love'.[91] Jonson, however, has more in mind and our reconstruction of the author's use of the space of her character will show why.

Nuntius relates:

> The wittily and strangely cruel Macro
> Delivered her to be deflow'red and spoiled
> By the rude lust of the licentious hangman,
> Then to be strangled with her harmless brother
> [....]
> Their bodies [are] thrown
> Into the Gemonies [...] the mother,
> Th'expulsèd Apicata, finds them there;
> Whom when she saw lie spread on the degrees,
> After a world of fury on herself,
> Tearing her hair, defacing of her face,
> Beating her breasts and womb, kneeling amazed,
> Crying to heaven, then to them; at last,
> Her drownèd voice gat up above woes,
> And with such black and bitter execrations
> As might affright the gods, and force the sun
> Run backward to the east – nay, make the old
> Deformèd Chaos rise again, t'o'erwhelm
> Them, us, and all the world – she fills the air,
> Upbraids the heavens with their partial dooms,
> Defies their tyrannous powers, and demands
> What she and those poor innocents have transgressed,
> That they must suffer such a share in vengeance,
> [....]
> *Arruntius*: [....] What says now my monster,
> The multitude? They reel now, do they not?
> *Nuntius*: Their gall is gone, and now they 'gin to weep
> The mischief they have done.
> [....]
> Part are so stupid, or so flexible,
> As they believe him innocent. All grieve.
> And some, whose hands yet reek with his warm blood,
> And gripe the part which they did tear of him,
> Wish him collected, and created new.
> (5. 861-97)

[91] Sweeney III, '*Sejanus* and the People's Beastly Rage', p. 76.

As Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker write in *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 'in all its forms, terror was designed to shatter the human spirit. Whether in London at the birth of capitalism or in Haiti today, terror infects the collective imagination, generating an assortment of demons and monsters', and infecting 'the collective imagination' with terror is what Jonson does in the crowd scene.[92] This is why Nuntius' language is so cruel, as cruel as the mob's act is cruel, and Macro's act is as cruel as the citizens' ('The wittily and strangely cruel Macro/ Delivered her [Sejanus' daughter] to be deflow'red and spoiled/ By the rude lust of the licentious hangman,/ Then to be strangled with her harmless brother'). That the cruelty which the crowd displays is the Senate's cruelty but overdone again implies that the agency is shared between the two, that they mirror each other.

Apicata responds to the mob's violent act with a desperate act of self-harm: performing 'a world of fury on herself/ Tearing her hair, defacing of her face,/ Beating her breasts and womb'; she indeed reflects violence done on her children and husband, Sejanus. Her own hands, then, symbolically become the mob's hands, and the pain she inflicts upon herself corresponds to sufferings Sejanus's body must have gone through in the hands of the mob. Her character, therefore, not only reflects the mob's cruelty but with it the Senate's too: the Senate started off by killing Sejanus and the mob performed the final touch, and now her act of self-harm symbolically represents Sejanus's. Plotting against Tiberius he inflicted his own punishment, and indirectly and unintentionally harmed his position in the Senate and lost his life. The violence he performed in his career is thus reflected back on him. It is feasible to say, then, that Apicata's character also articulates Sejanus's sufferings. Not only this, we shall see that Jonson also uses her space of character to articulate his own suffering as the author of *Sejanus*: that is, his relationship with the audience also shapes Apicata's character.

The question now is why she is able to stop the mob, and what are the implications of her actions? Equally, how does this moment relate to our discussion of the mob and the crowd scene? It could be argued that it is the genre, tragedy, that stops in the end the people's rage. For, Jonson needs to show that the wheel of Fortune turns in relation to the populace just as it has done for Sejanus. The populace must go from destructive rage to

[92] Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra, Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), p. 53 (for more see esp. p. 36-71).

sentimental pity (like the audience). Tragedy demands both fear and pity, shown in the action. Apicata's rage for heavenly justice asks for retribution, defying the gods. Ironically, she is used by the genre to give Fortune's wheel another spin. The crowd responds to the last pressure or stimulus that they have been subjected to, but this part perhaps belongs more to the didactic purpose of the tragedy, which suggests that Jonson does more in this scene than just obey the rules of the genre.

Reviewing the RSA performance in 2006, Peter Lathan observes: *Sejanus* 'is a very wordy play [...] for it is a play of ideas rather than emotions', that is – until Apicata's appearance.[93] Indeed, she gets the crowd's attention and touches them because she responds with emotion: she 'fills the air' with pain' and overwhelms the 'deformed chaos'. This is what Coriolanus is ready to respond to, and subdue, too, and this will be demonstrated shortly. Apicata's pain is a living thing, and Sejanus's body is not. His body, I would further suggest, symbolically represents violent and cold political words. This might be an explanation, then, why *Sejanus* as a play is so emphatically devoid of emotions: it has to be because politics is cruel and Jonson's aim is to represent it as such, and the crowd scene represents the culmination of Rome's politics and cruelty. This, then, accounts for Jonson's outrage at the Globe's audience that did not get this message, and appreçiate this cold play. When the citizens seize Sejanus, they get hold of a dead body, and they do not feel compassion for him but see his body as an object through which they can express their anger. Sejanus scattered body represents now the body politic in disintegration. For the citizens, he is no more a human being but the *embodiment* of what they hate the most: their politicians and their rhetoric. It is as if they are angry at the politicians for they breed a life of lies and cruelty.

Significantly, however, we see that Apicata does not voice her feelings ('her drowned voice gat up above their woes'). Like the crowd, she does not speak directly at first, but her actions become her means of eloquence. In this light, her reaction is similar to the crowd's and in the fact that hers is reported to us like the crowd's. In this play it seems, then, that Jonson shows that speech and words are rejected on a series of levels: through their act the mob implicitly refuses to speak and hear Tiberius' letter, and this rejection seems to be analogous to the rejection of Jonson's work by the multitude in the theatre. The groundlings, even if they had patience to endure the play's political debate, would hate it

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93 Peter Lathan, '*Sejanus: His Fall*', *The British Theatre Guide* (2005) <http://www.britishtheatreguide.info/reviews/RSCsejanus-rev.htm> [accessed 30 July 2009].

even more after hearing about the many-headed beast and would hardly wish to identify with it. What we find in the crowd scene, then, is an interesting train of thought in the author's mind whilst revising it: his depiction of Apicata is the key here, because it seems to offer another explanation why the popular audience did not respond favourably towards *Sejanus*. In the space of Apicata's character, I suggest, we may find Jonson's latent realisation that plain words, or rhetorical speeches that are devoid of passion and emotion, do not in fact touch the crowd.

In contrast to Apicata's reaction in *Coriolanus* Volumnia's rhetorical plea to stop Coriolanus' 'rage in power' is made almost entirely of words, and yet it is also accompanied by a gesture of humbleness and humiliation (kneeling down). Coriolanus is not touched by Volumnia's reasons but with the affection in her words. He warns her: 'Desire not/ T'allay my rages and revenges with/ Your colder reasons' (5.3. 85-7) as if saying 'rather speak from your heart'. At the moment when he wants to stay cold and untouched the most, he does not need affection to break him down. More importantly, Volumnia humiliates herself by kneeling down in front of him, which she knows will touch him. Coriolanus tries to remain firm: 'But out, affection!/ All bond and privilege of nature break;/ Let it be virtuous to be obstinate [....] I'll never/ Be such a gosling to obey instinct' (5.3. 24-35), or his love for his mother because she is tied to Rome and its customs. He breaks at the point when his mother, his wife Virgilia and his son Young Martius kneel down and 'shame him' (5.3. 170) with their knees. He is finally moved by his mother's pain. Similarly, as we have seen, in Sejanus's crowd scene the people are touched (at least partly) by Apicata's sincerity and authenticity: by her show of pain, not with reasoning, and emphatically, then, not with words alone.[94] Coriolanus is outraged and hurt by this 'unnatural scene' (5.3. 185) in which his mother humiliates herself in front of her son (and also acts as a politician). This, more than anything else, is unbearable to him. In *Sejanus*, too, the mob refuses to listen to Tiberius's rhetoric, but succumbs only to the woman's passionate response. In both plays the crowd indirectly seems to reject words that are bereft

[94] For a detailed discussion of Jonson's understanding and application of Roman moralists' views see Maus's 'Jonson and the Roman social Ethos': *Ben Jonson and the Roman Frame of Mind.* She makes an interesting point: 'The Roman moralists' identification of "reason" with "instinct" may seem peculiar to modern readers. [... But for them] or their predecessors, the Greek stoics, instinct has nothing to do with passion; it is rather a kind of proto-reason, the inborn equipment that allows animals and men to cope effectively, if unthinkingly, with their environment. [...] Passion, however, is not according to nature and has nothing to do with instinct; it is the result of false beliefs about the world', p. 114. For more discussions on Jonson's, and Shakespeare's, use of classics, specifically Virgil, see Margaret Tudeau-Clayton's *Jonson, Shakespeare, and Early Modern Virgil,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

of any decency, justice and (display of) emotion: we have seen that *Coriolanus*'s crowd insists on being spoken to 'kindly' albeit with love; *Sejanus*'s crowd, however, does not insist on this, and is represented largely as dismissing speech, but they do respond to Apicata's fervent reaction. Accidentally, it seems, Jonson might be acknowledging that the Globe's audience might have even been justified to dislike *Sejanus*'s extended reasoning.

Once satiated with blood and violence and stopped by Apicata, this once 'power in rage' suddenly succumbs. They realise the horrific deed they have done, and reveal again their inconstancy and gullibility: partly they 'are so stupid, or so flexible/ As they believe him innocent', but '*all* grieve' [my italics] (5. 893-4). This characterless 'all' becomes a derogative term denoting a crowd united in their cruelty and their stupidity. It is these two attributes that Jonson subsequently related to the multitude in the theatre, because these were the core reasons why those in the yard are viewed as having misunderstood and thus mistreated his play. Furthermore, the citizens are overwhelmed by Apicata's presence and action as well as by what they have performed. Her speechless violence done to herself links her character with the mob's and discloses a similarity in the representation of the people and of one figure. Both are shown as a powerful force and as characters whose spaces Jonson uses to make his point to the audience, and both demonstrate that as characters they are shaped by and exist through relations: in the space of Apicata's character Jonson depicts her reaction and relation to the mob, and within this he latently touches upon his relationship with the audience.

Apicata embodies the innocent and the vulnerable, but also becomes the womb of potential and the final cry for redemption. She is perhaps a nurturing or nourishing female with no political thought and this links with the idea of the shared body: she is the 'womb' and becomes a virgin figure and a symbol of the whole nation. As such, her character, then, inevitably becomes politicised: the female body becomes body politic. Both figures – the woman and the crowd - are, nevertheless, most powerful in their speechlessness, and dramatically in their absence on the stage, like Tiberius, too. It is, then, not a coincidence that these three most powerful figures are physically absent from the stage: this is a part of Jonson's dramatic technique. Apicata frightens the crowd just as the crowd frightens the Senate, and the audience. Dramatically, her action speaks for her, and her speechlessness, it may be said, animates the crowd's lack of words. That she responds to violence done to her dearest by inflicting violence upon herself finally is a dramatisation of reflective powers of violence: she echoes the mob's and the mob echoes the Senate's cruel policy. Indeed,

Apicata is reflecting or reacting upon her 'Thou': and her character's dramatic 'Thou' is the mob. Indirectly, then, her theatrical 'Thou' becomes the audience.[95] Further, her character comes alive in the description and, more importantly in her relation to the mob's character. The reported crowd scene, relying entirely on speech, now comes to work as a mirror of the whole play: indeed, it is the only speech in which the seemingly opposing parties reflect, affect and create one another, which indeed sums up the dramatic importance of the reported crowd scene. When she is 'kneeling amazed' Apicata is almost like a martyr calling forth the higher powers to interfere and rescue Rome from its degeneration. As such she is entering against the immediacy of Rome's noble and vulgar crowds.

**Epilogue, According to Jonson**

Jonsons's dramatic rendering of the mob and the crowd scene allows us to read *Sejanus* the scene on different levels, as a play about popularity and corruption and as a play that alerts the audience of the danger of becoming as mob: ignorant and, figuratively, violent, a deformed version of an audience. It sets the individuality of Jonson, the intellectual hero, against the amorphousness of the inferior crowd, the audience, and encourages reconsideration of this confrontation. His dramatisation of the scene strongly suggests that Jonson not only implicitly asserts himself into it as in his prefatory material, but even more importantly it shows, albeit more indirectly, Jonson contemplating his 'I-Thou' relationship with the audience. We may speculate, then, that Jonson may even have exaggerated the crowd scene because he had been bruised by the theatrical audience. As such the crowd scene is, indeed, intrinsically about the relationship between the two. As Munro stresses, 'we should view the fate of Sejanus as commentary on the reception of *Sejanus*'.[96] In re-writing *Sejanus* Jonson appears to be picking up the scraps of the body of the original text that was performed to the Globe's audience in 1604, and reconstructing it on order to create *Sejanus* anew: 'now, that proud Sejanus hath a statue/ Reared on his ashes' (1. 543-44). The ambitious *Sejanus* thus achieves immortality. That Jonson is compelled to such an extent to respond to the audience's criticism confirms their implicit input in creating the character,

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[95] We have to bear in mind that the space of her character, as any other, is shaped both by her *dramatic* relations (with other characters in the play) and by her *theatrical* relations (with the audience in the theatre); in other words by internal and external relations.

[96] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 170.

and paradoxically his strong bond with his audience: with his 'Thou' during the theatrical performance.

We have seen, however, that unlike Shakespeare, Jonson uses the space of his characters to voice what seems to be his own opinion. As such, the author is present on the stage in fragments. Coriolanus's cry of 'I banish you!' to the crowd, as Katharine Eisaman Maus rightly points out, is Jonson's 'I banish you!' to the multitude in the theatre: 'for the same reasons [like Coriolanus], Jonson denies the apes, spawn, swine, and parrots who disapprove of his work even the consolation of a human identity'.[97] By invading the dramatic space of his characters Jonson implicitly, perhaps unintentionally, wants to claim his authority in the theatre. That he to a certain degree resembles the character of Coriolanus might have seemed far-fetched at first, for after all Coriolanus is a character in the play and Jonson is an author. However, as this chapter has been exploring, when occupying the space of his characters Jonson covertly 'stages' himself: his presence seems to be implied in the space of his characters such Tiberius's and Apicata's, and the relationship between him and the audience is conveyed through this. He becomes a "character" fragmented, but potent. As such his presence is deeply imprinted in the dramatic profile of his characters. By using this technique he converses with his characters and with the audience, and becomes a character by implication. A very similar process is literalised at the end of Jonson's *Poetaster*: in his address 'To the Reader' (in *F* text) he informs the audience 'that which follows' is his 'apologetical dialogue', not only with Polyposus, but indirectly with 'the multitude of voices' in the theatre.[98]

That this is possible is evident from the fact that unlike Shakespeare, Jonson is exceptionally dominant. A discussion of his work demands discussing the author. It could be argued that this is because we know very little about Shakespeare and his opinions. His approach and dramatic representations are not personal, but playful, less controlling (in the Jonsonian manner), experimental and perhaps overtly impartial. Shakespeare, as Russ McDonald observes, 'took a greater interest in character for its own sake [...] than did Jonson. For the most part, Jonson seems to have regarded his characters as a means to an end', and, as my chapter demonstrates, used the spaces of his characters, their dramatic

[97] Maus, *Ben Jonson and the Roman Frame of Mind*, p. 143.
[98] Ben Jonson, *Poetaster*: *Ben Jonson, the Devil is an Ass and Other Plays*, ed. by Margaret Jane Kidnie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 1-103 (p. 94 and 100).

territory, to assert himself.[99] Furthermore, Jonson's representation of the mob strongly suggests that he sees himself in others and in their reaction to him: so, in relation to his auditorium. The play, then, indirectly tells us that you cannot see yourself in any other way but in reflection: to see oneself one must reflect, and Jonson offers his play as our mirror. '*Language* most shewes a man: speake that I may see thee', he tells us.[100] The characterisation process is to be found exactly here. It involves layers of mirroring relationships that form a network of relationships creating a dramatic character. These relations are evident in the space of the character. The representation of Sejanus and the mob in the crowd scene and of their relationship is the fundamental one, from which all other analogies spring. In this reading, we have the analogy between Sejanus and the Senate, the people and the Senate, Sejanus and the people, Jonson and Sejanus and *Sejanus*, Apicata and the mob, and finally the audience and Jonson.

As in *Coriolanus*, *Sejanus* demonstrates that within the walls of the theatre the responsibility is shared, and in the theatre both the author and the audience form an agency: together they are 'the arbiter[s] of it all' (3. 621). Their rejection of *Sejanus*, according to Jonson, is their rejection of their arbiter's role in the theatre. To dismiss his play, then, is a matter of a misapplication of words, and ultimately an abuse of language. Jonson knows his work does not exist without an audience but he is still abusive. For, it is hard to locate Jonson in one character and identify his spokesperson on the stage. Until the final act, he also does not make it clear with whom the audience can identify. Yet, this detachment between the stage and the audience, we can now say, serves a purpose of provoking the audience's self-consciousness.

The multitude in the theatre, nevertheless, does have a representative on the stage: their spokesperson - the play's mob - which teaches them not to become like them, cruel and rude. It is in speech where the people and the Senate reflect one another and speech becomes a mirror in which the images of both parties collide in one. Both *Coriolanus* and *Sejanus* address violence of political relations (in *Sejanus*, Coriolanus's worst fears come true – the people are empowered and Sejanus, a soldier, becomes all that Coriolanus fled from). In *Sejanus* the people do not have the tribunes, nor do they get time and space on the stage to speak for themselves as they do in *Coriolanus.* Jonson does not give them time and

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[99] Russ McDonald, *Shakespeare & Jonson, Jonson & Shakespeare* (London: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), p. 11.
[100] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 625.

space to speak for a reason. Their refusal to listen and their rejection to speak is also their rejection of corruption. Their 'O!' almost seems to be derived from a 'No': it also represents the audience's dismissal of *Sejanus*. Jonson clarifies: 'Wheresoever, manners, and fashions are corrupted, Language is. It imitates the publicke riot'.[101]

Jonson shows that the very sophisticated language which the patricians use is 'a kind of cruelty' which is not so different 'from some one kind of cruelty' (4. 314), the mob's physical violence. The mob's reaction in the last scene comes out inevitably, as well as being due to the events in the Senate that preceded it. This echoing characterisation, evident in the space of the crowd's character, suggests that there is a mirror-relationship between the plebeians and the patricians. Each is constituted and created in and by the other. The people in the play are not heard but are reported. The politicians are not seen performing violent acts, but their voices are heard. The violent hands react with anger only after, and in accordance with 'the violent ear'. In *Sejanus* the 'affecting' element of 'I-Thou' relation (represented with the dash) is violence and violation.

The play reminds us that violence breeds violence. Rome, a representative of a civilised society, is created through violence. The main premise behind all this is that cruelty becomes a habit, and an inevitable part of the establishment. Discussing this issue in the Court of his time Jonson writes: '*Hee* that is cruell to halfes [...] looseth no lesse the opportunity of his cruelty, then of his benefits: For then to use his cruelty, is too late; and to use his favours will be interpreted feare and necessity; and so he looseth the thankes. Still the counsell is cruelty. But *Princes*, by harkning the cruell counsels, become in time obnoxious to the Authors, their Flatterers, and Ministers; and are brought to that, that when they would, they dare not change them: they must goe on, and defend cruelty with cruelty: they cannot alter the Habit'.[102]

The next chapter examines Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II* continuing the debate on the role of the reported crowd scene. My focus will be on the representation of the crowd in public spectacles, and on its role - as the body politic -in the representations of Body Divine, in which the 'I-Thou' concept and the 'space of character' will be, again, of crucial importance.

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[101] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 593.
[102] Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries*, p. 599- 600.

## Crowds in Spectacles, and Representations of Body Politic and Body Divine: *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II*

This chapter considers a very different crowd from that of *Sejanus*: not a maddening mob running through streets causing chaos and disorder, but the dignified crowds of *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II*.[1] As with Chapter 2, our focus is on the dramatic role of the reported crowd scenes, and here I shall argue that these scenes emerge as key points in terms of the dramatisation of power, and that reporting, rather than staging, becomes an effective device in the representation of political power and of the people's role in it.

Shakespeare's dramatisations of the crowd in these two plays reveal his interest in the crowd's role in public spectacles. Contrary to critical readings so far, this reading proposes that the crowds in these plays are not merely represented as typical disorderly crowds, but are politicised: represented as the popular body politic. The crowds in these plays are dramatically rendered as a symbolic part of the '"mystical body of the commonweal"', or in Jonathan Gil Harris's terms, '*corpus politicum*'.[2] It is well-known that the early modern writers used the body politic analogy to explain and justify the social structure, and in the analogy to refer to the plebeians as 'hands', 'mouth' and 'eyes', or in Coriolanus's words, insignificant 'fragments' in the commonweal (1.1. 220).[3] This chapter focuses on the representations of the crowd's *symbolic* part in the royal display of political power: on the moments in which 'the head of the body politic', the royal figure, and the citizens create an illusion of a unified body of the nation.[4] Indeed, 'this peculiar identification of the nation with the person of the Queen [Elizabeth I] has [...] been

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[1] William Shakespeare, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, ed. by Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), and *Richard II*, ed. by Charles R. Forker (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2002).

[2] Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 208. The phrase '*corpus politicum*' comes from Jonathan Gil Harris's *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of social pathology in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 2. 'The expression "mystical body," Kantorowitz explains, which originally had a liturgical or sacramental meaning, took on a connotation of sociological content', p. 196.

[3] See for instance Jonathan Gil Harris's *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic*; Harris focuses on the limitations of 'Tudor and Stuart formulations of the *corpus politicum*' and argues that 'not only did political writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries transform the standard comparison between body and society into a highly sophisticated similitude informed by new developments in anatomical medicine and pathology; physicians themselves lent their textbooks a resolutely political flavour with elaborate analogies between the parts [...] of the body and those of the *corpus politicum*', p. 2 and 19.

[4] Kantorowicz's phrasing, *The King's Two Bodies*, p. 262.

recognised', as Marie Axton indicates in *The Queen's Two Bodies*.[5] However, my aim is to extend this debate by examining the ways in which Shakespeare dramatically renders the crowd as the popular body politic, the royal figure as the body divine, and, more importantly, the dramatised relationship between them in public spectacles with a political agenda. This discussion will demonstrate that a character in the crowd scene, for instance Cleopatra, is shaped through relations with his or her dramatic 'Thou'. Specifically, we shall see that Shakespeare's depiction of the crowd scene offers another great example of how dramatic characters come into being. In the space of Cleopatra's character Shakespeare indirectly depicts the crowd, and it is the representation of the crowd's reaction to Cleopatra that purveys her as the charismatic and fascinating character that we know.

In early modern England the concept of the divine body was authorised and reinforced by 'the theory of royal absolutism', or 'the Divine Right of Kings', which meant that kings derived authority directly from God.[6] Discussions of the two king's bodies, pioneering Ernst H. Kantorowicz's study *The King's Two Bodies*, tend to leave out the popular body politic, but, as it will be demonstrated, in *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II*'s reported crowd scenes (Act 2.2. and Act 5.2 respectively), Shakespeare indirectly incorporates it in his representations of the royal figure.[7] The theory of the two king's bodies (divine and natural), as Axton rightly suggests, may indeed help us better understand Shakespeare's dramatic techniques, especially in the reported crowd scenes of *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II*.[8] Again, this chapter suggests that Shakespeare's representation of the Body Divine indirectly incorporates a *symbolism* of the political relation between the ruler and the people, and argues that Shakespeare does not represent a typical vulgar

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[5] Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical society, 1977), p. 12. However, she also infers that the 'body politic should not be confused with the old metaphor of the realm as a great body composed of many men with the king as head. The ideas are related but distinct. The body politic was supposed to be *contained within the natural body of the Queen*', p. 12.

[6] J. P. Sommerville, *Royalists and Patriots: Politics and Ideology in England 1603-1640*, 2nd edn (Essex: Pearson Education, 1999), p. 9. So, the Divine Right meant, for instance, that 'laws were made by the king's "unconstrained will". They were not imposed upon him. In England kings had agreed to legislate in Parliament, but it was "the Kings absolute power", not the consent of Lords and Commons, which made law', p. 47. For more on early modern political thought and politics see *The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500-1800*, ed. by J. G. A. Pocock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[7] For more discussions about the concept of the body politic see Jonathan Gil Harris's *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of social pathology in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), in which Harris 'examines the early modern origins of social pathology', p. 3. My reading does not suggest that the concept of the 'body divine' and the royal 'body politic' are the same thing, but that in his representations of the royal figure in public spectacles, especially that of Cleopatra, Shakespeare dramatises both.

[8] Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession*, p. x.

multitude because he is interested in the symbolic role of the popular *corpus politicum* in public events of political significance.

Buber's concept 'I-Thou' will be used in terms of discussing Shakespeare's dramatisation of political power and authority, and will further highlight how and why Shakespeare uses the space of the reported characters, such as Cleopatra's and Bolingbroke's, to imply the crowd's presence, and vice versa. The concept of the space of the character, as it has been explored in the previous chapters, is essential precisely because it refers to the complexity of the dramatic and theatrical *relations* that operate in the space of the character, and our discussion of Shakespeare's dramatisation of the Body Politic in relation to the Body Divine will further signal the importance of examining characters through their dramatised relations. We shall see that the crowd's character, specifically in *Anthony and Cleopatra*, does not have an identity in its own right, but is entirely an outcome of its relation to the Empress, and implicitly to the audience. Finally, this chapter aims to bring us one step further towards an acknowledgement of the importance of the crowd scenes in early modern theatre.

What *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II* have in common is that in both plays Shakespeare uses the reported crowd scenes to represent the people's symbolic role in royal myth-making.[9] Somerville points out that 'the canons of 1606 rejected the ideas that the people had once been sovereign and that political authority was in any sense derived from or dependent on their consent', but I will argue that in the play's crowd scenes the monarch's authority and prerogative is represented in relation to the common people, and that critical reviews need to consider the crowd scenes in Shakespeare's plays as defining moments in the representation of power in early modern politics.[10] The scenes give us a crucial description of public approval, and, as it will be demonstrated, in political decision making public approval is symbolically important. I shall further argue that the relationship between the people and their monarch is central to the way in which Shakespeare presents the crowd scenes, and suggest that if there was no crowd and no crowd scene in these plays, we would not read them as effectively as plays about legitimacy and political conflict. The politicised nature of these crowd scenes, then, can no longer be underestimated. This is apparent, as we shall see, from Shakespeare's use of his sources: if there is no crowd scene

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[9] The only other comparative analysis of these two plays is by Dolores M. Burton, *Shakespeare's Grammatical Style: A Computer-Assisted Analysis of Richard II and Anthony and Cleopatra* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974).

[10] Sommerville, *Royalists and Patriots: Politics and Ideology in England 1603-1640*, p. 30.

in his source, he invents one. That the people are introduced in these crucial moments in the transition of power attests, therefore, to their dramatic and symbolic roles. Finally, I shall argue that by staging the crowd through the means of its own exclusion the dramatist enhances the crowd's presence. Indeed, the strategy of omission turns into one of incorporation. We shall examine first the reported crowd scene in *Anthony and Cleopatra* (Act 2.2), and then *Richard II* (Act 5.2).

**Critical Responses to *Anthony and Cleopatra***

Literary discussions of *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s reported crowd scene entirely omit both the importance and the dramatic function of the crowd. Given that the scene portrays Cleopatra's battle for legitimacy, it is surprising that they disregard the dramatic role of the scene, and often focus primarily on Shakespeare's representation of Cleopatra's or Anthony's characters. Perhaps, more surprisingly, Paul Menzer and Ian Munro do not discuss *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s reported crowd in their studies of the early modern representations of the crowd.[11] Munro, however, does examine the role of the crowd in civic rituals and ceremonies, and argues that the space of the crowd is 'a multivalent space that supplements the space of the [early modern] city.'[12] My approach differs from Munro's in that I view any dramatic character as a 'multivalent space' that is made so by the *relationship* to its dramatic 'Thou' in the crowd scene. The crowd's dramatic 'Thou', I shall argue, is Cleopatra, and vice versa.

As in many other discussions, in 'Shakespeare Performed: Assisted Suicides: *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*' Lois Potter also focuses on the ways in which the productions stage Cleopatra and Anthony and 'the nature of the hero's death.'[13] Another widely debated theme in the play is that of their love, which invited psychological readings such as Lisa S. Starks's '"Like the lover's pinch, which hurts and is desired": The Narrative of Male Masochism and Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*', in which Starks argues that Enobarbus's description of Cleopatra in Act 2.2 exemplifies the 'theme of dominance

[11] See Ian Munro's *London: The City and Its Double*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Paul Daniel Menzer's 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Univ., 2001; abstract in UMI Microform 3027458).

[12] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 1.

[13] Lois Potter, 'Shakespeare Performed: Assisted Suicides: *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 58 (2007), 509-29 (p. 511). The theme of Shakespeare's representations of suicide is also discussed in Jacqueline Vanhoutte's 'Antony's "Secret House of Death": Suicide and Sovereignity in *Anthony and Cleopatra*', *Philological Quarterly*, 79 (2000), 153-75.

and submission' and 'Jacques Lacan's notion of sexual desire and subjectivity.'[14] The 'theme of dominance and submission' in the reported crowd scene is evident, but as this chapter aims to demonstrate, Shakespeare's depiction of the scene and of Cleopatra's character are also significantly influenced by Cleopatra's political agenda, and this aspect of the scene needs to be re-evaluated.

Much has been written on echoes of *Anthony and Cleopatra* in other literary works. For instance, in 'Cleopatra and Her Problems: T. S. Eliot and the Fetishization of Shakespeare's Queen of the Nile', John P. McCombe 'traces the evolution of T.S Eliot's poetic allusions to Shakespeare's Cleopatra.'[15] The crowd scene, or as McCombe calls it, 'the barge scene', is viewed through the lens of a peculiar 'absence of' Cleopatra's 'body.'[16] In 'Shakespeare's Shavian Cleopatra' Annie Papreck King notes that with her power 'over the people' Shakespeare's Cleopatra stands out, but, more significantly, King also recognises 'the extent to which those people [surrounding Cleopatra] acknowledge her.'[17]

Moreover, discussing John Ford's *Tis Pity She's a Whore* Jennifer A. Low argues that some 'images of containment metaphorize the body more generally to express subjectivity in ways that were common during the early modern period', and alerts us to the way that the "bodiliness," [...] of the individual is an important constitutive element of subjectivity - a subjectivity that must be recognized as a broader experience.'[18] Indeed, Cleopatra's image in the reported crowd scene should be seen as an image of 'containment', and her dramatic body, to use Donald C. Freeman's phrase, as an 'entrapment metaphor' and 'body-container.'[19] Freeman's phrase is particularly helpful for our reading of the reported crowd scene in which Cleopatra becomes a symbol, an

[14] Lisa S. Starks, '"Like the lover's pinch, which hurts and is desired": The Narrative of Male Masochism and Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*', *Literature and Psychology*, 45 (1999), 58-73, (p. 60, and 68-9).

[15] John P. McCombe 'Cleopatra and Her Problems: T. S. Eliot and the Fetishization of Shakespeare's Queen of the Nile', *Journal of Modern Literature*, 31 (2008), 23-38 (p. 23). See also Ann A. Huse's 'Cleopatra, Queen of the Seine: The Politics of eroticism in Dryden's "All for Love"', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 63 (2000), 23-46, in which Huse suggests that 'Shakespeare in *Anthony and Cleopatra* responds to urbanization and to the rise of urbanity by developing a version of mythological English past as a feudal garden of plenty', p. 27.

[16] John McCombe 'Cleopatra and Her Problems: T. S. Eliot and the Fetishization of Shakespeare's Queen of the Nile', p. 32 and 31.

[17] Annie Papreck King, 'Shakespeare's Shavian Cleopatra', *Shaw: The Annual of Bernard Shaw Studies*, 27 (2007), 165-74 (p. 167). For more readings focusing on Cleopatra's character see also Eduardo González's 'Odysseus' Bed and Cleopatra's Mattress', *MLN*, 69 (2004), 930-48 (especially pp. 939-45).

[18] Jennifer A. Low, '"Bodied Forth": Spectator, Stage, and Actor in the Early Modern Theater', *Comparative Drama*, 39 (2005), 1-29 (p. 10 and 23).

[19] Donald C. Freeman, '"The Rack Dislimns": Schema and Metaphorical Pattern in *Anthony and Cleopatra*', *Poetics Today*, 20 (1999), 443-60 (p. 452).

*embodiment* of her nation: in whose dramatic body the people's presence is implied. The body of the seductress is not simply glorified as an object of sexual desire, then, but politicised. By implication her dramatic body entraps or contains the presence of the popular *corpus politicum*. As Lois Potter rightly points out, *Anthony and Cleopatra* is a play that 'has a subtext', and I suggest that its reported crowd scene has the political subtext, hence that the dramatic meaning of the crowd scene needs to be reconsidered.[20]

Indeed, in 'The Disunities of Time, Place and Reaction in Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*' Jonathan Pollock's point that 'the whole play is literally a study in reception' latently directs our attention towards the importance of Shakespeare's decision to report the crowd scene: 'Shakespeare chooses to represent not the historical action itself but the reactions of those who see it or, more often than not, have it reported to them.'[21] Cleopatra, Pollock claims, 'seems to espouse an Aristotelian point of view: the state of becoming is orientated towards an end, and that end is actualisation.'[22] As it will be demonstrated, nowhere in the play is this stated more effectively than in the reported crowd scene: in the scene Cleopatra's show becomes a symbolic invocation of her body divine calling forth her auditorium to witness it and affirm her authority. Cleopatra's power and her presence is legible *in* the reactions of those around her, but also their reactions are conveyed *through* her. That is, in the space of Cleopatra's character her *affecting* part in this 'I-Thou' equation (denoted with the dash) dominates this equation.

As this account of the recent literary discourse on *Anthony and Cleopatra* reveals, there is an obvious gap: the dramatic effect of the reported crowd scene and the implied but potent presence of the crowd has been entirely neglected. Perhaps, the neglect comes from the fact that this scene is not staged, but is a second-hand account in which Enobarbus relates to the audience the moment of interaction between Cleopatra and her auditorium. I am suggesting, however, that the technique of reporting should not be seen inferior to staging. As we have seen in the discussion of *Sejanus*, the reported crowd scene in the play makes a great impact on the audience, despite not being a staged scene. This scene is not merely Enobarbus's 'Cydnus speech' that portrays 'the Queen's paradoxical nature to

[20] Lois Potter, 'Roman Actors and Egyptian Transvestites', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 50 (1999), 508-17 (p. 514).
[21] Jonathan Pollock, 'The Disunities of Time, Place and Reaction in Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*', *Université de Perpignan* <http://www.univ-paris.3.fr/recherche/sites/edea/iris/Communications/ Pollock-AC-Disunities.html> [accessed 14 June 2007] (para. 2 of 16)
[22] Pollock, 'The Disunities of Time, Place and Reaction in Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*', (para. 14 of 16).

excite wonder', not merely a 'barge scene' but a crowd scene, and the scene with a great dramatic input.[23] Above all, it demonstrates that the crowd and the heroine cannot be seen in isolation but as a "dramatic item", and importantly, that the dynamics of their relationship can be seen as an analogy for the relation between the audience and the stage.

What we also need to bear in mind is that even though in *Anthony and Cleopatra* Shakespeare depicts the events around 31 BC, a time of Rome's triumvirate with Anthony, Caesar and Lepidus in power, and of Anthony's relation with the Egyptian queen Cleopatra, his dramatisation of the reported crowd scene (2.2) is Elizabethan in many ways. Most critics, however, look at Plutarch as source for Shakespeare's dramatisation of Cleopatra's appearance on Cydnus, but this reading suggests that Shakespeare perhaps considers Elizabeth's Progresses as another possible source. For this is a play not only about Cleopatra's world and politics but about theatricality and politics in performance in early modern Britain. Both Shakespeare's Cleopatra and the Queen Elizabeth turned the political arena into a stage for political seduction in which their observers were, indeed, flattered into the illusion of granting the monarch power. Shakespeare's Cleopatra uses the public occasion to win the popular support, as did queen Elizabeth I in her annual visits to towns. She not only held it important to visit her noble subjects but she held it equally important to visit her common subjects. In *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony* Mary Cole Hill argues that the townspeople acted as 'civic hosts', and thus actively participated in 'the ceremonial dialogue' with their queen.[24] This ceremonial aspect of Elizabeth I's public encounters, I suggest, is implicit in Shakespeare's dramatic rendering of the reported crowd scene in *Anthony and Cleopatra.* As Elizabeth's progresses, this crowd scene indirectly captures a symbolic unity of the queen and the nation.

### *Anthony and Cleopatra's* Reported Crowd Scene: 2.2

Cleopatra, like Coriolanus, looks down upon the plebeians, but the intensity of Cleopatra's contempt towards the plebeian crowd is not near to that of Coriolanus's nor is it prominent throughout the play. In Act 5.2 after her defeat by the Romans, however, she reveals her

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[23] Michael Neill's terms, Introduction to *Anthony and Cleopatra*, ed. by Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 103.

[24] Mary Hill Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), p. 98.

concern as to what might happen to her, and asks her maid Iras to imagine herself being exposed to the gaze of 'the shouting plebeians' in Rome (4.13. 34). 'Mechanic slaves', she says, 'With greasy aprons, rules, and hammers shall/ Uplift us to the view. In their thick breaths,/ Rank of gross diet, shall we be enclouded,/ And forced to drink their vapour.' (5.2. 209-13). She fears being a captive, but also being physically close to the base Romans, because, it seems, it symbolically makes her one of them: a slave in Rome. What Cleopatra's character indirectly asks Iras, however, and implicitly the audience, is to envisage a hypothetical crowd scene of a public disempowerment and humiliation of herself - the Egyptian queen - in the hands of the Romans. Cleopatra - a potential captive - if publicly displayed is figuratively in the possession of the base crowd: i.e. uplifted to their base view and presence. These lines are very significant, not only in that her character expresses contempt towards being part of the crowd, but in that they suggest the crowd's symbolic input in the crowd scene: their presence and their gaze directed towards her conveys their symbolic power. Even more significantly, this hypothetical scene suggests that the character exists in the eye of the beholder, in the beholder's reaction, therefore, in his or her relation to Cleopatra.

Much earlier in the play, however, in her quest to convey her political power and authority over Egypt, Enobarbus relates how Cleopatra's spectacle and her aura embraces the people and the whole environment, including himself:

> ENOBARBUS I will tell you:
> The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne
> Burned on the water; the poop was beaten gold,
> Purple the sails, and so perfumèd that
> The winds were lovesick with them; the oars were silver,
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat to follow faster,
> As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
> It beggared all description: she did lie
> In her pavilion -cloth-of-gold of tissue-
> O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
> The fancy out-work nature; on each side her
> Stood pretty, dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
> With divers-coloured fans, whose wind did seem
> To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
> And what they undid did.
> AGRIPPA O, rare for Anthony!

ENOBARBUS
Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
So many mermaids, tended her i'th'eyes,
And made their bends adornings. At the helm
A seeming mermaid steers; the silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her; and Anthony,
Enthroned i'th'market- place, did sit alone,
Whistling to th'air, which but for vacancy
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a gap in Nature.
[....]

AGRIPPA Royal wench! [....]
ENOBARBUS 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, power breathe forth.
MECENAS
Now Anthony must leave her utterly.
ENOBARBUS Never. He will not:
Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety; other women cloy
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry
Where most she satisfies; for vilest things
Become themselves in her, that the holy priests
Bless her when she's riggish.
(2.2. 198-246)

What is remarkable in comparison to Cleopatra's depiction of the Roman crowd is that this crowd is spared the traditional vocabulary of abuse: for no 'greasy aprons' and 'thick breaths' contaminate this scene. Shakespeare refrains from any hostile representation of the crowd - which, we shall see later, is evident in Plutarch's account - for a dramatic effect. The reason behind this is that the crowd in this scene is meant not only to represent a unified nation behind their queen, but symbolically to confirm Cleopatra's authority, her divinely appointed office to represent her nation: her body divine.[25] Hence, contrary to the base Roman crowd who, Cleopatra imagines, 'encloud' and force her 'to drink their

[25] At this point in the play Cleopatra is literally fighting for her survival, and to prevent her nation being conquered by the Romans.

vapour' – indulge in seeing her as a slave - in this scene the whole of Egypt, it seems, is 'lovesick with' Cleopatra. What is significant in the first example (5.2. 209-13), however, is that Cleopatra indirectly recognises the importance and power of the audience. Her realisation that her political defeat could bring her to Rome as a slave, and expose her to 'the shouting varletry/ Of censuring Rome' (5.2. 56-7) also suggests that the crowd has a symbolic power in the spectacle.[26] Moreover, Cleopatra's words imply that in a public confrontation, she sees herself in her observer, and fears not only her captivity but more so, being mirrored in the eye of the vulgar beholder.

Whilst she refuses to see herself in this crowd, in the reported crowd scene above (2.2) she seems to initiate the reflection: 'From the barge/ A strange invisible perfume hits the sense/ Of the adjacent wharfs', and attracts the citizens towards her. Symbolically, then, by perfuming the whole environment, she reflects and projects herself onto it, and, figuratively speaking, marks her territory. Everything is pulling towards her barge: the winds, water, the air, breathless powers. In his loneliness even Anthony is 'Whistling to th'air' that due to the crowd's movement, or 'for vacancy/ Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,/ And made a gap in Nature'. Cleopatra, then, has the audience, Anthony does not, and this symbolically manifests her power: his loneliness conveys Cleopatra's power. For, the crowd's attention is directed towards her, and this can be seen as a symbolic representation of their approval of her authority. This dramatisation explains why Shakespeare creates her as a character that makes the impossible possible, or why 'she did make defect perfection,/ And breathless power breathe forth', 'hungry/ Where most she satisfies; for vilest things/ Become themselves in her' – because her show needs to be spotless and represent unity between herself and the nation. This is why her public display must not suffer any imperfection: hence, even 'the vilest' members in the crowd watching her, we are invited to assume, have to be absorbed by her dignified presence.

My point here is that in this crowd scene, the space or presence of the crowd becomes legible *in* and *through* the space of Cleopatra's character. The crowd is legible, then, *in* the space of Cleopatra's character because it is depicted in Enobarbus's description of Cleopatra. Yet it is also depicted to symbolically approve of her *through* Cleopatra's character: Enobarbus's description of the effect of Cleopatra's performance onto her surroundings conveys this. The space of her character, then, encompasses how others relate

[26] Of course, it could be objected that Cleopatra portrays negatively the Roman crowd (5.2) because Romans are her enemy.

to her. Indeed, nowhere in his speech does he directly describe Cleopatra. What he describes is the effect she creates on those watching her: that is, their reactions to Cleopatra's extravagant show. This, then, points to the fact that this scene is not merely about Cleopatra, but about a symbolic interaction and relation between her and those around here, including the crowd on the riverbank.

In her presence the oxymoronic images in the passage lose their power because they are no longer the opposites that negate one another but opposites that attract one another and coexist in harmony. In this sense they contain one another, and as a result, we can say, Cleopatra's character contains the popular presence in her dramatic space. Her art or ability of making the vilest things become themselves in her, of making the barge burn in the water and of making the gap in nature, creates an illusion of her political power. Shakespeare dramatises Cleopatra's spectacle as a rhetorical move by which she attempts to manipulate her auditorium into thinking that she still has the authority over Egypt. As King points out, Cleopatra 'is aware of the effect she produces, with the knowledge that any politician would have of her constituents, and, consequently, those around her have far greater respect for her as a ruler.'[27] In other words, she recognises the importance of theatricality in maintaining the popular support.

More than this, with his exaggerated representation of Cleopatra, 'o'er-picturing' even Venus (2.2. 207), Shakespeare is perhaps playing with the notion of the divine body, the immortal body of the queen. He depicts Cleopatra not only as an extravagant and captivating woman, but also as a clever politician who uses aesthetics to maintain popularity, and who uses theatricality to give an impression that her authority as the empress of Egypt is of divine origin. The supernatural elements in Enobarbus's portrayal, such as 'strange invisible perfume', the movement of air, the barge burning on the water, all seem to suggest this. A paradox, however, is that this seemingly unreachable figure now, by drawing the crowd towards her, allows it 'in' her space. She, then, both represents and separates from the crowd. Shakespeare, it seems, in this specific moment allows the crowd symbolically to become part of Cleopatra's body divine, again, because his goal is to represent a symbolic unity of the people of Egypt and their Empress. Yet as an empress Cleopatra is clearly *above* them, because with her spectacle she also displays her authority, and her power over them. In the space of Cleopatra's character Shakespeare, then, not only

[27] King, 'Shakespeare's Shavian Cleopatra', p. 168.

implies the crowd's presence, but implicitly renders the subject-ruler relation in the royal-myth-making. The ways in which the dramatist depicts this subject-ruler bond have a direct influence on the whole characterisation process of the central figure: in the crowd scene Cleopatra is not simply an intelligent femme-fatale but the embodiment of the nation and her mystical royal office. Shakespeare reinforces this idea by representing the crowd in the space of Cleopatra's character, and this also suggests that in this representation he does not merely portray the crowd, but a popular body politic.

What this passage makes clear is that Cleopatra *is* Egypt, that she represents not only herself, but indirectly her people, too. Shakespeare seems to have in mind 'the absolutist equation between the king and the state', which meant that 'every Prince is virtually a whole Kingdom.'[28] The line 'the city cast/ *Her* people out upon her [my italics]', however, is an unusual phrase because the first possessive 'her' can refer to both Cleopatra and the city. However, given that the whole passage depicts Cleopatra having magnetic and almost supernatural powers to draw everything towards her (ll. 200-4, 216-25, 238-246), it is more likely that it refers to Cleopatra. Indeed, Shakespeare represents Cleopatra as a director of her show. The citizens are extras, but extras that have a significant import in this scenario: they give her their spiritual support in her mission to convince Anthony that she is still 'a queen/ Worth many babes and beggars' (5.2. 48-9). To do so, it seems, she needs to *show* that the citizens are on her side. Again, Shakespeare bestows these powers of political seduction onto Cleopatra's character in order to present what Cleopatra wants to convey: her power and authority in Egypt. More than this, he implies the people's presence in the space of her character because he knows that their presence contributes to her show: they make her look as powerful as she wants to portray herself to the Romans. That she needs their presence conveys the symbolic significance of the crowd in her spectacle, which is public approval.

However, what complicates this reading is the line 'the city cast/ Her people out upon her'. It also seems to indicate that Cleopatra is being acted upon, for the second possessive 'her' functions as an object of the sentence, and implies that Cleopatra, symbolically, is objectified and not in control. Indeed, by some strange power the city seems to throw the people 'out' to watch Cleopatra. A possible reading of this dramatisation of Cleopatra is that Shakespeare perhaps covertly states his presence here: for

[28] Somerville, *Royalists and Patriots: Politics and Ideology in England 1603-1640*, p. 194.

it is ultimately the dramatist who empowers her, who portrays the crowd supporting her. His dramatic intent of representing a unified body politic might be recognised here: Cleopatra's crowd in this scene is not represented as a typical "crowd", but symbolically, as an extension of her body politic. This explains, moreover, why Shakespeare's representation of the people in this scene is significantly different from that of Plutarch's account of the barge scene, in which, as we shall see, the people's presence is not rendered favourably.

Furthermore, what Steven Mullaney points out in relation to Elizabeth I's staging of herself might perhaps help us understand Shakespeare's peculiar representation of Cleopatra as an object. Mullaney infers that Elizabeth's 'visibility is not a sign of sovereign potency but of her own discomfiting subjection to the sight and view of all the world.'[29] He clarifies this indicating that 'in the course of her reign, Elizabeth would adjust [...] to a form of theatricality not so much commanded by her as visited upon her'; that even 'James' absolutist ambitions had to recognize that a certain power resides in the eye of the beholder' and, finally, that 'the power he was invested with, was to a large degree invested in him by the gaze of his subjects. The royal image and identity were not wholly at the king's command but were in part the projection and hence the product of those subjects.'[30] Elizabeth's use of her progresses as theatrical displays of power shows how far theatricality was important in relation to maintaining a good relationship with the people. This will be examined in detail in the section 'Elizabeth, Cleopatra and the Crowd', but for now we need to bear in mind that both Elizabeth's, and Shakespeare's Cleopatra's exposure to the public meant that as much as they were the main actors in the scene, they were also objects of the crowd's observation and more importantly that the power they were 'invested with' was symbolically 'invested with' them 'by the gaze of' their subjects.[31]

That a spectacular public appearance is important in the politics of the play is evident from Caesar's reaction upon Octavia's poor appearance in the public. Caesar is furious that Octavia appears in public without glamour, and, therefore, damages his reputation. He calls her a 'castaway' (3.6. 40.) and criticises her:

You come not

[29] Steven Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 96.
[30] Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage*, p. 97.
[31] Mullaney's phrases, *The Place of the Stage*, p. 97.

Like Caesar's sister: the wife of Anthony
Should have an army for an usher, and
The neighs of horse to tell of her approach
Long ere she did appear. The trees by th'way
Should have borne men, and expectation fainted,
Longing for what it had not. Nay, the dust
Should have ascended to the roof of heaven,
Raised by your populous troops. But you are come
A market-maid to Rome, and have prevented
The ostentation of our love; which, left unshown,
Is often unloved. We should have met you
By sea and land, supplying every stage
With an augmented greeting.
(3.6. 42-54)

So, Caesar's words bid a comparison with Enobarbus's recollection of Cleopatra's appearance at Cydnus. Unlike Cleopatra who overpictures gods, Octavia appears as 'a market-maid to Rome', a common girl, and as such does not stand out from the crowd. According to Caesar this is a problem: by not showing off to the people, he implies, she is disrespectful towards Rome, and the Roman people. This seems to suggest that the people in fact want to see Octavia publicly displaying Rome's power. Indeed, her status, as Ceasar's sister, dictates it. For when she is in the public eye, in that moment she also represents Caesar. More than this, however, Caesar's words suggest that, as his sister, she also has a responsibility to convey to the people Caesar's power over them, and the way to do this is to create a spectacular display supplied at 'every stage/ With an augmented greeting'. According to Caesar, then, in her public appearance Octavia should have given the people a spectacle in the manner of Cleopatra: she ought to have flattered them into thinking that they are important enough that she makes an effort to impress them with her theatrical display. What he, then, seems to suggest is that she does not have political charisma – an ability to seduce the crowd – as Cleopatra does. The main point is that Caesar connects theatricality in public display with the power in politics: a pompous public appearance symbolically conveys power, but implicitly it also fulfils a custom of pleasing the crowd.

As it has been demonstrated in our discussion of *Coriolanus*, the crowd likes to be wooed, flattered into thinking that they are 'loved' by their politicians. Their 'price is to ask it kindly' (2.3. 71), that is, to act in accordance to their desires, too. As Caesar puts it, 'The

ostentation of our love', or showing off to the people if 'left unshown/ Is often unloved'. What Caesar's words imply is that public 'love', i.e. symbolic approval, is necessary, and that it is necessary for the government to show to the citizens that it is important that they are pleased. Indeed, his words to Octavia highlight Cleopatra's act in the crowd scene – she flatters her observers into the illusion of granting the monarch power. This is also implicit in Caesar's emphasis that Octavia should have been witnessed and cheered by the crowd: 'The trees by th'way/ Should have borne men, and expectation fainted,/ Longing for what it had not'. Similarly, in Act 3.6 in Caesar's conversation with Menas, he confirms once more the importance of the crowd's symbolic approval. The Emperor is displeased that Anthony publicly made Cleopatra 'of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia,/ Absolute queen' (3.6. 11-12), and especially with the fact that 'i'th'market-place on a tribunal silvered,/ Cleopatra' and Anthony 'in chairs of gold/ Were *publicly* enthroned [my italics]' (3.6. 3-5). This implies then, how important he finds it that such an act is witnessed by the people. Mecenas's following question reconfirms this: 'This in the *public* eye [my italics]?' (l. 12).

That Shakespeare chooses Enobarbus, who is a Roman, to report Cleopatra's triumphant moment in 2.2 indirectly confirms the momentum of the crowd's presence in the reported crowd scene. Enobarbus's role is a case in point, for in the reported crowd scene Enobarbus is not merely a 'choric or pseudo-choric' character and a 'great poetic' voice 'of hyperbole in the play', as Michael Neill puts it.[32] He is also an eyewitness to the event, and therefore, it can be said that he is implicitly a member of the crowd, and a spokeperson for the crowd.[33] He is a spokeperson of the crowd in that he articulates the crowd's *reaction* to Cleopatra. The fact that this Roman praises Cleopatra's impeccable ability publicly to display herself and her political power serves to show the impact that the spectacle had on him, but also that it must have had on her audience watching from the river bank. Not only this, the report in fact empowers the crowd. This comes from the way Enobarbus describes them: he keeps them safe, behind closed doors, fixed and contained. As a matter of fact, the only explicit reference to the crowd in the whole passage is 'her people' (l. 221).

Indeed, Shakespeare empowers the crowd by representing it as a unified body politic: not as a scattered and chaotic multitude, but as an important player in the political

[32] Michael Neill, Introduction to *Anthony and Cleopatra*, ed. by Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 89 and 93.
[33] Of course he is not a member of the Egyptian crowd, however, he is a member of Cleopatra's audience after all.

games. This is why in Cleopatra's royal myth-making the people suddenly start to play a key role, and why in the space of Cleopatra's character, Shakespeare ennobles it. Their gaze, which is implicit in Enobarbus's description of Cleopatra's effect on her environment, can be seen as a symbol of their consent or approval of her authority. It not only empowers Cleopatra, but, figuratively speaking, it attaches them to her. What we need to recognise is that there are two processes going on in this report. One is that Enobarbus's description of Cleopatra indirectly conveys the citizens' reaction. Another is that both Cleopatra's and the crowd's character come into being in his report.

The way Enobarbus is affected by Cleopatra directly affects his representation of her and the crowd. Cleopatra projects herself on to them, they behold her in their gaze, and in this symbolic exchange and approval of each others' presence they *relate* to each other. As such the dramatisation of Cleopatra's and the crowd's characters demonstrates that they exist through their dramatic relations. The crowd in this scene exists in relation to Cleopatra, and vice versa: without the auditorium Cleopatra's spectacle cannot exist. Through her myth-making she is making a statement both *to* Anthony and *to* her own people. Her display of her political 'I' (her authority) does not exist without the auditorium. The auditorium, her 'Thou', is the crowd. Moreover, that the crowd's character is fixed and contained suggests that it is perhaps partly modelled on the theatre audience, too. The audience is, we could say, 'cast out' of their homes, of course not by force but by their own will. It is symbolically cast 'upon' the stage simply by watching it. As such the crowd's character in the crowd scene seems to stand for its theatrical 'Thou', the theatre audience, and for this reason Shakespeare also chooses to 'contain' Cleopatra's crowd. We can, then, find here an analogy between this crowd scene and the theatrical performance: as Cleopatra's show draws her audience towards her, Enobarbus's report draws the theatre audience towards the stage. His speech generates an aura surrounding Cleopatra even in her on-stage absence. In other words, the dynamics that are portrayed in the reported crowd scene indirectly remind us that the audience also is implicitly a part of performance.

The implicit evidence of the crowd's presence, as it was demonstrated, is strong. It shows that its presence is conditioned and shaped by their relation to the queen: that is, by Shakespeare's representation of it. That they are not represented as a noisy crowd, however, but as an environment surrounding around Cleopatra - in awe of her, almost perplexed and powerless - is important on a dramatic level. The line 'cast out upon her', again, suggests this, but also a claustrophobia in this representation of the crowd. The whole crowd is,

symbolically, located in Cleopatra's dramatic body: there is no movement and it feels as if it is there by force, not out of their own will. Perhaps this suggests that the scene is meant to show the people's absolute loyalty and obedience to their queen. It seems feasible to say, then, that in the reported crowd scene and his dramatisation of Cleopatra's spectacle Shakespeare seems to have in mind 'the theatricality of early modern power', the aim of which, amongst other things, was also to reinforce the notion of the citizens' unquestioned obedience.[34] That the play is connected to Elizabeth I's politics will be clarified later, but for now we need to remember that 'a doctrine of obedience' (5.2. 31) 'required subjects to obey their monarch' and 'was part of their religious duty.'[35] Indeed, it is plausible to say, again, that the crowd scene indirectly represents subject-ruler bonds, and through the implied citizens' submission to Cleopatra, to use John Walter's words, 'a *culture of obedience*'.[36] For in this crowd scene, the crowd's absolute obedience is implied in the description of the whole environment surrendering to and moving towards Cleopatra.

This crowd's covert submission and approval is also implied in a description of Cleopatra's power to enchant them: her perfume is hitting 'the sense/ Of the adjacent wharfs', as if her presence mesmerises the people watching her from the river banks. She is 'the effective head of state', and as Steven Mullaney indicates, 'power is never merely a coercive or repressive force [...] it must not be limited to acting upon its subjects, but must instead, to be effective, act through them as well, inducing them to participate and even to become the primary actors in the ongoing drama of their own subjection.'[37] For this reason, it seems, the crowd's reverence and submissiveness is implied in the space of Cleopatra's character. It seems that she forces them to be there ('casts them out upon her'), symbolically to approve of her. Her unearthly ability to attract and make 'the vilest things' become her reinforces the idea of the monarch's absolute power, and indirectly suggests that her people cannot but obey her command. Patriarchalism, on which the Renaissance theory of absolute obedience relied, 'was at once an account of the origins of government and a description of the nature of political power', but also it, 'served to show that humans had not been originally free, but were born into civil subjection.'[38] The implication behind

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[34] Mullaney's phrase, *The Place of the Stage*, p. 91.
[35] See Neill's note on 'doctrine of obedience' in *Anthony and Cleopatra*, p. 304.
[36] John Walter, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 2.
[37] First quotation is from King's 'Shakespeare's Shavian Cleopatra', p. 170; and Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage*, p. 94.
[38] Sommerville, *Royalists and Patriots: Politics and Ideology in England 1603-1640*, p. 32.

Cleopatra's forceful casting - out of the citizens on to the river bank is that they *have to* be there and show their support. Put simply, this crowd scene seems to be more Elizabethan than has been recognised. Shakespeare seems to be indirectly incorporating the doctrine of unquestioned obedience into his description of the people.

This symbolic alliance and union between Cleopatra and her people, their political 'I-Thou', is celebrated in Cleopatra's royal 'We'. When she refers to herself, 'we, the greatest [...] answer others' merits in our name' (5.2. 176-8), she conveys that she is Egypt (3.11. 50; 5.2. 114 and 281) and represents her people. It is in the reported crowd scene of 2.2 in which she actualises or projects this idea. Although she sets herself above the crowd, through her spectacle she is affecting the people into thinking that in that moment they together play a part in her political game, that in that moment they are together the 'We' of Egypt. This also supports my suggestion that the crowd symbolically becomes a part of Cleopatra's political act with which she wants to convince the Romans that she still has the authority over Egypt. In 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses' Mary Hill Cole argues that Elizabeth I used her progresses and 'her presence to cultivate unity and loyalty', and this seems to be what Shakespeare's Cleopatra is doing in the crowd scene, tending a sense of 'unity and loyalty', to maintain popularity among her people but even more to impress Anthony, in Cole's terms, 'with her political authority.'[39]

In comparison to Coriolanus who denies any political 'I-Thou' relation with the plebeians, Cleopatra profits from her relation with the people: she enforces it. The relation between Cleopatra and her people in this scene is made to look perfect and perfectly functioning, because Cleopatra's political strategy necessitates the crowd's presence in the show. Symbolically speaking, her royal 'We', which she displays in her spectacle, only exists if it is in relation with her 'Thou' - the popular body politic. Through her character Shakespeare suggests that Cleopatra's royal 'We' can only be communicated or conveyed if it includes the people. Cleopatra's 'I' is enhanced with the crowd's 'Thou', and this helps her justify her royal 'We'.

This is analogical to the theatrical performance: Cleopatra's character needs the audience in order to exist on the stage, and her character, as any other, can exist only if it is watched by the audience. Moreover, the 'I-Thou' relation between the audience and the

[39] Mary Hill Cole's 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', in *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I*, ed. by Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Goldring and Sarah Knight (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 27- 45, (p. 40-1).

stage is perfect only if the affecting part of the equation (' – ') is perfectly functioning: if the audience relates to the events on the stage. In the space of Cleopatra's character, then, Shakespeare indirectly shows to the audience that even as spectators they are part of the show. They are extras but extras whose presence is vital. Just as the crowd's presence in the crowd scene is symbolically important so is the audience's in the theatre. As such the crowd scene ultimately becomes a reminder of what a theatrical performance is and what it means to be a member of the audience: it means to interact.

As it was explored in the discussion of *Coriolanus*, staging a character produces a very different effect: the exposure makes a character more humane, mundane, more vulnerable. As McCombe puts it, 'through representation, it is possible to "know" her [Cleopatra] and thus diminish her power.'[40] Throughout the play we feel we 'know' Cleopatra: she strikes us as a witty, whimsical, vain (2.5. 110-20), violent (Act 2.5), but also a vulnerable woman (1.2. 45-50). Indeed, stripping the myth of goddess she confirms that she is also a 'woman, and commanded/ By such poor passion as the maid that milks/ And does the meanest chores' (4.16. 74-6). Yet in the reported crowd scene of 2.2, Shakespeare makes her exceed even the gods, a mythical figure beyond reach. In the reported crowd scene, Shakespeare does not focus on Cleopatra's qualities as a human being, on her 'maddeningly self absorbed and self-destructive character', but as a skilful politician who understands the impact of theatricality in making a political statement.[41]

**Between Plutarch and Elizabeth: Cleopatra and her Crowd**

All of this precisely explains why Shakespeare diverges from his source, Plutarch's 'The Life of Marcus Antonius.'[42] Whilst in the crowd scene the crowd is assimilated into the object of their admiration, in Plutarch's account, Cleopatra is set against the irritating presence of the multitude.

On her mission to win Anthony, Plutarch depicts her in all her grandeur:

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[40] McCombe 'Cleopatra and Her Problems: T. S. Eliot and the Fetishization of Shakespeare's Queen of the Nile', p. 24.

[41] McCombe's phrase, 'Cleopatra and Her Problems: T. S. Eliot and the Fetishization of Shakespeare's Queen of the Nile', p. 31.

[42] See Plutarch's 'The Life of Marcus Antonius': *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, tr. by Sir Thomas North, in *Anthony and Cleopatra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 332.

> [Cleopatra] disdained to set forward otherwise but to take her barge in the river of Cydnus, the poop whereof was of gold, the sails of purple, and the oars of silver, which kept stroke in rowing after the sound of the music of flutes, hautboys, citherns, viols, and such other instruments as they played upon in the barge. And now for the person of herself: she was laid under a pavilion of cloth-of-gold of tissue, apparelled and attired like the goddess Venus commonly drawn in picture; and hard by her, on either hand of her, pretty fair boys apparelled as painters do set forth god Cupid, with little fans in their hands, with the which they fanned wind upon her.[43]

As we shall see in the following example, the people are present but they are clearly set against Cleopatra's magnificent show; Plutarch writes:

> Her ladies and gentlewomen also, the fairest of them were apparelled like the nymphs Nereides (which are the mermaids of the waters) and like the Graces, some steering the helm, others tending the tackle and ropes of the barge, out of the which there came a wonderful passing sweet savour of perfumes that perfumed the wharf's side, pestered with innumerable multitudes of people. Some of them followed the barge all alongst the river's side; others also ran out of the city to see her coming in; so that in the end there ran such multitudes of people one after another to see her that [in effect] Antonius was left post-alone in the market-place in his imperial seat to give audience. And there went a rumour in the people's mouths that the goddess Venus was come to play with the god Bacchus for the general good of all Asia.[44]

The key word is 'pestered': it suggests that the people's presence is destroying the whole scene. 'A wonderful passing sweet savour of perfumes that perfumed the wharf's side' in Shakespeare's version, here does not hit 'the sense of adjacent wharfs', but is 'pestered with innumerable multitudes of people' that ran 'one after another to see' Cleopatra. Clearly, Plutarch is interested in Cleopatra and not in what she represents, whereas Shakespeare is interested in the effect of her appearance on the people, in their relation in that moment. In Shakespeare's version, as it has been discussed, the crowd is not a chaotic

[43] Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, p. 332.
[44] Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, p. 332.

but contained and not a nuisance but a part of Cleopatra's show. Unlike Plutarch's crowd that physically moves and follows the barge, Shakespeare's crowd is static, as if frozen in a moment, and figuratively speaking fixed *in* and *on* Cleopatra's barge. Indeed, Shakespeare's description of the barge with Cleopatra in it helps us understand in this instance what the concept of the space of the character refers to.

In this dramatic space we detect dramatic relations that bring a character into being, and Cleopatra's barge is dramatised as a space where these relations take place. For, Shakespeare locates in the barge not only Cleopatra and those physically close to her ('pretty, dimpled boys', 'her gentlewomen' and 'mermaids'), but symbolically the crowd watching her from the riverbanks, and the way they relate to her. Within the image of Cleopatra's barge Shakespeare implicitly incorporates the relation between Cleopatra and her people: their reaction is made evident in the description of the barge. This spectacular 'burnished throne' represents Cleopatra's dramatic space, but also it becomes a metaphor of Cleopatra's divine body. This is a vital change that Shakespeare makes. The dramatist, indeed, 'undid' what Plutarch 'did'. He idealises the people's presence through Cleopatra, and unlike Plutarch, he does not set the crowd *entirely* in opposition to Cleopatra, but its presence is enhanced through her: 'for vilest things/ Become themselves in her'. This explains why Shakespeare's Cleopatra out-pictures Plutarch's: she is not only 'the goddess Venus [that] was come to play with the god Bacchus for the general good of all Asia'; not just a femme-fatale clever in the games of politics.

In short, Plutarch's crowd is not part of the spectacle but mere spectators who came to watch the love game between Anthony and Cleopatra: 'there went a rumour in the people's mouths that the goddess Venus was come to play with the god Bacchus for the general good of all Asia'. This is different from Shakespeare's barge scene in which the people's presence authenticates, or sets their seal of approval on the royal spectacle. Shakespeare moves away from his source, again, because he focuses not on Cleopatra but on her relationship with the people, and on the people's role in Cleopatra's myth-making. Another reason that Shakespeare diverges from Plutarch, as it has been suggested, is because he uses Elizabeth I's Progresses as a more important source, as opposed to the explicit source, for his depiction of the reported crowd scene in *Anthony and Cleopatra*, because it tells us about Elizabeth I's relationship with her subjects, and suggests why Shakespeare moves away from Plutarch. This is precisely what has been underestimated in the discussions of the scene.

Elizabeth's annual visits to provincial towns show that there was an actual investment of crowds in public ceremonies - through an economic and emotional engagement of the 'civic host'.[45] As Mary Hill Cole indicates, the whole town participated by investing money, in cleaning and decorating it, and by organizing ceremonies and shows to entertain Elizabeth.[46] The culmination of these shows was when a representative of the city offered the queen a gift (usually a monetary gift), which was a prelude for asking her for specific favours. In 'Giving and Receiving on Royal Progresses' Felicity Heal for instance points out that 'gift-giving' during Elizabeth's travels 'increasingly combined public gestures of loyalty.'[47] Apart from this economic investment in the 'ceremonial dialogue' the citizens invested through their participation and support. They would also entertain the queen with the show of their own in which they would praise her, but all this was part of the bargain. They courted her, she courted them: 'the nexus of ideas of hospitality, reputation, and self-interest during progresses provided a fertile environment for display and self-fashioning.'[48] The queen invested herself in the ceremony by generously offering her royal presence, support, and at times even by responding to citizens' particular favours. This direct interaction between Elizabeth and the people would thus also help create a sense of oneness, of a union between the queen and her people. However, exposing herself to the public, Cole informs us, was not without risk, for 'progresses offered an opportune occasion to harm the Queen' and 'could reveal her subjects' venom as well as their esteem.'[49] The political agenda behind Elizabeth's travels was, then, to create and maintain her popularity among the people and a sense of unity.

Shakespeare, as it has been demonstrated, might have had this kind of "progress" in mind when writing *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s reported crowd scene. This is why in the space of Cleopatra's character and the crowd scene he seems to capture the ethos created in Elizabeth's annual visits to towns: a symbolic unity between the people and the queen. The dramatist seems to have recognised that in her royal myth-making Elizabeth I used her progresses and public occasions not only to assert herself, but also as a stage on which she could reinforce subject–ruler bonds. Most importantly, however, she used her trips to

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[45] Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony*, p. 99.

[46] For specific details see Cole's 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', pp. 27- 45, or Cole's *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony*. Cole for instance explains also that Elizabeth's travels were expensive enterprises, and that by exposing herself to the people was risky, too.

[47] Felicity Heal, 'Giving and Receiving on Royal Progresses', in *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I* (see Cole above), pp. 46-64 (p. 48).

[48] Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', p. 37.

[49] Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', p. 42.

demonstrate power over the people. Each visit must have been like a theatrical occasion in which the people were active participants, and thus played their part in Elizabeth's display of her royal 'we'. Indeed, it is important to understand the relationship between Elizabeth I and her people because it can help us better to understand *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s crowd scene.

In *Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, John Nichols documents '*the passage of our most drad Soveraigne Lady Quene* ELYZABETH *through the Citie of* LONDON *to* WESTMINISTER, *the daye before her Coronation, Anno* 1558-9' in which Elizabeth, like Cleopatra, glamorously parades on her stage.[50] She

> marched [...] through the Citie of London [...] richly furnished, and most honourably accompanied, as well with Gentlemen, Barons, and other Nobilitie of this Realme, as also with a notable trayne of goodly and beawtifull Ladies, richly appoynted. And entryng the Citie was of the People received marveylous entirely, as appeared by the assemblie, prayers, wishes, welcomminges, cryes, tender woordes, and all other signes, which argue a wonderful earnest love of most obedient subjects towarde theyr soveraigne. And on thother side, her Grace, by holding up her handes, and merie countenaunce [...] and most tender and gentle language to those that stode nigh to her Grace, did declare herself no lesse thankefullye to receive her Peoples good wyll, than they lovingly offered it unto her.[51]

Elizabeth's passage through the city of London, ending with a gesture of blessing the people, 'seemed [...] a terrestrial paradise.'[52] The account, indeed, depicts an emotional scene which seems to show a perfect union of the beloved monarch and her people. For their sighs and cries and prayers are answered with Elizabeth's presence and symbolic gestures of blessings. Their feelings of love and loyalty as well as the Queen's, seem synchronised. Indeed, the Queen herself is more than a monarch here. For Nichols portrays her almost like a saint- figure, or a paternal figure, who is embracing her loving children: a

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[50] John Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, I (London: John Nichols and Son, 1823), p. 38; for more on Nichols's scholarly legacy with regards to documenting Elizabeth's progresses see for instance Juilian Pooley's 'A Pioneer of Renaissance Scholarship: John Nichols and *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*', in *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I* (see Cole above), pp. 268-86.

[51] Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, p. 38.

[52] Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, 2 (London: John Nichols and Son, 1823), p. 137.

symbol of the nation, as is Cleopatra's character symbolically in the barge scene. Indeed, early modern audiences may well have recognized these processions played out in Shakespeare's description of Cleopatra. Elizabeth was making herself accessible to her people, and by showing her self in all her royal grandeur, she was also wooing popular support. John Nichols documents that on one occasion Elizabeth:

> took a boat, and was rowed up and down the River Thames; hundreds of boats and barges rowing about her; and thousands of people thronging at the water-side, to look upon her Majesty, rejoicing to see her, and partaking of the musick and sights on the Thames; for the trumpets blew, drums beat, flutes played, guns were discharged, squibs hurled up into the air, as the Queen moved from place to place [...]. By these means shewing herself so freely and condescendingly unto her people, she made herself dear and acceptable unto them.[53]

In the barge scene, Shakespeare dramatizes a moment like this, in which such a face-to-face encounter between the ruler and her subjects creates a powerful sense of union in which both parties participate. We could easily imagine the same atmosphere, indeed 'thousands of people thronging at the water-side, to look' at Cleopatra's display in the barge on the river of Cydnus. Moreover, arguing that 'the ceremonial purpose of [Elizabeth I's] procession [...] was also a process whereby [...] the complex relationship between crown and city was enacted', Hester Lees-Jeffries notes that: 'the Queen's formal entry into London [...] was a process whereby she was welcomed into a particular relationship with the city through her negotiation of the city's symbolically enhanced landscape.'[54] This seems to be reflected in Shakespeare's portrayal of Cleopatra in the crowd scene, in which the dramatist makes Cleopatra's character relate with her surrounding - the nature, the elements and the people - by assimilating them in her presence.

Shakespeare's Cleopatra, then, has something of Elizabeth I: she shows that the people's support in royal myth-making is vital, which supports the point that Shakespeare understood the symbolic significance of Elizabeth I's progresses and seems to have

[53] Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, p. 67.
[54] Hester Lees-Jeffries, 'Location as Metaphor in Queen Elizabeth's Coronation Entry (1559): *Veritas Temporas Filia*', in *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I* (see Cole above), pp. 65-85 (p. 65 and 83).

translated this in *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s crowd scene. Moreover, what Hill writes of Elizabeth in her annual travels, seems applicable to Cleopatra; she notes: 'all eyes focused on the royal centre, the image that embodied the government and the nation', and this is precisely how Shakespeare depicts Cleopatra in the crowd scene. [55] Elizabeth I knew how to win the people's hearts and she knew that her travels and her interaction with the people 'validated her authority', and Shakespeare's Cleopatra is indirectly represented to draw her strength on the symbolic interaction between her and her audience.[56] This all also implies that *Anthony and Cleopatra* is a play about the battle over legitimacy and about royal-myth-making. Therefore, even though the people are not a central figure in the play, their presence and their role is not insignificant. For, at the crucial moment in the play Shakespeare introduces the reported crowd scene. Had he left the people out of the picture, Cleopatra's spectacle would have no effect, or had he portrayed them as a pestering presence, he would not have been able to convey this ideal union, the importance of royal myth-making and the people's symbolic part in it. For in Shakespeare's version of the barge scene the crowd's presence is not 'pestering' but perfect. Moreover, had Shakespeare left out the crowd scene we may read the play differently, as little more than Anthony and Cleopatra's beautiful but unfortunate love tale. The reported crowd scene demonstrates, however, that Cleopatra's myth-making is not just a show of power, but symbolically, a sharing of power. In the space of Cleopatra's character Shakespeare, then, indirectly touches upon the symbolic 'I-Thou' relationship between the popular body politic and the body divine.

### *Richard II*

This discussion of *Anthony and Cleopatra* now establishes a basis for a discussion of another earlier famous reported crowd scene: *Richard II*'s reported crowd scene.[57] This analysis is necessary because it reveals a pattern in the playwright's approach to the problem of representing the crowd in spectacles, and more importantly it shows how the playwright dramatises the people's role in the politics of early modern Britain.

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[55] Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', p. 28.
[56] Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', p. 43.
[57] William Shakespeare, *Richard II*, ed. by Charles R. Forker (London: Arden, 2002).

**Critical Responses to *Richard II***

What often dominates scholarly debates of *Richard II* are 'character driven approaches', which exclude the crowd, but also topical issues in the play, such as the Essex rising.[58] With respect to the former, A. G. Harmon's point that Richard's 'tragedy is the reduction of what he and others have understood him to be and the consequences of that mistake' is helpful in that it indirectly directs our attention to what actually seems to be a cause of Richard's downfall: his dysfunctional relationship with people.[59] This chapter, indeed, does not look at character, Richard's or Bolingbroke's, in isolation but in relation to the crowd, and more importantly, it examines the place of the popular body politic in relation to the king's divine body in *Richard II.* Given that the play addresses the issues of the Body Divine and the Divine Right of kings, it is not surprising that Shakespeare's dramatisation of them has been widely discussed. Examining the aspects of 'Shakespearean tragi-comedy' in 'Narrative Universals, Heroic Tragi-Comedy, and Shakespeare's Political Ambivalence' Patrick Colm Hogan writes: 'in the usurpation sequence, the usurper violates social law [...], the higher ethical principles (eg., those of loyalty) that underwrite the social law, and the divine will that underlies both', but the effect of such changes in relation to the common people, and indeed their place in it, requires more attention.[60]

In 'The Emperor's new body? Richard II, Ernst Kantorowicz, and the politics of Shakespeare criticism' David Norbrook gives a comprehensive analysis of Kantorowicz's theory of the king's two bodies, and remarks: 'Kantorowicz reads *Richard II* as the tragedy of the emerging split between the king's two bodies, a shift from realism to nominalism as Richard's divine lustre dwindles to an empty name. [...] His tragedy is that of a fall from

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58 Zenón Luis-Martínez's phrase, 'Shakespeare's Historical Drama as *Trauerspiel: Richard II* – and After', *ELH*, 75 (2008), 673-705 (p. 673) reads the play 'in terms of the language, form, and ideology of *Trauerspiel* [...] as envisaged by Walter Benjamin' and as 'paradigmatic of a conception of history as mournful experience' (p. 673 and p. 678). For historically orientated criticism see for instance Chris Fitter's 'Historicising Shakespeare's *Richard II*: Current Events, Dating, and the Sabotage of Essex', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 11 (2005), 1-47; Robert M. Schuler's 'Magic Mirrors in *Richard II*', *Comparative Drama*, 38 (2004); Paul E. J. Hammer's 'Shakespeare's *Richard II*, the Play of 7 February 1601, and the Essex Rising', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 59 (2008), 1-35, is an excellent and convincing reading. Hammer argues that 'there is no evidence that the play itself was intended to rouse the London commons to action', and that the play 'hardly offers the sort of unalloyed endorsement of Bolingbroke's actions which the earl's anxious followers might be expected to want to see on the cusp of such a politically dangerous action', p. 26 and 32; A. G. Harmon's 'Shakespeare's Carved Saints', *SEL*, 45 (2005), 315-31.

59 Harmon, 'Shakespeare's Carved Saints', p. 324.

60 Patrick Colm Hogan, 'Narrative Universals, Heroic Tragi-Comedy, and Shakespeare's Political Ambivalence', *College Literature*, 33 (2006), 34-66 (p. 35 and 37).

absolute difference from his fellow-men into a banal humanity: he becomes a mere player-king'.[61] I argue that the people, too, are linked by 'divine' issues, not separated from them, that the reported crowd is central in the public spectacle, and dramatically rendered as the popular body politic, and finally, that in the space of its character Shakespeare depicts Richard's and Bolingbroke's *relationship* with the people. In '"Shakespeare's London": The Scene of London in the Second Tetralogy and *Henry VIII*', Ian Munro's indirectly acknowledges the dynamics of this relationship; he writes: 'In *Richard II*, the crowd is fixated on the body of the *de facto* ruler, focusing all their energy and attention on the singularity of the royal presence. To look at the crowd is to be always drawn back to the resplendent image of Bullingbrook on his proud horse.'[62] Munro's study, however, does not focus on the dramatic significance of the crowd-ruler relationship and of the dramatic function of the reported crowd scene.

*Richard II* shows us, however, that in crucial political moments in the transition of power, reported crowd scenes are vital in the dramatic representation of the shift of the authority. A significant indication of the importance of the crowd scene in this play, it must be noted, is that it is possibly Shakespeare's invention. John Julius Norwich points out that 'the first scene of Act V is [...] sheer invention, as is York's moving comparison of Henry's and Richard's processional entries into London in the scene that follows.'[63] Similarly, in the Arden edition of the play Charles R. Forker suggests that 'York's sad retrospective of Richard's humiliation in the London streets' is not present in Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1587).[64] However, what he also suggests is

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[61] David Norbrook, 'The Emperor's new body? *Richard II*, Ernst Kantorowicz, and the politics of Shakespeare criticism', *Textual Practice*, 10 (1996), 329-57 (p. 341). In '"I Live With Bread Like You": Forms of Inclusion in *Richard II*', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 11 (2005) <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/11-1/richard.htm> [accessed 27 June 2006] (23 para.), Aaron Landau disagrees with Norbrook saying that the 'lower-class spectators in the audience, either unfamiliar with or indifferent towards court factionalism, would have applauded the very inclusion of their own kind of popular discontent in Bullingbrook's defiant sense of nationalism. Bullingbrook is continuously associated with the popular segments of the population in the course of the play' (para 6 of 23). He concludes this point with 'his nationalist stance is thus also to a large extent a provocatively popular one, in addition to, or irrespective of, the "original" political intention behind such populism', (para 6 of 23).

[62] Ian Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 94. Paul Menzer's study of the role of the crowd, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', does not discuss the role of the crowd in *Richard II*.

[63] John Julius Norwich, 'The Triumph of Bolingbroke': *Shakespeare's Kings* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), p. 125.

[64] See Charles R. Forker's Introduction to *Richard II* (London: the Arden Shakespeare, 2002), pp.123-65, p.134, and his meticulous discussion of Shakespeare's sources for the play. Forker, indeed, gives an account of 'no fewer than eight principal sources', p.124. Unlike Shakespeare, Holinshed does not include Richard in the procession, and the crowd scene he portrays is all about the people's love for Bolingbroke: 'the joy and pomp' the Londoners received him with, as was the case with 'every town and village where he passed, children rejoiced, women clapped their hands, and men cried out for joy', see Richard Hosley's

that Daniel's *Civil Wars* might be in fact a source for York's description in Act 5.2.[65] We do not know with certainty, then, whether the crowd scene is entirely Shakespeare's invention, or whether Shakespeare's dramatisation of it is based on various accounts, which Forker points out, and which might have been available to him. In either case, we shall see that Shakespeare carefully crafted the scene for a certain dramatic effect: to show that legitimacy *is* confirmed by the people, i.e. that in public spectacles the people's approval in spirit is important.

In 'The Sun-King Analogy in Richard II' Heninger S. K. Jr suggests that in *Richard II* the 'ideal [of kingly conduct] is not operative, and the political pattern of the play is determined by Shakespeare's desire to show wherein both Richard and Bolingbroke fall short as sun-kings.'[66] Heninger's, as the majority of subsequent discussions about the divine body, does not take into account the presence and the role of the people, i.e. of the body politic.[67] Crawford infers that 'if Bullingbrook is thought to have a legitimate claim to the throne, then that claim is based on popular approval and not genealogical descent'.[68] The implications of this in *Richard II*'s reported crowd scene need to be reconsidered. As this chapter will argue, Shakespeare does not negate the concept of divine right, but shows that other rights also exist. Indeed, the reported crowd scene demonstrates that the right of the people to approve, or disapprove, power in public spectacles cannot be undermined, and that legitimacy is illustrated through public opinion. In other words, Shakespeare does not reject the idea of Divine Right, but he accommodates the people within it.

Contrary to these readings, Aaron Landau reads the play in the light of a popular presence in it.[69] He rightly points out that reading this play as 'exclusive and elitist' and as

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*Shakespeare's Holinshed: An Edition of Holinshed's Chronicles (1587), Source of Shakespeare's History Plays, King Lear, Cymbeline, and Macbeth* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1968), p. 84. For more on Shakespeare's use of sources see Nicholas Crawford's '*Richard II*', in *The Greenwood Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. by Joseph Rosenblum, 1 (London: Greenwood Press, 2005), pp. 190-216 (esp. p. 198-200).

[65] Forker, Introduction to the Arden edition of *Richard II*, the reference to Daniel on p. 141. Moreover, he suggests that 'the image of Bolingbroke on horseback bowing to the people' may be influenced by Froissart's *Chronicle* 'in the translation by Lord Berners (1523-5)', p. 154 and 124; and that 'Créton's [...] *Historie du Roy d' Angleterre Richard* (1399?)' perhaps 'could have prompted York's words about the "hearts of men [...] melt[ing]" (5.2.35)', p. 124 and 157.

[66] S. K. Heninger Jr., 'The Sun-King Analogy in *Richard II*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 11 (1960), 319-27 (p. 324). For more on discussions of the theme of the Divine Right see Crawford's '*Richard II*', pp. 209-11.

[67] Heninger does imply that 'when Richard employs the sun-king analogy, he retreats from individuality; he enters the doorway of anonymity, of generality. He assumes the attitudes of the idealized, etherealized king'; he 'is deficient morally as well as politically', and that with 'I live with bread like you [...] subjected thus' (3.2. 175-177) 'Richard argues for his own ordinariness', 'The Sun-King Analogy in *Richard II*', p. 326.

[68] Crawford, '*Richard II*', p. 210.

[69] Landau, '"I Live With Bread Like You": Forms of Inclusion in *Richard II*', (para. 1 of 23). Moreover, Landau explains why *Richard II* is about the lower classes, indeed about the popular protest in the play: 'if

concentrated 'chiefly on upper class figures' is wrong, and that leaving 'out popular characters, perspectives, and traditions' is misleading and not quite what the play is about.[70] 'By showing that even this play, ostensibly the most exclusive and elitist in the genre, is substantially more inclusive and popular than it might first appear,' he suggests, 'Shakespeare's take on English history is as a rule popular and inclusive'.[71]

## *Richard II*'s Reported Crowd Scene: 5.2

In *Richard II*'s reported crowd scene (5.2) Shakespeare represents the crowd legitimising a change of regime. As we have seen in the discussion of *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s reported crowd scene, there is tension in the representation of the crowd-monarch relationship: for Cleopatra is like a Goddess and the people are common, and yet she absorbs them in the space of her character. Quite differently, in *Richard II* Shakespeare represents the crowd's hero – Bolingbroke – not as a figure above the crowd, but as one of them. Shakespeare's decision to represent the relationship between the crowd and the new king in this way is strategically important. It depicts not only a crucial moment of the transition of power, but also national consent, and the reported crowd scene thus becomes an important dramatic device in the representation of it. We shall see that what benefits reporting crowds in moments of the transition of power is public confirmation in spirit.

At this point in the play Richard has been deposed. The Duchess of York asks York to relate the story about 'our two cousins' [Richard and Bolingbroke] coming into London' (5.2. 3). She asks him specifically to describe the people's reaction, and to tell the story from the point 'where rude misgoverned hands from windows' tops/ Threw dust and rubbish on King Richard's head' (5.2. 5-6). She not only indirectly condemns the crowd's 'misgoverned' reaction, that is, their change of loyalty from Richard to Bolingbroke, but highlights that the focus of the account is the crowd's reaction. York, then, describes the moment the crowd sets their eyes on Bolingbroke:

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there is something that *Richard II* [...] shows most vividly it is [...] the dire consequences of obedience and the considerable benefits, if not the very urgency, of rebellion', (para. 11 of 23).

[70] Landau, '"I Live With Bread Like You": Forms of Inclusion in *Richard II*', (para. 1 of 23).

[71] Landau, '"I Live With Bread Like You": Forms of Inclusion in *Richard II*', (para. 2 of 23). Landau is concerned with the presence of the lower-classes in the play, and in the ways they are dramatized. My focus is, however, is significantly different in that I am principally interested in the symbolic role of the people in the play's reported crowd scene.

the Duke, great Bolingbroke,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,
Which his aspiring rider seemed to know,
With slow but stately pace kept on his course,
Whilst all tongues cried, 'God save thee, Bolingbroke!'.
You would have thought the very windows spake,
So many greedy looks of young and old
Through casements darted their desiring eyes
Upon his visage, and that all the walls
With painted imagery had said at once,
'Jesu preserve thee! Welcome, Bolingbroke!',
Whilst he, from the one side to the other turning,
Bare-headed, lower than his proud steed's neck,
Bespake them thus: 'I thank you, countrymen';
And thus still doing, thus he passed along.

DUTCHES of YORK
Alack, poor Richard! Where rode he the whilst?

YORK
As in a theatre the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious,
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on gentle Richard. No man cried God save him!
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home,
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head,
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,
His face still combating with tears and smiles,
The badges of his grief and patience,
That had not God for some strong purpose steeled
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted
And barbarism itself have pitied him.
But heaven hath a hand in these events,
To whose high will we bound our calm contents.
To Bolingbroke are we sworn subjects now,
Whose state and honour I for aye allow
(5.2. 5-40).

This, indeed, is a very different crowd to that in *Anthony and Cleopatra* for this crowd articulates what it thinks. Its powerful presence and approval is not only depicted in their actual words of welcome, but also implied in the description of their location: 'the very

windows spake' and 'all the walls [...] had said at once' yes for Bolingbroke. This description suggests not only that a large crowd that is gathered to witness Bolingbroke's coronation entry, but more importantly it demonstrates the crowd's symbolic consent to Bolingbroke's ascension to the throne. As in his depiction of the crowd's response to Cleopatra, here, too, the whole environment symbolically echoes the citizens' approval, and we shall elaborate this shortly. The irony in York's choice of words, however, cannot be overlooked: he refers to the crowd with words such as 'all tongues', 'greedy looks', 'desiring eyes', which reveal his latent disapproval of the crowd's acceptance of the new king, Henry IV. For, throughout the play York shows loyalty to Richard, not out of personal sympathy but out of his sense of duty towards the divinely anointed monarch (2.2. 112-15; 2.3. 96-8).

Indeed, in the play 'absolutist doctrine [...] comes up against the obstacle of the *de facto*, the opposing or limiting force;'[72] and through York's report Shakespeare is asking 'what subject can give sentence on his king?', how can the king 'be judged by subject and inferior breath'? (4.1. 122-29). He is trying to come to terms with the deposition of Richard but, remarkably, he also seems to imply that Richard's deposition is authorised by God and that God's will is illustrated through the people: for, 'God for some strong purpose [had] steeled/ The hearts of men'. As Hogan rightly points out, the 'triumph itself is evidence of divine authorization. Since the godly side must win, whoever wins must be the godly side.'[73] Moreover, York recognises this as a providential moment: 'heaven hath a hand in these events,/ To whose high will we bound our calm contents./ To Bolingbroke we are sworn subjects now'.

If God's will is enacted through the people, the implication is that the people's will is a sign of divine order. The people, it seems, do not relent for Richard because God does not relent for Richard. What lies underneath York's words, then, is an implication that God's will is actually exercised *through* the people, through their disapproval and lack of affection towards Richard. For, he is a 'most degenerate King' (2.1. 262) who lies 'in reputation sick' (2.1. 96), because of 'his burdenous taxations' of the people to finance Irish wars, and 'the robbing of the banished Duke [Bolingbroke]' (2.1. 259-61). York, as it has been noted, is distraught with Bolingbroke's disobedience. He feels his duty is to obey the

[72] William O. Scott, 'Landholding; Leasing; and Inheritance in *Richard II*', *Studies in English Literature*, 42 (2002), 275-92 (p. 283).
[73] Hogan, 'Narrative Universals, Heroic Tragi-Comedy, and Shakespeare's Political Ambivalence', p. 38.

king (in his 'loyal bosom', as he says, 'lies his [Richard's] power', 2.3. 98). Indeed, that Bolingbroke's 'usurpation' is 'not punished by divine intervention' is telling enough.[74] With the line 'God [had] for some strange purpose steeled the hearts of men' Shakespeare is, indeed, cleverly merging Divine will with the will of the people. What this seems to suggest, then, is that God approves of Bolingbroke's overthrow of Richard, and that these 'hands' and 'tongues' symbolically become a channel through which God articulates his will.

Another essentially important line in this passage is 'but heaven hath a hand in these events', which, too, suggests that Richard is viewed by York as having been overthrown by Divine providence. Divine Right was given to him and then taken away by God. According to the definition of the Divine right of kings, 'a king receives his right to rule directly from God and not from the people.'[75] Shakespeare is, however, cautious in relation to this, and, again, he represents this crowd to *interpret* God's signs and message, and apply them. Shakespeare does not oppose the idea of Divine Right, but he also does not set God and the people in opposition. He seems to be interested in the symbolic place of the popular body politic in public spectacles, and in relation to the royal body divine. For this reason he portrays the people as if they are reflecting God's will. That there is so much emphasis on how the countrymen think and react upon this change of power testifies to the importance of their consent.[76]

Shakespeare seems to depict the national euphoria around Bolingbroke quite accurately. As John Julius Norwich relates:

> the Duke of Lancaster was no longer just a nobleman with a grievance; he was the leader of a rebellion. Nevertheless, according to a story later spread by the Percy's and nowhere else confirmed, he there and then swore a solemn oath that he had come only to claim his rightful inheritance; he had no designs on the throne [...]. Meanwhile the common people, too, flocked to his banner, as well they might - for his easy charm was a far cry from Richard's cold and haughty majesty [...]. Such were their numbers, indeed, and so

[74] Hogan, 'Narrative Universals, Heroic Tragi-Comedy, and Shakespeare's Political Ambivalence', p. 49.

[75] *Longman, Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, ed. by Della Summers, 2nd edn (Essex: Pearson Education, 1998), p. 381.

[76] In the prologue to Act 5 in *Henry V* the Chorus praises the King and depicts the movement of the royalty among the crowds, but with a very different effect: the crowd of Henry V opposes rather than become one with Henry. This scene, however, will be examined in Chapter 5, because the chapter examines Shakespeare's juxtaposition of the reported crowd scene to the staged crowd scene and offers a final evaluation of his use of the crowd scenes.

> rapidly did they increase as Bolingbroke continued his march through Derby, Leicester [...] that they proved impossible to feed: the vast majority were sent back to their homes.[77]

This passage, just as in York's account, emphasises Bolingbroke's popularity. Whilst the Duchess refers to this crowd as a chaotic and barbaric multitude: as the 'rude misgoverned' heads that are misled by Bolingbroke into a betrayal of Richard and implicitly into disobedience of God, in York's account, the phrase 'impossible to feed' suggests that Bolingbroke's presence attracted so many 'greedy' eyes of men that he could not possibly satisfy the whole auditorium, for not everyone could see him, or reach him. In relation to this Munro infers that 'though the reaction endorses Bullingbrook's capture of the throne, the metaphoric reframing of watching as speech indicates the active power of their gaze; the language York uses underscores the unsettling qualities of the greedy, desiring crowd, threatening to consume that which they observe.'[78] The consuming power of this crowd is analogous to the consuming power of the theatre audience, but this will be discussed later. This 'active power of their gaze', however, not only shows the threatening element of the crowd, but it reveals something about the relationship between the crowd and Bolingbroke. It is his power and victory, which the crowd celebrates and relates to in this moment, that implicitly empowers it: their gaze symbolically reflects Bolingbroke's potent presence.

In a similar way Shakespeare renders the relationship between Cleopatra and her crowd, but before we examine this, we shall pay attention to how he reports the crowd in *Coriolanus*'s reported crowd scene in 2.1. Here, Brutus describes the crowd's chaotic and ecstatic reaction upon Coriolanus's victorious return:

> All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
> Are spectacled to see him
> [....]
> Clamb'ring the walls to eye him. Stalls, bulks, windows
> Are smothered up, leads filled and ridges horsed
> With variable complexions, all agreeing
> In earnestness to see him. Seld-shown flamens
> Do press among the popular throngs, and puff
> To win a vulgar station
> [....]
> Such a pother
> As if that whatsoever god who leads him

[77] Norwich, *Shakespeare's Kings*, p. 117-18.
[78] Ian Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 84.

> Were slily crept into his human powers
> And gave him graceful posture.
> (2.1. 201-17)

As opposed to the fixed crowds of *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II* this crowd is moving, chaotic and seemingly uncontrollable: 'Clamb'ring the walls to eye him. Stalls, bulks, windows/ Are smothered up, leads filled and ridges horsed'. There is, then, something deeply disturbing and overwhelming in this description. I suggest that this threatening image of the crowd, along with Brutus's sense of unease with the crowd's admiration of Coriolanus, indirectly conveys the crowd's power in the politics of Rome: in this case, to approve of the Senate's decision to make Coriolanus a consul. Indeed, the passive form of the first line and Shakespeare choice of the word 'spectacled' covertly discloses the crowd's symbolic role in the scene. Their gaze is entirely directed towards Coriolanus, and it seems to consume the image of him. Their gaze symbolically conveys their power, but also it suggests that they are feeding upon the sight of their hero's victorious and 'graceful posture'.

It feels as if this crowd, as the crowd in *Richard II*, is 'impossible to feed'. Cleopatra, too, 'makes hungry/Where most she satisfies': symbolically, she entices the crowd to consume her, to want her as its queen, and in that to relate to her. Shakespeare, then, bounds the people in relation to Cleopatra. So, in the space of her character Shakespeare implies the crowd, and with her powerful presence empowers them. Bolingbroke, like Cleopatra, has enchanting qualities because he is represented as having an effect not only on the people but on the environment too. Munro argues that 'the body of the crowd and London dissolves, creating a theatrical space in which the physical attributes of the crowd merge with the symbolic meaning of the city', and yet, it can be argued, the opposite is true as well.[79] For, Shakespeare uses the setting, the walls and windows, to echo the crowd's will. That is, the environment is represented to reflect the people's and in effect God's will in support of Bolingbroke. Even 'the very windows spake' and 'all the walls/' cheered and 'with painted imagery had said at once,/ 'Jesu preserve thee! Welcome Bolingbroke!', and Bolingbroke humbly responded to their cheers: 'Bare-headed, lower than his proud steed's neck,/ [he] bespake them thus: 'I thank you, countrymen'.

[79] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 94.

Bolingbroke has a natural charm, then, but he is also cunning, for he knows that an integral part of his political performance, of his courtship of the common men, is performing humility. As Crawford points outs, Bolingbroke 'plays the reluctant king and hides his manipulations behind a mask of simplicity and forthrightness.'[80] When he lowers his body, in that moment, symbolically, he makes himself one with the people, part of them. He is capitalising, as Munro rightly indicates, 'on what Richard called his "courtship of the common people".'[81]

However, Bolingbroke's strategy of winning the popular support is different from Cleopatra's. In her royal myth-making she does everything to show her people that she is not an ordinary mortal, but an appointee of God, who is even over-picturing Venus, and all in order to convince them that she still is the authority. Bolingbroke does not need to convince the crowd that he has power, but he welcomes its support and celebrates his victory with the crowd. He is here acting more like Elizabeth I in her annual visits to towns: representing himself as one of them. His public demeanour shows, then, that he does not underestimate the importance of immediate contact with the people, that he flatters the people into thinking that he is their humble servant. As Richard says, he 'had the tribute of his supple knee/ With 'Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends' (1.4. 33-4). By kneeling down, he symbolically shows humility, and of course is reaching out for their support. Whilst he is pleasing his crowd with his act of humility, Cleopatra pleases hers by projecting herself as a goddess, and by absorbing her audience in the image she projects.

Richard himself recognises Bolingbroke's charisma and successful relationship with and courtship of the people. After cancelling the combat between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, Richard says:

> Ourself and Bushy, Bagot here and Green
> Observed his courtship to the common people -
> How he did seem to dive into their hearts
> With humble and familiar courtesy,
> What reverence he did throw away on slaves,
> Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles
> And patient underbearing of his fortune,
> As 'twere to banish their affects with him.
> Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench.
> A brace of draymen bid God speed him well,

[80] Crawford, '*Richard II*', p. 204.
[81] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 84.

> And had the tribute of his supple knee
> With 'Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends',
> As were our England in reversion his,
> And he our subjects' next degree in hope.
> (1.4. 23-36)

Wondering, thus, how Bolingbroke 'did seem to dive into their hearts/ With humble and familiar courtesy' (l. 25-6), not knowingly he also praises Bolingbroke's political charisma and highlights his own lack of skills in relation to his people. 'To dive' suggests that Bolingbroke gives himself overwhelmingly to the people, and symbolically in that moment becomes one with them. This is a moment of absolute commitment in which he surrenders himself to the people, or to the will of God. His commitment is direct, physical and purposeful. 'What reverence he did throw away on slaves,/ Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles [...] Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench'. Richard portrays a manipulative showman who has no right to woo the crowds, and who, as Richard says, behaves 'as were our England in reversion his/ And he our subjects' next degree in hope' (1.4. 35-6).

Shakespeare, then, represents Bolingbroke as a cunning politician who uses the public occasion to win the popular support as Elizabeth I did. Henry IV's own words to his son in *Henry IV Part I* present a useful instance of political performance in this respect. Henry IV (Bolingbroke of *Richard II*) here justifies his 'mistreadings' (3.2. 11) in stealing 'all courtesy from heaven' and 'pluck[ing] allegiance from men's hearts' (l. 50-2) - that is, his overthrow of the rightful king Richard.[82] He also criticises his son's 'lavish' behaviour, but, more importantly, he implies how important the people's opinion and support is during a transition of power (l. 42-9). For, if the king has no respect among his subjects, and if he is unpopular and can 'afford no extraordinary gaze' and no 'admiring eyes' (l. 78-80), Henry IV indicates, his reputation and position as king is in danger. Both Richard and Cleopatra are afforded this gaze, which has a symbolic importance in the public spectacle: it represents the crowd's approval. The people's confirmation in spirit in public spectacles is, then, crucial.

[82] William Shakespeare, *1 Henry IV* in *Complete Works*, ed. by Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson and David Scott Kastan, rev. by The Arden Shakespeare (London: Thomson Learning, 2001).

Munro argues that in *Richard II* 'the crowd [...] is a *setting*, existing to frame the absolute space created by the apotheosis of the new monarch.'[83] However, there is more to the crowd. As has been discussed so far, Shakespeare's depiction of the crowd's character suggests that the crowd's role in the scene is beyond that of a '*setting*'. The location of the crowd in relation to Richard and Bolingbroke is indicative, and it symbolises something about their role and their place in the public spectacle. Shakespeare elevates this crowd because he represents it as a crowd that enacts God's will. This crowd is accepting and connecting to Bolingbroke who becomes a recipient of the Divine Right, and in this symbolic moment the crowd becomes a part of it. Moreover, York's words suggest that the people are looking down at Richard and Bolingbroke. In this way the crowd resembles the members in the audience in the upper seats, not the 'rude misgoverned' multitude. The analogy is implicit in the following lines: 'As in a theatre the eyes of men,/ After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,/ Are *idly bent* on him that enters next [my italics]' (5.2. 23-25). Shakespeare does not suggest that the reported crowd represents the privileged members in the audience, but wants to show that the people watching Bolingbroke and Richard are not a nuisance, or a rabble.[84]

Munro argues that 'in this scene the theater audience is distanced from the reaction of the described audience, and thus relieved of the responsibility for the destruction of the king', and that 'York and his wife' are 'like the theater audience.'[85] Yet, as the audience in the theatre, the reported crowd is fixed and physically restrained. The theatre crowd, and similarly the reported crowd in the scene is dignified by the space it finds itself in – it is located above the ground level and its gaze is 'idly bent' whilst watching Bolingbroke and Richard.[86] The crowd is not only restrained in a literal sense, but it is not allowed to be a typical chaotic crowd due to the role it performs in the scene. So, Shakespeare uses the analogy of the theatre crowd to show that it is the crowd's symbolic role in the event that

[83] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 94.
[84] There is no explicit information as to who constitutes this, as Munro puts it, 'the anonymous London crowd' (*London: the City and Its Double*, p. 85), but, we can assume that it includes 'the common people', as Richard puts it, the 'poor craftsmen', 'oyster-wench', 'a brace of draymen' - the crowd he had already seen cheering for Bolingbroke (1.4. 24-32), the crowd that the Duchess of York would refer to as the 'rude misgoverned' multitude' (5.2. 5).
[85] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 85. He explains: 'the courtly audience connects with the royal spectacle through a privileged knowledge'; they 'know Richard and understand his performance', and 'unlike the "rude misgoverned" crowd' they 'know better than to consider' Richard 'a poor actor', p. 85.
[86] Obviously, this is not to say that the theatre crowd is respectable in every sense of the word: as my discussion in Chapter 2 shows, the theatre crowd can be disrespectful and not attentive. However, my point is that for dramatic purpose Shakespeare seems to model the crowd in *Richard II*'s crowd scene on the ideal theatre crowd: well-behaved and attentive.

dignifies them. Of course, there is nothing dignified in the crowd throwing 'dust upon' Richard's 'sacred head', but as it has been suggested, this reaction is also understandable. For 'some strong purpose', God 'steeled their hearts': the 'men's eyes/ Did scowl on gentle Richard' because they are angry at him for his treatment of the people throughout his reign. But we cannot overlook the sympathy evoked for Richard in this description: he is 'gentle' (5.2. 28), socially lesser than a king, but still respectful. Bolingbroke, however, receives the cheers because he knows how to make them believe that he is their 'next degree in hope' (1.4. 36). He is like a competent actor on the stage whose performance engages the audience and makes them feel they are a part of the show.

Shakespeare's dramatic rendering of the reported crowd scene shows that he is not merely interested in individual characters, but in the relations that shape them, and the crowd scene reveals how character in a sense comes into being. The crowd's, Bolingbroke's and Richard's characters, emerge as a result of a network of relations: dramatic and theatrical. The crowd's relation with both Richard and Bolingbroke reaches its pinnacle, and is confirmed in their reaction in the reported crowd scene. The 'threatening undertones' of the crowd, as Munro indicates, 'come to fruition' in the description of 'Richard's public humiliation', but what they reveal is precisely the root of Richard's tragedy: his downfall is caused by his dysfunctional relationship with the people: for, as king he did not perform his duty and misused his subjects (2.1. 246-48).[87] In his 'I-Thou' relationship with the people he disregarded his 'Thou', and now it reflects back on him. Walter Benjamin's might help us better understand this point. Considering the downfall of a tyrannical king, Benjamin writes: 'At the moment when the ruler indulges in the most violent display of power, both history and the higher power [...] are recognised as manifest in him.'[88] In *Richard II's* reported crowd scene, again, the will of 'the higher power' is legible in the space of the crowd's character, and more importantly, the history of the king's relationship with the people is legible in the crowd's reaction to him.

Conversely, what is legible in the crowd's reaction to Bolingbroke is their hope in the future happier ruler-people relationship. Bolingbroke represents himself as the type of ruler that the people desire. He is a character who understands the importance of his

[87] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 84. It must be noted that *Richard II* does not forefront this relationship, certainly not in the way *Coriolanus* does, until the crowd scene that is. Indeed, the importance of the scene is that it illuminates what otherwise might have seemed a peripheral issue in the play.
[88] See Walter Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, tr. by John Osborne (London: Verso, 2003), p. 70.

'Thou', and of the relation with the people. With his character Shakespeare suggests, that to flatter the crowd, or to be politically polite, means to acknowledge the crowd's symbolic part in the drama of the transition of power. Indeed, unlike Richard, Bolingbroke has political acumen, and with his humble act he symbolically authorises the people giving them the illusion that they are important, and manipulating them into thinking that they are his spiritual and political allies. Most importantly, the crowd scene shows that we can only fully understand Shakespeare's representation of Bolingbroke's character when we take into account Bolingbroke's relation with the crowd, which is implicit in the crowd's *reaction* to him. Shakespeare's dramatisation of the crowd scenes shows that they are in essence about *relations*, not about individuals, that in the space of his characters he does not depict an individual, but the relations that create the character of a "king", and this is precisely what most literary studies seem to overlook.

In the space of the crowd's character, then, we recognise a network of relations that operate and shape its dramatic presence. In shaping the crowd's character Shakespeare reflects the theatre audience, and with it indirectly depicts the relation between the stage and the audience. Moreover, by elevating the reported crowd he covertly suggests to the theatre audience that watching a play spiritually elevates them. It invites them to be *affected* by what they see, and enlightened by it: as Buber suggests, only in 'acting and being acted upon, of what is over against men, is anything', including learning, 'made accessible'.[89] That is to say, only by relating to what is happening on the stage can the audience learn and profit, mentally and spiritually, from the experience of watching the play. With the crowd scene Shakespeare suggests that for the duration of the performance, the audience's 'Thou' is the stage and the audience is bound in the relation to it.

In this sense, Walter Kaufmann's reasoning of the reader-book relationship is applicable to the theatrical setting and audience-stage relationship:

> We must learn to feel addressed by a book, by the human being behind it, as if a person spoke directly to us. A good book or essay or poem is not primarily an object to be put to use, or an object of experience: it is the voice of You speaking to me, requiring a response.[90]

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[89] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, tr. by Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937), p. 26.
[90] Walter Kaufmann, 'I and Thou': A Prologue to Martin Buber's *I and Thou* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1970), p. 39.

In the reported crowd scene and the space of the crowd's character Shakespeare implies that the theatrical setting requires their participation, but also that the setting engages them whether they are aware of it or not. Again, this is implicit in Shakespeare's representation of *Richard II*'s crowd in 5.2: the people are gathered to celebrate Bolingbroke's victory, and are indirectly approving a new political situation and the new king. In this sense they are not merely a crowd of spectators, but also a party that has a role in the event: the body politic whose role symbolically matters. With *Richard II*'s reported crowd scene Shakespeare also demonstrates that the theatre is intrinsically a relational place: a place of interaction, and more significantly, that interaction is innate to crowd scenes. They manifest or actualise what the theatre and playgoing is about: it is about '*I-affecting-Thou* and *Thou-affecting-I*', as Martin Buber puts it.[91]

The crowd in the scene is dignified not only because it resembles its theatrical counterpart, the audience, but also because it is described rather than staged. Shakespeare reports the crowd because he represents its *symbolic* role in the event. Its symbolic part in the event is implied, as is the audience's in the theatre. It is the report that enables Shakespeare to portray this 'rude misgoverned' crowd as a respectable crowd, and show that this is a providential moment in which the people enact God's will. Hence, to portray the crowd that channels the higher force necessitates the technique of reporting. By not exposing them physically on the stage the dramatist idealises their presence. The description, however, not only ennobles the crowd, but it also gives them authority: they are not simply a crowd, but the popular body politic: not merely 'extras' in a show of power, but the party that symbolically confirms Bolingbroke's power. Their approval becomes like an official stamp that confirms Bolingbroke's victory over Richard. Shakespeare, therefore, adds this reported crowd scene at a pivotal point to reinforce politically the importance of the crowd.

Norwich's account gives a different depiction of the people: 'Henry – who, as Adam of Usk puts it, had "within fifty days, conquered both king and kingdom" – certainly made such an entry: Holinshed describes the vast crowds that lined the streets, and the rapturousness of their welcome. But Froissart, unreliable as he may be, specifically emphasizes that Richard was not forced into any such procession: indeed, the new King's primary concern seems to have been to deal with him as quickly and discreetly as

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[91] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 22.

possible.'[92] First, as it was demonstrated, Shakespeare does not portray 'the vast crowds that lined the streets', but a contained crowd located on the windows. Second, he forces Richard into the humiliating procession, it seems, because Richard both deserves it and because it allows Shakespeare to introduce pity for him. Richard's humiliation tips the balance again towards Richard, at least in terms of sympathy, which might be another reason why Shakespeare includes this reported crowd scene. However, Richard mistreated his people, and even referred to them as 'slaves' (1.4. 27); he 'hath he pilled with grievous taxes,/And quite lost their hearts./ The nobles hath he fined/ For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts' (2.1. 246-48). As Hogan suggests, Richard himself can be seen as 'a usurper. Indeed, he is reported to be responsible for the very murder debated by Mowbray and Bolingbroke', and yet the play that portrays the overthrow of the divinely appointed ruler can hardly insist on portraying the king as 'a usurper'.[93]

For obvious reasons, Shakespeare could not but be politically ambivalent, but he could be "humanely" ambivalent, for, we do pity Richard even while we acknowledge the political necessity of his deposition. In the crowd scene, however, Shakespeare gives a crucial description of public approval, and attempts to justify why Bolingbroke succeeds the throne. The justification lies both in Richard's dysfunctional and Bolingbroke's functional relation with the people. For, Bolingbroke, indeed, acknowledges the relation. Given that his task in *Richard II* was to portray the overthrow of the rightful king, the disobedience of the king's subject, and finally to give grounds for the usurper's success, it is no wonder that he introduces the crowd scene. It highlights the importance of public relations and the role of the people. This explains why Shakespeare needed the crowd scene, and the people's implied presence on the stage: because the play proposes a complex debate on the relationship between the body politic with the body divine. In short, in the discussion of Elizabeth I's progresses and in the discussion of the barge scene, and now in *Richard II's* crowd scene Shakespeare shows that a symbolic union between people and their leader is manifested best in the direct encounter between the people and the ruler. In his representation of the Body Divine of kings Shakespeare does not reject the idea that God gives right to rule, but he also accommodates other rights: the right of the people to

[92] Norwich, *Shakespeare's Kings*, p. 126.
[93] Hogan, 'Narrative Universals, Heroic Tragi-Comedy, and Shakespeare's Political Ambivalence', p. 48.

approve of power.[94] Shakespeare implies that in royal myth-making the people and their ruler need to be united because the union between them gives an illusion that the ruler is a rightful receiver of the Divine Right.

This indicates that there is a pattern in the way Shakespeare dramatizes the crowd's symbolic role in reported crowd scenes: he seems to suggest that the body politic and the king's body are closely linked by 'divine' issues. The plays show that there is no division between people and politics, between people and their ruler, but rather that it is precisely the relationship between the two that defines and generates the dynamics of power in Britain of the age. In this respect Shakespeare's representations of crowd scenes are consistent: they suggest that in royal myth-making the king's body politic and the people's body politic must co-exist in harmony. While the most apparent connection between these plays lies in how they use spectacle, another connection can be found in Shakespeare's characterisation of royal figures. Richard and Cleopatra are both royals who lose their political power, and yet they both have theatrical power and charisma. They remain royalties on the stage. The historical Cleopatra, at the point that Shakespeare portrays her, lost her empire to Rome, but the play's Cleopatra is still a queen. Similarly, Richard is the king on the stage; with his poetic words the 'unkinged' king charms the audience. More significantly, Shakespeare uses both characters to test the idea of body divine. When Richard says: 'I wasted time, and now doth Time waste me' (5.5. 49) he suggests that he has not fulfilled his duties as a king.

Nevertheless, there are similarities between Bolingbroke and Cleopatra as well. They are both charismatic leaders who know how to woo crowds and win popular support. Unlike Cleopatra, however, Bolingbroke shows himself as modest leader, not pompous and theatrical. In the crowd scene, as we have seen, he is both asking for the confirmation of power, and cunningly suggesting that he is accepting the power. On the other hand, in the barge scene Cleopatra has put on a grand show in order to win popular support, but she is anything but modest: displaying power she uses the spectacle not only to assert herself but to affirm her royal status. Like Bolingbroke, she manipulates the stage, but she makes people believe in the power which she does not have. This shows then how these plays are connected to Elizabethan politics. They point out that a king's rule depends on his subject's

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[94] For more see Hogan's 'Narrative Universals, Heroic Tragi-Comedy, and Shakespeare's Political Ambivalence', p. 41.

will and that a king has to be attentive and listen to people's voice, as Elizabeth I did, or at least must perform such attentiveness.

Finally, Cleopatra's character seems to have something of both Richard and Bolingbroke, and of Elizabeth I. She is a successive leader in a sense that she has her people's support, however, politically she is defeated like Richard. She is the ageing queen, who understands the power of display in wooing the popular support, as did Elizabeth. Similarly, the crowd scene in *Richard II* seems to suggest that when Shakespeare wrote the play he seems to have had in mind Queen Elizabeth and the importance she found in her annual progresses, in which she was connecting with her people, just like Bolingbroke in the play. Her trips were about maintaining her relationship with the people, ultimately about maintaining power.

How wrong was Richard, then, to say: 'Not all the water in the rough rude sea/ Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;/ The breath of worldly men cannot depose/ The deputy elected by the Lord [....] God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay/ A glorious angel./ Then, if angels, fight,/ Weak men must fall, for heaven still guards the right' (3.2. 34-62). Richard, disillusioned in his belief that God will protect him, realises that it is 'the breath of worldly men' that deposes him 'the deputy elected by the Lord'. *Richard II* seems to imply that changes happen because God wants them to happen, and that God's will is enacted through the people's will - '*Vox populi, vox Dei*'.[95]

[95] That is, '*the voyce of the people is the voyce of* God', see Pierre Charron's *Of Wisdome three bookes written in French by Peter Charro[n] Doctr of Lawe in Paris*, tr. by Samson Lenard (London: Edward Blount & Will, Aspley, 1640), p. 211.

## 'To and Fro', Representations of Mob and Mutiny: From Public Rebellion to Public Subjection

In *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority*, Richard Wilson reminds us that 'Shakespeare's crowd scenes belong [...] to the period of the emergence of the city mob as a force to be reckoned with in English politics', and points out that 'the London mob' was different, because of 'its sense of purpose'; and, most importantly, he indicates that 'although the new social formation was anathematised by officials as a monstrous Hydra without shape or purpose, it had objectives and organization which contradicted this governmental canard'.[1] The latter is particularly relevant when analysing the dramatised crowd. As I shall argue, Shakespeare's on-stage crowd did not merely portray "mob" through the lens of the government, but rather, his on-stage crowd 'had objectives and organization which contradicted this governmental canard'. The idea that Shakespeare's dramatisations of un unruly crowd did not always reflect the authorities' negative representations of the mob has not yet received enough scholarly attention, and is a focus of this chapter.[2]

This chapter considers early modern representations of the mob in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, *2 Henry VI* and the collaborative play *Sir Thomas More*.[3] It extends the

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[1] Richard Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), p. 26. Wilson here identifies the mob's four 'driving ideas' of which, 'most importantly, [he writes] it assumed that once alerted, the authorities would remedy its grievances. Together, these assumptions made the city mob a formidable corrective both to local profiteering and royal despotism'; but what 'made it particularly inimical to the nation-state' was that 'it legitimated its protests and resistance "by rite"' – 'by linking them to the "wild justice" of traditional folk festivities and calendar games'; p. 26. Wilson stresses that 'the emergent identity of the London mob actually dates from the crisis years at the end of the sixteenth century [...]. Though critics speak of Shakespeare's mutinous crowds, then, as if they represented perennial human traits, it was only around 1590 that conjunctural circumstances produced the point of critical mass that precipitated the popular disorders in London', p. 25. Moreover, he suggests that Shakespeare's 'crowd scenes relate to the historical phase that has been documented by historians such as Eric Hobsbawm and George Rudé, when the rulers of the Old Regime were thrown off balance by the mass of urban poor that coalesced into the early modern "city mob"', p. 25; that is, when '"mechanic men" [...] began to organize in the illegal combinations that evolved into the city mob', p. 34.

[2] As we have seen in the previous chapters, there are a number of studies that touch upon Shakespeare's representation of the common men and the dramatist's approach to the crowds. However, of particular relevance is Phyllis Rackin's *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles* (New York : Cornell University Press, 1990) to which we will return later in this chapter, namely in the section on *2 Henry VI*. Most importantly, Rackin examines the role of the public theatre in creating as well as opposing to the official discourse and ideologies in early modern England, namely focusing on two groups marginalised by the society: women and *plebs*.

[3] Anthony Munday and others, rev. by Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Heywood and William Shakespeare, *Sir Thomas More*, ed. by Vittorio Gabrielli and Giorgio Melchiori (Manchester: Manchester

discussion of the theme of disobedience from the preceding chapter, and significantly, moves away from the debate of the symbolic role of the crowd to the actual role of the crowd in these plays. The focus is, therefore, on staged crowds and staged crowd scenes. Shakespeare's technique of "staging" as opposed to "reporting" crowds will highlight the dramatic effect of each strategy, and will help us better understand and appreciate the character of the crowd and the dramaturgical role of the crowd scenes in his drama. We shall also see that the British crowd in Shakespearean drama is very different in political complexion from a Roman crowd.

What brings these three plays together, nevertheless, is their representation of the mob and their engagement with popular upheaval. By "mob" I refer to an organised group of people that poses a danger to authority and society. As J. S. McClelland indicates, 'for Livy the people are not always a mob, though he always calls them a mob when they threaten violence, and they typically do that when they are roused by a demagogue.'[4] Moreover, the audience will be examined as "crowd" which is implied in the plays' debates on the position of the citizens in early modern Britain. I shall argue that the staged crowd scenes utilise the audience - the off-stage crowd - and implicitly address them, excluding the head of the state of course, as a potentially rebellious crowd. In other words, the existence of these crowd scenes and their emphasis on the position of subjects in early modern society insinuate that the theatre-crowd might hide a latent threat to the contemporary society, a danger that the plays are ultimately trying to prevent.

Indeed, 'in the closing years of Elizabeth's reign the question of the right of rebellion against a ruler was being taken so seriously that intellectual leaders in the land were not only discussing it under the cover of Roman history - they were about to move further towards open political and military rebellion led by one of their circle, the Earl of Essex.'[5] I shall argue that the crowd scenes in all three plays take up moments of public displeasure to draw our attention to the role of the citizen and subject in early modern Britain, which I will refer to throughout this chapter as the citizens' "subjection" or "subjected position".[6] What

University Press, 1990); William Shakespeare, *Henry VI part* II, ed. by Ronald Knowles (London: Arden, 1999); William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, ed. by David Daniell (London: Arden, 1998).

[4] J. S. McClelland refers to Livy's History of Rome to 386 BC; see McClelland's 'The Crowd and the Ancient World', in *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 46.

[5] Daniell, Introduction to the Arden edition of *Julius Caesar*, p. 29.

[6] According to *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, ed. by Della Summers, 2nd edn (Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 1998), the term 'subjection' refers to 'a state of dependence, especially in which one cannot do anything except if someone else allows it', p. 1347. This reading takes on the full meaning of this definition when talking about the citizens' subjected position in early modern Britain.

they all demonstrate to their audiences is that precisely this subjection is an intrinsic part of being a citizen in early modern Britain, and that, as we know from *An Homily Against Disobedience*, its prerequisite is obedience at all times.[7]

Tim Harris indicates that 'certain rituals, such as royal coronations and processions, or public executions, might serve to awe the public, to remind people of their lowly position in the divinely ordained hierarchy, to promote the splendour of majesty, or (in the case of executions) to advertise the power of state and show people what it could do to them if they chose to step out of line.'[8] The early modern stage certainly reflects this and, as will be demonstrated, the crowd scenes in these three plays tend not to depict the people's 'lowly position' as such, but in fact treat it as a condition which can be seen as *dignified.* Consequently, through the representation of disobedience paradoxically the plays "stage" obedience. Indeed, my reading suggests that the crowd scenes actually present subjection as a "positive subjection". These issues will be examined in 3.1 and 3.2 of *Julius Caesar*, in 4.2 of *2Henry VI* and in 2.3 of *Sir Thomas More*. My analysis aims to stress the importance of the relationship between authority-king-crowd, the representation of each, and the effects of such representation. In order better to apprehend these relations - dramatic and theatrical - Buber's 'I-Thou' concept will be employed as in the preceding chapters.

## Critical Responses to *Julius Caesar*

In literary discussions of *Julius Caesar*, critics have tended to focus on the representations of the rebellion, the power struggle, the representations of the character of Caesar and of Brutus, and, have elaborately discussed how they relate to contemporary events.[9] Addressing 'the notion of the "public good"' Markku Peltonen writes,

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[7] This is not to say that Shakespeare aimed to preach against disobedience like the Homilies, but that he was accommodating the concept within the play. The play is on one level about the battle over legitimacy, and, following from this, about the issue of republic versus monarchy. In 'Government and Administration': *Elizabethan People: State and Society*, ed. by Joel Hurstfield and Alan G. R. Smith (London: Edward Arnold, 1972) Hurtsfield and Smith write: 'The homily of obedience set out clearly the divine sanction behind the existing political and social order. It thus both justified and reflected the contemporary axiom that the Queen had, by God's authority, the right to issue commands to her people, and that subjects had a duty to obey or at the very least not to resist such orders', p. 138.

[8] See Tim Harris's *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 14.

[9] For instance, in his Introduction to the Arden edition of the play Daniell writes: 'The intensely-felt legal and moral questions raised by the conspiracy and assassination are tied to the equally intense interest felt by historians and biographers in Caesar himself', p. 32. In 'Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Erasmus's *De Copia*,

> the republicanism of the 1650s is often referred to as classical republicanism because of its obvious intellectual debt to classical Greek and especially Roman sources. It conceived of men as citizens rather than subjects; they were characterized not so much by obedience to the king as by active participation in the political life of their community through counselling and the law-making process. The citizens' participatory role was chiefly based on their virtuous characters, which enabled them to promote the public good.[10]

The present discussion of *Julius Caesar* and its representation of the violent and disobedient crowds aims to demonstrate that within his treatment of Caesar's assassination, the dramatist focuses on the consequences of this act and addresses the effect of it on the citizens and the state for the public good. The crowd scene 3.2 is emphatically concerned, to use Banerjee's expression, 'with the political rights of the subject and the citizen' in both Republican Rome and implicitly in Elizabethan England.[11]

In 'The Cobbler and the Tribunes', Athanasios Boulukos argues that the play's fundamental question is: 'what conditions are necessary for a man to be free'?[12] Yet, 3.2 bids more attention in that it offers a deeper insight into the condition of the citizen. Furthermore, Boulukos argues that 'the plebeians' character as the many-headed hydra too [...] proves to be an important issue in the play. It is not unconnected to the more weighty function of the plebeians as supporters of Caesarism, a force which wins the first skirmish in the play'.[13] 'The plebeians as Caesarists, too, represent the forces of history that, unbeknownst to Brutus, have marked him out for their sacrifice.'[14] Yet, Shakespeare's representation of the plebeians is more complex: it does not simply emphasise the fact that

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and Sentential Ambiguity', *Comparative Drama*, 41 (2007), 79-106 (p. 80), Jeffrey J. Yu writes: 'The play has been read as an unambiguous condemnation of the assassination and the conspirators and a glorification of Caesar', p. 80.

10 The first phrase is from Rita Banerjee's 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', *Comparative Drama*, 40 (2006), 29-49 (p. 29); the following quotation is from Markku Peltonen's *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought 1570-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 2.

11 Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 31.

12 Athanasios Boulukos, 'The Cobbler and the Tribunes in *Julius Caesar*', *MLN*, 119 (2004), 1083-89 (p. 1087).

13 Boulukos, 'The Cobbler and the Tribunes in *Julius Caesar*', p. 1088.

14 Boulukos, 'The Cobbler and the Tribunes in *Julius Caesar*', p. 1088.

they are 'Caesarists', rather, it questions the plebeians' right to have and exercise political power.

Paul Daniel Menzer argues that 3.2 'clearly mirrors the play's opening scene', and that crowds in the scene 'work as a domestic purgative'.[15] His study does pay close attention to the role of the crowd in the play, but unlike this chapter, his focus is on the 'play's current of bodily tropes,' or the play's 'body talk'.[16] He further argues that 'the staged crowds of *Julius Caesar* level an insistent, voyeuristic gaze upon the body, before which the anthropomorphic metaphor begins to dissolve' and that Brutus's and Anthony's 'dueling orations conform to the divergent body politics.'[17] Yet, as already suggested, the staged crowd scene (3.2) deserves another look: as a dramatic device in its own right. Furthermore, this chapter takes into account the nature of political relations, and even more importantly, how they are translated in theatrical terms. Menzer rightly suggests that 'Shakespeare has inserted Caesar's politics within an Elizabethan discourse of the "king's two bodies"', but the dramatist also interpreted the plebeians' role in politics within the Elizabethan understanding of the concept of "subject".[18] With his representation of the crowd Shakespeare seems to pose a fundamental question concerning the people's role and their rights in politics.

Analysing the role and the representations of the crowd in *Julius Caesar* and *Sejanus* Ian Munro argues that 'these plays incorporate the antitheatrical discourse of the multitude, the trope of collective dismemberment, and the idea of the prodigious city as ways of staging (without resolving) the problematic place of the theatre in the city.'[19] Directing our attention to the representation of the city of London in *Julius Caesar*, he suggests: 'Unlike the imaginary Rome that Brutus and Sejanus understand as an invisible support for their desires, the city of the crowd acts as a supplement to the discourse of power, characterized at once by insignificance and excess.'[20] Focusing on the place of the theatre and the representation of the people, he writes: 'In this dynamic the play incorporates the antitheatrical description of the many-headed multitude and the polluted theatrical city, not to rebut it, but to use it to articulate anxieties about the theater's place in

[15] Paul Daniel Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Univ., 2001; abstract in UMI Microform 3027458), 55-97 (p. 93, 94).
[16] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 80-1.
[17] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p 80 and 87.
[18] Menzer, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 83.
[19] Ian Munro, *London: The City and Its Double* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), p. 13.
[20] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 13.

and effect on the city.'[21] However, whilst Munro's discussion focuses on the crowd's character and 'the symbolic space of the city', my discussion examines the symbolic roles of the character of the crowd and the staged crowd scene (3.2), and the latter's role in portraying the 'I-Thou' relation between the stage and the audience.[22]

In his Introduction to the Arden edition of the play, Daniell observes that '*Julius Caesar* has unique high moments of the experience of being inside a theatre and at the same time overhearing a different crowd being worked on – it happens in several ways in the first and second scenes. It is almost overwhelmingly powerful in the Forum scene in 3.2.'[23] This viewpoint is important as it acknowledges a presence of different types of crowds (the audience as the theatre-crowd, and the play's crowd), and it implies that the audience has a significant part in Shakespeare's conception of the play. However, whilst Daniell argues that in the play 'there comes into view no alternative basis of authority at all', I will argue that the audience forms this 'alternative basis of authority', and that the staged crowd scene in fact actualises this authority.[24]

Ian Munro, however, remains perhaps the most perceptive commentator:

> in all of the English history plays [...] and in the Roman histories [...] there are crowd scenes in which the staged or imagined urban populace acts as spectators to the affairs of the elite. On one level this could be understood as a form of displacement, a forcing of the dangerous symbolic energies of the crowd into peripheral and supporting role. On another level, though, the staging of crowds is a natural consequence of the material conditions in which the plays were produced. By staging or invoking spectating crowds, especially through an address to the actual audience, plays linked the bounded space of their drama to the theatrical space of their performance. One space was mapped onto the other, and the

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21 Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 154.

22 Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 153. He indicates that *Julius Caesar* 'presents (at least) two constellations of potential authority in the play - Caesar and the crowd versus the noble Romans'; moreover, he suggests, 'the whole action of the play, in some ways, is about producing strategic theatrical effects in the context of the city, with the intention of producing a particular legitimate response from the easily manipulated people', p. 153. In addition, he sees a parallel between Caesar and the city, in which he sees the people as a 'supplement to Caesar', p. 155. In this light, Caesar becomes 'the figure of the theatre itself', p. 154; and, 'the parallel comes from the dramatic function and theatrical significance of Caesar's role in the city: the locus around which the distracted multitude builds its energy and then disperses its mayhem through the city, the contaminating and disseminating presence in the play and the city.' p. 155.

23 Daniell, Introduction to *Julius* Caesar (London: Arden, 1998), p. 4.

24 Daniell, Introduction to *Julius* Caesar, p. 38. Daniell explains, there is no authority 'either divine or popular'; but 'there is only possession of power, the politics of the school playground. While that power was in Caesar himself, his authority and popularity held Rome together: with Caesar gone, there is no larger charter', p. 38.

> contradictions inherent to staging an urban world could be articulated through the relationship between the staged play and its London audience.[25]

Yet, there is more to the plays' crowds and the crowd scenes. By definition a forum is 'a place of or meeting for public discussion', 'a court or tribunal', and historically 'a public square or market place in an ancient Roman city', and this definition, I shall argue, encompasses what the crowd scene on the stage is: a moment in the play where public matters become physically immediate, through the actors' presence and utterance. As such the staged crowd scene is first and foremost a scene of direct engagement with the audience.[26]

*Julius Caesar*'s Staged Crowd Scene: 3.2

Shakespeare's representation of the crowd in *Julius Caesar* in this play is complex: whilst he portrays it as a gullible mob, he also represents it as the body politic that, paradoxically, does not deserve power. This section argues that the crowd's character is dramatically important, that Shakespeare's dramatisation of the staged crowd scene (3.2) reveals that he is deeply interested in the issue of what the position of a subject in early modern society means, and that the crowd scene indirectly invites the audience to participate in the debate.

The crowd scene becomes a forum in which Shakespeare poses a question of what being "subject" in early modern society entails: an issue that his audiences might easily relate to. Shakespeare's Brutus seems to invite the audience into the *platea*-world of the stage and to "participate", as it were, in the play's debate. Thus, Caesar is murdered and the conspirators, with Brutus as the head of the plot, have to face the consequences of their act and the judgement of the people. For instance, he reminds the people that with Caesar their status was comparable to that of 'slaves', whereas now that they have removed Caesar, they can 'live all freemen' (3.2. 24) and achieve 'freedom from bondage': freedom from subjection to Caesar.[27] Brutus justifies his murder of Caesar (3.2. 24-26) claiming Caesar 'was ambitious' (l. 26) and posed a threat to the public good and the republic, and his

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[25] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 47.
[26] *Oxford Compact English Dictionary*, ed. by Della Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 387-88.
[27] Boulukos's phrase, 'The Cobbler and the Tribunes in *Julius Caesar*', p. 1087.

words reveal his fear of Caesar's popularity among the people, and disclose his fear of Caesar's ambition to attain supreme power.[28] Indeed, 'now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,/ When there is in it but one only man' in power (1.2. 155-56). Implicitly, however, Brutus's character questions what Rome is, or what it should be - a monarchy or a republic - and whether with Caesar's growing popularity they risk becoming subjected to him. He asks:

> Who is here so base, that would be a bondman? [....]
> Who is here so rude,
> that would not be a Roman? [....]
> Who is here so vile, that will not love his
> country?
>
> ALL None, Brutus, none.
> (3.2. 29-35)

Brutus's words about the position of the citizen are in the light of Cassius's comment against supreme power, or a political system that entails subjection. Equating 'bondman' to subject, Brutus is playing a deft rhetorical trick on the crowd: he implies that a subject is a 'base' position in the social ladder and equal to the position of a slave, thus not desirable. By implication, then, 'Roman' intrinsically means free citizen, but only in the republic, because in the republic the citizens are politically "free", not subject to the will of 'one only man', although they are still subjects within the Republic. Cassius's character seems implicitly to be saying to the audience that living a life of 'peep[ing] about' is in fact a dishonourable way of living as a citizen. However, by now the audience might realise that Cassius, just like the rest of the conspirators, is not concerned about the people's 'subjected' position, but about a change in *their own* position. Together with Brutus he defends Roman liberties, and in the process, it seems, aims to climb higher up the ladder of power.

Brutus indirectly asks the audience not only to justify and approve his murderous act, but to see Caesar's character as an embodiment of tyranny: 'and therefore think him as a serpent's egg/ Which hatched, would as kind grow mischievous' (2.1. 32-3), who once in power, would 'keep us all in servile fearfulness' (1.1. 76), as Flavius puts it. His emphatic insistence on liberating Rome from slavery conveys Shakespeare's interest in the matter of

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[28] Daniell suggests that the audience could have interpreted Caesar's ambition as Essex's ambition; for more on the matter see Introduction to the Arden edition to *Julius Caesar*, p. 23.

subjection, and his intent to make the audience think about it. While deriding Caesar's pride Cassius ironically compares Caesar to "colossus" and then adds:

> and we petty men
> Walk under his huge legs and peep about
> To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
> [....]
> The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars
> But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
> (1.2. 135-40)

Being an 'underling', then, is a consequence of personal inability rather than a legitimized status of a citizen. The conspirators see themselves as Caesar's 'underlings' and 'petty men' who are in this position as a result of their own doing. They can achieve colossal status instead of being underlings. Besides, being 'petty underlings' for them also means to be robbed of their political rights and liberties. All this reveals to the audience little about Caesar's ambition but more about the ongoing battle over legitimacy, and about their own 'underling' status not only as subjects to their monarch, however, but also as "subjects" to the theatre.

Shakespeare perhaps raises a question of whether the audience sees itself as 'underlings', or symbolically, "subjected" to the performance that they are watching and to the institution of the theatre. The implication behind Cassius's words may be that being "subjected" to the performance is not a 'petty' condition: rather it is dignified. He seems to suggest that being "subjected" to the rules of the theatre, which preclude participation, is a responsibility and an honourable condition. With *Julius Caesar*'s crowd scene Shakespeare seems to challenge the audience's mental "freedom", as it were, or their ability to resist manipulation by a character such as Brutus, and then Anthony. In doing so, he does not allow his audience to feel "subjected" to a comfortable state of complacency.

Shakespeare, nevertheless, does not want Brutus's character to be entirely disliked. He shows Brutus's redemptive side because he wants the audience both to like him and to learn from him (3.1. 169-72).[29] As a traitor his character is accountable to the audience: they are the authority whose approval he - as the character on the stage – seeks. Yet again, whilst Brutus's character is asking the audience to understand why he has committed this

[29] By contrast, by manipulating the crowd we mistrust Anthony.

gruesome act, Shakespeare, it seems, is also testing the audience's gullibility – whether they too may be seduced by Brutus's words (3.2. 49-52). Brutus's character, then, covertly reveals something about the dynamics between the stage and the audience: they are in a theatrical "relation", and that relation brings with it responsibility. That the audience has a responsibility in the theatre indicates, then, that it has authority, too. This authority is reflected in the fact that the playwright takes into account the issues that may concern the audience, and expresses their concerns on the stage.

In terms of winning the audience's full approval Brutus, however, faces some difficulty. For, regardless of the fact that he might have had honourable intentions in killing Caesar - rescuing Rome and the people from a potential tyrant - he has still committed a horrific crime: murder. What makes his act even more dishonourable is that he murders Caesar who was *potentially* a tyrant ('think him as a serpent's egg/ Which hatched, would as kind grow mischievous'). In support of this view is the fact that in *Julius Caesar*, Caesar's alleged ambition has a status of fiction, for it is never realized, or materialised. These 'defenders' are, indeed, accountable to the audience, and their argument against subjection spoilt and lost in the air by committing murder, now stands between them and the audience.

By revealing or making Brutus's character defend himself to the Roman *plebs*, Shakespeare focuses on Brutus's sense of guilt (2.1. 18-34), and in effect he makes the audience pay attention to it, too. The audience is now predisposed to see him as a confidant. He is not a murderer without conscience, but quite the opposite. This is apparent from Brutus's musing over his conspiracy before it is performed; yet his moment of doubt does not suggest that he questions the act of murdering Caesar (2.1. 18-34). Rather, his self-doubt is a dramatic device directed towards the audience and meant to draw them closer to Brutus's character and to make them doubt, together with him, his act. As such his character now becomes the audience's ally, the figure that by example enlightens them in what is right and wrong. In this sense only, we could say, Brutus's character can be seen as that of the "dramatic hero".[30] The audience, in other words, is implicitly drawn into the dramatic space of Brutus's character: we relate to the issues that Brutus indirectly addresses whether to support monarchy or not, or to advocate "slavery" or freedom from it. Brutus's character thus embodies an image of a disobedient subject, and paradoxically, he preaches

[30] With regards to the concept of 'dramatic hero' and what it refers to, see the section *I and Thou*, Relation in the Introduction of this thesis, p. iv.

*in favour* of obedience, which, then, becomes a division on which the drama turns.[31] More than this, however, we shall see that 'monarchy' is upheld as something necessary and yet as something to be feared. The crowd, as the play depicts it, in fact magnifies the terms of this dilemma.

The audience is faced with a predicament, then, for whilst Brutus represents Caesar as a type of Machiavellian New Prince, Anthony represents him as a potentially kind and good king (3.2. 89-98). Another problem arises, however, with the representation of the mob: the people have power, but no authority for it. The crowd scene seems to echo Coriolanus's sentiment towards the plebs. At the beginning of the crowd scene the plebeians shout, 'we will be satisfied' (3.2. 1). The line symbolically conveys their power: it indicates that they have a right to demand an explanation for Ceasar's murder. First Plebeian confirms this by saying 'I *will* hear Brutus speak'; and Second Plebeian restates: 'I *will* hear Cassius, and compare their reasons [my italics]' (3.2. 8-9). As in *Coriolanus*, the word 'will' figuratively embodies the law, the people's political power, and the custom of Rome, which meant that politicians were obliged to account for themselves before the people. Indeed, this is again implied in the plebeians' demand to hear Caesar's 'will' (3.2. 139-40). 'Read the will, *we'll* hear it, Anthony [my italics]' (l. 148), says Fourth Plebeian. Then, he puts it as an order: 'You shall read us the will' (l. 149). Again, as in *Coriolanus*, this is the people's 'peremptory "shall"' (3.1. 96), their right in politics of which Coriolanus does not approve.

Shakespeare, however, challenges the people's role in politics. Indeed, the play seems to suggest that they should not delegate such power, because they are 'easily swayed', unreliable, and seem only to obey to their own whims and their own will – their power.[32] Their response to Anthony conveys this. He mentions Caesar's will and informs them that they 'are his heirs' (3.2. 146), that generous Caesar 'to every Roman citizen he [Caesar] gives,/ To every several man, seventy-five drachmas' (3.2. 234-35), his private parks, to 'you/ And to your heirs for ever: common pleasures/ To walk abroad and recreate yourselves' (3.2. 240-42). He reminds them that they are a part of Caesar's body politic: that the conspirators attack on Caesar is an attack on them. Yet, what affects them is not so much Anthony's words, but his display of emotion, which suggests that in politics they

[31] Brutus's act of murder (in the *locus*-world of the play) is, therefore, juxtaposed with his character's dramatic role (in the *platea*-world of the stage): to make the audience question it.

[32] Menzer's phrase, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 64.

have no authority, because they are more emotional than rational in their response. The crowd's response is determined, in other words, by Anthony's performance in visual not just verbal terms.

After Anthony's little pause to weep, the crowd concludes that he must be right. Second Plebeian interprets it as a genuine reaction and is touched by it: 'Poor soul, his eyes are red as fire with weeping' (3.2. 116-17). So, it is his histrionic act of weeping that wins them over. Shakespeare shows that this crowd does not have a feeling of affiliation, hence to win their loyalty and affiliation Anthony plays on their emotions. Part of his rhetorical strategy, then, is not to attack the people's disloyalty (as Murellus does in 1.1), but to target their sensitivity to human sufferings, and also their gullibility. In the process, his character indirectly draws the audience's attention the people's fickleness, their inability to judge, and to their lack of political acumen. Shakespeare, however, does not portray a typically gullible crowd for the sake of belittling the plebeians, but because he is asking: if they are so easily swayed, how much respect for the crowd do we have? What is their right to "power" in the first place? The fact that the crowd is so unstable in its opinion challenges, then, their right to "power" in the first place. This crowd has no sense of obedience that could possibly keep them loyal to Caesar, but the crowd in the theatre may have and Shakespeare is aware of this. The playwright also indirectly suggests that the Roman *plebs* are not entirely free citizens, but also "subjects" to Brutus's and Anthony's rhetoric.

What emerges from all of this, then, is that in such an important political moment the plebeians base their judgement on what they see rather than hear.[33] The fact that the crowd in the end succumbs to Anthony's rhetoric implies that it needs to be and desires to be subjected and have a "leader": that the hierarchical order is desirable. In this process Roman Anthony, then, becomes more and more a British figure. For, the emotional game ,that his character is playing now turns into a covert address to the audience: he turns into a

[33] Indeed, whilst Jonson overtly discusses the issue of the audience as spectators rather than hearers, in *Julius Caesar*'s crowd scene Shakespeare indirectly suggests to the audience that they are in the theatre primarily to listen, not to "spectate": or rely on and indulge in the visual effect of the performance, as the plebeian crowd does. Andrew Gurr points out, 'although the stages became concerned to offer "shows" to the "beholder" who gradually became a "spectator", the English "hearer" and its Latin equivalent "auditor" held on with surprising strength'; see Gurr's *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 107. However, according to Gabriel Eagan's study into the frequency of the 'occurrences of the verb "to see" and "to hear" in connection with plays', plays were actually 'much more commonly thought of as visual rather than aural experiences in the literary and dramatic writing of the period'; see Egan's 'Hearing or Seeing a Play?: Evidence of Early Modern Theatrical Terminology', *Ben Jonson Journal*, 8 (2001), 327-47 (p. 329 and p. 332). 'The total number of example expressions found', Eagan indicates, 'is high (over 100), and the preponderance of visual over aural phrasing is more than twelve to one', 'Hearing or Seeing a Play?: Evidence of Early Modern Theatrical Terminology', p. 332.

demagogue stirring the theatre crowd into platonic mutiny against the idea of conspiracy (3.2. 219-23). Shakespeare's depiction of Anthony's character and his relation to the crowd reveals something about the nature of the audience and its relation to the stage, too: they are inseparable, and in constant mental interaction.

The Roman crowd, then, is very dangerous not only because it can turn into a mob, but even more because of the political power it has. Analysing Tacitus's approach to crowds McClelland writes: 'In the republic, the mob were opponents worth fighting; and it was then "the business of the true politician to study the manners and temper of the multitude", and the man who could combine a grasp of crowd psychology with an understanding of "the Senate, and the character of its leading members was deemed the most accomplished statesman of his time."'[34] The latent message to the audience, however, is that this type of danger can be avoided and prevented by having a Head of State whom everyone obeys. "Obedience", then, seems pragmatic: it promises stability in the society, but also ensures and preserves the hierarchical order in Elizabethan society. As the play suggests, not simply the "mob", but this politicised and yet politically incompetent crowd, poses the threat to the society, and to the hierarchical order. This is why the people are shown from the outset as having no authority and as undeserving of the power or choice they have. 1.1, in which Murrellus accuses the citizens of their inconstancy supports this (1.1. 36-52). What is also interesting in this scene (1.1. 36-52) is that it is a reported crowd scene, and that it takes place within a staged crowd scene. This choice of representation suggests that the report is necessary because it emphasises the danger that these plebs pose, not only in terms of their changeability, (or 'sway-ability'), but also in terms of the power that derives from it. Again, it is the political power of the plebs in the Roman republic that Shakespeare seems to challenge, not necessarily the citizens' intellect.

When Brutus announces that this is the moment when 'public reasons shall be rendered/ Of Caesar's death' (3.2. l. 7-8), the second Plebeian decides he will make his judgement only after he hears both Brutus and Cassius: 'I will hear Cassius, and compare their [Brutus's and Cassius's] reasons/ When severally we hear them rendered' (3.2. 9-10). Thus, he is a clever, eloquent, open-minded member of the crowd, and far from gullible.

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[34] McClelland, *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 52. Moreover, he writes, 'for Tacitus the people are vulgarly credulous [...] their support cannot be relied on [...] they are no better than slaves [...] or, in their propensity to follow demagogues, no better than savages [...] the legions are a mob [...] ready to listen to demagogues and incendiaries [...] capable of appalling acts of motiveless brutality', see *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti*, p. 51.

Yet, this representation of the plebs is again complicated by the fact that in the essential moment, they fail.

In many ways, the staged crowd scene can be seen as the pinnacle of *Julius Caesar*, for Shakespeare uses it not only to relate a conflict between two political factions in Rome, and blacken the plebeian crowd, but to suggest that a system which encourages the common people to have power, which they do not merit, is dangerous.[35] The irony in the play is that Brutus murders Caesar in the name of defending and protecting the liberty of the people from subjection, and yet their own behaviour as a mob reveals that they require subjection and do not deserve liberty. The staged crowd scene thus plays a crucial role in that it depicts a key moment in political decision making, in which the crowd judges 'the cruel issue of these bloody men' (3.1. 294).[36] By laying out the issue of the nature of citizenship and subjection, Shakespeare covertly incorporates the audience in the crowd scene. The scene bears the most responsible moment in the play: by becoming a "forum" in which the stage and the audience relate, or in which the stage most prominently communicates with the audience in the theatre. Daniell rightly notes that 'pulpits' are platforms that are used 'with an obvious association for an Elizabethan audience with the more usual sense, implying that Rome, and thus the stage, is about to become a place of preaching.'[37] The crowd scene, indeed, is used as a place not only to demonstrate, but *to preach* against unjustified rebellion, and yet it, paradoxically, also leads to it. The tension lies in the fact that neither monarchy and absolute rule nor a republic is entirely satisfactory. The former requires absolute subjection and deprives the citizens of political "freedom" and power, and the latter gives the citizens political "freedom", but with this instability, too. The tension between the two becomes the drama of *Julius Caesar*.

Finally, the crowd scene also reveals how dramatic character comes into being. Shakespeare's dramatisation of the crowd scene indicates that we cannot understand either

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[35] Plutarch's representation of the treason is quite different from Shakespeare's. Plutarch suggests that the treason was a result of god's will; see Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes*, tr. by Sir Thomas North (1579), Appendix in the Arden edition of the play, ed. by David Daniell, p. 330.

[36] Unlike Shakespeare's, Plutarch's report of the scene is not climactic. Whilst Shakespeare's demonstrates a moment of political decision-making, Plutarch's does not. Whereas Plutarch's crowd in this moment is chaotic, 'a multitude of rakehells of all sortes, and had a good will to make some sturre' (p. 343), Shakespeare's crowd in this particular scene is not manifested as a violent mob, but contained. This is because on the dramatic level the crowd's role is different. It represents the popular body politic, hence, the playwright does not allow chaos in this scene. In his representation the market-place (the staged crowd scene) is not a lawless place but a place of decision-making and of political bargaining, rather than a scene of violence. See Plutarch's account of the scene in *Lives of the noble Grecians and Romans*, p. 369-70.

[37] The quote is from Daniell's Introduction to the Arden edition of *Julius Caesar*, p. 238.

Brutus's and Anthony's or the crowd's character if we do not take into account the nature of their relation, in this case of the political relation. As in *Coriolanus*, in *Julius Caesar* Shakespeare shows that a political 'I-Thou' relation between the plebeians and the patricians needs to be functional, or politically polite. Indeed, Anthony's and Brutus's speeches indirectly acknowledge this political 'I-Thou' relation. The 'I-Thou' relationship between the plebs and the individual characters - Brutus and Anthony - nevertheless, is of a different nature to that of Coriolanus and the plebeians. Whilst Coriolanus disapproves of and fights against his political 'I-Thou' relation, Brutus and Anthony do not: they implicitly approve of the relation, but arguably to very different ends.

Most importantly, *Julius Caesar*'s crowd scene shows that the play's political 'I-Thou' relation can be seen as an analogy for the politics of the theatre, and as an analogy of the audience-stage 'I-Thou' relation. To conclude, not only does Shakespeare ask 'his Globe audience to recognize themselves in his on-stage crowd', but even more importantly to recognise that they are a part of the theatrical relation.[38]

## The Mock Mob and Honourable Subjection in *2 Henry VI*

We shall see how *2 Henry VI*'s staged crowd scene (in Act 4), which portrays Jack Cade's rebellion, renders the theatrical relationship between the stage and the audience. Indeed, Shakespeare seems to have been interested in the notion of 'subjection' and in the nature of the concept of *subject* for almost a decade prior to writing *Julius Caesar* (1599); and thematically *Julius Caesar*'s early predecessor is *2 Henry VI* (1591-92). Most importantly, it is again the staged crowd scenes, known as Cade scenes (Act 4.2 to 4.10) in *2 Henry VI*, which the dramatist uses to explore these issues. With regard to the dramatist's portrayal of the mob in this play, we shall see that it is slightly more complex than the portrayal in *Julius Caesar*. The difference is to be found in the representation of the mob and the rebel-leader Jack Cade. The rebels are portrayed as gullible and easily manipulated people, although not entirely ignorant, and significantly *are not* always represented as a united crowd unanimously supporting their cause. My argument is that this representation of the mob does not follow the prevailing representations of the mob, but that in this staged crowd

[38] Menzer's phrase, 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage', p. 67.

scene the people, this 'angry hive of bees' (3.2. 125), sabotages itself. Our discussion of the scene will explain why.

## Critical Responses to *2 Henry VI*

Literary scholars have focused on questions such as whether Shakespeare was populist or antipopulist, but much criticism, however, evolves around the play's representation of Cade's rebellion and on the contemporary references in the play.[39] In *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority*, Richard Wilson insists that key to understanding Shakespeare's plays is an understanding of 'the author's society'; and in relation to the Cade scenes, he argues, it is precisely 'the militant clothing industry of London in the 1590s [...] which forms the context' for Cade's rebellion.[40] Moreover, 'what is advertised here, in a text that was to be one of his [Shakespeare's] earliest publications, is the sneering impatience with the language of peasants and artisans of the literate parvenu. [...] these scenes are a triumph of text over orality. Shakespeare's Cade is a Gargantuan Big Mouth, but nothing could be more unlike the demotic laughter of Rabelais than the young playwright's revulsion from the *vox populi* and the stinking breath he insists goes with it'.[41] Further, Wilson insists that 'Shakespeare's commercial playhouse [...] must be viewed as part of the apparatus of the English nation-state: as an institution, in fact, of separation and enclosure, where bourgeois "order" was legitimated by the exclusion of the "anarchy" and

[39] For historical background and circumstances that may have influenced Shakespeare's shaping of the play see Chris Fitter's extensive analysis 'Emergent Shakespeare and the Politics of Protest: *2 Henry VI* in Historical Context', *ELH*, 72 (2005), 129-158. For instance, Fitter indicates that at the time 'there was also the threat from below' because of 'ongoing military levies, ferocious taxation, and the disastrous casualty rates of the English expeditions sent to support Henry IV in his war against the Catholic League. In such conditions, Shakespeare's play, by illustrating horrors loosed by dynastic destabilization and the brutality of popular revolt, seemingly gave implicit support to an imperiled Elizabeth and a panicky traditional order', p. 130. Moreover, 'that Shakespeare's primary concern was political engagement of his contemporary moment, rather than reconstruction of the mid-fifteenth century, is clear in his recurrent departures from the Chronicles', p. 133.

[40] Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority*, p. 20 and 31. He writes further: 'Critics regularly treat Cade as the "timeless embodiment of lawlessness", and ignore the signs that the motive for this character assassination stem from Shakespeare's own involvement in social process', Wilson indicates, but 'in fact, his defamation of Jack Cade was prompted by a crisis in London's culture which, perhaps more than other incidents, explodes the legend of a democratic Bankside. The clue to this local motivation lies in the characterization of the rebels.', p. 31. In relation to Shakespeare's own involvement, Wilson writes: 'Shakespeare, who took care to depict his villain as a disaffected veteran returned from Ireland, aligned himself squarely with the empire and the free market in timely opposition to London's small masters', p. 33. 'The writer portrays the poor', Wilson writes, 'as philistine vandals', p. 28. 'The civil war', Wilson points out, 'in this play is between an educated elite [...] and the illiterate mass who make their mark and communicate only in plain, rude English', p. 28.

[41] Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority*, p 28.

"sedition" of the mob. In practice,' he adds, 'the ideological function of the "Wooden O" was less to give voice to the alien, outcast and dispossessed, than to allow their representatives the rope to hang'.[42] The latter suggestion is arguable. First, that the public playhouse *does* give voice even to the marginalised is almost inevitable: for, any character that appears on the stage must have a dramatic function, and therefore 'voice'. Shakespeare makes use of every "body" and every "voice" on the stage. Secondly, that the public playhouses use the stage to sabotage the mob is true in some cases, but not in *all* cases: in the scenes, as we shall see, in a very subtle manner Shakespeare throws off balance the conventional image of "mob"– as one body of people united in its gullibility and stupidity. The mob in the Cade scenes, in fact, not only sabotages itself and latently those in power (York), but unlike a typical mob, this mob is not unified. This section will examine why this is significant.

In 'Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*' Thomas Cartelli also focuses on the representation of the rebels. He reviews Shakespeare's approach to the common people and their protest in relation to and as their response to the corrupted society. Particularly, Cartelli looks at Shakespeare's rendering of the idea of "disorder" linking it to the issue of corrupted aristocracy, and 'disordered social relations'.[43] The dramatist's 'construction of aristocratic disorder' in the play 'may be said to dramatize a crisis of legitimacy that in turn "produces" not only Cade's rising and York's subsequent campaign of usurpation, but Suffolk's fatal encounter with his pirates'.[44] The latter scene, which dramatises 'the confident assault of two commoners on an aristocrat who (like Iden) takes every opportunity to remind his opponents of how radically unequal they are', is the focus of Cartelli's article.[45] 'This encounter', Cartelli rightly notes, 'is structurally and thematically tied to Cade's rebellion', however, he writes, 'it is differently oriented in that it brings to a point of culmination or conclusion the play's sustained study of aristocratic corruption and in that [...] the scene is end-directed'.[46] This question of 'monstrosity' in relation to the dramatisation techniques employed to depict 'aristocratic

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[42] Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority*, p. 30.
[43] Thomas Cartelli, 'Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*', in *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works: The Histories*, ed. by Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard, 5 vols (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), II, pp. 325-43 (p. 326).
[44] Cartelli, 'Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*', p. 327.
[45] Cartelli, 'Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*', p. 326.
[46] Cartelli, 'Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*', p. 327.

corruption' (through Cade's character) will be important for my argument. As Cartelli indicates,

> The world of this play is upside down from the start, and [...] the disease of identity-distorting megalomania that afflicts Cade has not merely been transmitted by his tutor in disorder, Richard Duke of York, but has its root and source in a highly contagious aristocratic presumption that, quite literally, knows no bounds and affects virtually every character that steps on the stage.[47]

In 'The Many-Headed monster in *2 Henry VI*', Margaret E. Owens touches upon the same topic - of the 'aristocratic corruption', focusing on 'the role of violent spectacle' in the play, particularly on the image of the 'severed head', and examines 'its impact as a theatrical spectacle but also its implications as a cultural sign'.[48] She writes: 'In the proliferation of severed heads on the stage, we witness a version of that much-feared Elizabethan bogeyman, the "many-headed monster," an image depicting the violent deformation of hierarchical order'.[49] Owens rightly points out: 'Typically, the topos of the many-headed monster (variants include "beast" and "multitude") was applied to popular uprisings', which echoed the fear of crowds. However, Owens also notes that 'in *2 Henry VI*, the topos carries a significantly different import to the extent that the nobility, more than the masses, are presented as the creators, as well as the victims of, the many-headed monster'.[50] My reading, however, directs our attention, again, to Shakespeare's dramatisation of Cade arguing that his insurrection can be seen as a dramatisation of a higher 'class revolt', and as the dramatic representation of the ultimate political treason: a betrayal and an attack on monarchy, and thus an amplification or echo of the play's main plot.[51] The elite members of the society (such as York), then, are represented as monstrous as well in that they beget

[47] Cartelli, 'Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*', p. 327.
[48] See Margaret E. Owens's *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), p. 187. 'Beheading in this play is a sign not of the orderly extirpation of civil dissension but of its uncontrollable proliferation', p. 190.
[49] Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama*, p. 190-1.
[50] Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama*, p. 191.
[51] Annabel Patterson indicates that Cade is not 'the proper popular spokesman', but 'an impostor aristocrat, [and] a traitor to his class, hawking his false claims to the name of Mortimer', see Patterson's *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 48-9.

and initiate monstrosity (York's use of Cade).[52] In this sense, Cade's character is York's pawn, but it is also the dramatist's tool whereby he points to the cause of the monstrosity in the play (York's betrayal displayed through Cade's character), and discards it as unacceptable.[53] But why does the dramatist opt to use Cade's character to demonstrate and dismiss York's disloyalty, rather than York's character? Perhaps Shakespeare wants to show that the violence committed by the 'many-headed monster' is, or can be a by-product of the authorities' policies and corruption.[54] In doing so, by giving the rebels an important dramatic role (to expose the roots of violence and threat to the society) Shakespeare, we can say then, implicitly challenges the authorities' typical portrayal of the crowd – as the original source of threat and disorder. Hence we can say that Cade's dead body on the stage, to use Owens's phrasing, can be seen as 'the polluted body of a traitor', but not only "polluted" in that it embodies Cade's sins as a deluded and disobedient subject: but his dramatic body is also symbolically "polluted" because it is contaminated by York's treachery.[55] Moreover, as Owens writes,

> the mutilated and humiliated bodies of aristocrats are flaunted by Cade's crew as the very sign of their own newly won power. Using a central carnivalesque strategy of reducing abstraction to corporeality, of uncovering the dirty secrets hidden by the mask of euphemism and idealism, the rebels demystify the ceremonial mace, exposing its true nature as nothing more than a sign whereby the ruling elite asserts its power over the bodies of the lower orders.[56]

[52] 'In *2 Henry VI*', Owens writes, 'as in contemporary treatises on the Body politic, monstrosity is conjured up chiefly in order to legitimate the hierarchical organization of the state [....] The representation of monstrosity in this play carries a potentially radical edge in so far as it dramatizes a struggle for ownership of the symbolic apparatus of the state, most conspicuously the mace and the severed head', *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama*, p. 200.

[53] 'As York's pawn and alter ego', Rackin writes, 'he follows a scenario of York's devising [...]. As Shakespeare's, he proposes a revolution so radical and so ludicrous that it discredits the just grievances it addresses', *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 219.

[54] This issue, has already been examined in chapter 2, discussing *Sejanus*. Owens writes: 'The seizure by the lower orders of the apparatus of punishment typically plays a central role in popular risings. (Perhaps the mock punishment that figure so prominently in festive traditions can be seen as contained, nonthreatening rehearsals of the more serious attempts to appropriate judicial authority.)', *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama*, p. 195.

[55] Owens's phrase, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama*, p. 197.

[56] Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama*, p. 194.

In '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*' Stephen Longstaffe directs our attention to 'Bakhtin's conceptions of dialogism and carnivalesque', which, he explains, 'enable a reading of these scenes which addresses the ways in which their presentation of ridiculous danger may function'.[57] Longstaffe suggests that 'the play may be more dialogical in performance than has been allowed', and investigates 'the presence of the clown – as both "character" and "performer"' suggesting that 'Cade may have been played by the clown Will Kemp'.[58] Moreover, rather than reading Cade's actions as 'a sub-plot equivalent to York', Longstaffe points out that 'Bakhtin's carnivalesque suggests another focus', which is 'laughter' embodied within 'the mocking contradictions [of] the rising's "asides"'.[59]

Behind the laughter a slightly more sinister picture emerges and takes our attention: that of betrayal and greed for power, disloyalty and ambition that can only bring misfortune and affect the whole society. This type of threat is what Shakespeare despised, and depicted in the space of Cade's character.[60] Such a character is not only a threat to the monarch but also to the well being of the whole society. This is exactly the reason why Shakespeare has Cade's character mocked not by the elite but by his own men (indeed those who account for the biggest number in social demographics). The stage direction "aside" demonstrates this, and shows that common men can actually think; that they neither want chaos and disorder, nor do they want freedom in which anarchy is the guiding principle, but they want stability and expect to be protected by their leader. Most importantly, Shakespeare implies through the dramatic representation of Cade's relation with his 'followers' that, unlike the contemporary presentations, not every mob is in fact gullible and stupid. The fracture

[57] Stephen Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', in *Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin*, ed. by Ronald Knowles (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1998), pp. 13-35 (p. 29).
[58] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 19. Longstaffe suggests that 'the Cade/Kemp figure is closer to [...] "metaparody"', and that 'seeing Kemp/Cade as breaking from York on his first appearance also makes a more Bakhtinian reading of these scenes possible, because reading the rising as primarily signifying something else, whether this be York's ambition or the disorder in the body politic, makes it difficult to see the performed action as carnivalesque.'; '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*: *Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin*, p. 26. 'Kemp/Cade not only inverts York's own genealogy, but adds in an obviously fake ancestor of his own', p. 25.
[59] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 27. 'Ultimately', he adds, 'it is the presence of commoners in the audience and others on-stage willing to perform in this way that enable such a carnivalesque spectacle to be suggested', p. 30.
[60] We shall see later in our discussion how this concept can give us a better insight into Shakespeare's choices when creating Cade's character for the stage. For now, we can think of Cade's "character" as "empty" of human traits that define a complete person, but we can think of him as an embodiment: as a dramatic character with a weighty role on the stage. The overwhelming presence in the space of Cade's character is not simply that of York's but that of any disobedient subject who is working for his own benefit on the expense of others, as well as the presence of the audience.

within the mob (again, revealed through "asides" of 'the sceptical commons') does not allow us to view this mob as a conventional mob.[61] My study invites us to approach Shakespeare's crowd as a *dramatic character* with its own purpose and objectives, rather than as "the many-headed monster"-type-of-character that hovers dangerously around kings and heroes, both in the *locus*-world of the play and in the *platea*-world of the stage.

Stephen Greenblatt's 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representations of Rebellion' seems to imply that the official "many-headed monster"-portrayal of the *plebs* in early modern England was unavoidable: i.e. it was always reflected in the theatres' dramatised crowds.[62] Regarding *2 Henry VI* Greenblatt suggests that 'Shakespeare depicts Cade's rebellion as a grotesque and sinister farce, the archetypal lower class revolt both in its motives and in its ludicrousness', and that 'Shakespeare calls attention to the comic humbleness of the rebels' social origins'.[63] Focusing on Cade's encounter with Iden, and Cade's end (Act 4.10), Greenblatt indicates that what is at stake in the episode is the owner's (Iden's) 'property rights'.[64] 'Status relations', he adds, 'are being transformed before our eyes into property relations, and the concern [...] for maintaining social and even cosmic boundaries is reconceived as a concern for maintaining freehold boundaries'.[65] More significantly, however, Greenblatt points out that a literary text is inevitably written by a culture of oppression:

> intention and genre are as social, contingent, and ideological, as the historical situation they combine to represent. The genre of the monument is no more neutral and timeless than the Peasant's War [...]. If intention, genre, and historical situation are all equally social and ideological, they by no means constitute a single socio-ideological "language". On the contrary [...] they are, in effect, separate forces that may jostle, enter into alliance, or struggle fiercely with one another. What they cannot do, once they are

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[61] Longstaffe's phrase, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 23.

[62] See Stephen Greenblatt's 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion', *Representations*, 1 (1983), 1-29.

[63] Greenblatt, 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion', p. 23.

[64] Greenblatt, 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion', p. 24. Greenblatt explains: 'The legal right of a property owner with absolute title to his land to impound stray animals that wander onto estate, makes it clear that the garden is *enclosed private property*, not in any sense, then, a public or common domain', p. 24. Yet, in one sense it is 'common domain' - the fact that this invasion of privacy occurs on the public stage and in front of an audience (who by default intrude this private property even before Cade) is not irrelevant – as much as the stage is Iden's, it is Cade's as well.

[65] Greenblatt, 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion', p. 25. 'Symbolic estate gives way to real estate. And in this revised context, the context of property rather than rank, the fear of stain in the representation of an unequal social encounter vanishes altogether', p. 25.

> engaged in a living work of art, is to be neutral – "pure" [...] signifiers – for they are already, by their very existence, specific points of view on the world.[66]

This rendering not only explains the complexity of Cade's character in which 'separate forces[...] may jostle, enter into alliance, or struggle fiercely with one another', but also accounts why there are so many different interpretations of Cade's character.[67] Yet, this classification also seems to imply that Shakespeare's crowds are always represented as a typical many-headed monster. For, what is implicit in this classification is that apart from a "neutral" signifier there are in fact two signifiers remaining: a pure *negative* and a pure *positive* (and by now we know that the authorities in early modern England were always inclined towards a negative portrayal of the crowd). However, my study invites a review of this classification arguing that in the representations of Shakespeare's crowds we sometimes find notable nuances in the *represented,* in which the negative and positive may coexist in one same character – depending upon the character's dramatic role. In short, although it is certain that the official crowd-discourse will be translated on the stage, it is also certain that the discourse will be challenged and subverted at times. Our discussion of *2 Henry VI*'s crowd centres around these moments and examines their significance.

Moreover, my reading accepts the argument that the early modern theatre 'as an institution did not stand in a mimetic or secondary relation to its social milieu but,' in a subtle way, it participated in creating this milieu, and Shakespeare's use of the crowd's character to create a certain impact or impression on the audience and to pose a delicate (perhaps even unintentional) challenge to the authorities' crowd-discourse, demonstrates that the theatre as a cultural institution did not simply function as a reflection of what was going on in the world, but at times it also projected a vision that was "novel" or different to that of the authorities.[68] In Phillis Rackin's excellent study *Stages of History:*

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66 Greenblatt, 'Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion', p. 13-14. A part of this quotation has been quoted in my Introduction, see p. xiv; however, it is necessary to mention it in this section as well.

67 Among these conflicting 'forces' in Cade's character are: York, the carnivalesque aspect of Cade's character, a pseudo-rebel Cade, historically inauthentic "Cade" and so on.

68 Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment*, p. 15. As she further indicates, 'the theater provided a cultural site where it was possible to explore – to revisit, test, challenge, and transform – the body's role [in our case, the crowd's role] in signification', p. 23. Indeed, 'a dramatic production does not have to be *overtly* [my italics] subversive in order to contest the prevailing mystifications of the body' (p. 252), and we could add, the prevailing image of the crowd, too.

*Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, Rackin reminds us that 'in the case of the common men [...] the conditions of theatrical production opposed the repressions of the dominant culture and its authoritative and authorizing historiography'.[69] Although the common men were marginalised like women in the early modern society, in the theatre, however, they were in a better situation than their female counterparts:

> Only in the case of the common men could they [the actors] speak from their own social location. Impersonated by actors who occupied the same social location as the characters they portrayed, the common men constituted a material presence within the scene of performance. They spoke with their own voices and appeared in their own bodies. Their lines, moreover, were written by one of their own, a common player who was also the son of a bankrupt glover from Stratford.[70]

That the plebeians 'spoke with their own voices and appeared in their own bodies' is not a minor point. It demonstrates that the theatre was a site unlike any other in the early modern society, a site where the common men were actually "in charge" of the whole event. The public theatre had some freedom: 'theatrical performance,' as Rackin indicates, 'by its very nature, defies comprehensive censorial control'.[71] Most importantly, 'the roles of common men in dramatic production provided the basis for the most radical challenge to', Rackin adds, 'the repressions of official discourse.[72] With regards, to the Cade scenes, she writes, 'the rebellion scenes [...] in *2 Henry VI* appear to have escaped censorship. Potentially subversive, they seem finally designed to justify oppression. Dissident sentiments are first evoked, then discredited and demonized as sources of anxiety, and finally defused in comic ridicule and brutal comic violence'.[73] My argument is that they are designed to give us an insight into the meaning of "subjection", and a better understanding of the nature of the

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[69] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 205-6. Thus, even though the 'commoners had no place in genealogically constructed historical records' (*Stages of History* p. 230), they certainly had their place on the public stage.

[70] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 206.

[71] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 237. 'The normal practice appears to have been to submit the written text of a play for censorship; objectionable material added in performance could only be censored after the fact', p. 237.

[72] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 221.

[73] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 219-20. Rackin explains: 'Plebeian characters constitute a significant presence in *2 Henry VI*, but their characterisation, their roles, and their interests are finally determined by the requirements of the historical plot and the conventions of dramatic representation, subsumed under hegemonic structures that expressed the interests of the elite', p. 218-19.

"ruler-ruled" relationship. In doing so, my reading offers a closer look at the "characterisation" of both Cade and his rebels, focusing on their dramatic relationship, and with the intention, again, to show that (according to Shakespeare) 'the underclasses' were 'not entirely incapable of political thinking', that they could '*imagine* how things might be absolutely different', and that Cade and his rebels can neither be simply classified as a sinister crowd of revellers nor as a monstrous crowd. The ultimate goal is to demonstrate that Shakespeare's crowd is hardly ever "pure" and purposeless, or without a dramatic agenda.[74] The point being, Shakespeare's representation of the play's mob does not always follow the official discourse or the representations of the mob.[75]

Most of the scholarly readings of *2 Henry VI*, it seems, tend to overlook the immense *dramatic input* of the crowd's character. Many focus on the question of historical accuracy in relation to the dramatisation of Cade, and in relation to the contemporary issues. In his essay '"Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation": Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*', Chris Fitter evaluates the problem of the historical model for Cade's character; he sketches 'the Hacket revolt and its popular reception, and demonstrate[s] the playwright's suggestive remodelings of Cade as Hacket.', and in the quotation below touches upon a theme that will be closely examined in relation to the dramatic role of *2 Henry VI*'s crowd.[76] According to Fitter's reading

> *2 Henry VI* inaugurates [...] popular insurrection's tragic pattern: a recurrent configuration whose indictment is not the phenomenon of the commons in arms, but its betrayal by self-interested leadership when once empowered. Shakespeare's complex and often generous

[74] Patterson's quotations, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 37 and p. 44. Patterson examines 'how the popular voice was [...] represented in Elizabethan and Jacobean England, despite or because of its political silencing, as a cultural tradition of protest', p. 32; and she indicates that 'there was a form of popular culture which [...] had manifestly non-recreational functions', p. 34. Her focus 'is not with Cade at all, but rather with the formal act of ventriloquism performed at the play's center, in relation to the murder of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, and the popular outrage it caused', p. 47. Furthermore, that Shakespeare opposes the official crowd-discourse is also implicit in his staging of Cade's end. Rackin explains it, 'Cade [...] insists that he has been "vanquish'd by famine, not valor" (IV.x.75), invoking the present material reality of hunger to demystify the historical account [...]. This opposition between eating, food, and cowardice on the one hand and the historical record of military valor on the other is deeply embedded in Shakespeare's historiographic discourse.', *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 212.

[75] Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment*, p. 17. To use Owens's phrasing, we can say that 'drama reinforced', but also 'resisted contemporary models of' crowd's behaviour.

[76] Fitter, '"Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation": Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*', p. 174. William Hacket, was a 'Northamptonshire yeoman' (p. 183), known as the traitor 'of the 1591 rebellion', p. 173. Fitter argues that the figure of this rebel must have inspired Shakespeare's creation of Jack Cade's character in *2 Henry VI* (p. 174).

> vision of popular rebellion, though touched by sympathy and some conditional endorsement, thus terminates repeatedly in a final pessimism centering on the ineluctable treachery of power.[77]

What my reading will offer, it must be noted at this point, is a close insight into the dramatic role not only of the crowd but of the *staged crowd scene* in the representation of this 'ineluctable treachery of power', and subjected condition, focusing on a dramatic relationship between Cade and York, and Cade and the rebels. Michael Hattaway suggests 'that what Cade proclaims' in fact 'constitutes a cause, and a cause that emerges from class oppression', and adds: 'This is no mere riot, but an occasion when aristocratic rebellion is the catalyst for popular revolt', and an occasion when the stage raises questions that concern its audience: in particular, the issue of the "subjected" position of a citizen in early modern England.[78] Indeed, the issue of the "subjected" position of a citizen in early modern England is a central issue that is raised in the crowd scenes and depicted not only through Cade's character, but emphatically so through his relation to the audience. What is, then, even more significant in Hattaway's reading is that he stresses the importance of the audience in relation to the events on the stage:

> the audience is simultaneously made aware that matters of real moment for the people are being raised. Shakespeare seems to have wanted to set his spectators laughing and then demonstrate that this combination of noble provocation and popular combustion is no laughing matter. It is certainly not just an occasion for "mechanicals" to be forced into their customary role of clowns, for the disorder includes not only the marginal and dispossessed.[79]

Margaret E. Owens also recognises the relationship between the stage and the audience: 'In the early modern theater, the actor's body is never "the thing itself," a purely spectacular, material object, but is always constituted at some level by language, most

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[77] Fitter, '"Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation": Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*', p. 206.

[78] Michael Hattaway, 'Rebellion, Class Consciousness and Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*', *Cahiers Elisabethans*, 33 (1988), 13-22 (p. 13 and 17). Hattaway writes: 'The nobility in this set of plays [*Henry VI* plays] does constitute a class – or, if we prefer, an elite [...].The troublesome reign of Henry VI takes its nature *not* from the visitation of divine vengeance for an original sin committed two generations before but from the aspirations of a particular estate'; hence, he concludes, 'their political and material ambitions do define them as a social class', p. 16.

[79] Hattaway, 'Rebellion, Class Consciousness and Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*', p. 18.

obviously by the dialogue that frames and conditions the audience's response'.[80] Talking about the potential threat when staging *2 Henry VI*'s rebellion, Rackin writes: 'Giving public voice to the grievances they *shared* [my italics] with actual rebels in Shakespeare's England, the actors threatened to produce in the real time of the audience the same disorder they enacted in the fictive time represented on stage'.[81] Again, as our discussion of the scenes will show, the stage and the audience had things in common: the stage reflected the issues concerning its time and its people. Further, Ian Munro, too, brings our attention to the importance of the audience in the dramatist's creation: 'The political threat of the urban crowd extends to its role as audience as well. Talbot's description of his French imprisonment in *1 Henry VI* [...] recurs in the context of London in *2 Henry VI* [...] (2.4.8, 10-11). For the nobility in *Henry VI*, the public space of London is typically a location of threat and vulnerability.'[82] However, his study does not examine closely the representation of the mob and crowd scene in *2 Henry VI.* I suggest that the crowd scene in 4.2 seriously questions the crowd's business, the nature of rebellion, and political treason.

Finally, what needs to be emphasised is that I aim to examine the issue of rebellion from the perspective of the *staged crowd scene*. In this my aim is to restore, or to re-establish, the dramatic importance of the play's staged crowd scene in critical approaches and readings of *2 Henry VI.* As Ronald Knowles observes: 'Ultimately, Cade is an inverted image of authority, both its distorted representative and its grotesque critic.'[83] Whilst Knowles's reading raises valid points, as do the majority of the readings of the play, it does overlook an important aspect of the Cade scenes - the fact that this is a crowd scene. Automatically then, he appears not to consider Cade's dramatic role and that of his dis-unified crowd. I argue, however, that through the representation of the mob in the staged crowd scene Shakespeare dismisses the idea of unjustified rebellion and of disobedience driven by sheer ambition, and that, most importantly, this is what affects his representation of the mob in the Cade scenes. It is thus given a unique portrayal: as the mob that sabotages the mob's business.

[80] Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama*, p. 16.
[81] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 208.
[82] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 82.
[83] Knowles, Introduction to *Henry VI, Part 2*, p. 90.

## *2 Henry VI*'s Staged Crowd Scene : Act 4.2

As in *Julius Caesar*, in *2 Henry VI*'s staged crowd scene we have two characters who are trying to win over the people: Cade, the rebel-leader, who stirs the crowd to mutiny, and Stafford, the 'Sheriff of the county' who tries to quell it.[84] The scene (4.2) opens with two rebels Nick and George who express their discontent and anger towards the aristocracy (4.2. 1-28). This is followed by suggestive stage directions: '*Drum. Enter* CADE, Dick [the] Butcher, Smith the Weaver, *and a Sawyer, with infinite numbers* [*carrying long staves*]' (4.2). This stage direction not only introduces us to the rebels, but by isolating three rebels by their names and occupations demonstrates the dramatist's departure from the common representation of a many-headed beast even while the expression 'infinite numbers' conveys the usual representation of the multitude.[85] Notably, it also suggests that the presence of the mob is not as significant as the presence of the individual rebels: by putting the individuals in the crowd in the spotlight Shakespeare indirectly subverts the authorities' usual portrayal of the crowd as one body with one voice. The voices of the three identified rebels are dramatically important. With regard to staging this presence of 'infinite numbers', there should not be a logistical problem. A few actors could easily produce the effect of a number of people, and the rest could be left to the audience, to the infinite limits of their imagination, as in *Henry V* and the chorus of 1.0.

The rebel Cade enters the stage and starts his rebel performance. By this point we know that this is going to be an illegitimate and inauthentic rising because it is choreographed by York (and yet it is otherwise 'real' and really-happening on the stage).[86] It is illegitimate and has no real cause because it is being driven by York's ambition.

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[84] Knowles's phrase, see the introduction to the Arden edition of *Henry VI part II*, p. 148

[85] With regards to the stage direction '*infinite numbers*' (4.2. 31-32) Munro writes: 'What draws me to this direction - besides its shading from the specific and named to the general and anonymous - is primarily its preposterousness: given the small size of early modern theatrical companies, the infinite numbers of the staged crowd would perhaps number a dozen. Of course, Shakespeare knew how to produce the effect of a cast of thousands [...] through the "imaginary forces" of the audience, which could "Into a thousand parts divide one man" (1.Pro.18,24). This figure of multiplication and division, carrying with it contradictory implications of unity and dissolution - and expressed in the context of a punning opposition between the "forces" of the massed audience, numbering in the thousands, and the small space of the stage in which the crowd is manifested - is an intriguing imbalance that has been a continual motivation for me in this study.' p. 50.

[86] The Duke of York, with Warwick and Salisbury on his side, is one of those who thinks he has more right to the throne than the current King (2.2. 44-52), and decides to test what the common people think about him. Whilst in Ireland to quell an uprising, he employs 'a headstrong Kentishman,/ Jack Cade of Ashford' (3.1. 355-56) in England to raise an insurrection in his name, and see whether the public would want him (York) as their King (3.1. 345-82). So, he 'put[s] sharp weapons in [... this] madman's hands' to 'stir up in England some black storm' (l. 346-48). As he says, 'this devil [Cade] here shall be my substitute' (l. 370).

Assuming his royal-like persona, Cade refers to himself using the royal 'We' (4.2. 29) and 'vows/ reformation' (l. 59-60) in which, he promises, 'all the realm shall be in common' (4.2. 63), and all things violent will be legitimate. In his attempt to stir the people against the King, Cade tries to establish his authority among the rebels by claiming he is 'of an honourable house' (l. 45), descending from Mortimer and Plantagenet families (4.2. 35-45).[87] The rabble, as we shall see, just like the audience in the theatre, is aware that he is putting on an act and does not for a moment believe that Cade is York. In analysing the representation of the people this recognition is invaluable. For, even though Cade's rebellion cannot be taken seriously, nevertheless, it has a dramatic and perhaps a didactic purpose: Shakespeare uses Cade's character to tackle specifically the issue of the subject's position in early modern society. Moreover, whilst Cade's character represents a pseudo authority, he also embodies a deformed *subject*. His army of rebels seem to emphasise this.

Unlike the official depictions of the crowd - in which the crowd is uniformly portrayed as a gullible multitude with no ability to think or judge rationally – Shakespeare actually creates a fracture among the rebels for a dramatic effect, and in doing so he discards the conventional portrayal of the crowd.[88] For instance, Cade's speech is continually disrupted by his audience: Butcher and Weaver constantly mock everything he says (4.2. 30-58). Both characters are as sarcastic and quick-minded as Anthony in *Julius Caesar* (3.2). When Cade stresses his bravery as a soldier, Weaver remarks: ''A must needs, for beggary is valiant' (4.2. 50), and so sums up Cade's speech not as a dignified address, but as a form of begging. That Shakespeare has these two men mock Cade after every statement he makes, serves not only to make the audience laugh, but to show also that the rebel (Cade) is deluded and ignorant. This also makes a mockery of the appropriation of the Royal 'We': i.e. there is no unified 'we' or 'us' for Cade, but only dissent and disagreement. 'Cade is both York's creation and Shakespeare's. Within the performed action he is to be understood as a pawn in York's game of claiming the throne; but he is also to be understood as part of Shakespeare's project, outside the play, of repudiating the common and clownish. Cade speaks for (is reducible to) Shakespeare, or York [...]. Cade is

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[87] Cade 'does not have to hide his invented genealogy; in fact it is a token of the nature of the rising, always-already undercutting itself', Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 28.
[88] For instance, in *Of Wisdome* Pierre Charron writes: 'the vulgar sort' is 'without judgement, reason, discretion. Their judgement and wisdome is but by chance, like a cast at dice [...] alwaies ruled by opinion or custome, or greater number, going all in a line, like sheep that run after those that go before them, and not by reason and truth', Pierre Charron, *Of Wisdome three bookes written in French by Peter Charro[n] Doctr of Lawe in Paris*, tr. by Samson Lenard (London: Edward Blount & Will: Aspley, 1640), p. 208-209.

effectively repudiated, silenced not by his superiors, but by his equals, and by the recognition by all that he is a hypocrite using the rising for his own ends.'[89] Most significantly, however, this scene shows that this is not a typical many-headed monster. This mob in fact undermines the usual business of a mob. Cade himself illustrates this best:

> Be brave, then, for your captain is brave, and vows reformation. There shall be in England seven half-penny loaves sold for a penny; the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and I will make it felony to drink small beer. All the realm shall be in common [...]
> And when I am king, as king I will be –
>
> ALL God save your majesty!
> (4.2. 59-66)

As a carnivalesque invitation to the world turned upside-down Cade's words are entertaining both to the rebels and to the audience in the theatre. 'In the context of *2 Henry VI*, the rising's festive and levelling operations are shown in order to discredit them'.[90] At the same time in relation to Cade's representation of his cause, his words are counter-productive, or even subversive. Cade's reformation does not promise stability and freedom from 'slavery'. He wants them to be his subjects, or slaves. His arguments against subjection are, therefore, unconvincing. Indeed, he thanks the crowd and says that once he is the king everyone will have food and drink seemingly at his expense, and, significantly, he says he will 'apparel them all in one livery, [so] that they may agree like/ brothers and worship me their lord' (4.2. 69-70).[91] Hence, he does not plan to change their social position, but simply to elevate his own, and his argument against subjection indeed becomes a parody.[92] His promise to dress everyone in 'one livery' is undermined by his desire to be worshipped as their lord. However, the audience knows that Cade has no plans to free the people from subjection. This is very important because it is one of the most

[89] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 25.
[90] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 16.
[91] See Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass's study *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), esp. p. 175-207, in which they demonstrate that the sumptuary laws in Britain dictated which type of clothes is appropriate for each class in the society.
[92] 'He is mocked; he and his followers are shown as endangering the commons as well as the elite; he is an agent (and thus does not represent anyone other than York and, latterly, himself); he is motivated by hatred, envy and bloodlust', Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 25.

prominent themes in this scene, a hot contemporary topic, and as in 3.2 in *Julius Caesar*, it is brought up in the staged crowd scene.

So, what is then the dramatic role of the staged crowd scene here? It conveys a relationship between the stage and the audience. As Longstaffe notes: 'The parvenu players, and their writer, are often seen to distance themselves from the rising (and therefore from the contemporary social protest it evokes) through emphasizing its destructiveness, with the implication that Cade and the others would have been seen by a metropolitan audience as a threat, and thus their actions and agenda repudiated'.[93] The fractured mob, I suggest, should be seen now as a mediator, a commentator on the stage, and a voice of the audience. For, whilst Nick and Weaver question Cade, the audience might simultaneously question the whole performance. As such, the onstage-crowd (the rebels) seems to represent the voice of the off-stage crowd. The crowd scene, then, reveals something about the dynamics between the stage and the audience, and the on-stage crowd implicitly becomes an analogy for the off-stage crowd. Given this analogy, it is plausible to say that the on-stage crowd also resembles the audience in that that it is not easy to please. For, Shakespeare is aware that during the performance the audience judges, approves or disapproves the performance, and his work. This interaction between the stage and the audience demonstrates that the staged crowd scene is a place for the exchange of ideas, and a place where current issues are made apparent through their physical manifestation, wherein they are discussed and challenged. As such the staged crowd scene becomes an analogy for the whole theatrical occasion, a micro-cosm of theatre indeed. It is the most obvious moment of the dramatist's *interaction* with his audience. As Rackin reminds us: 'Shakespeare's playhouse constituted an arena where cultural change was not simply represented but rehearsed and enacted': 'a place where history was made'.[94]

With regard to Shakespeare's representation of the mob in the staged crowd scene, and the fracture within the mob, a stage direction '[*aside*]' serves a dramatic function in questioning the mob's business, and as Longstaffe points out, asides also tell us about 'relations between Cade and his followers'.[95] 'Cade is often seen to be isolated,' and 'it is

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[93] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 16-17.
[94] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. ix.
[95] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 22. Knowles's edition of the play is based on 'the original quarto and folio editions', and, as he indicates, 'the texts are presented in fully modernised form, with a textual apparatus that records all substantial divergences from those early printings', p. xi. Furthermore, neither Appendix 1, The First Quarto (1594), in Knowles's edition, has the stage direction '[aside]' in 4.7. 54 - 4.8. 56 (see p. 402 and Knowles's note on p. 300) nor does the First Folio edition of the

his followers, rather than his social superiors, who provide an authoritative (and mocking) perspective on him. Cade defends himself with bravado against his elite opponents, but the mockery of Dick the butcher or Smith the weaver is unanswered, and Cade in secretly criticizing himself even seems to license their perspective. The key staging point in creating this effect is the use of asides, which all modern editions of the play include'.[96] The function of the '[*asides*]' is to point to the fact that the rebels support the King and his dynastic line of descent. For example, in 4.7 after Matthew Gough is slain, Jack Cade enters the stage, and Butcher flatters him saying that he wishes to see Cade in command of the state. He thus desires: 'only that the laws of England may come out of/ your mouth' (4.7. 5-6). Cade is of course flattered, but Nick and Weaver continue Butcher's ridicule:

> NICK [*aside*] 'Mass, 'twill be sore law then, for he was thrust in the mouth with a spear and 'tis not whole yet.
> WEAVER [*aside*] Nay, Nick, it will be stinking law, for his breath stinks with eating toasted cheese.
> (4.7. 7-10)

Even his crowd of rebels does not support Cade and do not believe him: their comments serve to underscore his lack of authority. They are certainly not "subjects" to Cade. Most significantly, this also insinuates that the common people actually do not think that a person of low social status like Cade (as is implied in the phrase 'stinking cheese') should have the power and opportunity to rule the country. 'Parody', then, 'functions within, and by its nature has to faithfully represent, heteroglossia', and by default, we can also say, it also reveals a fracture within the mob.[97] Weaver's remark is profound in its implication that it is common men who do not support one of their own to advance to higher status, and achieve

play has the stage direction; see Shakespeare's *The first part of the contention betwixt the two famous houses of Yorke and Lancaster,: with the death of the good Duke Humphrey: and the banishment and death of the Duke of Suffolke, and the tragical end of the prowd Cardinall of Winchester, with the notable rebellion of Iacke Cade: and the Duke of Yorkes first clayme to the crowne* (London, 1600) in *Early English Books Online* <http:eebo.chadwyck. com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk> [accessed 19 May 2011]. This seems to imply that the stage direction was not originally published, and that it may be the editor's addition. However, even if it is the editor's "addition", Nick and Weaver's comments still "function" as "asides" or as comments directed to the audience.

[96] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 21-22.

[97] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*', p. 16. With regard to the relationship between Cade and his followers Longstaffe adds: 'Cade and his followers are always in dialogue with another's speech [...]. Their speech is frank and free, there are no footlights between them, and for a while an image of carnival power exists, one with its basis in the contradictions of carnival laughter which, Bakhtin reminds us, is directed at all and everyone, including the carnival's participants', the audience, too; p. 29.

power. As Tim Harris points out, in early modern England 'catechisms and homilies inculcated obedience to superiors, and commentators warned against the "many-headed multitude", and', significantly, against 'the "rude mechanick" who turned politician.'[98] Thus, 'Toasted cheese', as Knowles notes, 'is not just a personal allusion, but social and, as elsewhere in Shakespeare, ethnic. Social inferiors could not afford the beef of their superiors.'[99] In this case 'the beef' signifies, as it were, 'the crown' and the right to rule. Since Cade is ridiculed, or stung 'by his own', there is no reason for us in the audience to believe him. It is easy to imagine the groundlings in the audience shouting, laughing and mocking Cade along with Nick and Weaver. The dramatist shows Cade's law to be nothing but a stinking and sore law, and rule. If anyone in the audience entertained the idea of rebelling, or to see a common man attaining power, and disobey the King, this scene might certainly dissuade them. What is then remarkable in this crowd scene is that here it is the common people themselves who mock the idea of common rule, and indeed, the idea of people's engagement and exercise of power in political affairs. Potentially, this could be seen perhaps as the play's rejection of the idea of a Republic; a recurrent theme in Shakespeare's plays, as we have witnessed in our discussion of *Julius Caesar*, too. *Julius Caesar*'s representation of the republican state, and Cade's alternative vision of state are determined to be unappealing to the people. The implication is that whilst the republic seems to give more political power to the common men and freedom as opposed to subjection to the will of one man only, it also creates more instability. This is why Shakespeare allows the rebels to be only temporarily seduced by Cade's prospect of a lawless state, and in fact does not allow Cade's dream of reformation to succeed.

Annabel Patterson rightly points out that 'what Shakespeare provided in 1592 was an opportunity to discriminate between contrasting attitudes toward the popular voice protesting; and between socially useful or abusive styles of its mediation'.[100] To put his point across, Shakespeare seems to rely on the socially useful style of mediation, which is the dramatised character. Even though in *2 Henry VI* crowd scene the rebels are violent on the stage their roles change and they become the severest critics of the business of the mob. This 'parody from within', this fracture within the many-headed monster is exactly what is

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[98] Tim Harris, 'The Unacknowledged Republic': *The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850*, ed. by Tim Harris (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 155.
[99] See Knowles's note on the phrase 'toasted cheese' in the Arden edition of the play, p. 319. For Knowles's account of Elizabethan 'correctness of dress and degree' see his Introduction, p. 94; for more on the topic see p. 92-95.
[100] Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, p. 51.

new in the representation of the rebellious crowd in this play.[101] With this dramatisation of the mob Shakespeare moves away from the conventional images of the mob. Cade and his "followers" are in fact never truly a unified "mob": Cade's rebels 'plainly are not speaking to their leader. Neither is he speaking for them'.[102] Shakespeare, indeed, redeems the mob, and allows it to be perceived differently from the many-headed monster. As such the mob, this body of rebellious subjects, now can be seen as a character on the stage in its own right. Now, what is important to bear in mind is that in the space of its character the dramatist gives it an entirely different role to that of a rebellious crowd. Shakespeare juxtaposes the generic bloodthirsty image of the "mob" and the mob with a more positive *dramatic function*: to act as an opponent of the mob's business. This is then a moment of the ultimate and immediate rejection of rebellion - by rebels themselves, that guarantees nothing but a carnival of carnage. Hence this becomes a moment of a rejection of York's betrayal too, depicted through Cade's character.

We shall return to this matter shortly. However, at this stage the concepts of both the space of character and 'I-Thou' need to be re-introduced. They will help us better understand the staged crowd scene, but also how the staged characters, the mob's and Cade's, come into being. In the space of Cade's character Shakespeare does not solely portray the deluded rebel figure, nor simply the comic figure meant to entertain the audience: he is not only a pseudo rebel, but a figure that embodies a violent mob, and a disobedient subject, too. Put simply, Cade's character does not stand in its own right, but is constituted through his dramatic and theatrical relations. The audience's perception of his figure depends in fact not only on how Cade represents himself to the mob, but also on how the mob responds or relates to him. In other words, the mob-Cade 'I-Thou' relation on the stage defines them as characters. Furthermore, Cade's character is even more complex in that he does represent a violent and deformed crowd, and yet the play's crowd - his dramatic 'Thou' - is meant to mock him. That his dramatic 'Thou' does not reflect back a supportive image is due to the fact that Shakespeare does not want the audience to respond to Cade with anything but laughter and derision. That is, Shakespeare considers the audience's reaction to Cade and "weaves" it, as it were, in the space of Cade's character.

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[101] Longstaffe's phrase, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*: *Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin*, p. 16.

[102] Longstaffe, '"A short report and not otherwise": Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*: *Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin*, p. 23.

This reveals the dynamics that take place during the theatrical performance, and shows that the relations, both dramatic and theatrical, create Cade's character.

Similarly, Nick and Weaver's characters on the stage also do not stand in their own right, but only in relation to Cade. This is evident from the fact that they are rebels, but they do not resemble a typically gullible and easily manipulated mob. Shakespeare does this not in order to "elevate" their characters, as it were, but because it is their response or relation to Cade that defines Cade's character. Yet, it is also feasible to say that to an extent Shakespeare does elevate their characters. For, as commentators upon Cade's words and observers of his character, their characters seem to embody the audience: for, what they say about Cade could have been articulated by anyone present in the audience. As such, their characters are operating both in the *platea*-world of the stage and the *locus*-world of the play: they belong to the play's mob, but also, implicitly, to the theatre crowd. Finally, what all this reveals is that in the staged crowd we can recognise a network of relations that are established among the characters on the stage, between the characters and the audience, between the playwright and the audience, and between the playwright and his characters. Indeed, this symbolic network of relations is evident in the space of Nick's and Weaver's characters, and in the space of Cade's character. Another dramatic relation, or another dramatic 'Thou' creates Cade, too: York, whose ambition is caricatured in Cade's character.

The idea that even the common people seem to disapprove of the idea of York coming to the throne is evident in the episode when two petitioners come to Gloucester with their petitions (1.3). Although they mistake Suffolk for Gloucester, nevertheless, they lay out their 'supplications' (1.3. 13), and one of them, a petitioner called Peter, gives a false petition against his 'master Thomas/ Horner, for saying that the Duke of York was rightful/ heir to the crown' and for saying 'that the King was an usur[p]er' (1.3. 25-231). Even though the accusation is actually false, on a dramatic level it is suggestive. It indicates that the common people, unlike many of the Lords, remain loyal to the King. Additionally, it shows that they are not ignorant of the state affairs, but are aware of the conspiracies going on in the Court, perhaps even more so than the King .[103]

Similarly, in 3.2 after Gloucester has been murdered Warwick and Salisbury enter with '*many Commons*' and report to the King that Gloucester was 'traitorously [...]

[103] See also 4.1 70-146, which portrays the common men acting as judges, but also shows that the common men are not ignorant, but that they know what is going on among the nobility.

murdered/ By Suffolk and the Cardinal Beaufort's means' (3.2. 123-24). More importantly, the description of their reaction conveys their sense of affiliation to the King:

> The commons, like an angry hive of bees
> That want their leader, scatter up and down
> And care not who they sting in his revenge.
> Myself have calmed their spleenful mutiny,
> Until they hear the order of his death
> (3.2. 125-29)

The implication is that the leader is wanted, for he is not found in the present King. This is why 'the commons' are angry. Moreover, as in the "bee" metaphor of *Henry V* (5.0. 27) in which the plebeians are depicted as a "swarm", threatening and unpleasant, here 'the commons' are also depicted in a negative light: 'scatter[ed] up and 'down', chaotic and confused.[104] Yet, Shakespeare's choice of words to describe the people's response as 'spleenful mutiny' suggests that another interpretation is possible. The phrase expresses not only their anger, but their support of the King, and their fear for his well-being. They, therefore, want justice and to find out who killed Gloucester. The point here is that Shakespeare shows this specific revolt is an 'aggrieved revolt', and for the reasons mentioned above it is acceptable.[105] It is, therefore, a revolt against the disobedience of Lord Suffolk, and as such it is a rebellion against the rebel.

Soon Salisbury enters '[*from the Commons, again crying,/* "Down with Suffolk! Down with Suffolk!"]' (3.2. 242), the people believing that Suffolk is responsible for Gloucester's death. Salisbury informs the King:

> They will by violence tear him [Suffolk] from you palace
> [...].
> And mere instinct of love and loyalty,
> Free from a stubborn opposite intent,
> As being thought to contradict your liking,
> Makes them thus forward in his banishment.
> They say, in care of your most royal person.
> (3.2. 246-54)

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[104] William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, ed. by T. W. Craik (London: Arden, 1995). Canterbury's description of the ideal "bee-hive" world (1.2. 183-214), which he uses as an analogy of the contemporary society, as a justification of the hierarchical society, and as an explanation why "obedience" and "subjected" position of citizens is right and honourable, will be discussed in detail in the final chapter.
[105] See Knowles's note on 'spleenful mutiny' in the Arden edition of the play, p. 263.

The people here act again as dutiful and exemplary subjects and as guardians of the King, just as Canterbury in *Henry V* desires the King's subjects to act (1.2. 183-214). They say thus: 'were there a serpent seen, with forked tongue,/ That slyly glided towards your majesty' (3.2. 259-60) they would protect the King 'from such fell serpents as false Suffolk is' (l. 266). The commons then demand 'an answer from the king' (l. 270), and the King it seems gladly decides to answer their demands (3.2. 279-88). The whole episode is significant for the fact that it demonstrates that the common people disapprove of a plot to overthrow the King. This is important on a dramatic level as it pre-empts the rebels' reaction to Cade's propositions. It shows that the people's reaction in this scene is consistent with the rebels' in the staged crowd scene: specifically with Nick and Weaver's response to Cade's rebellion in Act 4.

On the stage, then, the mob has the role of mediator in the play's sermon against York's disobedience (not against legitimised popular revolt such as the one illustrated above). Furthermore, what this indicates is that the staged crowd scene in this play, on a symbolic level, protests against York's revolt. It is a mutiny against mutiny. Now we can say that the staged crowd scene seriously questions the business of the mob. With York's experiment – employing Cade to test public opinion towards him (3.1. 346-56) – the dramatist, perhaps, simultaneously tests his audiences' attitude towards an insurrection such as York's. The abandonment of York's authority (through the rebels' abandonment of Cade) is meant to happen *collectively*. What needs to be acknowledged, then, is that the crowd scene becomes a moment in which the stage and the audience are united in their support of the King, and as such are part of one collective, or of one body. Indeed, Cade's vision of a society founded on treason, disorder and anarchy (4.2. 59-77) would most probably amuse the audience, but also it would prompt them to question York's ambition.[106] Yet, the audience, especially the groundlings, might find Cade's vision alluring at times, for he promises: 'there shall be in England seven half-/ penny loaves sold for a penny; the three-hooped pot/ shall have ten hoops, and I will make it felony to drink/ small beer' (l. 60-3). However, his vision overall is unworkable, and it offers everything but security and stability: only in the confined space of the theatre may his vision have an

[106] At times 'Cade is one of the most articulate social critics in Shakespeare; but when he turns from criticism to action we see that his vision, though penetrating, is narrow', Alexander Leggatt, *Shakespeare's Political Drama: the History Plays and the Roman Plays* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 18-19.

appeal. In short, here the on-stage crowd, with sceptical members in the mob, now comes to represent the off-stage crowd.

Of course, the audience does not relate to the entire mob; and even though not all rebels are united about the cause they are to fight for, all are united in their thirst for violence, just like the mob in *Julius Caesar.* Thus, soon they turn to violent thoughts and even the witty and sarcastic Butcher says: 'The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers' (4.2. 71), for fun it seems. So even though Butcher sees no authority in Cade's figure, and has previously mocked him, he does not actually care. This is a turning point when the "redeemed" mob becomes like any other: they kill for no valid reason. After the rabble finds out that Lord Saye speaks Latin rather than English they rage and all shout that they want his head off (4.2. 162) - because he 'speaks Latin' (4.7. 53).[107] Like the mob in *Julius Caesar*, who in their ignorance murder the innocent poet Cinna (3.3), this mob now fits into the category of a many-headed monster that poses a threat to the general order.

This representation of the mob is complex because we have an image of a generically bloodthirsty mob (as the mob in 3.3 in *Julius Caesar*) which is now juxtaposed with the fracture within the mob. It is criticised from within, by Cade's own men. When Stafford and his brother proclaim war against Cade and his rebels, and send their army, unlike the rest of the enraged mob, Butcher, sceptical as ever, starts judging the situation realistically. He esteems that the rebels are not strong enough for the war: 'they are all in order and march towards us' (4.2. 177), and Cade counterpoints this with what could be a classic mob slogan: 'But then are we in order when we are most out of/ order' (4.2. 178-79). This is witty but unlikely to reassure Butcher and the audience in its rightness, of course. Moreover, the line is significant because it sums up the intellect of the mob, and their destructive power. Being 'in order when out of order' also implies that apart from hierarchical order, there are different kinds of order to be considered, like for instance the stage performance in which different rules apply. As Cade's remark implies, the stage, specifically the crowd scene, is a place in which the mob's chaos is contained and

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[107] See 4.7. 21-42; after listing Saye's crimes against the well-being of the state, Cade actually focuses our attention to injustices done to the people, and for the first time he seems to make sense. He claims that the illiterate people were mistreated and killed simply because they were illiterate. If this was the reason, than this treatment of the people was wrong and outrageous. However, if this all is Cade's invention then it is solely a part of his twisted rhetorical skills, which is implied in the last two lines in which he claims that man is worth living if he or she is incapable to read.

controlled. Indeed, Cade's character now shows a meta-theatrical awareness, and it is this aspect that brings him closer to the audience.

Almost their ally, he points to the fact that the chaos that his mutiny causes is only allowed within 'this wooden O' (*Henry V.* 1.0. 13). This is why his character claims that although their act stages disorder, paradoxically it is still in order and purposeful. Indeed, as already suggested, what is important to bear in mind is that on the stage Cade's character is the dramatist's puppet used to reject what Cade in the play represents.[108] Their following response not only conveys their cause as a caricature of a real rebellion, but it also reveals to us, indeed, the dramatic function of the mob. Thus, Cade orders:

> Away with him! [....]
> The proudest peer in the realm shall not wear a head on
> his shoulders, unless he pay me tribute; there shall not
> a maid be married, but she shall pay to me her
> maidenhead ere they have it; men shall hold of me *in*
> *capite*; and we charge and command that their wives be
> as free as heart can wish or tongue can tell
> [....]
>
> ALL O brave!
> (4.7. 113-21)

What needs to be recognised here is that Cade's words reveal what he, and perhaps we too, expect from the rebels as a typical bloodthirsty mob. However, the rebels resist this. Through their response Shakespeare in fact detaches them from this generalisation. Were there no irony in the rebels' response, these words would simply express a typical reaction of a violent multitude. With 'O brave!' the mob here has a dramatic function to subvert the mob's enterprise (Cade's and indeed, the rebels'), and by doing so, to defy generic representations of the gullible mob. For, their mocking responses to Cade's ideas show that the rebels, and certainly the audience in the theatre, believe in everything but Cade's 'brave new world'.[109] Miranda's excitement and naïve remark, 'O, brave new world!' somehow

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108 "Cade" of the *locus*-world of the play and "Cade" of the *platea*-world of the stage are not identical in that they have different functions. The former acts as one of the key performer's of the play's plot, the latter acts as a *mediator* between the stage and the audience in that it symbolically "incorporates" the audience on the stage. Both "Cade[s]" coexist in the space of Cade's character, and this multidimensional and "relational" quality is precisely what makes a staged character, and what we need to bear in mind when analysing Shakespearean characters, including the character of the crowd.

109 Perhaps we could read the mob's response in the opposite direction, as a sincere response to Cade. Yet, given the nature of Cade's proposals, this seems very unlikely. As interjection, however, "brave" can have a meaning of 'Spanish *bravo* "courageous untamed"', see Oxford *Compact English Dictionary*, p. 114.

reflects this, but there is nothing brave and exciting in Cade's new world, and most importantly, there is nothing naïve in the crowd's response to it.[110] The rebellious crowd now has one voice, but in that they ('ALL') *collectively* voice their criticism. Let down by his own men Cade is let down at the highest level. I suggest that with this representation the dramatist redeems the mob. The mob's fickle nature in the play is now overshadowed by its role on the stage. In other words, the rabble is rescued precisely by its *dramatic role* as critic of Cade's vision. This *collective* body includes the audience, and now even Cade's character. Undercover the staged crowd scene raises a symbolic mutiny against the mutiny that the play presents.

As the scene now focuses on the dramatic role of Cade's character, we shall examine how Shakespeare dramatises the rebel-leader, in relation to the rebels, and in relation to the theatrical context: the staged crowd scene. Knowles points out that

> The historical Jack Cade was rather different from the rebels of 1381. [...He was] impressively personable and articulate [...]. He is heard insisting on the principle of non-resistance to divinely appointed rulers and on individuals' responsibility to "follow reason" and "subdue their wylles" and "lust", rather than allow the vagaries of Fortune to rule over them.[111]

According to Fitter, 'hilariously delegitimated, "Cade" warps into a figure of opportune farce and fun on the margins of hard political grievance. The last thing he can stand for, as Shakespeare is at pains to show us, is the authentic vision of the masses, who revel, rather, in his exposé'.[112] Certainly Cade's character is not 'the authentic vision of the masses', however, our reading is primarily concerned with Shakespeare's Cade as an embodiment of

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[110] 'O wonder!/ How many goodly creatures are there here!/ How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world/ That has such people in't' (5.1. 182-85), see William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, ed. by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan (London: Arden, 2001).

[111] Knowles, the Introduction to the Arden edition of *2 Henry VI*, p. 90. In addition, comparing historical Cade to Shakespeare's he writes: 'By the 1590s Cade's rebellion was generally seen more in political than theological terms [...]. Jack Cade was turned by Shakespeare, without any indication in the sources, into a "clothier" and a "shearman" (4.2.4, 124) [...]. Both declared themselves kings, both were opposed to learning, both proclaimed that all would be held in common and that money was to be banned. Given these parallels, it is unlikely that Shakespeare's presentation of Cade as a clothier could be made without some of the audience seeing such parallels implied in a richly compounded stage figure. Shakespeare pointedly concentrates on the anti-literacy of the 1381 rebels and adds a theme of his own, the critique of a culture that would make legible its social distinctions through the clothing of its citizens', p. 90-91.

[112] Fitter, "'Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation': Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*', p. 197.

a disobedient subject, and a character whom the dramatist uses to examine the nature of the early modern subject.[113] It is focused specifically on the space of the character, which allows Shakespeare to represent Cade as a critic who negates Cade-the rebel without a cause or authority, a rebel-leader who is in fact de-authorised by his own men.

As a disobedient subject he assumes an authority to which he has no right. As such this subject in fact challenges the authority and the subjected position that he finds himself in. As in *Henry V*, Shakespeare uses the bee-hive metaphor to refer to subject-position in the hierarchical society of his day. Cade says: 'some say the bee stings, but I say 'tis the/ bee's wax; for I did but seal once to a thing and I was/ never mine own man since' (4.2. 75-77). With this statement Cade not only subverts his credibility as a rebel, but he implicitly subverts the credibility of York's claim to the throne. So, that he once sealed 'to a thing' and 'was never' his 'own man since' means that once he agreed with York's plan to overthrow the King, he literally lost part of his own identity as a subject: and with it the sense of the 'absolute allegiance' and loyalty to the King.

Shakespeare, thus, uses space of Cade's character to criticise both York and Cade. Moreover, Cade is a caricature of a revolutionary, because revolutionaries are seen as dignified figures on the political stage and by definition revolutions attempt to *promise* order and safety for the people. Cade does not, and Shakespeare, it seems, does not let him. For Cade's insurgence is instigated by the disobedient York. In his reading of *Henry VI*, Alexander Leggatt indicates that 'from the beginning the Yorkist cause is shadowed with irony', and the dramatist's intention seems to be to use Cade 'as an ironic commentary on the main action [York's plot].'[114] Moreover, he suggests that 'though he [Cade] takes off on his own, he is initially the agent of York, and there are indications that he represents a dark comic underside of the great man.'[115] Yet, what is more significant is that as York's ally and as York's act, Cade embodies treason, and his act is sedition, not revolution. Hence, on the stage Cade's character undermines everything he embodies.

Within this portrayal of the rebel-leader, the play rejects public protest that does not contribute to the public good but generates chaos and anarchy: Shakespeare is not against authorized protest (as we have seen for instance in our discussion of *Coriolanus*, and in this play in his depiction of the commons' protest against the murder of Gloucester), but he is, it

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[113] Fitter's phrase, "'Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation': Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*', p. 197.
[114] Leggatt, *Shakespeare's Political Drama: the History Plays and the Roman Plays*, p. 13-16.
[115] Leggatt, *Shakespeare's Political Drama: the History Plays and the Roman Plays*, p. 16.

seems, against a rebellion such as York's, as it is dramatised in Cade's performance. Put simply, if the change is generated by greed for power Shakespeare disapproves it: a good crowd – like the 'angry hive' - seeks to be subjected to proper order, beneath a good "leader". Indeed, the good crowd seeks a restoration of order and justice, not their overthrow. This is why the play, as we shall see, eventually condemns Cade, whose association with York's treason is the main purpose of his presence on the stage. He is a tool of somebody else's ambition to attain power.

Nevertheless, Cade seems to affect the people and momentarily wins them over when he attacks Lord Saye: 'Fellow kings, I tell you that that Lord Saye hath/ gelded the commonwealth and made it an eunuch; and/ more than that, he can speak French, and therefore he/ is a traitor' (4.2. 154-57).[116] Stafford exclaims, this is 'gross and miserable ignorance!' (l. 158). The latent idea behind Cade's words is that English, rather than a foreign language, should be spoken and praised. By condemning Lord Saye's ability to speak French, he shows his ignorance, and that this is not a legitimate source of protest. However, his attack on Saye is also clever because it targets his listeners' patriotic feelings. He finds Lord Saye's attitude offensive precisely because Saye looks down upon the common people and, it seems, upon the 'mother tongue.'[117] Saye's contempt towards common men is depicted in 4.7 when he addresses 'men of Kent' (4.7. 50) and refers to the region as '*bona terra, mala gens*' (4.7. 52). In his note Knowles indicates that the Latin phrase means: '"a good land, a bad people"'.[118] Thus, Saye's choice to use Latin rather than English reveals his contempt towards the (Kentish) people, and also that he does not care whether the common people, the rebels, understand him or not. However, Cade's remark (that Saye is a traitor because he speaks French) seems to reflect the contemporary public attitude towards use of Latin rather than English. In their chapter on the beginnings of English language Robert McCrum, Robert MacNeil and William Cran document: 'only seventeen years after the poet's death [i.e. Chaucer's death], Henry V became the first English king since Harold to use English in his official documents, including his will. In the summer of 1415, Henry crossed the Channel to fight the French. In the first letter he

116 Cartelli offers a different reading; he writes: 'As opposed to Cade's riotously disposed murder of Lord Say [...] the capture and execution of Suffolk is largely presented as something in the order of a high-mindedly motivated public service undertaken to advance the interests and concerns of commons', see Cartelli's 'Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*', p. 327.

117 William Cran, Robert McCrum, and Robert MacNeil, *The Story of English* (London: Faber and Faber, and BBC Books, 1992), pp. 84-85.

118 See Knowles's note on the line 52 in his edition of the play, p. 322.

dictated on French soil he chose, symbolically, not to write in the language of his enemies. This national statement indicates a turning-point, as decisive in its own way as [king] Alfred's use of English in the ninth century [...]. Henry V's example clearly made an impression on his people. There is a resolution made by London brewers [which expresses this], dating from the year of Henry's death, 1422, which adopts English by decree'.[119]

Cade's idea of regaining their 'ancient freedom' (4.8. 26) only momentarily brings the rebels back to him (4.8. 33), but when Old Clifford evokes a sense of foreign threat, posed by French, and in this way appeals to the crowd's patriotic feelings, Cade eventually loses the mob's support. He says: 'I thought ye would never have given o'er/ these arms till you had recovered your ancient freedom;/ but you are all recreants and dastards and delight to/ live in slavery to the nobility' (4.8. 25-28). Again, just like Brutus, Cade's definition of 'subjection' is a life in slavery, and his character's implicit question is in how far subjection to the King *is* dignified and whether it can be unconditional. However, this issue cannot be resolved at this point, and we now anticipate a figure of authority to resolve the issue. Indeed, even the name of the King is enough to remind the people of their duty as subjects. When Old Clifford addresses the crowd in order to win them to the King's side (4.8. 34-7) he evokes the name of Henry V, i.e. the name of Henry VI's father rather than Henry VI's name. He says: '"God save his majesty!"/ Who hateth him and honours not his father,/ Henry the Fifth, that made all France to quake' (4.8. 15-17)? This is Clifford's last resource to remind the people of their duty to this King. For this reason Henry V is used as an authority for Henry VI. Here most important for us is a recognition that the name of the King has a real impact on the crowd. It evokes a sense of loyalty to a divinely ordained king (even when he fails as king), because his authority is derived from divine sources and as such cannot be questioned.[120]

The end of the Cade sequence illustrates once again the dramatic significance of the name of the King in the debate about subjected position and subjects' duty in early modern Britain. In *2 Henry VI* the name of the king can be seen actually as a reminder of what the king's subject is - an obedient and honourable citizen of the kingdom. The fundamental idea is not only that kings are ordained by divine powers, but that the king's subjects are

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119 For this and more see William Cran, Robert McCrum, and Robert MacNeil's "The Mother Tongue": *The Story of English*, p. 84-85.

120 Of course, this brings us to another ardent discussion of the time, and of modern critical debates indeed, which is -whether Henry V can be seen as a divinely appointed ruler since he is a son of Henry IV, the King who came to power by overthrowing a king, Richard II -a York type of a figure thus.

automatically *ordained* in their subjected position by these same divine powers. This is why the play condemns the rebellion, and with it York and Cade, because ultimately it is rebellion against God. Therefore, the dramatic purpose of evoking the name of the king on the stage serves to remind the audience of their sense of obedience to their monarch.

It is of no surprise then that the play ends with the following question. The Duke of Buckingham asks York: 'Why thou, being a subject as I am,/ Against thy oath and true allegiance sworn,/ Should raise so great a power without his leave/ Or dare to bring thy force so near the court' (5.1. 19-22). This can be an implicit question to the audience. Indeed, in the light of such 'true allegiance' the play asks the audience, through its dramatisation of Cade's rebellion, how could York's treason possibly be justified? Moreover, Buckingham's question also points to how essential a relationship between the King and his subjects is, and most importantly, how important it is for the benefit of the country that subjects act honourably and in support of the King, and vice versa: how important it is for the King to lead the people, or rule over them justly – the "bees" want their leader. At the same time, the staged crowd scene in Act 4 challenges York's belief that he is a rightful heir to the throne. With this the dramatist suggests to the crowd in the theatre to challenge York's decision to disobey the King. However, how does the dramatist reconcile the idea of obeying even an ineffective king like Henry VI? The answer is in dramatisation of the King, who we shall see, now becomes a kind and caring monarch ready to pardon his disloyal subjects.

The King's ambassadors, Buckingham and old Clifford, arrive and announce to Cade that they come as 'ambassadors from the King/ Unto the commons, whom thou hast misled,/ And here pronounce free pardon to them all,/ That will forsake thee and go home in peace' (4.8. 7-10). On the stage this is a manifesto of the King's good will and of his care for his people. But why this sudden favourable portrayal of the King whose name cannot even be evoked in order to claim respect in the people? Censorship of plays could be an explanation, and if nothing else it would make the dramatist portray the king as likeable and sympathetic figure. Earlier in the play when Buckingham asks the King how he will reply to the rebels' supplication, the King answers rather emotionally and shows sympathies towards the common men: 'I'll send some holy bishop to entreat,/ For God forbid so many simple souls/ Should perish by the sword' (4.4. 8-10). There is a certain fondness in his reference to the people as 'simple souls', which is again conveyed when a Messenger arrives and informs them that Cade and his rebels are in Southwark; that Cade 'calls your

grace usurper, openly' (4.4. 29), and the King again replies fondly, as a father who is upset with his unruly child: 'O, graceless men! They know not what they do' (4.4. 37), his words deliberately echoing Christ's words on the cross: 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.'[121] Indeed, the rebels in the Cade scene know not what they do (and they do not care), but what is important is that the audience does know.

This favourable representation of the King at the end of the play reflects Shakespeare's (or his censors') desire that the audience retain their belief in the rightness of the existence of the anointed ruler. Perhaps because, being a subject, he believed in it himself, or at least because he knew it was his duty to act as if he believed in it.[122] Henry's final words when addressing old Clifford and '*the* [repentant] *multitudes with halters about their necks*' (4.9) confirm this:

> Soldiers, this day have you redeemed your lives
> And showed how well you love your prince and country.
> Continue still in this so good a mind,
> And Henry, though he be unfortunate,
> Assure yourselves will never be unkind.
> (4.9. 15-19)

The King's final words are meant to show that he is not only just and 'kind', but also that he has a belief in his subjects, for whom he cares, and whom he calls his 'soldiers'. At this point, then, "bees" want their leader, and Henry VI becomes it. This is what the audience would certainly remember. What needs to be acknowledged at this moment is that the mob, redeemed by the King's forgiveness, now can return to its original state and become an honourable multitude of the King's subjects. Based on this we can now define what, according to the play, a 'subject' is. Symbolically, a subject is a "soldier", a respectable and loyal member and in service of the kingdom and the nation. This implies that actually there is a purpose in subjection, and in this light 'subjection' gains positive connotations, and as opposed to slavery and loss of freedom, it becomes related to qualities such as dignity and respect. In the end, even though the play portrays a violent and gullible mob who is

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[121] *The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version: Luke 23. 32 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[122] As Fitter points out in 'Emergent Shakespeare and Politics of Protest: *2 Henry VI* in Historical Contexts', 'on its surface, the work wears the appearance of loyalist drama [...]. Such reassuring fidelities were the condition, however, of evading censorship's proscription', p. 129.

temporarily conquered by Cade's craze, the play retains its belief in the people as respectable subjects of the King and of the nation.

The fact that the rabble ultimately dismisses Cade, does not indicate that they are miraculously redeemed as human beings (as their violence demonstrates). Rather, their rejection of Cade's promised liberty is symbolic. The audience now realises that *subjection* is always a better solution both for its own sake and for the benefit of the country as a whole. Indeed, in his representation, Shakespeare depicts the mob's typical behaviour, but also he decides to show a redemptive side to the common men, which, according to the staged crowd scene, resides in their deep-rooted sense of obedience to their king. As such, for the dramatist, every soul was worth rescuing. The discussion of *Sir Thomas More's* crowd scene in the third and final part of this chapter will develop this matter further.

Finally, Cade's final remark on the crowd's behaviour in the staged crowd scenes is almost uniform in Shakespeare's representations of the mob. Indeed, Cade's final chorus-like question-comment, which could have been an '[*aside*]' as well, sums up the mob: 'Was ever feather so lightly blown to and fro/ as this multitude?' (4.8. 55-56). These words could easily have been Brutus's final words too, after Anthony's victory. We might also ask, 'was ever' a character 'so lightly blown to and fro/ as this' embodiment of the rebellious multitude: Jack Cade.

### *Sir Thomas More*:
### 'We Yeeld, and Desire His Highnesse Mercie'

Specific to *Sir Thomas More*, by comparison to *Julius Caesar* and *2 Henry VI*, is the fact that it is not a play that portrays a battle over legitimacy. Rather, it portrays the common people in their struggle for justice in their protest against what they perceive as foreign invasion. Moreover, in this play the mob acts on its own initiative, is solely in charge of the revolt, and not manipulated by another party as is the mob in the previously discussed staged crowd scenes. However, whilst the two previous plays are Shakespeare's work, *Sir Thomas More* is a collaborative work, and Shakespeare's contribution (as Hand D) of the crowd scene in Addition II is widely acknowledged.[123]

[123] See Vittorio Gabrieli and Giorgio Melchiori's detailed analysis of the issue of authorship in the Introduction to the Revels edition of *Sir Thomas More*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990) p. 12-24. See also Nina Levine's 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and Sir Thomas More', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 58 (2007), 31-64 (p. 35-38). 'That the original version of the play was written in

The key question is: what is the implication behind the fact that Shakespeare wrote the play's *crowd* scene? Does it point to its dramatic importance in his drama?[124] Furthermore, the play's historical source, Hall's *Chronicle, Containing the History of England to the End of the Reign of Henry VIII* recounts no "crowd scene" such as we find in the play, but reports at length the events leading to the uprising, the quelling of it and its aftermath.[125] As we shall see, unlike Hall's report, the play puts a great emphasis on the quelling scene, the staged crowd scene in 2.3. However, the question is what would be the implications if the crowd scene was not staged but reported, as Edmund Tilney, the Crown's official censor of the play, wanted it to be?[126] The play which *is* about the common people, would hardly achieve its dramatic climax had there been no staged crowd scene.

In terms of representing the people prior to the crowd scene, they are introduced individually, by their names, and we learn about their grievances. Despite the fact that in the crowd scene the members of the crowd are at times individuated, they are represented as a crowd. As Nina Levine suggests, *More* 'manages to rewrite the faceless multitude of chronicle history as an individuated commonality identified not only by social status but, more importantly, by participation in shared activity, by the joint labor of their protest. Again, Tilney's markings offer interpretive direction, for it is at this moment - when the citizens on stage form a collective [...] that Tilney begins striking out whole speeches until eventually the entire scene has been cut.'[127] This representation of a rebellious 'collective' in the staged crowd scene is my main interest.

As in is *2 Henry VI*'s staged crowd scene (4.2), *More*'s staged crowd scene (2.3) is concerned with the mob and with undermining the mob's affair: it "tames" the audience with the fear of the mob. Furthermore, as in our discussions of *2 Henry VI* and *Julius Caesar*, in this play the word 'crowd' is also associated with a threat to public order and the

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Munday's hand not later than 1593' is generally accepted, however, as Gabrieli and Melchiori point out, even though the most likely date of all additions is 1594, the question of date 'remains open.', p. 27 and 12.

[124] It is probable that *Sir Thomas More*'s crowd scene could be the second crowd scene that Shakespeare wrote; the first being *2 Henry VI*'s (1592), followed by *Richard II*'s (1595), *Henry V*'s and *Julius Caesar*'s (1599), *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s (1606-7), and finally *Coriolanus*'s (1608-9).

[125] The sections from Hall's *Chronicle* that will be used later in this chapter are from Alexander Dyce's edition of the play, *Sir Thomas More: A Play* (London: Frederick Shoberl Junior, 1844); see 'Illustrations of the Earlier Scenes of the Play', pp. vii-xviii.

[126] For more see Gabrieli and Melchiori's Introduction to the Revels edition of *Sir Thomas More*, p. 17-20, and Nina Levine's 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 58 (2007), 31-64 (p. 40-42).

[127] Levine's 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 49.

danger of insurrection. This issue becomes the main problem and the focal point of the play, which only the crowd scene can resolve. This scene is profoundly concerned with the citizens' duty as subjects of the King, with the relationship between the authority and the people, as the foundation of safe life and public order, and finally with the authority in the theatre, the audience.

## Critical Responses to *Sir Thomas More*

Literary criticism has been extensively focused on the question of the authorship of the play. [128] J. M. Nosworthy, however, recognises the importance of the crowd scene, and argues that Shakespeare's 'sole intent [...] was to give shape and dramatic urgency to a piece not without quality but desperately pedestrian in parts.'[129] In relation to the staging of the scene, he acknowledged the problems related to censorship and the authorities' approval: 'The appearances of Shakespeare's insurrection scene are in fact deceptive, and the notion that he was commissioned to supply something which would pass muster with the authorities in place of something which would not is untenable, as comparison of the two versions will show.'[130]

Ian Munro points out that 'the section of the play that deals with the rebellion is very similar in structure to the representation of the Peasants' Revolt in the contemporaneous [*Life and*] *Death of Jack Straw*, in that it begins with the local (and justified) grievances of the commons before proceeding to the reaction of the authorities to the insurrection', and adds, 'while *Jack Straw* moves quickly to establish the inherent depravity of its rebels, *Sir Thomas More* works to maintain a guarded loyalty to the leaders of its riots.'[131] Most importantly, Munro takes into account the presence of the audience: '*Sir Thomas More* envelops rioters, strangers, and audience alike in the mantle of civic generosity and urban mutuality; the description of Londoners as strangers themselves would have had strong resonance in a city increasingly composed of immigrants.'[132] My discussion acknowledges the role of the audience in staging the crowd scene, and yet it also

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[128] See for instance Thomas Merriam's 'Munday and the Oxford Shakespeare *More*', *Notes and Queries*, 53 (2006), 470-74; Scott McMillin's '"The Book of *Sir Thomas More*": A Theatrical View', *Modern Philology*, 68 (1970), 10-24; Gabrieli and Melchiori's Introduction to the Revels edition of *Sir Thomas More*, p. 12-17.
[129] J. M. Nosworthy, 'Shakespeare and *Sir Thomas More*', *The Review of English Studies*, 6 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), 12-25 (p. 25).
[130] Nosworthy, 'Shakespeare and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 12.
[131] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 44.
[132] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 44.

invites a reconsideration of the play's staged crowd scene as an important dramaturgical device.

Some scholars, however, have acknowledged the centrality of the question of 'how Londoners articulate their position as citizens as well as subjects.'[133] Levine suggests that *More* offers a 'serious treatment of civic themes', and 'in its concern with resistance as well as submission, the play marks out a competing, and more radical, commonality in the position of *citizen*'.[134] She also points out that 'even popular protest, the most likely candidate for an authentic citizen game, loses its agency when the collective expression of grievance is understood primarily in theatrical terms.'[135] To suggest, however, that the popular protests were a part of 'citizen[s'] game[s]' is to say that creating disorder was a pastime for the citizens. My interest is specifically in how and why this 'common grievance' is appropriated and quelled in the play's crowd scene.

**_Sir Thomas More_'s Staged Crowd Scene: 2.3**

The crowd scene opens with the 'frowning vulgar brow' of 'the displeasèd commons of the city' (1.3. 4-8), whom John Lincoln calls to mutiny. Justifying their rebellion and disobedience, he says: 'these bastards of dung [the foreigners] - as you know [...] have/ infected us, and it is our infection [that] will make the city shake,/ which partly comes through the eating of parsnips' (2.3. 15-18). Lincoln thus excuses chaos, which they have caused, and displaces the blame onto the foreigners. What is important to remember is that although the citizens' complaint is well founded, the staged crowd scene is more concerned with the fact that the citizens, as true subjects of the King, have no right to act as judges. Indeed, the question that the play poses is whether the citizens in fact have a right to rebel when they are wronged. As such, this play, like *Julius Caesar* and *2Henry VI*, brings to the fore the issue of obedience and the subjects' duty.

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133 Levine, 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 31. Levine argues that '*More* offers a way to extend recent work on both collaborative writing and popular protest in order to include a more fully articulated account of collective individuation, one that acknowledges the messiness, contradictions, and actual labor behind collaboration's "Art and Mystery."', p. 38.

134 Levine, 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 37 and p. 39. 'Citizenship, in its legal sense, depended on being admitted into the "freedom" of a company,', Levine adds, 'by way of apprenticeship, and carried numerous privileges, most notably the right to trade within the city. Citizenship was also defined negatively, in relation to the city's alien population, the so-called strangers perceived as threatening the livelihoods and privileges of the citizenry within.', p. 40.

135 Levine, 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 32.

This crowd scene shows that key to quelling the mob is in the relationship between the people and the authorities. For instance, prior to the moment of confrontation between the city elders and the rebels, the Lord Mayor, Surrey and Shrewsbury try to get the crowd's attention and address them. None of them succeeds until Sheriff More speaks up. This is because, we learn, More is 'in especial favour with the people" (1.3. 87). As Doll says, More is a good man and worthy of listening to because, she remembers, "A keeps a plentiful shrievalty, and 'a/ made my brother Arthur Watchins sergeant Safe's yeoman' (2.3. 47-8). The nature of his relationship with the people is dramatically important, and it is further developed and dramatised in the crowd scene.

More's technique and approach to the people is clever and tactful - he understands the mind-set of the angry citizens (2.3. 23-4 and 2.2. 8-10). Inviting the rebel leaders to calm the people, he challenges their authority: 'You that have voice [i.e. authority] and credit with the number,/ Command them to a stillness' (2.3. 56-7). The following challenge, paradoxically, comes from the rebel leader himself; Lincoln says: 'A plague on them, they will not hold their peace,/ The devil cannot rule them' (2.3. 58-9). Thus, Lincoln's character now challenges the mob's authority, underscoring its volatility and disorder; but this is for dramatic effect. Shakespeare indeed uses the same technique found in the *2 Henry VI*'s staged crowd scene. He creates a fracture within the body of rebels in order to show its weakness, which is the rebels' failure as subjects. However, this fracture does not merely reveal that this crowd questions its own venture, but it suggests to the audience that the mob's violence is not a solution and remains unacceptable. For this reason Lincoln links the rebels to the devil. His implicit dismissal of his own authority and control of the people is now voiced by More: 'Then what a rough and a riotous charge have you,/ To lead those that the devil cannot rule'? (2.3. 60-1).

Nevertheless, whilst More questions Lincoln, he also shows respect to the rebel-chief. By inviting Lincoln to order silence he slowly builds trust between him and the citizens, but also between him and the audience in the theatre. Shakespeare indeed shows how More gradually builds on this relationship, which proves vital to winning over the mob. To demonstrate how paradoxical their behaviour is, More points out that whilst they claim they want settlement and a resolution to the problem, through violence and abuse of the foreigners, they create a problem and thus become part of it (2.3. 67-8). More's character is reminding the audience that violence only breeds more trouble, and also that the rebel's power is illusionary and counter-productive. As Surrey puts it upon hearing

about the insurrection: 'I hear they mean to fire the Lombards' houses./ O power, what art thou in a madman's eyes:/ Thou mak'st the plodding idiot bloody wise' (2.3. 27-29). There is no sense and reason in rebellion, and no authority in a rebellious figure.

Furthermore, More is shown as an authoritative figure, but not as a politician, for, he does not flatter the crowd in order to win them over. Similarly to the King in *2Henry VI*, the dramatist represents him as a father figure. Fondly he addresses the raging men: 'Alas poor things, what is it you have got,/ Although we grant you get the thing you seek?' (2.3. 74-5), which is, 'the removing of the strangers' who take advantage of 'the poor handicrafts of the city' (2.3. 76-8). More in effect disarms this crowd: his authoritative words detract any sense of perceived power allowing them, and the audience, to understand they have no authority to enact justice. He reminds them who they are as subjects, whilst creating a space in which he makes their subjection seem most desirable. Put simply, to obey the authorities and to accept that they have no right to judge is in their own best interest. However, the problem here is in the irony of More's advice, because he himself rebels against the king.[136] This scene is, then, also important in establishing a counterpart to More's own judgement later on.

Unlike Brutus or Anthony, More is not in search of the people's approval which would confirm his political power, but, literally, in quelling their anger to save the city from further destruction. In the process, he reminds them, and the audience, who is *the* authority. Through the dramatisation of his interaction with the people the scene is set to show to the rebels what their duty and limitations as subjects to the King are. This all points to the fact that this crowd scene has a pragmatic and dramatic role in demonstrating how the problem of insurrection can be resolved: it becomes a focal point of the representation of the insurrection. It manages to contain, control and put an end to the public discontent, and it indirectly promotes a hierarchically ordered society, as one that seems most practical in terms of controlling rebellions and preserving public order.

Nevertheless, to lure the mob into questioning their own actions More attacks the rebels' conduct towards the foreigners as human beings. He evokes the crowd's empathy for the foreigners, and asks them to imagine themselves in the strangers' shoes, and the abusive strangers now become 'the wretched strangers' (2.3. 80), the wronged party. Indeed, he rebukes the rebels like children, and indicates that with their behaviour they:

[136] In relation to More's talk of obedience to the crowd in this scene (2.3), his own act of disobedience in Act 4.1 and 4.4 will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

> had taught
> How insolence and strong hand should prevail,
> How order should be quelled, and by this pattern
> Not one of you should live an aged man,
> For other ruffians
> [...]
> With selfsame hand
> [...]
> Would shark on you, and men like ravenous fishes
> Would feed on one another
> (2.3. 87-93)

Their brute force has a domino effect, then, and places them in a very vulnerable position. More's words are severe, but also caring; he convinces them that he is actually fond of them and does not want them harmed. Thus, he establishes the bond with the citizens, by showing that his authority fosters their well-being. Implicitly, this indicates that in the scene the rebels are treated as subjects, and, more importantly, that they are on the way to be converted to being true subjects again.

More's character seems to offer a warning both to the rebels and to the audience in the theatre of the dangers of violent insurrections. Most significantly, at this point the mob ceases to be mob. By cautioning the rebels of the dangers of the alien mob, he implicitly flatters them into thinking that he does not see them as rebels, but as citizens and subjects. He achieves this by appealing to their consciences and their collective sense of obedience, and thus manages to detach the mob from (being) the mob. The citizens are, thus, almost converted to their original position, respectful subjects of the King.

The following interaction between More and the citizens becomes the climax of the crowd scene and its debate on "subjection". To make the rebels understand how poor an example of the King's subjects they have become, he reminds them that they are God's subjects in their subjection to the King (2.3. 98-108), which is the standard position when it comes to the early modern tendency against disobedience. Shocked when reminded of their offence to God himself, the crowd succumbs (l. 104). After accusing them of the highest level of disobedience (l. 112-14), rising against God, he then, most spectacularly, invites them to purge themselves from their sin, disobedience, through a public apology, or collective confession: 'Wash your foul minds with tears [...] lift up for peace, and your

unreverent knees,/ Make them your feet. To kneel to be forgiven' (l. 116-19). 'The play's audience is urged to identify with Lincoln and the two Betts brothers as they bear silent witness to this abuse at the hands of strangers', but also, we could say, with theirs and the rebels' shared subjected position.[137] Moreover, by focusing on the rebels' position as subjects, the audience is asked to re-consider and question its own status as subjects of the King. This demonstrates why the staged crowd has a momentous place in stage performance and why it is relevant to its early modern audience: it engages with the issues most relevant to them. To Levine's point that 'More shifts the ground of obedience away from monarch, reconstituting the law in relation to the citizen, as well as to the subject', it is important to add that it is More's emphasis on the bond between the monarch and the subjects that in fact delivers 'the ground of obedience' back to this relationship, and in effect back to the monarch.[138]

More's character cleverly twists the actual problem, which is the foreigners' perceived abuse of the common people, into an accusation that the citizens fail in their duty as the King's subjects. With this Shakespeare shifts the audience's attention to the issue of subjection. The audience is reminded that the citizens' disobedience is an abuse of the subjects' pivotal duty, which is obedience to the King. In the crowd scene, therefore, the citizens are no longer simply rebels but emphatically represented as failed subjects. As such the staged crowd scene points to the fact that in early modern society the people are subjects *before* they are citizens, that their duty to the King and God goes before their duty to the society. The crowd scene implicitly calls the audience to empathise with the rebels, and hopefully, learn from them, and it indicates that the citizens' revolt is not justifiable even when the complaint is justified. The rebels themselves recognise this. Upon Lombard's threat to take his wife and the Mayor's wife, George Betts says he would have 'revenge their injury' (1.1. 36) were he not 'curbed by duty and obedience' (l. 51). Defending his male valour, his character acknowledges that the space of the subject is restrained, 'curbed' indeed by the law, that he, therefore, does not have freedom or power to punish.

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[137] The quotation is from Levine's 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 48.

[138] The quotation is from Levine's 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 40.

The question is how far, if at all, can the citizens be allowed to act on their own initiative, and rebel? Sherwin's words explain: 'It is not our lack of courage in the cause, but the strict/ obedience that we are bound to: I am the goldsmith whose/ wrongs you talked of, but how to redress yours or mine/ own is a matter *beyond all our abilities* [my italics]' (1.1. 75-8). That is, the citizens have no authority to exercise power: they cannot be 'right ministers of the law' and act as 'the principal' (2.1. 30-59). So, Sherwin is a rebel who is in fact *in favour* of obedience. He is not only a man with common sense, but dramatically as a character on the stage he, too, is meant to reveal a disunity within the mob. The fact that the rebel articulates this thought is radical, as is the case in the *2 Henry VI* crowd scene. It reveals a fracture within the mob, and becomes a critique from within, a lack of unity which can thus undermine the cause for revolt. Levine observes, 'the protesters recognize [...] that consort does not automatically confer consent: the "commons" may live together within the city and share their grievances, but they may not be of the same mind (as would subjects identified in the sovereign will, say).'[139] My point is that a representation of this 'differentiated whole' on the stage is meant to reveal why in its core the mob's business is dysfunctional: it is against the law, and ultimately against itself.

More's theatrical invitation for forgiveness is also an invitation for the audience to become part of the show (by putting themselves in the rebels' position). The author's concern with the audience's interaction is apparent from the fact that at this point in the scene the rebels are already quelled. However, More's sermon continues. From now on he is hardly ever challenged. Indeed, after warming up the crowd to his side, More's rhetoric turns harsher. He now goes back to the point of the authority, and asks again: 'What rebel captain,/ As mutinies are incident, by his name/ Can still the rout? Who will obey a traitor?' (l. 124-6). The fact that he is using general terms rather than specific ones, i.e. he talks about 'a traitor' as opposed to *the* traitor, indicates that he is addressing not only the rebels but the audience in the theatre too. In other words, More's character now directly asks the off-stage crowd how to question the morality of following a traitor. To add to this he makes them an embarrassment to the nation (l. 141-4). The crowd agrees with this and shouts they 'want to procure' their 'pardon', and Moore replies: 'Give up yourself to form, obey the magistrate,/ And there's no doubt but mercy may be found,/ If you so seek it' (l. 157-9). To

139 Levine's 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 53.

the audience the phrase give up yourself 'to form' would mean to act in accordance and within the boundaries of the law and in accordance with their subjected position.

The rebels are touched and redeemed. All shout: 'We yield, and desire his highness' mercy' (l. 160). More tells them that their yielding means they will be dispatched to several prisons until they hear from the King. Miraculously, the crowd 'most willingly' (l. 164) succumbs to this. It is unlikely that the crowd would so easily succumb, yet their reaction becomes symbolic and shows not only the ideal image of subjects, but suggests that being a subject is better than being banished. The phrase 'most willingly' makes their submission look almost like a kind of relief, so that the moment of submission itself becomes an epiphany. The audience is revealed who they as subjects are and that it should be 'most' natural 'willingly' to submit themselves to their duties as subjects. What they learn in addition is that they are part of the performance, and therefore, that they should, too, 'most willingly' submit themselves to their role in the theatrical occasion.

It is of no coincidence that the crowd's submission occurs in the staged crowd scene. In order to achieve the public reconciliation, the play needs the crowd scene. As a scene that is addressing the audience, and the relationship between early modern citizens and the authority, the crowd scene needs a spectacular image of submission to make it successful. The scene, however, is also there to please the ever present eyes of the censor who implicitly dictates a message *in favour* of submission. Within the theatrical occasion, the staged crowd scene, therefore, would carry a huge amount of responsibility. It has a dramaturgical function of representing the theatre crowd on the stage.[140] By contrast, had *More*'s crowd scene not been included, the play would have been but a report, or an adaptation of the *Chronicles*'s account of the Ill May Day. As Levine writes:

> The emendation would drain the content from Ill May Day by reducing it to an occasion for More's "good service" to the Crown, thus silencing the citizens and with it the network of cross-references connecting their protest to More's act of conscience. In substituting narrative for dramatic form, the change to a "short report" would further undermine the collective by re-presenting the multivoiced protest with the singular authority of an official account.[141]

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[140] As Gabrieli and Melchiori indicate in their Introduction to the Revels edition of the play, we do not have evidence that the play was performed, however, 'the theory of a revival of the play in the early 1600s leaves the possibility open that it might have been actually performed then', p. 33.

[141] Levine's, 'Citizens' Games: Differentiating Collaboration and *Sir Thomas More*', p. 42. In *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, Phyllis Rackin adds: 'Substituting historical narrative ("A short

Levine makes a key point: for the crowd scene is not merely about More, it not only foreshadows his own 'act of conscience', but also his redemption of the mob: in this scene it is the relation and interaction between the two that matters.

In relation to the staging of the crowd scene and the rebels, Munro poses an interesting suggestion. He writes that the play was never produced on the stage because of Tilney's censoring.[142] However, upon Tilney's instruction to leave out the crowd scene, he comments: 'Tilney's reasons for this interdiction are doubtless several, but a central one must be that the scene proposed to stage something far too close to the social reality of London at the time'.[143] Munro adds 'that under the possibility of censure "att your own perilles," as Tilney puts it - theatrical portrayals of crowds typically worked within the limits of a symbolic economy that helped to minimize the threat of the multitude. Rebellious English crowds *could be* [my italics] portrayed in the context of London', as Cade would say because they are 'most in order when out of order'. [144] Munro continues, 'each of these portrayals [*Jack Straw*, *2 Henry VI*, and *Edward IV*] superficially preserves the social and symbolic integrity of the city by opposing it to the rebellious rabble, thus making the multitude extrinsic to London. Crowds, if properly stigmatized, could also be portrayed in other urban locations, such as [...] in the mob scenes of Roman plays such as *Sejanus*, *Juilius Caesar*, and *Coriolanus*.'[145] Gabrieli and Melchiori remind us that 'the purpose of these [Tilney's] interventions is clear: to avoid allusions to public disorders against the authorities, and more particularly to any reason for resentment against foreigners.'[146] Paradoxically then Munro's proposition implies that censorship was not entirely against staging the mob. The implication vital for us, therefore, is that the

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report") for present dramatic enactment, the prescribed censorship interposed the barrier of narrative mediation to contain the rebels within the dramatic fiction and separate them from their dangerous present counterparts in the uruly theatre audience', p. 207.

[142] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 46. W. W. Greg illustrates Tilney's corrections: '<Leaue out > | $y^{e}$ insur<rection> [1] | [2] wholy & | $y^{e}$ Cause ther off [3] & | <b>egin $w^{t}$ $S^{r}$ Tho: | Moore att [4] $y^{e}$ | mayors sessions | $w^{t}$ a reportt afterwards | off his good servic' [5] | don being' [6] Shriue off Londõ | vppõ [7] a mutiny Agaynst $y^{e}$ | Lũbards only by A shortt | reportt & nott otherwise | att your own perrilles | E Tyllney.', see Greg's edition of *The Booke of Sir Thomas More* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911), p. 1; for a modernised version of Tilney's recommendations, see John Jones's *Shakespeare at Work* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p 9.

[143] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 46.

[144] The quotation is from Munro's *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 46-7.

[145] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 47.

[146] Gabrieli and Melchiori's Introduction to the Revels edition of *Sir Thomas More*, p. 18.

dramatisation of mob undermines the business of the mob. The stigma permits the mob's presence on the stage.

Whilst Hall's account, as indicated earlier, reports the events leading to the uprising, the quelling of it and its aftermath, the staged crowd scene in the play, it has been demonstrated, entirely focuses on how the insurrection is quelled and on the issue of the subject's duty to the king.[147] A mere short report could not accentuate the significance of the bond between the ruler and the ruled, the vulnerability of it and the significance of it in maintaining public order. For the crowd scene points to the fact that they depend on each other and sustain each other, and as such share a responsibility in preserving peace in the city. In relation to the dramatist's use of his source, there are a few more telling discrepancies, mainly in the representation of the rebels' response to the authority's bans and prohibitions, and their riot. The account tells us that in order to prevent further violence, the elders of the city were sent to warn the apprentices to stay at their homes. But unlike the play's crowd scene, here the citizens are everything but submissive, and it is obvious that even evoking the king's name is not enough to make them obey.[148] Hall's account does not portray a moment of clear interaction between the authority and the people, so the dramatist tries to mend the fault that he perceives in the authorities' approach to the problem. Hence, in the crowd scene Shakespeare restores the bond between the two. This lack of communication between the people and the city elders seems to be the main drive in the crowd scene. What becomes apparent is that the angry crowd needs a figure to whom they can trust, and bond with, and More is given this trust. This trust, however, proves to be ironic, given that by the end of the play More himself is passively disobedient – the effect of this paradox will be addressed shortly.

At this point in the play, nevertheless, More is still a role model of a successful and efficient authority, and his success is due to his great rhetorical skills, his tactfulness, diplomacy and wisdom, not violence (2.3. 175-6; 2.3. 181-2). More significantly, Lord Mayor remarks that with his eloquence More prevented 'this limb of riot here in St. Martins' from spreading throughout the city, and, thus, 'redeemed' it 'from much threatened blood' (2.3. 190-6). The phrase 'limb of riot', therefore, depicts the mob as the malfunctioning body part: 'th' discontented members, mutinous parts' (*Coriolanus*. 1.1. 108) of the body politic, or the disobedient subjects who threaten the well-being of the

[147] Dyce's edition of the play, 'Illustrations of the Earlier Scenes of the Play', p. xiii.
[148] Dyce's edition of the play , 'Illustrations of the Earlier Scenes of the Play', p. xiii.

whole society. Indeed, now that the citizens have yielded, the attitude towards them changes, and they are now spoken of with the typical anti-crowd discourse: they embody 'lewd assemblies' that beget 'unlawful riots, and such traitorous arts' (2.4. 164-65), with whom the audience would hardly wish to identify.

And yet, as in *Julius Caesar*, the violence is not prevented. We are taken to the scene of Lincoln's death whose character now becomes the figure of a redeemed rebel, and with a message for the audience. Speaking as an embodiment of a true obedient citizen, he willingly embraces both his death and his subjection:

> now I can perceive it was not fit
> That private men should carve out their redress,
> Which way they list. No, learn it now by me,
> Obedience is the best in each degree.
> And asking mercy meekly of my king,
> I patiently submit me to the law.
> (2.4. 56-61)

Whether in real life he would 'patiently submit' himself 'to the law' and end up hanged is irrelevant. What matters is how he is dramatised. Indeed his character's role on the stage is to show again by example that accepting his position of an obedient subject 'is the best in each degree'. The problem, however, is that the rebels are pardoned and even though originally no rebel was to be punished, Lincoln is. Another problem is that More, refusing to sign the articles, disobeys the King (4.1.69-74) and so that the argument in favour of obedience and subjection in the crowd scene becomes even more vitally at stake. How does the dramatist rectify a conflict between More's speech against disobedience with More's own act of disobedience?

More gives his own version of "obedience", in which he, ironically and arrogantly portrays his disobedience as an obedient act (4.4. 151-6), accepts that the consequences of his action entail punishment, but he does not accept submission, and 'with all [his] submissive willingness' (l. 152) he in fact refutes the King's authority, covertly criticises the King's dignity and authority (5.4. 71-7) for making him 'of a state pleader a stage player' (l. 73), and then the government and the law (l. 88-93). He states bitterly that he is used as a spectacle – an example to others of a disobedient subject. More is a victim of his own error. 'Surrey mentions More's unspecified "error" as the cause of his disgrace and death. It is an error in statesmanship, due not, as history reports, to More's religious

position, but to his poetic nature.'[149] On the authority of private conscience (4.1. 74), More not only dismisses, implicitly of course, the King's authority, but the authority of God, too. Whether he keeps or loses his integrity in doing this is a problematic issue: as a "subject" to the King he loses his integrity, and yet refusing to adhere to something he does not believe in, as he puts it, he 'rebels to' his 'conscience!' (4.4. 128). On moral grounds, then, he is a victor, not a rebel: and his personal integrity is to bond his character with the audience. In the end, his death and martyrdom comes with the same doctrine of obedience after all, casting now the crowd scene in a clearly ironic light. Addressing his servants, he substantiates the nature of their position:

> I conceive that Nature
> Hath sundry metals, out of which she frames
> Us mortals, each in valuation
> Outprizing other. Of the finest stuff
> The finest features come, the rest of earth
> Receive base fortune before their birth.
> Hence slaves have their creation.
> (4.4. 63-9)

Thus, not only does More justify hierarchical order and the existence of the lowest degree of subjects in the society, he also tries to establish that both 'the finest creatures' – the nobility and the aristocracy, and the 'rest of earth', the ordinary mortals including the members of the audience - have their *purpose* and with it *dignity*.

More's disobedience forces us to review the earlier crowd scene. It does not cancel out his earlier speech to the crowd, but it makes it all the more emphatic, because he is punished in the end. He learns that 'it was not fit/ That private men should carve out their redress' (2.4. 56-8), as Lincoln puts it. The end, then, reconciles the play's ambiguity generated by More's disobedience and his sermon against it in the crowd scene. The fact that More acts alone and is solitary in his resistance or disobedience makes the key difference: this is not a "crowd" or "riot", but a single man. The contrast between his own disobedience and that of the mob is thus effective because it reinforces what the play alerts to the audience: the threat of the "mob", of becoming like the mob, and finally, of disobeying the King and God.

[149] Gabrieli and Melchiori, the Introduction to the Revels edition of the play, p. 31.

Our final discussion continues the debate on the subject's position in early modern society and the question of obedience, and how it is dramatically rendered. However, it engages with a very different type of crowd, *Henry V*'s dignified crowd. In addition, it examines closely the dramaturgical role of the play's crowd scenes, and draws conclusions about the role and representation of crowds and crowd scenes in Shakespearean drama.

### *Henry V*'s Honourable Crowd and the "Semi-Crowd" Scene

> When it comes to adjudicating our propensities and our actions - the most difficult and most important matter of all - we have recourse to the votes of the common people and of the mob, that mother of ignorance, of injustice, of inconstancy. Is it reasonable to make the life of a man depend on the judgement of idiots?[1]

This chapter examines two crowd scenes in *Henry V*.[2] First, it looks at the reported crowd scene in Act 5 in which the Chorus relates to the audience King Henry's victorious return to Britain following the defeat of the French in the Battle of Agincourt. This scene depicts the monarch's entrance and his movement through the streets of London, and how the people, who gather to witness the king's return, respond to him. Secondly, this chapter redefines 4.1 as a "staged crowd" scene. It has never been treated as a "crowd scene" before. In this scene King Henry, disguised as a common soldier, 'Harry Le Roy', visits his troops the night before the battle at Agincourt (4.1. 49). However, whereas the Chorus to Act 5 describes a huge public event, 4.1 does not. What links these scenes is that both of them demonstrate the subjects' reactions to their monarch and indeed, the interaction between the King and his subjects. The issue of "obedience" and of a subject's position, examined in the preceding chapter, will be expanded in this discussion. However, unlike the previous discussions, the main focus of this chapter is the *interaction* between the play's two crowd scenes. Shakespeare's dramatisation of the dramatic relation between these two scenes will give us a deeper insight into the dramaturgical role and "nature" of crowd scenes in Shakespeare's dramas.

What I propose, then, is that the crowd scene in act 4.1 warrants consideration as a staged crowd scene, and that we can understand more about this moment in the play if we consider it as a counterpart to the crowd scenes of other dramas. This analysis will prove necessary because it will give us a valuable insight into how and why the dramatist represents the people in this play and what their role is in terms of the representation of

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[1] Michel de Montaigne, 'On Glory' in *The Complete Essays*, tr. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Classics, 1991), p. 709,

[2] William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, ed. by T. W. Craik (London: Arden, 1995).

royal power. It will demonstrate why crowd scenes are an important device in the representation of the people. In this chapter, therefore, I examine both the dramatic function of the people, and the dramatic function of the crowd scenes in *Henry V*. In particular, I suggest that for a dramatic effect Shakespeare stages 4.1 as a variation of the staged "crowd" scene. Hence, I refer to it as a "dramatic" crowd scene and as a "semi-crowd" scene. This chapter aims to demonstrate the further effects and implications this might have. For instance, this raises a question of when a group is a "crowd", and what "crowd" means and contributes in Shakespeare's drama?

The importance of 4.1 is that it prepares us for what we are about to witness in Act 5 - the myth-making in progress. I shall argue that *Henry V* is engaged in a myth-making process about British soldiers as much as about Henry V. Shakespeare's portrayal of the people in 5.0 and especially in 4.1 indicates that they play an important and a symbolic role in it. Specifically, the dramatist's depiction of the people suggests that they are not portrayed as, to use Montaigne's words, the 'mother of ignorance, of injustice, of inconstancy', but rather as a group of intellectually inclined minds, predisposed to justice and constancy. Moreover, my aim in this chapter is to explain how the public (or, the reported) crowd scene in Act 5 and the more private and contained (but still staged) crowd scene in 4.1 affect, counteract, and indeed complement each other, and how *Henry V*'s representations of the people reflect this.

What remains to be clarified is how this reading treats people-related terms. In relation to the reported crowd scene in act 5, 'the people' and 'the crowd' refer to those assembled to see Henry, regardless of their rank in the society, as the King's subjects. However, in relation to 4.1 Shakespeare presents a different kind of crowd, not a typical many-headed multitude, but what I term an honourable crowd. Lastly, as in our previous discussions, the audience in the theatre is treated yet again as another crowd that Shakespeare implicitly "stages" in his play.

## Critical Responses to *Henry V*

In 'History and Ideology: the Instance of *Henry V*' Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield suggest that in *Henry V* Shakespeare was 'wonderfully impartial on the question of politics', and 'that the ideology which saturates his texts, and their location in history, are

the most interesting things about them'.[3] As they further indicate, in the process of legitimating 'the social order' and 'inequality', 'subordinate classes are in fact being exploited by' the dominant class, 'actively' repressed and blamed 'for the social instability which originated in its [the Elizabethan ruling fraction's] own policies.[4] With regards to *Henry V*, Dollimore and Sinfield propose that a play 'which is often assumed to be the one where Shakespeare is closest to state propaganda, the construction of ideology is complex – even as it consolidates, it betrays inherent instability'.[5] Further, as Dollimore and Sinfield indicate, Shakespeare did certainly reflect the ideology of his time and did 'locate' his texts in history (it is impossible not to do so). However, as this chapter aims to demonstrate, he was far from 'impartial on the question of politics'.

If we consider Shakespeare's construction of the "semi"-crowd scene in 4.1, and the dramatic relation between the plays crowd scenes (4.1 and 5) then Dollimore and Sinfield's claim seems less plausible. Indeed, Shakespeare's dramatic rendering of the common soldiers in 4.1 (which demonstrates their different view points and perspectives on, for instance, the question of a just war and the 'legitimation of warfare'[6]) shows that the dramatist was neither detached nor nondiscriminating about 'the question of politics', but inquisitive and curious, and careful with his representations. Surely, he had to be exceptionally cautious when covertly disputing the ideology that centres around the monarch, and interrogating Henry V by his own subjects (4.1). Shakespeare, therefore, had to find a balance between soldiers challenging the king whilst simultaneously showing to him obedience and loyalty. Finally, in relation to *Henry V*, Dollimore and Sinfield argue that

> the more ideology (necessarily) engages with the conflict and contradiction [...] the more it becomes susceptible to incorporating them within itself. It faces the contradictory situation whereby to silence dissent one must first give it a voice, to misrepresent it one must first represent it[7]

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[3] Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, 'History and Ideology: the Instance of *Henry V*' in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. by John Drakakis, 1 (London: Routledge, 1985), pp. 206-27 (p. 227).

[4] Dollimore and Sinfield, 'History and Ideology: the Instance of *Henry V*', p. 211.

[5] Dollimore and Sinfield, 'History and Ideology: the Instance of *Henry V*', p. 211.

[6] Dollimore and Sinfield's phrase, 'History and Ideology: the Instance of *Henry V*', p. 212.

[7] Dollimore and Sinfield, 'History and Ideology: the Instance of *Henry V*', p. 215. 'In fact, *Henry V* is only in one sense "about" national unity: its obsessive preoccupation is insurrection', 'History and Ideology: the Instance of *Henry V*', p. 216.

Yet, after reading *Henry V* and analysing the dramatic input of the crowd scenes, it seems hard to "fit" Shakespeare's rendering of the common soldiers within this official strategy of representing 'the subordinate classes' only in order to misrepresent them as a potential threat. I argue that there is nothing that portrays the common soldiers (in 4.1) as potential 'dissent'. On the contrary, even whilst overtly interrogating and contesting their monarch the common soldiers are portrayed as dignified figures.[8] Moreover, Dollimore and Sinfield rightly note that 'all these areas of possible resistance in the play had their counterparts in Elizabethan England', but they also write that 'the play seems in one aspect, committed to the aesthetic colonisation of such elements in Elizabethan culture' by representing them as 'inherently submissive'.[9] My discussion invites a reconsideration of the latter proposal: it aims to show that as part of this 'aesthetic colonisation' the play does not represent the common soldiers as 'inherently submissive' but rather as 'inherently' *dignified* people who are also *loyal* and obedient to their king. What is important to notice, then, is that Shakespeare's dramatisation of the soldiers does not show them intellectually 'submissive' to Henry. The shift from merely 'submissive', then, to 'loyal'- and - inquisitive soldiers is more than significant: the former is more likely to be related to the official discourse, whilst the latter is emphasised in Shakespeare's discourse in 4.1. In short, if Shakespeare aimed to represent a 'submissive' crowd of soldiers, he would, perhaps, have created an entirely different scene: one in which the king speaks *to* the silent, or an "all-agreeing" and unquestioning auditorium.

Dollimore and Sinfield's article, nevertheless, is important in that it regards the relationship between the king and his subjects, and considers how the plays represent the king's "common" subjects. Other scholars focus on the representation of Henry V. Claire McEachern's article '*Henry V* and the Paradox of the Body Politic' focuses on the analysis of Henry's body politic, in which, 'with the dual valence of the monarch's body in mind,' she turns 'to a reading of Henry V's personhood.'[10] McEachern aims to 'shift the discussion away from the personability of Henry V to the question of why the play and its location in Elizabethan culture so repeatedly generate *personableness* as the currency of our

[8] The fact that the soldiers are not aware that they are speaking with the king is irrelevant, and does not change the dramatic significance of this moment and of the representation of the soldiers. What matters is that those in the audience who can associate with these soldiers do know that the soldiers are talking to the king.
[9] Dollimore and Sinfield, 'History and Ideology: the Instance of *Henry V*', p. 216-17.
[10] Claire McEachern, '*Henry V* and the Paradox of the Body Politic', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 45 (1994), 33-56 (p. 44).

response.'[11] She argues that 'discussion of the play's representation of power in terms of personhood derives from a similar inflection in Elizabethan discourses of communality'; and indeed, she explores 'the way this discourse of personhood animates corporate identity.'[12] Hence, McEachern wants to demonstrate 'that social mutuality and tyranny were alike described in terms of monarchic personhood. In doing so [she hopes] to reveal that the Elizabethan vocabulary of corporate identity did not imagine the relationship between fellowship and hegemony to be an exclusively antithetical one.'[13] McEachern concludes by saying that 'the ambivalence that characterizes *Henry V* is an ambivalence fundamental not to his personality but to a fantasy of social union which employs the tropes of personhood as a means to its realization.[14]

The play's 'ambivalence', I shall argue, seems to be resolved through the interaction between its two crowd scenes, the reported and the staged crowd scene. In *London: The City and Its Double,* Ian Munro acknowledges the analogy between the theatrical performance and Shakespeare's portrayal of Henry's victorious return from France, and focuses on 'the space of early modern London' and how 'it was imagined, constructed, and contained, especially in the official and commercial drama of the period.'[15] The difference between my reading of the Chorus's account in Act 5 of *Henry V* and Munro's is that whereas Munro focuses on the relationship between the city and the manifestation of royal power, I focus on the representations of the people in relation to the monarch and, most significantly, in relation to the representation of the common soldiers in 4.1. As Richard Dutton notes, 'It is not accidental that the heart of this play is not the battle of Agincourt, which is textually almost a non-event: it is the night before the battle, where the hopelessly outnumbered English army from Henry down looks into its soul.'[16]

Furthermore, in her reading of the play in '*Henry V* as a Royal Entry' Anny Crunelle-Vanrigh suggests that the structure of the play is pageantic, and argues that 'the

[11] McEachern, '*Henry V* and the Paradox of the Body Politic', p. 35.
[12] McEachern, '*Henry V* and the Paradox of the Body Politic', p. 35.
[13] McEachern, '*Henry V* and the Paradox of the Body Politic', p. 37.
[14] McEachern, '*Henry V* and the Paradox of the Body Politic', p. 56.
[15] See Ian Munro's *London: The City and Its Double* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2005), p. 77.
He suggests that the ruler's 'power is based in and expressed through visual display', p. 78. 'The example form *Henry V* makes clear that similar shifts in social and mental space can be produced in one locale; the Chorus's words, which urge an imagined London audience as they acknowledge a physical one, initiate a shift from a mental to an environmental setting for Harry's triumph, causing a corresponding shift in the social meaning of the presentation', p. 78.
[16] Richard Dutton, '"Methinks the Truth Should Live from Age to Age": The Dating and Contexts of *Henry V*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 68 (2005), 173-204 (p. 194).

play, with its processional plot and dazzling choruses, fashions an alternative royal progress, performed across the river from the regal route through the city.'[17] The ceremonial procession is used as 'as a structural device [that] reinforces the political focus of the play, providing an adequate backcloth for its representation and subversion of the cultural and political transactions at work in ceremony.'[18] Moreover, similarly to Munro, she emphasizes that 'the urban backcloth helped fashion the familiar transaction between drama and the city in sixteenth-century Europe, a transaction in which the town was a stage and the stage figured an ideal commonwealth', adding: 'These "wonderful spectacles," which enabled the ruler to put his or her power on display, were also integrating moments when society projected an ideal image of itself.'[19] However true this maybe, I shall argue that it is the interaction between two crowd scenes in the play that shows that this is not so straightforward. For, while the dramatist is portraying an idealised moment in Henry's royal entry, simultaneously he is questioning it. Inevitably, the question that rises here is how does Shakespeare find a balance between these two contradictions: idealising and questioning Henry's royal entry? Indeed, is this balance possible at all, and what role do *Henry V's* crowd scenes play in it?

In 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*' Rita Banerjee suggests that the play's 'choric portrayal of victory tempts us to question how far such a war contributes to the general good', and while examining the role of the people she suggests, 'not only does a history play like *Henry V* emphasize the individual ability of the monarch, but it also demonstrates the active virtue of the common people, and republican ideals feature in many ways in the history plays as in the Roman plays.'[20] In addition, she reads '*Henry V* and *Coriolanus* together, seeking to demonstrate that the phenomenon of war is judged in both plays with respect to the republican ideal of the common good and is seen to serve only sectional, that is, absolutist, oligarchical, or ecclesiastical interests.'[21] Finally, she reads the play in

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17 Anny Crunelle-Vanrigh, '*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', *SEL*, 47 (2007), 355-77 (p. 361).

18 Crunelle-Vanrigh, '*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', p. 357. 'The form of the royal progress [...] becomes the paradigm for this national form of the *ars memoriae* that is the history play [...]. For its dramatization of pageantry, the play borrows from Elizabeth's entry, the most recent, best documented, and politically most relevant occasion for a fresh reading of ceremony', p. 362.

19 Crunelle-Vanrigh, '*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', p. 358.

20 Rita Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', *Comparative Drama*, 40 (2006), 29-49 (p. 29-31).

21 Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 31.

particular 'as critiquing the Machiavellian notion of the perennial necessity of warfare for the well-being of a state', and specifically argues that 'the subjects display the active virtues of citizenship not only in demonstrating patriotic valour but in the intelligent and rational critique of war.'[22] I would add here, however, that this 'critique' should be examined precisely in relation to how Shakespeare represents the relationship between the monarch and the people. The reason that I emphasize the need to explore the representations of the relationship is because these *are* fundamental to crowd scenes and public spectacles. This is because the crowd scenes are generated through the interaction between the king and his subjects, whether it be during a national celebration or a ceremonial procession and so on. In effect, this interaction defines the representations of the crowd scenes.

In '"A Little Touch of Harry in the Night": Transluency and Projective Transversality in the Sexual and National Politics of *Henry V*' Donald Hedrick and Bryan Reynolds's analysis of the play, and for our interests their reading of 4.1, concentrates 'on the way that Henry as actor-sovereign engages in transversal movement through different subjective spaces in order to consolidate, or rather to help consolidate, his control' and in demonstrating this they show how Henry 'relies on the spectators of his performance to inhabit the sovereign's subjectivity.'[23] Moreover, Hedrick and Reynolds employ a method they call 'transluency', which 'is a chief visual mechanism for transversal power, and even projecting transversality onto others, making others, as it were, experience movements across the conceptual and emotional boundaries of subjective territories, becoming-other themselves.'[24] That Shakespeare's Henry V becomes 'other', as 'Harry le Roy', and engages in a private conversation with his soldiers, bids attention and a re-consideration of the soldiers' dramatic role in the scene. First, I propose to view this "private" moment as a

[22] Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 34-5.
[23] Donald Hedrick and Bryan Reynolds, '"A Little Touch of Harry in the Night": Transluency and Projective Transversality in the Sexual and National Politics of *Henry V*': *Performing Transversally: Reimagining Shakespeare and the Critical Future* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2003), pp. 171-88 (p. 185).
[24] Hedrick and Reynolds, '"A Little Touch of Harry in the Night": Transluency and Projective Transversality in the Sexual and National Politics of *Henry V*', p. 185. In the foreword to *Performing Transversally* Janelle Reinelt explains Reynold's key concepts of - subjective and transversal territories: 'subjective territory' is a 'space within which individuals are "subjected conceptually and emotionally, that is, developed into a subject by the state machinery of any hegemonic society or subsociety" [...]. In other words, Reynolds claims for art the power to push individuals beyond their limits into "transversal territory" where multiple forms of subjectivity, contradictory feelings and cognitions, and transformative possibilities may be grasped, at least in the subjunctive'. Hence, 'performance as an art form [...] can most easily produce transversal events'; and these '"transversal movements occur when one entertains alternative perspectives and breaches the parameters of their subjectification"', p. xv.

"public" encounter between the King and his subjects, and secondly, that this dramatisation of 4.1 'consolidates' Henry's soldiers as an honourable crowd. Public encounters were crucial moments not only in the representations of royal power both in ancient Rome and in the Elizabethan Britain, but most importantly in the representations of Roman and British crowd scenes respectively. Therefore, I shall specifically argue that Shakespeare uses crowd scenes in *Henry V* to demonstrate the crucial dramatic function performed by the people in the play.

### *Henry V*'s Reported Crowd Scene: 5.0<br>Reconstruction of the Myth

What is significant about the 5.0 crowd scene is that it is a crowd scene in which the people are evoked rather than staged. The reason for not staging the crowd could be to remind us again of the logistics of the theatre in which, as the Chorus to Act 1 tells us, the stage, or 'this wooden O' cannot accommodate a large number of people.[25] Similarly, the Chorus to Act 5 opens asking the audience to witness in their minds Henry's triumphant parade through the streets of London: 'I humbly pray them to admit th' excuse/ Of time, of numbers, and due course of things/ Which cannot in their huge and proper life/ Be here presented' (Act 5.0. 3-6).

The structure of the Chorus' speech itself is telling and suggestive. As we shall see, it begins by describing the people, then moves on to describe the King, and concludes with the people. This apparent focus on the people implies perhaps, that the glory and the success of the war goes not to the King only but to the people too, and that for this reason the description of the people, as it were, contains the King: that is, their response to Henry reveals something about the king. In the following passage we shall see how, while evoking the crowd, the Chorus praises the king:

> Now we bear the King
> Toward Calais: grant him there; there seen,
> Heave him away upon your winged thoughts
> Athwart the sea. Behold, the English beach
> Pales in the flood with men, with wives, and boys,

[25] Chorus. 1.0. 13.

> Whose shouts and claps out-voice the deep-mouthed
> sea,
> Which like a mighty whiffler 'fore the King
> Seems to prepare his way
> (5.0. 6-13)

What stands out in this speech is that the description of the king actually merges into the description of the crowd. We are asked to imagine the King and then to focus on the people. Indeed we now 'behold' not just a crowded beach, but the beach *flooded* with people waiting to see Henry. So, what about the King? We are left heaving 'him away upon' our 'winged thoughts', and what we know about him is that he is on his way to the British shore. In other words, while we are imagining the King's spectacle we are in fact asked to suspend our imagining of the King. The effect of this suspension of imagination is to re-focus our attention upon the people, because Shakespeare wants us to see Henry's greatness through the crowd, and, as it will be demonstrated, this is because the character of the crowd now serves to reflect not only the king, but the nation. Besides, the crowd is reported rather than staged because in this representation they are to reflect a great moment in the history of Britain, which is the nation's victory over France. All this, and most significantly, the people's puissant presence is conveyed in two words: 'pales' and 'flood'.

The image of 'the flood' shifts our attention, then, to the people. It suggests that this crowd is in movement and constantly rising, and symbolically, its presence erases everything else in sight, even the beach. Indeed, the whole city is out there waiting for Henry: 'The English beach/ Pales in the flood with men, with wives, and boys'. The word 'pales' reinforces this effect. It implies that the crowd's presence "bleaches", or wipes out the landscape. This seems to imply that this crowd is potentially dangerous too, rather than simply a festive and welcoming crowd.[26] This description, then, underscores with irony the crowd's welcome of Henry, and reveals 'the critical problematic of the heroic characterisation of Henry.'[27] The dramatic significance of this depiction, however, is that it

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[26] Craik indicates in the note that the word refers to 'stakes', see Arden edition to the play, p. 333. 'Pale' can function as an adjective or a noun; however, to my understanding the word 'pales' in this line (l. 10) functions as a verb, and depicts an overpowering presence of the people.

[27] Hedrick and Reynolds, "'A Little Touch of Harry in the Night": Transluency and Projective Transversality in the Sexual and National Politics of *Henry V*', p. 173.

establishes the crowd as in important figure in the scene, for everything but the people in this moment appears to pale into insignificance.[28]

Yet, another reading of the passage is possible. Shakespeare draws our attention to the crowd because the passage is engaged with a process of myth-making about the British soldiers, along with Henry. Hence, Henry's presence is overshadowed by the people's. Shakespeare represents the people as a powerful force of nature as well. For even their outstanding cheers outdo the noise of the vast seas, as their 'shouts and clasps out-voice the deep-mouthed/ sea'. As Craik points out '"the deep-mouthed sea", outvoiced by the welcoming crowds on the beach, is personified as "a mighty whiffler", another fanciful image'.[29] 'Whiffler' is '"one of a body of attendants armed with javelin, battleaxe, sword or staff, and wearing a chain, employed to keep the way clear for a procession"'.[30] This 'mighty whiffler' indirectly personifies the people, for its might is outdone - silenced, conquered, or subdued by their shouts. The latent implication here cannot be overlooked because it conveys, through the figure of the crowd, the greatness of the moment, and of the British nation. Another possibility is that this moment in the play re-enacts the British victory over the far outnumbering French, and it seems to echo the aftermath of the battle at Agincourt. For, the image of the people shifts, or merges into this powerful image that 'fore the King/ Seems to prepare his way', a possible analogy to Moses's parting of the Red Sea, preparing the way for his people to cross, but in this case the Moses analogy is reversed.[31] What this seems to suggest is that it is precisely the people, the British soldiers, who pave and prepare Henry's way to victory: they bring the victory and glory to the King. In doing so the people symbolically confirm the king's power and his conquest of France. Indeed, the British nation is represented as a great conquering nation, as Munro puts it: 'The London of *Henry V* is a city unified behind its bold hero, participating and glorying in his grand expansion of English sovereignty.[32] The king's victory becomes the people's, or rather, their victory becomes his.

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[28] Munro reads the crowd's manifestation differently. Focusing on its relationship with the city he writes: 'The urban crowd becomes a background to the highlighted audience for Harry's entry [...]. As the city is idealized into ancient Rome a social hierarchy is introduced [...]. London is removed by simile to the classical world, and the audience's firsthand participation in the scene is suspended by the historical distance', see *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 88.

[29] Craik's Introduction to *Henry V*, p. 66-7.

[30] Craik's note in the Arden edition to *Henry V*, p. 333.

[31] See *The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version: Exodus 14. 21 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 51.

[32] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 150.

Furthermore, this depiction of the people can be compared to the way the people are presented in Plutarch's account of the barge scene in which he reports that Cleopatra's spectacle is 'pestered with innumerable multitudes of people.'[33] In contrast, in describing Henry's return to Britain Shakespeare does not suggest that the people pester the show. Not only does Shakespeare not represent them as a pestering multitude, but he represents them as a colossal and renowned company to the king. Hence, their presence does not distort but indeed enhances the whole scene, and what the scene and the King in it represent: the King's body. Their prodigious presence is also enhanced by the fact that it is unseen, or not staged. Indeed, the crowd is displaced from the stage to the Chorus' speech, and thus into our imaginations. This allows the audience to imagine and experience an almost supernatural presence, similar to how we might imagine a Divine presence: for, in Shakespeare's representation the crowd's presence evokes a sense of fear, awe, respect and even a sense of dangerous force – that of the great British army. In other words, Shakespeare here draws our attention to the British soldiers 'thawing cold fear', and the image of 'the flood' demonstrates this powerfully.[34]

This depiction of the people in relation to their king naturally invites a comparison with *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s reported crowd scene (2.2).[35] For in the latter it is precisely the monarch, Cleopatra, who is depicted as a character that contains or absorbs the whole scene (the people, the landscape and the royal figure) and who contains everything in her presence and even outdoes gods. She is 'O'er picturing that Venus where we see/The fancy out-work nature' (2.2. 207-08). In the Chorus's speech in 5.0, it is precisely the crowd that contains and absorbs the whole scene and as such out-does the power of nature, too. The people merge with the landscape and this becomes the representation of an idealised union of "nationhood". Unlike Cleopatra in *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s reported crowd scene, here it is king Henry who is depicted *through,* or *within*, and *among* his people. It is this outpouring of enthusiasm and the people's grand response to their king that helps us understand and value Henry as a worthy leader of the people. Hence, the scene, or this moment is not simply about the king but about the nation, and is a counterpart to the great

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[33] Excerpts from 'The Life of Marcus Antonius', *The Lives of Noble Grecians*, tr. by Sir Thomas North in the Oxford edition of *Anthony and Cleopatra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 332.
[34] 4.0. 45.
[35] Shakespeare William, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, ed. by Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

speeches of Act 4: 'We few, we happy few, we band of brothers' (4.3. 60). The emphasis on the people in this passage conveys this point to great effect.

In the analysis of 4.1 we shall examine how Shakespeare balances this portrayal of the king and justifies his greatness, his political manoeuvres, and in fact his right to exercise royal power. Munro indicates that 'the scene [5.0] represents an unusual and iconic weaving together of the dramatic space of the play, the theatrical space of the playhouse, and the urban space of London.'[36] Whereas his reading focuses on the city, this reading focuses on the representation of the people. Indeed, the Chorus's striking depiction of the people in 5.0 implies that they not only play a major role in the victory-and-myth-making of Henry the King, but that they are praised in it, too. As it has been demonstrated, their presence is depicted as superior and even supreme to everything around them, and this is because they not only embody the King's presence and his achievement, but that of his *army*. We shall return to this point shortly, but for now what needs to be recognised is that, as in *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s reported crowd scene, the crowd is represented as giving symbolic approval and confirmation of the king's power. However, whilst *Richard II*'s crowd in the reported crowd scene turns its back on Richard, *Henry V*'s crowd supports Henry.

Now that we have met the people in 5.0, our expectations remain high, and we are allowed to enter Henry's 'proud dream' (4.1. 254): his walk through the streets of London. We shall see here how the King responds to the people's welcome, and what it tells us about his relationship with the people:

> So let him land,
> And solemnly see him set on to London.
> So swift a pace hath thought that even now
> You may imagine him upon Blackheath,
> Where that his lords desire him to have borne
> His bruised helmet and his bended sword
> Before him through the city. He forbids it,

[36] See Munro's *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 148. He explains: 'London is both realised and idealized through the invocation of the metaphor of Caesar, suggesting the ideal qualities of the Roman triumph and the Elizabethan royal entry, the absolute space that creates the city as the chamber of its ruler. Caesar here stands as the classical example, the conventional truth through which the space of London and the space of the theater are brought together and made inseparable. The ritual of possession is given a theatrical valence that acts to confirm, celebrate, and solidify the unity of the moment. This might be described as the supplementing of London with Rome, not the reverse: Roman ritual becomes a frame whereby the space of London is organised and given an emblematic clarity it usually lacked', *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 148-49.

Being free from vainness and self-glorious pride;
Giving full trophy, signal and ostent,
Quite from himself to God
(5.0. 13-22)

In this passage Henry is shown to be looking for symbolic confirmation of his power, both from God and from his people. Indeed, with humility he responds to their admiration: 'His lords' desire 'to have borne/ His bruised helmet and his bended sword/ Before him through the city', but Henry does not allow this to happen. Indeed, 'He forbids it/ Being free from vainess and self-glorious pride'. As the Chorus implies, Henry finds this type of show unnecessary, and does not seem happy parading before the people, or at least not in self-glorious pride.[37] Ian Munro points out that 'it is only after the victory of this few [his army] that Harry can stage himself to the many, in the moment of public spectacle.'[38] Yet his choice of "staging" himself emphasises humility and piety in victory. At the same time, however, his humility can be seen as a strategy by which he tries to invoke, or create an illusion of God's consent and acknowledgment of his victory: he is 'Giving full trophy, signal and ostent,/ Quite from himself to God'. What stands out here is that it is Henry who gives 'signal' to God, not God to Henry. What is implicit in his action, then, is that instead of being a receiver of God's approval, like a God-like figure, Henry blesses and authorizes himself: he embraces, or bestows on himself, as it were, his Divine Right.

Henry's public demeanour is related to his past, namely to his father's, Henry IV, legacy. The original audience must have been familiar with the fact that Henry V's father was not a legitimate heir to the throne, but succeeded it by overthrowing king Richard II. Hence, before the battle of Agincourt Henry, worried about his soldiers' motivation and the outcome of the battle, famously turns to God, kneels down, prays for God's intervention, and articulates his insecurities: 'Not today, O Lord,/ O not today, think not upon the fault/ My father made in compassing the crown' (4.1. 289-91). Afraid that his father's actions might have bestowed a curse upon him, he now reminds God that he has been trying to correct his father's mistake:

[37] This goes back to Henry's speech on ceremony in 4.1. 235-81, in which Henry laments about the uselessness of the whole process of ceremony.
[38] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 87.

> I Richard's body have interred new,
> And on it have bestowed more contrite tears
> Than from it issued forced drops of blood.
> Five hundred poor I have in yearly pay,

and even the poor intercede on his behalf in an attempt to get God to pardon him,

> twice a day their withered hands hold up
> Toward heaven to pardon blood; and I have built
> Two chantries, where the sad and solemn priests
> Sing still for Richard's soul. More will I do,
> Though all that I can do is nothing worth,
> Since that my penitence comes after all,
> Imploring pardon.[39]

As Craik indicates

> The usurpation is referred to only once in *Henry V*, but is given strong emphasis by being the main theme of the King's prayer before Agincourt. [...] the efforts that the King has made to expiate Richard II's murder, a crime for which the usurper was indirectly responsible, also bear witness to his sense of *inherited guilt* [my italics]. It is possible to conclude from this soliloquy that the King has no true claim to the crown of England, let alone to that of France [...]. As for the King's prayer at Agincourt, the outcome of the battle shows that God has not visited the usurper's sin upon the son – not, of course, therefore condoning the usurpation and Richard's murder, but rather recognising the King's contrition.[40]

In addition, I would like to stress here the significance of this 'inherited guilt' in the presentation of Henry, and the impact it makes on the representation of the crowd scene in 5.0 and his relationship with the people. Crunelle-Vanrigh opens a space for discussion, suggesting that by: 'Reallocating the preserves of God and warrior, Harry rewrites his victory as the sign of his legitimacy. With the fault of his father washed clean in the blood of Agincourt, he returns to England a king in his own right, symbolically crowned anew',

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[39] 4.1. 292-302.
[40] Craik, the Introduction to the Arden edition of the play, p. 57-8.

an answer again to Richard II's humiliation before the crowds in *Richard II*.[41] It is worth adding, moreover, that unlike in his private moment of praying to God, in the passage above, with his humble gestures Henry is publicly asking for the confirmation of his power and of his status in terms of being 'crowned anew'. That is, he is openly assigning and confirming his power, but also the crowd's symbolic role in this spectacle. Since this is a public occasion it means that his character is also asking his audience to confirm it. This process in turn conveys their symbolic part in the spectacle.

Another interpretation of Shakespeare's representation of Henry, however, is possible: he is the king who is a son not of a legitimate king but perhaps of a so called 'innovator'. The question is whether it is possible to view Henry as a Machiavellian 'new prince': a title which he inherited from his father Henry IV (Bolingbroke in *Richard II*). Unlike a 'hereditary prince' (like his predecessor Richard II) Henry V is not a king who is 'legitimized by custom and tradition'.[42] Henry IV indeed legitimized himself by force and won the nation's support. It is in this respect that Henry IV fits the description of a 'new prince'. Because of his disobedience to ancient tradition and the custom of hereditary line of descent Henry IV caused disorder.[43] Furthermore, he knows only his actions can prove him as a great leader, and in the above instances his action actually becomes his humble reaction. Moreover, Henry is depicted as creating an *illusion* of having the Divine Right at this point, which insinuates that he is a skilful and charismatic leader, and "charisma" is, according to Machiavelli, one of the key qualities of the 'New Prince': '*virtù* - functioning where rational and traditional authority are both absent - is a kind of charisma.'[44]

Henry knows, then, just like Volumnia in *Coriolanus*, that in public encounters 'action is eloquence' (3.2. 78), or that 'action is *virtù*', and that his popularity and the public support depend on his leadership and his people-skills.[45] This explains why Henry is abandoning a 'self-glorious pride' and, as if a true God's appointee, shows that his victory

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[41] Crunelle-Vanrigh, '*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', p. 356.

[42] John Greville Agard Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 158. Moreover, Pocock explains Machiavelli's theory about 'new prince': he 'required exceptional and extraordinary qualities standing outside the norm defined by the case of the *principe naturale*', and his act of 'innovation' is an act of 'destruction of a previously existing legitimatory system', p. 161.

[43] As we shall see the entire play evolves around the question of the subjects' obedience to the King.

[44] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* p. 179. *Virtù* 'is an innovative force', that 'by which we innovate' and 'acquire power', 166-7. 'Civic humanism', Pocock explains, 'identifying the good man with the citizen, politicised virtue and rendered it dependent on the virtue of others', p. 157.

[45] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* p. 178.

indeed was God's work, not his.[46] As Machiavellian 'new prince', Henry uses "action" in Volumnia's understanding of the word, to seduce the crowd and to prove himself as great leader of the nation. 'If *virtù* is that by which we acquire power, the ideal type we are now seeking is the individual who acquires it wholly by the exercise of his personal qualities', and this is what we find in the description of Henry.[47] The difference with Henry and the real 'new prince', however, is that Henry does not need to acquire power, because he already has it, but he needs to have it confirmed and legitimized, and this raises some interesting problems about the Chorus's reference to Essex at precisely this point.[48] Crunelle-Vanrigh makes a valid observation:

> With ceremony exposed as an illusion, authority needs to be rooted in new ground [...]. Harry relocates authority in the figure of the charismatic leader, displacing it from the vertical hierarchy of king and "slave" to the horizontal standpoint of the '*band of brothers*' [my italics] (IV.i.241, IV.iii.60). Moving from regalia to charisma, and from kingship to kinship, he also moves from divine to group legitimacy. No longer God's lieutenant but his champion, he develops a new set of symbols to support his new definition of authority[49]

The key point here is that Henry 'moves from divine to group legitimacy', and, this is reflected in 4.1 in which Henry, disguised as a common soldier, presents himself to his soldiers as one of them, and is implicitly looking for their approval. Indeed, Henry 'may be humble before God, but he enforces, at length, the idea of subjectivity within the "band of brothers"'.[50] What Hand's words imply is that by working on their approval Henry is

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[46] This of course is not a characteristic of a 'new prince', and the fact is that after all Henry has inherited the throne, so unlike his father he did not get it by force. See also John S. Mebane's '"Impious War": Religion and the Ideology of Warfare in *Henry V*', *Studies in Philology*, 104 (2007), 250-266.

[47] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* p. 167.

[48] As many have noted, an analogy with the general Essex, under Elizabeth I surfaces here; as Munro indicates, in *Henry V* London and its people support Henry and his victory over France, and explains: ' by the time *Julius Caesar* was in performance it was obvious that the Irish campaign of Essex, *Henry V*'s modern "conqu'ring Caesar," was an irredeemable disaster', see *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 150. In the Introduction to the Arden edition to *Julius Caesar* (London: Arden, 1998), David Daniell writes, 'Shakespeare himself expressed in the Chorus to Act 5 of *Henry V* the hopes that London had set on the adventurer's triumphant return', but 'the words', in 5.0. 29-32, 'are ambivalent, to the point of not being hopeful', p. 23.

[49] Crunelle-Vanrigh, '*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', p. 370.

[50] Richard J. Hand, 'Shakespeare, Soccer, and Spin-Doctors: Staging a Contemporary *Henry V*: *Henry V* at Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, Wales, UK, November 2002', *College Literature*, 31 004) 60-71 (p. 61). He

actually looking for authority, in particular from his soldiers, his 'band of brothers'. For, in the war his action and skills depend precisely on the skills or *virtù* of his own army, all of which suggests that the representation of Henry's 'inherited guilt' affects and accounts for the representation of the King's interaction with his soldiers in 4.1. In this scene, as will be demonstrated later in our discussion, Henry indirectly asks his people for a "lawful" approval of his legitimacy. Having no true hereditary right to the throne, only the people can provide Henry with a "lawful" approval. This is, indeed, what defines and highlights their role in the spectacle of 5.0.

Shakespeare's representation of the King may, indeed, prompt the audience to reconsider the myth about Henry, and along with it 'the increasingly important role of the people.'[51] With respect to this, the following passage is crucial for our understanding of their dramatic function and importance in *Henry V*'s reported crowd scene. The Chorus starts with the implied description of the King's amazing charisma to draw the people to himself, and then it focuses entirely on the people gathered to see the king:[52]

> But now behold,
> In the quick forge and working-house of thought,
> How London doth pour out her citizens.
> The Mayor and all his brethren in best sort,
> Like to the senators of th'antique Rome
> With the plebeians swarming at their heels,
> Go forth and fetch their conquering Caesar in;

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adds, 'for Shakespeare's audience, *Henry V* had a clear significance for their national identity in connection with war. The Battle of Armada (1588) had happened within living memory, a similar story of English triumph against all odds. Elizabeth I was seen as instrumental in the victory, an iconic monarch just as Henry V would be perceived as the ideal monarch in the eyes of the Renaissance', p. 62.

[51] In conclusion of her discussion Banerjee writes: 'the epilogue of *Henry V* shows the inadequacy of strategies such as marriage that involve individual alliances between kings or great houses to bring stability to the life of a nation. The failure suggests the progressively minimal role played by individuals and coteries in the life of a nation, indicating the increasingly important role of the people', see 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 39.

[52] Again - a possible allusion to Essex and his charismatic conduct in the public: 'Elizabeth's bitterness about Essex's conduct, however, adds an additional layer. Essex not only forgot his duty to his royal benefactor but also repeatedly displayed his hubristic ingratitude and self-promotion "in open streets and houses" - that is, both publicly for the commons to admire and privately in the houses of well-to-do friends and followers. The first kind of display was demonstrated by Essex's love of extravagant gestures and grandstanding, such as the great procession which accompanied his departure for Ireland in March 1599 [...]. As far as Elizabeth was concerned, each of these many instances of Essex's trying to steal away the love rightfully owed to her by her subjects represented another step closer to his paying a fatal price for his ambition'; see Paul E. J. Hammer's 'Shakespeare's *Richard II*, the Play of 7 February 1601, and the Essex Rising', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 59 (2008), 1-35 (p. 24-25). Richard Dutton notes, that 'the quarto omits all the choruses and so the reference to Essex', see Dutton's "'Methinks the Truth Should Live from Age to Age": The Dating and Contexts of *Henry V*', p. 195.

> As, by a lower but as loving likelihood,
> Were now the General of our gracious Empress,
> As in good time he may, from Ireland coming,
> Bringing rebellion broached on his sword,
> How many would the peaceful city quit
> To welcome him!
> (Act 5. 22-33)

Similarly to the *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s barge scene, in which 'The city cast/ Her [Cleopatra's] people out upon her' (2.2. 220-21), here 'London doth pour out her citizens' to welcome Henry. Shakespeare's use of the phrases 'pour out', and 'cast out [...] upon' are dramatically significant when envisaging the crowd. They imply that there is a powerful force bringing the people out onto the streets. In Henry's case this is implicitly his power for we just need to imagine 'how many would the peaceful city quit/ [just] To welcome him!'[53] The latent message, however, is not only that the people "support" their King, they are obedient subjects of the King.

Symbolically, Henry is described as having a magnetic impact on the crowd just as Cleopatra does. However, unlike Cleopatra's crowd Henry's crowd is depicted as just as powerful as the King: in the process of the myth-making of Henry the playwright deliberately includes the people. What is also important about this description is that the crowd watching Henry consists of both high and low ranks of people: social divisions no longer seem important: 'The mayor and all his brethren are there', we are told, and the plebeians are 'swarming at their heels', which alone provides a key metaphor. This description, then, also recalls Brutus's description of the people's reaction upon Coriolanus's triumphant return to Rome (2.1. 201-17).[54] *Coriolanus*'s reported crowd scene likewise depicts a moment of the ceremonial myth-making, in which the people's 'spectacled' presence (l. 201) implies that, with their (imagined) glasses, they are to reflect Martius's victory and the glory of Rome to the universe. As I have already indicated in Chapter 3, the passive form of 'spectacled' suggests that the people are acted upon, or as in Cleopatra's show, they are 'cast out' to stage and witness his show. As a part of Martius's spectacle, their 'spectacled' presence therefore conveys that they play a part in his glory, and, symbolically, confirm Martius's power. With their 'caps and shouts' (*Coriolanus*, 2.2.

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[53] If Shakespeare is indirectly referring to Essex, then, this crowd resembles the fickle and disloyal crowd of *Julius Caesar* (1.1. 31-49).

[54] William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, ed. by R. P. Parker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

263) the plebeians even 'outvoice the deep-mouthed/ sea' (*Henry V*, 5.0. 11), 'all agreeing/ In earnestness to see him' (*Coriolanus*, 2.1. 208-9), indeed, united in their euphoria: all are participants and contributors in Roman myth-making. But as in *Coriolanus*'s reported crowd scene (2.1. 206-7), in *Henry V*'s too, the description of the plebeians reveals something threatening. Munro indicates that 'in the case of the royal entry [...] the most prominent threatening element is the people on the streets of the city. For regimes dedicated to ceremonies of visual power, the rapid changing nature of London was most visible through the city's manifestation in the urban crowd.'[55] In *Henry V*'s reported crowd scene, this 'most prominent threatening element' is depicted through the phrase 'plebeians are *swarming*'. The word 'swarming', however, does not only depict a typical dangerous crowd. It offers a clue into what Shakespeare aimed in this scene: to ennoble the people's presence.

The word 'swarming' here takes us back to the speech in 1.2 in which Canterbury, using an analogy of the bees' society, portrays a perfect state. Andrew Gurr's influential reading of 'the bee fable', in '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', focuses on Shakespeare's adaptation of the analogy from Erasmus's *Institution principis Christiani* as well as *The Mirror of Magistrates*'.[56] Gurr notes that 'clemency', which is a seminal quality of a king according to Erasmus, in this play 'turns a curious side' in order 'to fit' Henry's 'own different circumstances', and 'the Archbishop's use of the bee fable shows how circumstances alter cases'.[57] For now, what is necessary to mention is that the fable points out is that 'every man in this society has a significant role and purpose: 'the civil citizens [are] kneading up the honey' (1.2. 199) and so on. This divinely ordained social order automatically authorizes its existence, and promises prosperity and harmony in 'continual motion' (l. 185). The main point Shakespeare makes here, however, is about the 'fixed' state of subjects' 'obedience' (l. 186-7). For Canterbury emphasizes that these 'creatures [honey-bees...] by a rule in nature teach/ The act of order to a peopled kingdom' (l. 187-8). 'Swarming' relates to this description because the reported crowd scene in 5.0 depicts the people as an organised crowd, not as a scattered and disordered multitude, and

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[55] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 79.

[56] Andrew Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', *Shakespeare Survey*, 30 (1977), 61-72 (p. 61).

[57] Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 62. Notably, 'Henry's character [...] is conditioned first by his concern to conduct himself like a Christian prince, and secondly by his management of the war', p. 61. Gurr adds, 'Henry's policy in war as well as in peace is to act in conformity with the precepts of his time', p. 68. Regarding the bee analogy, Gurr's reading of Henry's particular circumstances is especially relevant for our discussion of 4.1, which will be discussed shortly.

one that follows rather than overwhelms its leader. In this sense we may say that Shakespeare "converts" the crowd's potent and potentially dangerous presence into a powerful description of their loyalty to the King. This subtlety, and this decision to represent the plebeians as a "swarm" cannot be overlooked, because with it the dramatist dignifies *Henry V*'s crowd.

With 'swarming', then, the common people are implicitly compared to an army that obeys their leader's order with 'fixed' obedience. This will be shortly contrasted to the soldiers' response to the King in 4.1. 'Swarming' implies, moreover, that under the King's spell, the people are rushing towards him and rejoicing in the victory, and as a result they are obedient to their master. They show their support; for they are like bees swarming around their leader in the establishment of a new colony. In the Chorus's address the people, then, celebrate with Henry and the army, not only Henry's but the army's conquest of the new territory in France. The bee-hive reference of swarming, nevertheless, goes back to the beginning of the play, to Canterbury's comment on Henry's brilliant rhetorical skills:

> Hear him but reason in divinity
> [....]
> Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs
> [....]
> Turn him to any cause of policy,
> The Gordian knot of it he will unloose,
> Familiar as his garter, that 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.
> So that the art and practic part of life
> Must be the mistress to this theoric'
> (1.1. 38-52).

Of course, this reminds us how great Henry's rhetorical skills are and how competent a politician and leader he is. He is again like Cleopatra: having charisma enough to affect even the elements, and to be using the art of rhetoric so masterfully that it becomes his companion: like a 'mistress to this theoric'. Unlike Cleopatra, however, Henry possesses a legitimacy and an authority, and his 'bees' confirm this. More importantly, what emerges from this is the link between the metaphor of the 'swarm' (5.0) and Henry's 'sweet and honeyed sentences'. Indeed, the last few lines suggest that the idea of the perfect bee-

society not only authorizes the subjects' unquestionable obedience to the king, but it now authorizes Henry's words too. That is, Henry's sentences are 'honeyed' or blessed by this sweet nectar. As the bee-hive speech indicates, it is his 'civil citizens' whose duty it is to produce honey (to 'knead honey'). In other words, the analogy now suggests that symbolically they approve his words and implicitly his deeds, as obedient subjects should. Hence, although the image of bees swarming might at first evoke a sense of danger and perhaps chaos, Canterbury's 'bee-hive' analogy rectifies it. It pre-empts the Chorus's description of Henry's subjects as a dutiful and respectable crowd of subjects. By depicting the people as a swarm, Shakespeare thus ennobles their presence, and by doing so he shows that they have a role and purpose in this scene: they are following their monarch. Similarly, in Canterbury's speech every individual 'bee' in the bee-hive has a purpose in the society, and every bee's aspiration, as it were, is to obey their Queen. As our discussion in Chapter 4 has demonstrated, in the crowd scenes "subjection" is represented as a dignified condition.

The image of 'swarming plebeians', however, bids another interpretation. I suggest, it elicits an image of a bold, powerful crowd that 'before' them 'carries noise' and provokes fear.[58] Yet, this is not a negative representation. Indeed, I suggest that these people on the beach are symbolically 'the ushers of' the British army. With this imagery Shakespeare is, perhaps, re-enacting the battle of Agincourt, and this explains why the people in the scene are represented as if they are conquering the scene. That the word 'swarming' is accompanied with the phrase 'at their heels' suggests that they are 'swarming' in a menacing fashion, and as such 'swarming' may now evoke an image of stinging bees, or an image of the army in the battlefield: the point being that the 'swarming plebeians' not only represent Henry's obedient subjects, but they also re-enact the King's army. That is, in the space of the crowd's character Shakespeare implies the army's presence. If this crowd re-enacts a battle-scene of sorts, we can say, then, that it takes part in a symbolic "pageant" in which it is paying respect to their King and to the King's army. They are welcoming their 'mighty whiffler': the British army, and are involved, then, in the process of myth-making of Henry's soldiers.

The underlying message behind all this, however, is that the British soldiers are the true conquerors, for we know that even though the French outnumbered them, the British

[58] To use Volumnia's words in her description of Coriolanus, 2.1. 154-5.

soldiers 'proved best' men 'i'th' field'.[59] This portrayal now becomes a praise of their martial valour (a virtue so important to ancient Rome, the role model to the people in early modern Britain). We are, indeed, reminded that it is the king's soldiers who get blood on their hands, not the king, and now this myth-making of a British victory turns into the myth-making of the soldiers' accomplishment. In the words of Henry VI, they are the 'soldiers' who 'showed how well' they 'love' their 'prince and country' (*2 Henry VI*. 4.9.15-16). Shakespeare is interested in what the myth-making entails, and, as many have noted, in showing what the price for it is - just as Essex did upon his return from Ireland.[60]

Now we shall pay attention to where Henry's soldiers stand in relation to the royal myth-making. In the case of *Henry V* what this all suggests is that in 5.0. the dramatist focuses on the people because he represents through them the British soldiers, and equally because he indirectly praises the common soldiers' courage, too, not only the king's. After all, they are the ones who are exposed to death and suffering, which explains why the Chorus's speech focuses on the people rather than on Henry, and why Shakespeare presents the people as an army that is 'creating awe and fear in other men' (4.1. 244), like their King. As a result this representation of the crowd scene is 'creating awe and fear' in the audience. As we shall see in the analysis of 4.1, the victory is ultimately achieved by force, and by the loss of precious lives. If anyone should be remembered in history, it should be the soldiers who won this victory. Importantly, this critique comes from a very articulate group of soldiers. We shall see indeed that the 5.0 reported crowd scene echoes much of what is going on in 4.1.

### *Henry V*'s Staged Crowd Scene: 4.1
### A Little Touch of the Soldiers in the Night

Crunelle-Vanrigh has linked 5.0 and 4.1, suggesting that: 'the prologue to act IV reworks material from the royal entry [5.0], adding a ceremonial stamp to Harry's stroll through the English camp', and rightly indicates that 'the king's exchange with his men [...] replicates Elizabeth's much noted attention to her subjects during her passage.'[61] Implicit in this claim

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[59] Cominius's terms describing Coriolanus's valour (2.2. 95).

[60] For more see Paul E. J. Hammer's 'Shakespeare's *Richard II*, the Play of 7 February 1601, and the Essex Rising', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 59 (2008), 1-35, which gives a detailed review of the historical context of Essex's rising, p. 1-35.

[61] Crunelle-Vanrigh, '*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', p. 359. 'On 15 January 1558/9, the day preceding her coronation, Elizabeth rode in an open litter from the Tower of London to the Palace of Westminster, along

is that 'a ceremonial stamp' is always linked to some sort of a public event, or encounter. The Chorus's rejoiced description of the 'sweet majesty's'... 'visits [to] all his hosts' (4.0. 40 and 32) before the battle indirectly announces Henry's meeting with the soldiers in 4.1 as a dignified and stately encounter. In addition, although Henry meets his soldiers 'incognito' – disguising his identity – the scene still portrays the encounter between the King and his soldiers, and engages in the debate about kingship and the subjects' duty in early modern England. Even more important is the fact that the audience is aware that 'Harry Le Roy' is king Henry, because the audience, too, is meant to learn, and profit, as it were, from this encounter. Phyllis Rackin acknowledges the immense importance of the theatrical event, the audience and the subject matter raised in 4.1: 'Henry and the audience are forced to hear an eloquent challenge to the official version of events and a powerful case against war itself, that is, against the king's entire historical enterprise'.[62]

It is precisely the audience's presence that gives this scene its 'ceremonial' element. The reason I refer to this scene as the "semi-crowd" scene, however, is because it represents a "crowd" of just a few individuals.[63] The word "crowd" typically refers to 'a large number of people gathered together', but it can also refer to 'a particular set of the people', and the soldiers in the scene represent in fact 'a particular set': the British army.[64] Last but not least, the "crowd" also refers to 'a mass of spectators; an audience', and the audience watching *Henry V* are implicitly staged in the play's staged semi-crowd scene.[65] That is, this small crowd on the stage is symbolically "enlarged" with the presence of the audience in the theatre. Nevertheless, Henry's 'ceremonial stamp' in 5.0, and all it represents, is not only reflected in 4.1, but seriously questioned by the "crowd" that Henry encounters. Indeed, as Crunelle-Vanrigh later in her essay points out: 'Its [the Chorus'] idealized depiction of the king's visit to his army [...] is darkly reflected in IV.i'.[66] Therefore, I am interested in examining how this "semi-crowd" scene, which criticizes the

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Fenchurch Street and across Gracious Street to Cornhill, then along Cheapside into Fleet Street through Ludgate and past Temple Bar. She was shown on her way five allegorical pageants devised by the citizens of London, illustrating the functions of, and hopes in, the new queen', p. 356.

62 Phyllis Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles* (New York : Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 243. Rackin adds: 'The character who makes the case is a theatrical creation, a common soldier for whom William Shakespeare invented the name Williams', p. 243.

63 The word "crowd" typically refers to 'a large number of people gathered together', 'a mass of spectators; an audience', but also 'a particular set of the people', *Oxford Compact English* Dictionary, ed. by Della Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 235.

64 *Oxford Compact English* Dictionary, ed. by Della Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 235.

65 *Oxford Compact English* Dictionary, p. 235.

66 Crunelle-Vanrigh ,'*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', p. 368.

war, affects the representation of the 5.0 reported crowd scene, and the glorification of British victory within the scene, and clarify further why it can be considered as the "semi-crowd" scene.

As I suggested earlier, the play does not portray a straightforward approval of Henry's cause. Throughout, the play seems to prompt the audience to question Henry's decision to invade France. This play in fact opens with this challenge by the king himself. In 1.2 the king asks the Archbishop of Canterbury to explain why they have a case to go to war with France, and indeed why he has a right to the French throne.[67] Canterbury gives the famous "Salic Law" speech in which he concludes that the French of course would not agree with this reasoning; hence that the only option would be to invade France.[68] That this is not widely accepted and approved is nowhere more obvious than in Act 4.1. Shakespeare's representation of the soldiers in this scene serves both to challenge the King's authority and to pay tribute to the soldiers. Most importantly, this 'little touch of the soldiers in the night' portrays, in fact what can be termed an *honourable crowd*.

Henry disguised as a common soldier, visits his troops the night before the battle, and converses with them about his regal responsibilities and about ethical questions in relation to the war with France. As the Chorus to Act 4 relates, on the eve of the battle the morale in the English camp is low: 'every wretch, pining and pale before' (l. 41). The English army is outnumbered by the French and the soldiers fear they stand no chance of victory: 'We see yonder the beginning of the day,/ but I think we shall never see the end of it' (4.1. 90-91), a soldier, named Michael Williams articulates; and King Henry, as the Chorus tells us, 'the royal captain of this ruined band' (l. 29), aware of this poor sentiment in his camp:

> forth he goes and visits all his host,
> Bids them good morrow with a modest smile,
> And calls them brothers, friends and countrymen
> [....]
> With cheerful semblance and sweet majesty,
> That every wretch, pining and pale before,
> Beholding him plucks comfort from his looks,
> A largess universal, like the sun [...]
> A little touch of Harry in the night.

[67] 1.2. 9-32. As Gurr points out, 'Henry himself was the only one to point out the moral issue, and to picture clearly all the deaths and destruction which go with war', see '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 66.
[68] 1.2. 33-135.

(4.0. 32-47)[69]

However, despite his efforts the King is about to face a great challenge to his authority. For now 'Harry's constant staging of himself takes place not before an urban crowd or a tavern audience but in front of an army, a very different collective body with a critical stake in believing in the godlike power of their leader. In front of this crowd, the theatrical strategy relies on a conceit of intimacy and courtliness'.[70] Hence, he disguises his royal identity and as a common soldier, under the alias 'Harry Le Roy' (4.1. 49), encounters a group of common soldiers by the campfire. Significantly, we are introduced to them by their individual names: John Bates, Alexander Court, and Michael Williams.[71] Banerjee stresses that 'even while speaking of the glory that awaited the victors in the battle, Henry had listed those who would be remembered in history and people's memory, yet he had not asked for the names of the soldiers with whom he had conversed.'[72] Certainly this is not something to praise Henry about, yet it is in a way beside the point. For, even though Henry does not show interest in their names, Shakespeare does. In fact, we, the audience, hear their names, which highlights the importance of what they are about to say in their debate about war, the king and the king's responsibilities. The play in fact pauses on the eve of the battle to tell us about their opinions, and this is telling. Indeed, by giving the soldiers major parts in the scene (approx. 150 lines, including the King's) the dramatist stresses the significance of what they are saying.

Before we analyse Shakespeare's representation of these soldiers, however, we need to examine in detail how Shakespeare constructs 4.1 and why it could be actually treated as a crowd scene. It has a shape of the crowd scene because it displays a moment in which the monarch encounters his subjects in the public space and interacts with them. However, what complicates this view is that even though the scene is set in an open space - by the

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[69] Rather than the king's tactics, 'the work of raising morale is, in Shakespeare's presentation, Henry's essential contribution to the victory'; Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 66.

[70] Munro, *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 87.

[71] Note that unlike in other staged crowd scenes that we have discussed, these soldiers are not "individuated" by numbers (*Coriolanus*, 2.3), by their profession (*Julius Caesar*, 1.1), and not merely by a first name (*2 Henry VI*, 4.2), but by both first name and second name. They are, thus, treated with respect. *More*'s crowd is "individuated" at times (for instance, "John Lincoln", "George Betts"), and yet it is represented as "mob". This mob is "redeemed" in the end, but the nature of it is very different to *Henry V*'s "crowd" in 4.1 that we are about to encounter now.

[72] Banerjee, 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 34.

campfire - the interaction between Henry and his soldiers looks more like a private conversation rather than a public encounter. The *locus*-world of the play merges into the *platea*-world of the stage, and the private moment now becomes public. Indeed, Shakespeare allows the King to interrupt this private conversation precisely because he needs a crowd scene at this point in the play. However, this encounter cannot be treated as a crowd-scene-proper, but because it depicts the monarch-subjects interaction it dramatically works, or functions, as a crowd scene. What also needs to be recognised is that while the King's identity is not obvious to the soldiers, it *is* to the *audience*. The effect of this scene, then, is that it helps clarify the link between "army" and "crowd", but also between "audience" and "crowd".

Moreover, in discussing the sources of the play, Craik points out that 'the incognito encounters with Pistol and the three soldiers' springs 'from a dramatic tradition current in the 1590s [...] in which a ruler in disguise mingles with his subjects. *Henry V* greatly benefits from this infusion of "comical history"'.[73] What matters even more, however, is how Shakespeare utilises this tradition in 4.1. Apart from infusing 'comical history' into the scene, he is thus converting it into the 'incognito' crowd scene. It is this comic element of the King's hidden identity that now serves to bring us close to the three soldiers, and allows Shakespeare to show what they really think. In other words, now we can say that this scene is a crowd scene "by default" because like other crowd scenes it depicts a moment in which a crowd interacts with an all-important public figure (a king, a warrior, a hero, or a politician). However, it is still a 'semi-crowd' scene because it lacks an element of the crowd scene proper, i.e. the subjects' awareness that they are interacting with the King. What ultimately makes this scene a crowd scene, though, is that as a part of a theatrical performance it portrays a public event. It is after all performed on the stage and witnessed by an audience, and this is what matters especially in *Henry V*. The crowd scenes function as an analogy of the audience-stage relationship and, indeed, they "stage" the audience. This interactive "nature" of the crowd scenes means that our focus should be on *relationships* – dramatic and theatrical - rather than on individuals and crowds.

The King's famous oration at Harfleur (3.1) in which he raises his troops' spirits, evoking their patriotic feelings and loyalty to him with 'Cry, "God for Harry! England and

[73] See Craik's Introduction to the Arden edition of the play, p. 10. He adds that 'although it would be wrong to ignore the more serious aspect of the latter encounter it would be equally wrong to underestimate the comic element in its dramatic irony', p. 10-11.

Saint George!'" (l. 34), is answered in this scene, and we shall hear what the soldiers really think of it, and how they receive it. For instance, Bates cynically counterpoints: 'He [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; and so I would/ he were, and I by him, at all adventures, so we were/ quit here' (4.1. 113-117). His words seem like a cold shower by comparison to Henry's passionate words, and imply that the war is an unnecessary evil, and even adds: 'I would he [the king] were here alone; so should he/ be sure to be ransomed, and a many poor men's lives/ saved' (4.1. 121-123). In his reply Henry tries to rescue the king's reputation, and as 'Harry le Roy' says: 'methinks I could not die anywhere so/ contented as in the King's company, his company being/ just and his quarrel/ honourable' (4.1. 126-28). Bates responds with a clear sense of duty and obedience to the king: '[this is] more than we should seek after, for we/ know enough if we know we are the King's subjects. If/ his cause be wronged, our obedience to the King wipes/ the crime of it out of us' (4.1. 130-33).

First, Bates's reply indicates that the whole responsibility and the moral question of war depends upon the King, and that obedience to the king is far more important than even the moral question of war. The following critique, however, poses the strongest challenge to Henry's authority so far. Williams disagrees with Bates about the responsibility of the king. He thinks that being a king is a huge eschatological responsibility, and that if he wrongly decides to have a war he is answerable for all those people who die for the cause:

> But if the cause be not good, the King himself
> hath a heavy reckoning to make when all those legs
> and arms and heads chopped off in a battle shall join
> together at the latter day and cry all 'We died at
> such a place', some swearing, some crying for a
> surgeon [....] I am afeared there are few die well that
> die in a battle, for how can they charitably dispose of
> anything when blood is their argument? Now, if these
> men do not die well it will be a black matter for the
> King, that led them to it, who to disobey were against
> all proportion of subjection
> (4.1. 134-46)[74]

[74] Reading Williams's argument (4.1.129-35) Banerjee writes: 'Implicit in the moral issue of the king's reckoning is a vivid picture of the concrete, material problems of the common soldier, who is conscripted into war against his will. Such details foreground the political responsibilities of the king [...]. Williams's central question' suggests that 'the soldiers object to bloodshed because such an act is unchristian'; and she adds: 'Significantly, the grievances related to wars were based on realities, and Williams and Bates might have had

Williams thus indicates that the king is accountable for his actions, that he himself 'hath a heavy reckoning to make' for those who die, and that there needs to be a legitimate reason for war and that it is precisely the King's responsibility to recognise that. More importantly, Williams entirely disapproves of wars and bitterly remarks: 'there are few die well that die in the battle; for how can they charitably dispose of anything when blood is their argument?'[75] Indeed, 'if the cause be not good', or 'if these men do not die well it will be a black matter for the King, that led them to it'. That is, the king's legacy will suffer, and the King will be accountable for them on Judgement Day. Williams is clearly an opinionated and articulate man, but what matters the most and what this portrayal of this crowd (of soldiers) in fact shows is that this crowd is *different* from other on-stage crowds: it is capable of carrying out this type of debate, and is not easily manipulated. The main point is that this scene "works" in a way familiar to us through other crowd scenes: that is, individuals are having their say and representing the views of others as well as themselves. The impact of 4.1 in *Henry V* lies in the way it draws on techniques that are recognisable from Shakespeare's other crowd scenes, but subverts them to present an honourable, articulate, clear-thinking and independent minded "crowd".

Williams's final words, however, reveal a real sense of defeat, for he adds: 'to disobey were against/ all proportion of subjection', and this suggests that in the end, whether or not they disagree with the war, they have no choice but to obey the king's order to fight: one of the play's central themes.[76] Williams thus faces a 'no win' situation and he

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their counterparts in real life'. She stresses the 'utterly impoverished condition of Henry's soldiers on the eve of Agincourt, and adds 'Although Henry's victory glosses over these details, the play evidently critiques such practices and suggests that a greater say for the commoners in their governance would further the general weal', see 'The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 35-37.

[75] Interestingly, in 1.2 the king himself poses the same question to the Archbishop; he wants to know how Canterbury justifies deaths of innocent soldiers in the war: 'For God doth know how many now in health/ Shall drop their blood in approbation [...]. Therefore take heed how you impawn our person,/ How you awake our sleeping sword of war:/ We charge you in the name of God take heed./ For never two such kingdoms did contend/ Without much fall of blood, whose guiltless drops/ Are every one a woe, a sore complaint/ 'Gainst him whose wrongs gives edge unto the/ swords' (1.2. 18-27). His words in a sense lose validity after his reaction to the French insult with the tennis balls, based on which he suddenly decides to invade France.

[76] Again, it is more than tempting to draw links with Earl of Essex. By giving such an emphasis to the issue of the subjects' obedience to the King, Shakespeare might be reflecting at the conflict between Elizabeth I and Essex in 1599. As Craik writes in the Introduction to the Arden edition of the play, Essex who quite bluntly disobeyed the Queen's orders, consequently was put 'under house arrest for leaving his command' in Ireland without the Queen's permission. His plot to seize Whitehall palace was discovered and soon after he was beheaded (p. 2). However, as Craik rightly notes: 'If allusions are to Essex they imply that *Henry V* was acted

can do nothing about it, because he knows that to 'disobey were against/ all proportion of subjection'.[77] Williams's words indeed are not 'reflecting back and enhancing the image of perfect rule with a perfect reciprocal obedience', that is, at least not here. [78] In relation to this matter Hedrick and Reynolds suggest that this debate

> becomes a debate about the "subject" of the King, that is, about subject position itself. The idea is addressed explicitly by Williams's argument that if the men do not die well in war, it is a "black matter for the King that led them to it - who to disobey were against all proportion of subjection" (137-38). For Henry's "proportion of subjection" is indeed the key issue for enforcing domination, for having his way, which he attempts both through force and through rhetoric.[79]

Hedrick and Reynolds suggest that 'Williams responds far more cynically and resistant [...]. with the straightforward but ultimately subversive scepticism', and explain: 'With this line, Williams directly acknowledges not only patriotism but its blindness, the inherent position of the subject to sovereign power, relying on the legitimacy of that power without any access to modes of proof of verification.'[80]

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between March 1599, once it was generally known that Essex was going to Ireland, and September that year. The play might, of course, have been written well before that time', p. 3.

[77] Recall Lincoln's final words, 'Obedience is the best in eche degree' (*More*, 2.4. 59).

[78] I use here Munro's wording in *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 79; however, his focus is different. He focuses on the city of London and writes: 'as a stage because the city acts as a backdrop to the monarch, the setting of the royal jewel. But the urban audience of this regal magnificence is not simply an audience. The stage also encloses 'the people,' reflecting back and enhancing the image of perfect rule with a perfect reciprocal obedience. In this moment the space of theater becomes the space of ritual, producing the liminal/ sacred condition that Victor Turner terms *communitas*, the revelation of the deep truths and the values of the community', see Munro's *London: The City and Its Double*, p. 79.

[79] Hedrick and Reynolds, '"A Little Touch of Harry in the Night": Transluency and Projective Transversality in the Sexual and National Politics of *Henry V*', p. 182.

[80] Hedrick and Reynolds, '"A Little Touch of Harry in the Night": Transluency and Projective Transversality in the Sexual and National Politics of *Henry V*', p. 183. In addition, Hedrick and Reynolds point out that the King's role goes even further: 'Here, Henry is aware of transversal situation of projecting the other into a subject position: they [the soldiers] find themselves the source of the *King's* subjectivity. Of course, the argument in its entirety replicates the rhetorical posture of Henry throughout the scene, namely, that he is continually abjuring responsibilities [...]. In effect Henry has by his rhetorical assault created a double bind for himself. Whereas on the one hand he would invite his hearers to think transversally as if they were in the position of the King (thinking that this will help him out), on the other hand, if they should actually do so, as Williams does in his provocative challenges, the King is placed in a very dangerous and disadvantaged situation, since they will *see through* his rhetoric and his disguise, recognizing the self-interest and manipulation that motivate them'. In conclusion, 'The King requires a sense of consent for hegemony to work properly, both from his troops [...] and from Catherine [...]. Thus Henry's transversality in this scene implies a terroristic imagination of total force requiring total submission', p. 182-4.

The question, nevertheless, is why Shakespeare allows this crowd to articulate their complaints, specifically the complaint about their subjected position and duty to obey the King, and whether anything really can be changed about it? For, after all the subjects' duty and obedience to the king is not even questionable. Hence, whether the war is justified or not, and whether the people like it or not, seems paradoxically beside the point, and these soldiers are in a position in which they 'willingly' have to consent to the war, and yet they do so indeed 'against their will'.[81] Moreover, these soldiers 'end with only the honour of fighting in their king's company', and 'these are the men whose deaths in his service Henry refuses to take responsibility for'.[82] Gurr's interpretation of the bee-hive metaphor is relevant here. According to his reading, 'the noble's and the priest's elaborate metaphors [i.e. Exeter's in 1.2. 180-3, and the Archbishop's in 1.2. 204-6] ] tell us more than they think. They are eager for the war. Many things and many men may work with one consent to the war in France, but as the Archbishop's revealing word has it, they work contrariously'.[83]

Henry's justification of war, however, is that it is 'God's beadle, war is his/ vengeance; so that here men are punished for before/ breach of the King's laws in now the King's quarrel' (l. 168-70), he says, and thus justifies his own war enterprise (and bestows on himself the Divine right in the process).[84] In fact, Henry's 'supreme self interest' is 'personal glory and a secure title for his two kingdoms. There is something to be said for the view of Shakespeare which takes commodity to be the mainspring of action in his commonwealth. Only the innocents like Bates and Williams seem to be without this

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[81] *Coriolanus*; Third Citizen realizes they were manipulated by the Tribunes to decide to banish Coriolans, and he says: 'That we did, we did for the best, and/ though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet/ it was against our will' (4.6. 152-54).

[82] Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 71-2.

[83] Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 70. 'Societies work contrariously. [...] all bees are out for themselves. Foreign war has the advantage of drawing all interests into one consent, and of strengthening lenity to friends through harshness to enemies', Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 72.

[84] Gurr suggests that what Shakespeare shows in his representation of the king is that, unlike a Christian prince that Ersamus talks about (not a 'warlike' ruler), Henry does not display 'clemency' and does not really offer any argument for a 'just war'; 'for the sake of victory he sets aside lenity and takes so many deaths on his conscience', see '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 63 and p. 69. As Gurr further indicates, 'a monarch has more than his private conscience to satisfy in deciding what is a just war, and he puts at risk far more bodies than his own', '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 62.

motivation'.[85] The truth is, 'the only members of the commonwealth who act out of loyalty rather than self interest are the common soldiers'.[86]

More importantly, what this debate tells us about the soldiers is that although they have no role in political decision-making, their characters on stage have roles, and especially in this scene. Shakespeare indeed gives them a part and a moment in the play in which they disclose to us their intellectually inclined minds, capable of judging and carrying out a debate on such a sophisticated level. 'Unlike the other fictional commoners in the Henriad, Williams is allowed to speak standard English', not 'the regional dialects of Fluellen, Jamy, and Macmorris [...] linguistic deformities that bespeak their exclusion from the dominant official discourse of the King's English'.[87] As we have seen, thus, the dramatist can stress the fact that there is nothing 'vulgar' about the common soldiers; that along with the soldiers' martial skills which bring glory to Britain, we should praise them for their intellectual skills, too. The representation of this dignified crowd, indeed, prepares us for the celebration of the King and most importantly, of the British soldiers in Act 5, upon *their* victorious return from France.

Furthermore, Shakespeare implicitly indicates that victory does bring national glory, but as Williams's words imply, it does not come without a price, and the price is always too high because it involves the loss of human lives. Volumnia's depiction of Coriolanus's triumphal return to Rome covertly describes the consequences of war, yet her words reveal a different sentiment from Williams's:

> These are the ushers of Martius. Before him
> He carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears.
> Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm doth lie,
> Which being advanced, declines; and then men die.[88]

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[85] Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 71. 'The glory he looks for in France he wants partly in order to fulfil his own prophecy of a glorious career, partly to cure the insecurity of his title and his psyche', Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 67.
[86] Gurr, '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 71.
[87] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 244. In fact, 'Williams is the only character in *Henry V* who ever manages to confront the king with a challenge to the official version of events', Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 246. 'Theatrical creations, Shakespeare's commoners, live in the Elizabethan present rather than the medieval past of his historical kings and noblemen'; 'the recourse to fiction is necessary', she explains, 'because common soldiers had no place in the historiographic record', Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 233 and p. 225.
[88] 2.1. 154-7.

Volumnia, of course, worships her son's valour and with pride depicts him as a great and dangerous warrior, hence he 'carries noise'. The noise could represent the crowd's cheers, but symbolically it could also represent the aftermath of the battle, 'the ceremonies of the wars [...] the forms of it, and the sobriety of it', as Fluellen puts it (4.1. 73-4). This 'noise', however can also refer to the noise created by the sound of the warriors' armour in the battle, and also to the groans of those injured. By creating such a vivid picture of Martius's martial skills, she indirectly depicts the danger that the battle-field poses. In her myth-making, Volumnia, therefore, simultaneously demystifies it. Indeed, for 'behind him [Martius...] leaves tears/ Death [...] and [...] men die'. Williams's character articulates the same point but he is aware that as a subject he cannot change the King's political decision, that he has to obey him. *Henry V*'s answer to this debate is not straightforward. For, as 5.0 shows, the play indirectly glorifies the British soldiers' achievement, and yet it appears to covertly to criticise the war.

The reconciliation between these contradictions – the myth-making and expressing a critique of war - is to be found in Shakespeare's portrayal of the soldiers in 4.1. Despite the fact that they disagree with the King's decision to invade France, they are in the end dutiful and honourable "subjects", or a dignified "swarm". Later in the scene when Bates disagrees with Williams, he says: 'I do not desire he [the king] should answer for me, and/ yet I determine to fight lustily for him' (4.1. 186-87). Williams seems to perceive "obedience" to the king as a "duty" rather than "choice", whereas Bates sees it as his choice to passionately fight for the king's cause. Indeed, a choice that is imposed as the only option is no choice at all. However, when Henry tells them he heard that the king himself said 'he would not be/ ransomed' (4.1. 189-90), Williams launches an indirect critique of war, and cynically responds to Henry's words: 'Ay, he said so to make us fight cheerfully; but/ when our throats are cut he may be ransomed and/ we ne'er the wiser' (4.1. 191-93). Thus, Williams understands well that the king may have said this to raise his soldiers' spirits, but he knows that these are just vain words, for if the king's army is defeated and the king is ransomed, then in the end nobody is a victor. When it comes to the moral questions of the war, Henry's words seem to imply that there is not such a thing as a "group" conscience, or "shared" responsibility, as it were. Indeed, every soldier individually needs to 'wash every mote out/ of his conscience' (l. 178-9). That is, the King

is neither accountable for his or his subjects' acts, and is gently telling them, and the audience, not to question the King and his authority.[89]

What *is* important to acknowledge is that by saying that each soldier is responsible for his own deeds and conscience, Henry's character now "individuates" the crowd: he acknowledges it consist of individuals with different opinions. That is, Shakespeare does not allow Henry to approach them, his army simply as a "crowd". In addition, Shakespeare also implicitly points out the fact that the King actually is debating with the common soldiers, the very soldiers who will be probably on the front line in the battle and the first ones to be sacrificed. This alone should highlight and emphasize everything they say. Furthermore, Williams's logic and understanding of the reality of the situation clearly undermines the enthusiasm that the king is trying to demonstrate, and in this way Shakespeare makes again us pause before act 5.0 - the Chorus's praise of the victory - and reconsider exactly what that victory entails. Shakespeare's representation of this honourable crowd of soldiers seems to be indicating glorious victories and praises should not be taken for granted and that the audience should challenge what it hears or sees. More than this, Shakespeare is saying to the audience that it is part of this debate, and that the issue being discussed in the scene is of its concern, too. 4.1 thus reminds the audience that it is in a "dialogue" with these soldiers and with the King: they are implicitly staged in the crowd scene. The dramaturgical role of this "semi-crowd" scene, then, is to interact with the audience, and make it a part of the theatrical 'I-Thou' relation.

The function of this "semi-crowd" scene is to portray not only the crowd interacting with the King and challenging him, but to portray a dignified crowd. It is, then, not a prototype of the "crowd", but a "dramatic crowd" whose role on the stage dignifies it. This is due to the fact that Shakespeare is engaged in the myth-making process about the soldiers, not only as soldiers, but as decent human beings: it is, then, not a typical crowd. For this reason, too, this crowd has not one mind on the matter. As it has been noted, in his reply 'Harry le Roy' defends the king saying to Williams that 'Every subject's/ duty is the King's, but every subject's soul is his/ own' (4.1. 175-77). Here he implies that soldiers and the king have a mutual responsibility to each other, for a 'subject's duty is the king's too; but despite this, he emphasises, the king is not responsible for deeds and sins of each subject. Henry, of course, twists what Williams is saying (l. 134-46), and implies that

[89] Gurr rightly notes that 'kindness is a theme in *Henry V*, but it is kindness (in royal terms lenity) under pressure', see '*Henry V* and the Bees' Commonwealth', p. 68.

unlike his subjects, the King cannot make mistakes: his actions are not questionable. Yet, what is implicit in this debate, as it is in 5.0, is that the King looks to his soldiers approval, and tries to convince the soldiers of his own rightfulness as their king, and then aims to establish his authority through God.

This, then, explains why the dramatist chooses to present the interaction between the King and these soldiers, and why he needs such a semi-crowd scene, and indeed why he needs to represent the soldiers as a dignified crowd. This crowd is quite philosophical and not easily manipulated as for instance the citizens in *Coriolanus*. In this play we encounter a crowd who turn out not only to be an angry and dangerous crowd (rightly so, because of the famine and sufferings they go through), but also a crowd gullible and quite easily manipulated by the Tribunes.[90] In *Coriolanus* the plebeians' individuality is distinguished by numbers (i.e. First Citizen, Second Citizen etc.), not by names. Moreover, even though we hear their individual opinions, in the end they all fall into one voice ('All'), a voice that is entirely influenced by the Tribunes (Brutus and Sicinius). Contrary to this, *Henry V*'s honourable crowd in 4.1 is not represented as an angry rabble, but as a group of people capable of reasoning their king and the ongoing events. Banerjee rightly points out that 'it is the common people who voice sentiments against wars, and in their criticism, they resemble active, mature citizens of a republic rather than the "wretched slave" with "vacant mind" or the peasant with "gross brain"' (4.1. 69-70), and adds, 'it is the common soldiers who recognise that the war *does not* serve the *common* good'.[91] She further notes stating that 'Kings do not take their people into confidence about wars waged on behalf of the country. Yet this is a demand that the commoner could justifiably make against the monarch, who irresponsibly drives them to war to secure his throne or to extend his rule to foreign territory.'[92]

We hear a lot of what the soldiers think in 4.1, apart from one figure, however, and I would like to suggest that with this exclusion Shakespeare is actually highlighting the importance of the scene, and the importance of what this crowd is about to say. Alexander Court is listed in the stage direction to 4.1 and remains in the scene, but turns silent as the King arrives. It is interesting that in this moment in the scene Shakespeare decides to give

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[90] See for instance act 2.3. 1-36 in which the citizens debate whether to give their voices to Coriolanus so that he can become a consul; and then 2.3. 151-250 in which the Tribunes suddenly turn them against Coriolanus; and finally 4.6. 136-54, after Coriolanus is banished, the citizens doubt their own decision to banish him.
[91] The Roman citizens as they are represented in *Coriolanus*, of course, do not entirely reflect this.
[92] Banerjee, The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 31-4.

this soldier a rather passive role. In Laurence Olivier's production of *Henry V*, significantly, Court is given an active role in the debate.[93] In fact, he is actually given Williams's most important lines starting with 'But if the cause be not good, the King himself/ hath heavy reckoning to make' (l. 134-5).[94] In Olivier's production Court's role is, then, not different from that of his companions and as such it does not stand out. However, if on the stage Court is represented as the dramatist instructs it, then his role entirely changes. In the play, Court now comes to represent an on-stage audience, or an extra with an important role. His presence creates a further sense of a "crowd". Moreover, his silent and attentive demeanour implicitly tells the audience to look up at him and follow what he does. That is, Court's "silent" part now becomes similar to that of the Chorus – giving us instructions and leading through the play. Indeed, Court may be viewed as silently giving instructions to the audience to pay attention and listen attentively to what the soldiers are saying and this in fact emphasizes the importance of the scene. Symbolically then Court's detachment in the scene dramatically functions as instruction to the audience: to "attach" themselves to the scene. For Court's disengagement actually shows respect and implies three crucial things: first, that this scene demonstrates an important moment of the interaction between the King and his people, and this then implicitly suggests that this *is* a crowd scene; second, that Court's silent response implies that this crowd is worth listening to. This crowd is astute, forthright and far from being ignorant. Finally, as we have seen, in this crowd scene the King is not talking *to* the soldiers, but he is talking *with* them.

What emerges from this discussion is that a redefinition of the term "crowd" is demanded by *Henry V*. In Shakespeare's drama a scene depicting a gathering of the plebeian crowd does not necessarily warrant the term "crowd scene". For instance, the plebeians conversation regarding their reputation in *Coriolanus* (2.3), or the citizens' complaints in *More* (1.1) are not dramatically crowd scenes, because they do not have a politicised nature in terms of representing the interaction between the crowd and authority. In fact, had *Henry V*'s staged crowd scene portrayed only a group of soldiers discussing the same issues it could not have been seen as a "crowd scene", and would not have the same dramatic effect as it has. By default, then, crowd scenes in Shakespeare's drama dramatise the interaction between a monarch (or the figure of authority) and his or her subjects.

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[93] *Henry V*. Dir. Laurence Olivier. Rank Film Distributors. (1945) [on DVD-ROM].

[94] However, his final and most powerful statement in the final line ('who to disobey were against all proportion of subjection') is taken out. *Henry V*. Dir. Laurence Olivier. Rank Film Distributors. (1945) [on DVD-ROM].

The momentum of a crowd scene also resides in the fact that it gives us an insight into the 'crowd's' mind, and makes us reconsider what "crowd" in Shakespeare's drama means. It is not merely a representative, in Montaigne's words, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, 'of ignorance, of injustice, of inconstancy', but, we are reminded that on the stage the crowd can be of a worthy character and it can consist of worthy individuals. With respect to *Henry V* all this suggests that Shakespeare needs to have this semi-crowd scene because it allows him to show that these soldiers are capable of holding a conversation on the same level with the king; to show and explain why these bright subjects support Henry even when they question him in their own private moments; and to offer us another perspective to that of the Chorus to act 5. Most importantly, it ennobles the soldiers and by implication other "crowds" in the theatre, too.[95]

With regard to Shakespeare's dramatisation of 4.1 as a private conversation, it can be said that this is a manipulative way of convincing the audience that even though Henry is challenged, his soldiers still choose to obey him, and as such the scene can now pave the way to the reported crowd scene in act 5. Indeed, both the audience and the king now know that there is no pretence in what the soldiers are saying. Again, by dramatising a "private conversation" as a "crowd scene" Shakespeare shows us that these soldiers have privacy and that they are not always part of a "crowd". Had Shakespeare not created the scene as such then we, and Henry, would probably miss the chance to hear what the soldiers really think. Moreover, act 4.7 demonstrates this, and the necessity for this type of crowd scene. In this scene, Williams faces Henry again, and learns that he actually spoke with the King himself that night. When the King asks Williams why he carries a glove in his cap, Williams tells him that he got it from a 'rascal that swag-/gered with' him 'last night' (l. 123-24). The 'rascal' is of course Henry. Henry reveals to Williams that it was him whom he abused. Williams, once he faces Henry, not Harry, significantly changes his tone:

> Your majesty came not like your self: you
> appeared to me but as a common man – witness the
> night, your garments, your lowliness; and what your
> highness suffered under that shape, I beseech you take
> it for your own fault and not mine, for had you been as

[95] Being in the presence of the King dignifies their presence, too. Notably, in the stage directions, Henry is always introduced as "King", not as "Harry le Roy". Most importantly, his "off-stage" crowd is aware that this is the King speaking.

> I took you for, I made no offence; therefore I beseech
> your highness pardon me
> (4.8. 51-57)

The scene can be played as quite comical and light-hearted, and yet it still shows that the soldier might have reacted differently if he knew he had sat with the King by the campfire that night. Nevertheless, it also shows Williams at his best again, for even now when he is facing the King he is not intimidated as one might expect. He stands up for himself, escapes with a good argument, and even reminds the King that it was all the King's own mistake. Moreover, Williams's words imply that the King's eloquence was well-matched by Williams's. In comparison to his soldiers, then, Henry does not appear to be supreme and superior in carrying out the debate.

Shakespeare depicts 4.1, then, as a private event disguised as a public event in order to balance the people's response to Henry in Act 5. In Act 5 they are ecstatic about Henry, but Shakespeare clearly wants to show that such public support does not come without questioning. Regardless of the fact that Henry is heavily criticised and challenged in 4.1, Shakespeare still portrays him as a sympathetic and charismatic figure. First, his rhetorical skills in the scene win us over; second, he is a king who *is* involved and shows concern about what his people think. With this Shakespeare addresses those in the audience who may have doubts about the King, and sends the message that Henry was indeed one of the people. As the imagined soldier Harry le Roy reminds us: 'the King is but a man, as I am:/ the violet smells to him as it doth to me [...] all his senses have but/ human conditions' (4.1. 102-5).

Crunelle-Vanrigh indicates, moreover, that 'to attentive audiences, the episode originates in the pageant. Its purpose is still to instruct, but silent allegory has turned into unadorned dialogue, the redundant presenter into a participant, and the dignified figures of the pageant are now spoiling for a fight over the question of the king's cause. Harry is left unaided to cope with an edifying pageant-turned-trial, in which Williams - or Williams S - literally "baits the court"'.[96] She thus sees the scene as a ceremonial walk in which the King's interaction with his subjects reveals a 'give-and-take relation with the sovereign, reaffirming its loyalty to his line of descent, while holding a mirror up to the magistrate.'[97]

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[96] Crunelle-Vanrigh, '*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', p. 368.
[97] Crunelle-Vanrigh ,'*Henry V* as a Royal Entry', p. 358.

More importantly, I would emphasize here that the 'give-and-take', or the exchange of words in this scene, is in a sense quite ceremonial; that is, if we take into account that 'ceremonial' includes or requires a competent use of language too. As McEachern points out, in 3.1 the King 'punctiliously insists on differences among his "dear friends," between "you noblest English,/ Whose blood in fet from fathers of war proof" (3.1. 17-18), 'and you, good yeomen,... Let us swear/ That you are worth your breeding ... For there is none of you so mean and base/ That hath not noble luster in your eyes"' (l. 25-30).[98] By emphasizing social status among his soldiers Henry makes his army look less unified, and he is also restating or reinforcing the hierarchical order in the society, and this takes us back again to the analogy of the perfect apiar society. In the last lines quoted above (3.1. 25-30), Henry reminds his 'mean and base' soldiers that they can be noble warriors. Yet, even though Henry seemingly flatters the soldiers of the lower social rank (to motivate them to fight well, of course), still by using 'so' in 'so mean and base' he implies that he also perceives them as inferior human beings. This 'so' does not erase the possibility that in fact there may be nothing base in these soldiers of a lower social rank. As we have seen in 4.1, as a response to this, the scene demonstrates that there is nothing 'base, common, and popular' (4.1. 38) in the soldiers' way of thinking. This crowd is a thinking crowd not a mob, or a many-headed monster. However, it thinks itself into "obedience", which may seem paradoxical. However, what options does this crowd have but to accept its "subjection"?

Crunelle-Vanrigh offers another view of the scene. Her reading in fact oversees the purpose behind Shakespeare's need to stage the soldiers and make the scene a semi-crowd scene:

> the play raises the issue of just war, from Harry's initial question, "May I with right and conscience make this claim" (I.ii.96), to his debate with Williams, Bates, and Court in act IV over the justice of

[98] McEachern, '*Henry V* and the Paradox of the Body Politic', p. 45-6. McEachern rightly points out that in 4.8. (l.102-6) 'Henry's closing words on the battlefield displace the promised kinship with a hierachical ordering', and adds that 'by naming them in rank order—unless they have no "name" - this enumeration of the dead reinscribes social divisions, the link between blood and power [...]. At the same time, [however] Henry punctiliously insists on differences among his "dear friends," between "you noblest English" and "you, good yeomen", p. 45. Moreover, she writes: 'The play is as vigilant in limiting the scope of common feeling as it is in encouraging it. Henry's body becomes the chief site of this contest. It is precisely the corporeality of the monarchic body that is resisted as the trope is turned into a metaphysics of power [...]. Thus to "gentle" is both to erase social division and to reinstate it by turning conquest into a "noble" sport', p. 46.

> his cause. It shows by and large a royal training course in governing, run by a host of benevolent uncles and soul-searching soldiers. Williams, Bates, and Court improbably spend the night before Agincourt arguing over the extent of the sovereign's responsibility when soldiers die for a wrong cause [...]. Reverberating with controversies over the technicalities of rule, or right, or genealogy, the play reaches its apex when a dispirited Harry finally admits that "[he] must bear all," a message the local authorities in charge of a royal entry were all too willing to pass to the new sovereign (IV.i.205)[99]

Perhaps it is 'improbable' that these 'soul-searching' soldiers would spend a night before the battle debating of their leader's rights–and-wrongs, but this is beside the point. Shakespeare creates this scene in order to highlight the reported crowd scene in act 5 and its myth-making of the British army. So, what we witness in 4.1 is crucial - a crowd of people who have distinctive view-points, who are capable of assessing and evaluating the king's rule and his political decisions. As a result, with this representation of the people Shakespeare is in fact serving the King well; he implies that if Henry is judged favourably by his people, the audience watching the play too should esteem and value him. As we have seen, their sense of obedience both helps them and makes them accept their King's decisions, and their own duties as subjects. For this reason Shakespeare allows, as Banerjee puts it, 'the common people, who are the most exploited by the practice of war, [to] appear as its most articulate critics.'[100] In addition to Banerjee's point, this reading does not only convey that 'the common people' are the play's 'most articulate critics' of war, but demonstrates that these soldiers make a dignified crowd. That the play celebrates this particular crowd is obvious from the Chorus' speech to Act 5. Indeed Shakespeare's depiction of the crowd in Act 5.0 echoes the soldiers' voices in 4.1.

**'Every Man Will Do His Duty'**

Lord Nelson's famous message to his fleet prior to the battle at Trafalgar during the Napoleonic Wars in 1805 sums up the premise behind *Henry V*; he says: 'England expects

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[99] Crunelle-Vanrigh, '*Henry V* as Royal Entry', p. 363.
[100] Banerjee, The Common Good and the Necessity of War: Emergent Republican Ideals in Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Coriolanus*', p. 31.

that every man will do his duty'.[101] Nelson's words regard his crowd with reverence. For, whilst addressing his army, he is indirectly addressing each individual, and this is similar to the effect *Henry V* has. The play's "semi-crowd" scene represents the soldiers as individuals, not as a nameless crowd. It idealises the crowd because the scene represents soldiers with conscience, but also because these soldiers are aware that they are a part of a union with the King – the noble "We": 'We few, we happy few, we band of brothers' (4.3. 60). This crowd is also unified through duty. What is also implicit in Lord Nelson's words is that he is both gathering support from the people, as Henry does in 4.1.

In the "semi-crowd" scene Shakespeare also represents a crisis in authority, which is resolved by victory in battle, and confirmed in the reported crowd scene. It is not a surprise, then, that this honourable crowd and their opinion matters to the king. The soldiers' presence, and their every sentence, in 4.1 serves to challenge and also to confirm Henry's power. For as we have seen they do doubt him at times, but ultimately have to accept both the King *and* their subject-position. In Act 5 the people's obedience is depicted through the image of a 'swarm' which portrays an honourable crowd: obedient rather than rebellious, putting its power in the hands of the monarch. As Canterbury's bee-hive analogy, and then Bates's words and the metaphor of 'swarming'-plebeians imply, it is exactly 'our [subjects'] obedience to the King [that] wipes/ the crime of it out of us'.

The Chorus's speech in Act 5 celebrates the King *through* the representation of the people. His "crowd of heroes", including Williams, Bates and Court, brings glory to him and the nation. Only such representation can do justice to the representation of the King, and in effect guarantee the audience's approval. Shakespeare knows that 'the common English soldiers, unlike the nobles who died in both the armies, have no names in the historical record'.[102] The latent message behind *Henry V*'s staged crowd scene, therefore, is that not only 'Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,/ Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester' (4.3. 53-4) shall be remembered, but the soldiers too. Their 'names' will also 'be in their flowing cups freshly remembered': Williams, Bates and Court indeed 'in it shall be remembered,/ We few, we happy few, we band of brothers' (4.3. 59-60).

What dramatically brings *Henry V*'s crowd scenes together, then, is their emphasis on the issue of the subject-position and subject obedience to the King. The soldiers' words

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[101] Admiral Horatio Nelson's words (1805); see Ronald Andidora's *Iron Admirals: Naval Leadership in the Twentieth Century* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 3.
[102] Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles*, p. 229.

are important because they reveal the reality behind the "show": the myth-making and glorification of Henry's victory. 4.1 shows, therefore, that, in contrast to the Chorus's account to Act 4 before the battle, not every 'wretch, pining and pale [...] Beholding' Henry 'plucks comfort from his looks'. Instead we learn about their anxieties, and about their views about the King. The soldiers have the authority to speak about the war because it is they who fight in it. Indeed, the play on the whole suggests that the challenge the soldiers pose in 4.1 is necessary and unavoidable. Shakespeare's representation of the "semi-crowd" scene indicates that the role of the people in *Henry V* exceeds the simple role of dutiful and obedient subjects. By making the soldiers in 4.1 spoke-persons for the army, Shakespeare allows them to be remembered, too. James Shapiro remarks 'the battle won, those commoners Henry fondly called his 'brothers' are easily forgotten'.[103] This is certainly true if we overlook the importance of 4.1 and its echoes in 5.0.

One could also say that the crowd in 4.1 is unique and unusual in that it stages those subjects who are not likely to question the King, or rather the subjects whose challenge is not likely to be voiced in a patriotic play such as *Henry V*. However, their challenge to the King is now in fact secondary to what they represent on the whole - obedient subjects who fulfil their duties and bring glory to their King. As a result, Shakespeare is now able to reconcile two issues: the conflict between the glorification of war and the reality of it, and the subjects' position and the question of their obedience to the King. In other words, the dramatist is now able to present the soldiers' subjection (or subjected position) as something dignified. Moreover, he can now justify the people's approval of the King's cause and confirm their part in it, and finally ask the audience for the recognition.

The dramatist's relationship with the audience, then, is crucial to the understanding of the play, and to his representations of the crowd scenes. The Chorus's interaction with the audience suggests that the dramatist is looking for their approval of the play, and of his representation of the King. The dramatist is aware that even while subverting and challenging the King, he still has to retain and re-enforce the myth about him. Indeed, everything that was in question in the play and specifically in 4.1 is no longer a question by Act 5. Moreover, in *Henry V* Shakespeare constantly invites the audience to participate in the show. Indeed he often 'utilises the spectators so that they become, unwittingly, part-

[103] James Shapiro, 'The Death Of Kings', *The Guardian*, 15 March 2008, p. 13.

actors in the plays they are observing'.[104] As Stern points out, the spectators 'can then supply the massed army that the *Henry V* prologue could not come up with. When Henry ends his "Once more unto the Breach,/ Deare friends" speech with a three-part expression designed to elicit applause, he urges the audience to cry out and swell the multitude'.[105] Moreover, Stern notes that while 'reading public theatre prologues and epilogues of the period *en masse*, it becomes obvious that all share the same themes. They are, for instance, always unclear what the spectators will think of the play'.[106]

Indeed, this concern of what the spectators (may) think and how they will judge the play implicitly conveys their part, or their participation in the theatre and the effect this has on how Shakespeare represents the play. What remains to be said is that in terms of our discussion of the role of the crowd scenes in Shakespeare's drama, this chapter brings the whole thesis together. It juxtaposes the reported crowd scene and the staged crowd scene, and in the process clarifies Shakespeare's technique and appropriation of the crowd scenes in his drama. The discussion of *Henry V*'s "semi-crowd" scene reveals not only that it is a crowd scene like no other and defies definition, but that 'crowd scenes' have a powerful dramaturgical role in Shakespeare's drama. They celebrate "crowds" and the theatre as an interactive space between the stage and the audience.

The theatre and the dramatist's interaction with the audience can be seen as a re-enactment of a crowd-scene, and Henry's relationship with the soldiers in 4.1 analogous with the dramatist's relationship with the audience. In the theatre the dramatist is a "king-like" character who is courting and conversing with his crowd of spectators and trying to win their support. In the opening of the play the Chorus invites us to imagine the stage as a 'crooked figure' that, with the help of our imagination, 'may/ Attest in a little place a million', and in the closing of the play it asks for the applause for 'the bending author'.[107] *Henry V* 'mountebank[s]' our love and with the promise and hope of good entertainment, it bargains our approval.[108]

[104] Stern, Tiffany, *Making Shakespeare From Page to Stage* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), p. 28.
[105] Stern, *Making Shakespeare From Page to Stage*, p. 28.
[106] Stern, *Making Shakespeare From Page to Stage*, p. 120.
[107] 1.0. 15-16, and Chorus to 5.2. 2.
[108] *Coriolanus*, 3.2. 134.

## In Retrospect and Prospect: Crowd and Crowd Scenes

> no man is the lord of anything,
> Though in and of him there be much consisting,
> Till he communicate his parts to others;
> Nor doth he of himself know them for aught
> Till he behold them formèd in th'applause.
>
> William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, 3.3. 115-19

In retrospect, Shakespeare's crowd has no "straightforward" character, but remains complex, demanding scholarly attention more than ever.[1] As I have indicated in my Introduction, this is partially due to the fact that the crowd has not been considered seriously in literary studies. Annabel Patterson's *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* brings attention to the fact that Shakespeare did not necessarily despise the people as it is often so easily assumed. In a similar way John Walter's meticulous study, *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* gives an insight into the role of the people in early modern politics and in the ways they were able to exercise their rights. Paul Daniel Menzer's 'Crowd Control: the Corporate Body on the Renaissance Stage' and Ian Munro's inspiring *London: The City and Its Double* each offer a long awaited critical enquiry directed specifically towards the crowd's *character* and its role on the early modern stage. Here, of course, I have singled out a few scholars who in terms of approaching the character of the crowd in Shakespeare's drama stand out. Many, as my study has shown, have indirectly contributed to this still young debate about Shakespeare's crowds.

The first goal of this thesis was to reassess and re-establish the role of crowds in Shakespeare's drama with particular regard to the crowd's character in various plays' crowd scenes. What has emerged out of this study is not simply the fact that Shakespeare

[1] My title for the conclusion was inspired by Lewis Mumford's title 'Retrospect and Prospect': *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* (London: Pelican Books, 1973), p. 655.

was populist or anti-populist, or that the dramatised crowd does not have a peripheral role in Shakespearean drama, but that the crowd in his drama has both "character" and a significant - if not vital - function on the stage. The significance of Shakespeare's dramatised crowd is that it challenges the prevalent early modern attitudes to the crowd - as an ignorant and fickle many-headed beast. *Coriolanus* reveals that the crowd can be a "multitude" in the full sense of the word, yet it is the multitude that also does not have one mind, but is able to carry a discussion and contemplate its own place in the republic and, thus, indirectly challenge Coriolanus's severe attack on the common people. In *Sejanus, His Fall*, Jonson does not spare the crowd from the typical description as the many-headed beast. However, he does not refrain from depicting the patrician class as a "crowd" either. The author's antagonism and troubled relationship with the audience has been widely discussed. Yet his 'I-Thou' relationship with the audience, as *Sejanus*'s crowd scene suggests, has been neglected. Jonson not only used his prefatory material to address his relationship with the theatre-going multitude, but he also indirectly used *Sejanus*'s crowd scene to articulate his position on the matter. With his dramatisation of the "mob" in *Sejanus* Jonson warns the audience of the danger of becoming a mob: ignorant and violent, both in words and deeds.

Shakespeare, of course, was not simply interested in belittling the plebeians. As in *Coriolanus* he shows that the plebs represent a powerful body politic, yet they do not merit that power or right to approve or disapprove, and consequently to be involved in political decision-making. The question of obedience and loyalty, and of republic versus monarchy, now becomes a focal point, and the difference in character between Roman and British crowds, likewise becomes apparent. Although British crowds are fickle and violent, their sense of obedience and loyalty to their monarch seems to "redeem" them from remaining permanently, a degraded version of human beings – a cruel and violent mob. The plays in Chapter 4, indeed, seem to suggest that it is better to be "subjected" and decent than have "freedom" to exercise power and no political acumen. In the figure of Jack Cade Shakespeare thus depicts the mob with all of its mob-like qualities, and yet he uses Cade's character and the rebels to challenge and subvert the mob's business. So, the fracture within the mob, displayed through the comments of Nick and Weaver, not only shows that the mob is not always unified, but it tells us what the role of the crowd is in the crowd scene: to sabotage its own enterprise and instruct the audience not to follow the way of disobedience. It becomes apparent that the only dignified way to be or to live in a hierarchical society, is

to accept one's subjection with dignity. *Sir Thomas More*'s staged crowd scene illustrates this idea and portrays the discontented citizens miraculously restored to their "original" state of honourable citizens, that is, obedient subjects. The peak of this debate about the subjected position of the citizens is reached in *Henry V*'s "semi-crowd" scene which represents a crowd like no other: a dignified and intellectual group of soldiers. As we have seen, Shakespeare introduced this scene and utilised it in the play as a "dramatic" crowd scene because he was not only interested in the myth-making of Henry, but of the army, too. In doing so, the dramatist inaugurated the crowd on his stage.

*Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Richard II* introduce an entirely different kind of crowd: a multitude that is contained rather than scattered, and yet which remains powerful, too. This dramatisation of the crowd is linked with the fact that in the crowd scenes in these plays Shakespeare is engaged with the representation of the crowd's symbolic role in public spectacles, and indeed, in its symbolic part in politics. In the former play the crowd is less powerful and described as entirely subsumed within the image of the Empresses. In *Richard II*, however, the crowd is threatening. It approves of Bolingbroke, the new leader, and shows contempt towards the legitimate king Richard. In this play the crowd is featured at a key moment in the transition of power and its presence turns out to be fundamentally important. As in *Henry V*'s reported crowd scene here, too, Shakespeare points out to the fact that in the debate of the Divine Right, and in royal myth-making more generally the people's presence is imperative and essential. The crowd gathered to support a new leader, or celebrate the current one, is not there simply to cheer and form a background to the event, but it is there symbolically to confirm or re-confirm the monarch's authority. This is the crowd's symbolic role, and for this reason Shakespeare chooses to report the crowd and the scene. Without the crowd there is no confirmation of power in spirit, and this confirmation, as it has been shown, is important. The playwright makes it clear that monarchs or the authorities need to maintain their reputation amongst the people. In their own ways, Jonson's *Sejanus* and *Sir Thomas More* also demonstrate this point in their crowd scenes. As *Richard II* implies, the Divine Right of kings becomes a myth unless the people are content and in a functional and happy relationship with their monarch. The people support Bolingbroke, yet their '"second nature"', as 'the term *principe naturale* implies', should be 'obedience' to the 'hereditary prince'.[2] Shakespeare seems to reconcile

[2] John Greville Agard Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 161.

this conflict – the crowd's disapproval of the legitimate king and their support of the 'new prince', Bolingbroke - by representing the crowd as a means to "channel" or signal God's will. In short, all of this indicates that Shakespeare's crowd is not always beast-like: it has "character", it consists of individuals with different opinions, and on the stage is dignified by the latter aspect, but also through their sense of obedience.

What also dignifies the crowd's character in Shakespeare's drama is its prominent role in the plays. One of the main goals of this study, indeed, is to suggest another way of looking at crowds. As I have indicated in Chapter 5, crowd scenes are always "political" in nature and by default, then, the crowd's character becomes "politicised", or made important in the plays' politics. That the crowd's presence is necessary and even urgent in the representation of political power, battle over legitimacy, and royal myth-making conveys its momentousness. In this respect, another outcome of this study is a recognition that Shakespeare's use of the "staging" technique and the "reporting" technique should not be neglected. His decision to stage or report the crowd always reveals what dramatic effect he aims to produce. The "staged" crowd allows us to enter its "world". We hear what the crowd thinks, and we are asked to remember that the individuals in the crowd are able to think and reason, and are not always a base and ignorant multitude. The staged crowd, nevertheless, can be vile and ignorant when Shakespeare wants them to be: when he wants to convey a certain message to the audience, as it is the case with *Julius*'s *Caesar*'s staged crowd. This crowd is meant to demonstrate how and why it does not deserve power. *2 Henry VI* and *Sir Thomas More* expound on this idea further. Hence, whilst the staged crowd scenes embark on more practical concerns with regard to the people, such as the citizens' subjected position, the reported crowd scenes address the more symbolic and mythical role of the people, such as the place of the people in the representations of the mythical Body Divine. This aspect or choice in Shakespeare's dramatisation of the crowd is meaningful. For, instead of being focused on the individual figure in the reported crowd scene, such as the figures of Henry V or Cleopatra, Shakespeare directs our attention to the crowd. The reason for this is because he wants his audience to acknowledge both the crowd's symbolic part in a public occasion and the importance of the relation that is established during a public event. Both types of crowd scene, nevertheless, point to one fact: that is, the people had a meaningful role in early modern society *and* on the early

modern stage. As this study shows, some of the vital questions of the era are demonstrated and debated in crowd scenes. This itself suggests the dramatic function and the importance of crowd scenes in early modern plays. With respect to the audience, the crowd scenes always indirectly interact with the crowd in the theatre because they always reflect the issues and concerns of its main "character" – the people in the audience. Thus, when the politicians in plays address the crowd, they often indirectly address the audience in the theatre. As such, crowd scenes should be acknowledged as an important dramaturgical device.

The significance of these crowd scenes lies not only in the insight that they give us into the crowd's mind, but also in what that they reveal about the theatre-going experience. The theatre is a place of interaction, and the crowd scenes represent the most powerful moment of the interaction between the stage and the audience. Indeed, on the stage, the crowd's interaction with the individual figure is analogous to the implicit "dialogue" between the stage and the audience. Shakespeare's representation of Coriolanus's unsettled relationship with the plebeians thus serves to remind the audience to embrace the play's characters, Coriolanus and the crowd, with an open mind in order to and understand where their characters are coming from, and, thus, resist any complacent response. The play's crowd scenes invite the audience to see themselves on the stage, 'and therein behold themselves', (*Coriolanus*, 3.1. 71) and thereby recognise that they indirectly play a part in the playwright's creation: that they are in a theatrical, 'I-Thou' relation with the stage. Martin Buber's concept 'I-Thou' is more than relevant, then, in discussing Shakespeare's dramas.[3] As in Buber's work, in Shakespeare's plays the main premise is that:

> no man is the lord of anything,
> Though in and of him there be much consisting,
> Till he communicate his parts to others;
> Nor doth he of himself know them for aught
> Till he behold them formèd in th'applause[4]
> (*Troilus and Cressida*, 3.3. 115-19)

[3] William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, ed. by R. B. Parker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
[4] William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

Shakespeare's dramatisation of crowd scenes reveals, and embodies, this innate aspect to any type of interaction, and shows that the theatre is a "meeting" place between the stage and the audience. Buber reminds us that we exist in relations and only in relations can we see ourselves. Shakespeare's dramatisation of crowd scenes and the interaction between the crowd and the individual character shows that dramatic characters come into being in their relations. It is this symbolic space in-between, the relation, in which the staged characters exist. Coriolanus's refusal to embrace this fundamental aspect of human being alerts us to the fact that we are not a part of our own universe alone, but that we depend on and benefit from being in relations: whether in the political, the social, or any sphere of life. Coriolanus's refusal to be politically "polite" in Rome means that he does not embrace his "role" in the society. With this his character indirectly suggests to the audience that the code of conduct in the theatre is to be "polite" in theatrical terms, which means to embrace their role in the theatre. The crowd scene, like no other, invites the audience, figuratively speaking, to take part in the performance. In addition, although Coriolanus knows himself and thinks he does not need his 'Thou' to confirm who he is, his character paradoxically shows that in order to be unique he needs the crowd's presence, and in order to become alive as a "character" he needs the presence of the audience. Indeed, he does not know his 'parts [...] Till he behold[s] them formed in th'applause'. 'Th'applause' his character is seeking is not the confirmation of being liked but of being accepted for who he is, or for what he on the stage represents. His dramatic identity is, indeed, to be found in the relation. A greater legacy of crowd scenes, then, is that they manifest how dramatic characters come into being.

That a new critical enquiry into Shakespeare's "characters" is necessary is acknowledged in a recent study, *Shakespeare and Character.*[5] In the introduction to the volume, Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights recognise 'the development in Shakespeare studies' of, what they term 'a "new character criticism"'.[6] 'Character has made a comeback', they point out.[7] 'Having all but disappeared from Shakespeare criticism as an analytic category in the second half of the twentieth century, the idea of character has now begun to reemerge as an important – perhaps even essential – way of thinking about the

[5] *Shakespeare and Character: Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons*, ed. by Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
[6] See Yachnin and Slights's Introduction to *Shakespeare and Character*, p. 1, and the most recent literary discussions contributed by scholars such as Robert Weimann, Michael Bristol and Catherine Shaw.
[7] See Yachnin and Slights's Introduction to *Shakespeare and Character*, p. 1.

political, ethical, historical, literary, and performative aspects of early modern theater'.[8] The concept of the 'space of the character' that I have introduced and used throughout this study, I hope, contributes to this current debate. It has proved to be a useful concept in demonstrating that dramatic characters operate not as individuals but always as a part of a "dramatic item", or as a part of dramatic and theatrical relations. In other words, the dramatic character is in essence an outcome of a network of intangible relations that emerges during the theatrical production.

Coriolanus and the plebeians are, for example, one such item, Cade and his rebels another and Cleopatra and her crowd yet another. Through all of these "dramatic items" Shakespeare implicitly depicts the audience: either through indirect address, or through indirect representation. Nick and Weaver not only mock Cade, but act as mediators between stage and audience, and at times "act" as if they are members of the audience watching *2Henry VI*'s "rebellion". Similarly, *Anthony and Cleopatra*'s Enobarbus implicitly embodies Cleopatra's crowd, but also he articulates the wonder and awe that the play's audience must feel whilst listening to his description of Cleopatra's myth-making. Into the space of his character, therefore, Shakespeare "weaves" the audience, and makes them part of the spectacle. The audience in the theatre is, therefore, implied in Enobarbus's figure. Indeed, the moment of "meeting" between two characters, and the moment they face the audience, creates them as "dramatic beings".

In his controversial book *True and False, Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor*, in which David Mamet instructs the actors how to "act", he argues that "character" does not exist but only "speech" and that the actor's job is not to interpret a character but to speak a part.[9] He alerts actors to the fact that the audience 'came to see a play, not your reasoned "emotional" schematic of what your idea of character might feel like in circumstances outlined by the play'.[10] By saying this Mamet, then, implicitly acknowledges that "character" exists independently from the actor who performs the character. That the character should be recognised in a relation is implicit in Mamet's following instruction to actors: 'an actor', he claims, 'should never be looking inward', but 'turn outward [...] face the world', and we could say allow the character to inhabit its natural space, the symbolic

[8] See Yachnin and Slights's Introduction to *Shakespeare and Character*, p. 1.
[9] David Mamet, *True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997).
[10] Mamet, *True and False, Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor*, p. 110.

space between the stage and the audience.[11] My study, therefore, invites reading dramatic characters from the "outside" rather than from the "inside" as individualist approaches tend to do. Indeed, 'though in him there be much consisting', as it is for instance the case with Cade, he is not 'the lord of anything' until 'he communicates his parts to others'. Communicating 'his parts to others' means relating to the audience, inviting them into the theatrical 'I-Thou' relation, and inviting them to recognise that relation. Shakespeare's dramatisation of the crowd scenes demonstrates that the audience indirectly *affects* Shakespeare's creation of the play, but also that the dramatist indirectly *affects* them with his representation. The crowd scene can be seen as a "micro" theatre, or the embodiment of what the theatre is.

To conclude, Shakespeare appears to have a respect for his characters and treats them equally, with fondness and care. He knows that "crowds" are commonly disliked, abused in the discourse of those in power, but in his representations he shows that they are the key component of the theatrical setting. After all theatres depend on crowds, on those who come to watch his plays, on their approval, but most of all on their willingness to participate in the show, mentally, intellectually and emotionally. His crowd scenes offer the audience a moment in which they can 'behold themselves'. As a playwright Shakespeare was far from being interested in the confined space of an individual. His dramatisations of individual characters are always dependent on approval, or recognition of their dramatic and theatrical 'Thou[s]': of other characters on the stage and the audience. Even Coriolanus's character, who antagonises the audience and dismisses their authority, in the end asks to be accepted for what he is, or represents. Shakespeare indirectly asks his audience to be tolerant and perceptive, to challenge their own way of thinking. In doing so he reminds them that they are part of a "crowd" for the duration of the theatrical performance, and he is saying there is nothing wrong with being a dignified crowd. The pinnacle of Shakespeare's celebration of the crowd's character is in *Henry V*'s staged crowd scene. By creating the unique "semi-crowd" scene Shakespeare ennobles the character of the crowd, highlights the importance of the dramaturgical role of crowd scenes, and indeed celebrates and changes the image of crowds. He shows that the marginal role that early modern crowd had in the society was not reflected on the stage. "Dramatic hierarchy" in early modern theatres posed a subtle challenge to the everyday order. Indeed,

[11] Mamet, *True and False, Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor*, p. 111.

being a crowd in the theatre, in terms of both the on-stage and off-stage varieties, meant that the crowd could be transformed into a dignified figure on the stage. It could be and act as a "crowd" because it was contained and not threatening, but even more importantly because it had an important dramatic part to play. The theatre was the crowd's "natural" domain. Its marginal position in early modern London not only "encouraged" crowds but it commemorated the character of the crowd and showed that on the stage the crowd is always 'in order when [...] most out of/ order' (*2 Henry VI*, 4.2. 178-9), as Cade so famously puts it.

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