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A Man for All Stages: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Hal's Leadership in Henry IV Part I and Henry V

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Abstract— *This article seeks to highlight and elucidate various facets of leadership as manifested by the character of Prince Hal in Henry IV and V, including his ability to speak eloquently and convincingly, and to go to war against his father's enemy. It seeks to analyze his progress as a king, and how he uses that power to meet the needs of his nation and reveals the complex relationship between power, language, and social authority. The analytical discussion will be conducted within the framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to explain how Shakespeare represents this king. Thus, Hal's evolving persona, political choices, and rhetorical abilities will be focused on using CDA approaches from Fairclough and Van Dijk.*

Keywords— ***discourse, narrative discourse, critical discourse analysis, leadership***

I. INTRODUCTION

In *Henry IV* (Part I) *and Henry V*, Shakespeare presents Hal as an apparently simple character with a complex worldview who reflects the dichotomy between youthful recklessness and disciplined, strategic leadership. On one hand, he is down to earth and seemingly laid back, while on the contrary, he systematically defeats his opponents. Hal is presented as the epitome of focused and effective leadership, as the mirror of Christian Kings. These kings held on to the virtues espoused by the Bible, including faith, integrity and mental strength. Shakespeare places Hal in a variety of roles that serve as a means of testing his character. These roles also highlight the interplay between personal identity and political authority. In addition to doing this, Shakespeare also gives Hal a certain immunity and fearless acuity that enable him to emerge victorious and in control of every life stage on which he finds himself. Thus, the audience and reader can map Hal's chronological progress through his theatrical encounters as he proves to be a man for all stages.

This article employs CDA, particularly the theoretical approaches of Norman Fairclough and Teun A. van Dijk, to explore how Hal's rhetoric, actions, and portrayal in the text reflect broader themes of political legitimacy, power relations, and identity. On one hand, Fairclough views discourse as "the use of language seen as a form of social practice, and discourse analysis is analysis of how texts work within sociocultural practice" (1995, p. 7). According to van Dijk, "discourse control usually aims at controlling the intentions, plans, knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and ideologies – as well as their consequent actions – of recipients" (2015, p. 472).

Thus, CDA allows the reader to analyze how Hal constructs his authority through language and action, using speech acts, framing, and narrative strategies to influence both his subjects and enemies. Hal's clever use of rhetorical questions and repetition is seen, for example, when he responds to Falstaff's roleplaying as King Henry in Act II, Scene IV, while enumerating Hal's faults, stating,

> Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink / it? wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and / eat it? wherein cunning, but in craft? wherein crafty, / but in villainy? wherein villainous, but in all things? / wherein worthy, but in nothing? (II.iv.455-59)

It can be surmised that Hal wields the power of language to manipulate the situation through the seemingly harmless ribbing of Falstaff. Through CDA, one can explore the extent to which Hal's discourse functions as a tool for political and social control, revealing the various illocutionary force brandished by Hal to manipulate those around him, to ultimately achieve his desired outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

According to the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), language is a powerful and intentional tool used to persuade, guide and shape persons of lesser status and mental acuity. Willig (2014) avers that the role of language is emphasized "as a power resource". This intimates that language definitely delineates and demarcates classes and is used as a tool by those in authority to hold sway over their subordinates and subjects. This can occur in major societal groups such as schools, governmental offices, health institutions and political parties. As it relates to education, Mullet (2018) submits that CDA is a useful tool for persons engaging in educational research allowing them to assess and analyze links "between educational practices and social contexts" (p. 117). From Fairclough's perspective, CDA exists within a three-dimensional model that analyzes discourse through the examination of the actual text, the discursive practices within which the text is situated, and the overarching social practices that govern the first two dimensions.

Alasari (2024) refers to the textual level as the micro level, and the discursive and societal levels as the macro levels. Further to this, Fairclough (2015) utilizes three stages of analysis, which begin with description, followed by interpretation and culminate in explanation (see figure 1**)**. The description is at the textual level, which is referred to as the core or heart of the model; this highlights the outlining of the structural form or properties of the text. The interpretation stage is where the processing of the discursive context or discourse practices takes place. This is done within the context of the piece, when and where it is situated. This is important as it helps the reader to logically follow why certain decisions and actions occur within the particular discourse and how they would affect behaviours or lead to certain thoughts, feelings or assumptions.

While the interpretation adds to the description and gives the piece more meaning, relating it to the wider societal context is even more meaningful. This helps the piece to be to be interrogated and applied to real life situations. Thus, Fairclough's highest and deepest levels necessitate explaining the text within the discourse in relation to the overarching external sociocultural landscape. This helps the reader to connect more vividly with the characters, along with their decisions and actions, since the social fabric or context would, in effect, influence the ebb and flow of the characters' thoughts, words and actions. Furthermore, the social analysis compels the reader to interact at an evaluative level with the piece, using the literature to develop a clearer mental construction of societal complexities and to infer valued judgements, whether personally and socially.

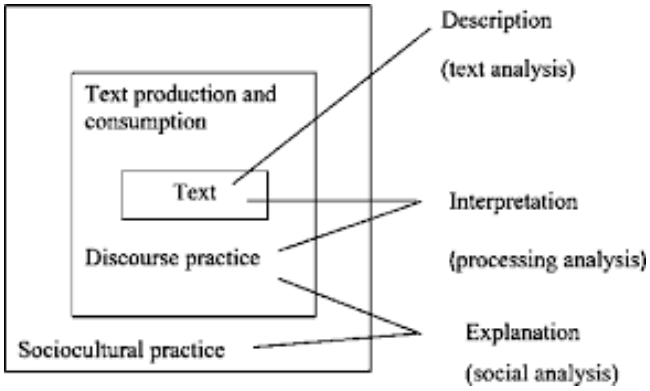

Fig.1 Fairclough's Model of CDA

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Van Dijk (2006) contends that critical discourse analysis (CDA) is motivated by a commitment to understanding social issues, particularly those that address power imbalances and social injustices. As such, CDA serves as a tool for highlighting issues that influence societal actions and changes, often aligning with the politically engaged perspective of discourse analysts. In this way, CDA can be viewed as a "social movement" (Van Dijk, 2006). This commitment to analysing social imbalances is particularly relevant to Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, *Part I* and *Henry V*, where language becomes a means of constructing authority, navigating social hierarchies, and reflecting national identity.

Mogashoa (2014) further avers that CDA is intricately rooted in the study of language and communication as it encapsulates the epistemologies and pervasive mindsets of individuals and society alike. In these texts, language effectively mirrors and reveals the characters' beliefs and the societal constructs of Shakespeare's historical period. According to Mogashoa (2014), CDA "is primarily positioned in the environment of language" (p. 105). Thus, language within the text is an insight into the minds and souls of the characters that displays their epistemologies and helps the reader grasp the prevailing beliefs and, thus, the habits of the period and place. Moreover, Mogashoa (2014) elaborates that the study of the textual language enables the reader to encounter the speakers' "beliefs, positions and ideas, in terms of spoken texts like conversations" (p. 105). Effectively, the reader enters the minds of the characters and traces their motivations for certain utterances and actions.

As explained by Van Dijk (2006), critical discourse analysis is not a singular method of research per se but rather an overarching, all-inclusive theory that subsumes various types of discourse analysis. These types include sociolinguistics, discourse grammar, narrative analysis and conversation analysis. Whichever the type,

analysis is the focus rather than just description. This analysis generally focuses on political or social difficulties (Van Dijk, 2006). Thus, the reading of the text goes beyond a mere recreational event to one that encourages the reader to actively examine and assess the events and utterances, with the outcome of being better able to understand and treat with actual life situations.

Regarding narrative discourse, Elson (2012) purports that a narrative serves as a vehicle for conveying human thought across generations. Thus, as human interaction evolves, so too does the depth and complexity of the narrative. Moreover, Elson (2012) states that "The analysis of discourse concerns the relations between clauses and sentences that make a document more than the sum of its parts" (p. 3). This implies that the sum of the entire discourse must be encountered if the full meaning is to be evaluated and grasped on different levels. Likewise, Bamberg (2015) asserts that "the referential and ideational fixity of writing orients more clearly toward intentions 'behind' the text that are to some degree now inscribed or fixated by writing" (p. 217). Thus, through the narrative, one can highlight categories and levels that can be used to examine human intention, societal complexities and political identities.

Moreover, according to Fairclough (2004), text analysis, of which linguistic analysis is a subset, is an important facet of discourse analysis. Examining the subsets contributes towards making sense of the overarching discourse, in that it allows the reader to apply the various elements of the text, for example, setting, to the overall meaning. More specifically, Genette (1983) posits that the narrative discourse analysis, in particular, "implies a study of relationships: on the one hand the relationship between a discourse and the events that it recounts…on the other hand the relationship between the same discourse and the act that produces it" (p. 27).

III. METHODOLOGY

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a qualitative analytical approach for critically describing, interpreting, and explaining how discourses construct, maintain, and legitimize social inequalities. According to Mullet (2018), CDA "rests on the notion that the way we use language is purposeful, regardless of whether discursive choices are conscious or unconscious" (p. 116). Notably, narrative discourse analysis can vary based on the focus of the researcher. There is no one agreed-upon prescriptive approach by the various mavens of critical discourse analysis with respect to analyzing the narrative discourse. In the case of the present paper, the focus is on the various aspects of the text and how they help in building the message and the multiple themes within the text. Accordingly, the analysis focuses on key milestones in Hal's development: his social interactions and domestic life as evidenced by his interactions with his friends in London, his pivotal soliloquy, his confrontation with his father, and his eventual transformation on the battlefield.

Discourse Analysis

In *Henry IV* (Part I), Hal is firstly found at his London home with Falstaff whom Hal later refers to as "the tutor and feeder of my riots" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 5.5.60). According to Sarkar (2020), "Hal, at the first stage of drama, drinks mouthful and lives in an apartment accompanied by lecherous Falstaff and his company" (p. 30). Thus, at the onset, readers are alerted to the extent of Falstaff's influence on Hal's wayward and riotous actions. At the scene of his dwelling, Hal embodies the role of "the prodigal prince" (Wilson, 1990), having departed from the restrictions of the court to engage in what he might have deemed more carefree and exciting, howbeit unruly, living. This reflects the account referenced in the biblical account of the Prodigal's Son (Luke 15:11-32 KJV), and presents an incontrovertible interactive similarity of motive, temperament, and behavior. The fact that his companions are far different in comportment from what obtained at the court undoubtedly prejudices the reader's initial opinion of Hal; upon first glance, the reader may perceive him to be a reckless, debauched, and even ungrateful, rogue. In fact, for one who had been bred and educated in the king's palace, his behaviour fits quite seamlessly into the raucous and excessive lifestyles of his companions, which would have been certainly frowned upon by polite society.

However, upon keen inspection of the lines given to him by Shakespeare, one realizes that Hal actually has more mastery over himself than he lets on and is, by no means, a respecter of persons. On one occasion, in response to Falstaff's flippant, "Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.1), Hal uncharacteristically responds in a very blunt and honest manner about Falstaff's excesses, alluding to his impropriety to deign to question him, who in spite of his behaviours, is still the crown prince. Hal responds,

> What the devil hast thou to do with
> The time of the day? Unless hours were cups of
> Sack, and minute capons, and clocks the tongues
> Of bawds, and dials the signs of leaping-houses,
> And the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in
> Flame-colored taffeta, I see no reason why thou
> Shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time
> of the day. (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.6-13)

In his first words, he clearly reveals his understanding and perception of Falstaff's character and lifestyle. Here, Shakespeare lays the foundation for Hal's eventual unveiling of the brilliant transformation, which eventually comes forth at the ideal time. Barber (1990) describes it as Hal "developing in such a way as to exhibit sovereign nature fitted for kingship" (p. 216). Therefore, one who is following the play closely would not be unduly shocked when Hal emerges "like bright metal on a sullen ground" to "show more goodly and attract more eyes" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.220-221), such being the contrast between his bawdy behaviour and his recently emerged noble bearing.

Thus, as it relates to the societal context, like a butterfly emerging from cocoon, Hal is determined to no longer hide his brilliance within the shadows of Falstaff's and his companions' lives. As much as he has had his adventures with his 'merry men', he is beginning to embrace his greater obligation to the wider society and his allegiance to his king and father. This pivoting from allegiance and friendship is frequently seen in everyday life where persons who sometimes cling to others to gain strength and notoriety, depart once that goal is accomplished; they reason that this prop is no longer necessary or convenient. This ofttimes leads to them cutting ties with the prop, particularly if that prop is from a lower societal rank.

While in Scene 1, Hal is seen interacting with "disreputable companions" (Barber, 1990, p. 216), he demonstrates his ability to maintain his integrity. Thus, when Poins enters and introduces the idea of robbing the pilgrims, even then, Hal is seen rejecting the idea of dishonesty and fraud. His reply to Falstaff, "Who, I rob? I a thief? Not I, by my faith," (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.144) reveals deeper thought and integrity. What Hal does indulge in, though, is the opportunity for candid humour and wit, since it does not involve unnecessarily hurting anyone neither does it leave a lasting stain upon Hal's character. However, upon learning of the nature and plan of the jest, Hal tells Poins, "Well, I'll go with thee," (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.198) revealing his playful yet caring nature.

Although Hal is able to embrace roles of the common man, his personality transcends that identity. It is evident that when he wishes, he can control and reinvent himself. Accordingly, Grady (2002) claims, "Prince Hal is a juggler of identities within the social real[m], able to move from one social context to the other, changing his sense of self almost as casually as he changes his clothes" (p. 127). He does not yield to any suggestion that does not appeal to his sense of honesty. He seems to be mirroring Jesus, who was tempted by Satan himself and yet emerged triumphant. In this respect, Shakespeare has elevated Hal to a sphere to which few men or even kings have ascended. He is showing that change can be achieved even as an adult; it is possible for one to overcome one's flaws.

By putting Hal on this stage of his life's journey, Shakespeare establishes Hal's ability to interact with the "low life" (Wilson, 1990, p. 92). This serves to illuminate more keenly his later heroic and victorious battle with Hotspur, which was as illustrious as his previous activities were infamous and base. In fact, Hal himself, in his soliloquy, mentions this stark transformation. He declares, "And like bright metal on a sullen ground, / My reformation glittering o'er my fault, / Shall show more goodly and attracts more eyes" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.212-214). Thus, Shakespeare sets up the foundation for a dramatic turnabout in Hal's public image because of the drastic contrast between who he was thought to be and who the court and the public saw revealed subsequently. Hal's dramatic transformation signals the capacity for positive change within the inner man. By intentionally associating with the "lowlife" characters of Eastcheap, such as Falstaff, Hall intentionally creates a baseline of low and modest expectation that makes his eventual metamorphosis appear miraculous and divinely ordained, so as to exude a certain measure of political acumen and resolve that would attract admiration and virtue (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.203). This would be sufficient to later frame and justify his invasion of France as a necessary and righteous pursuit of his dynastic rights, and not a fanciful act of whim that was motivated by personal pride.

Hal's soliloquy is one of the strongest pieces of evidence of his deliberate role-playing and shows that he possesses spectacular acting skills. He clearly reveals his awareness of his position and his understanding of human nature. He also demonstrates his impeccable timing, which allows him to effectively reveal his spectacular transformation to the world around him. In the opinion of the court and even his "disreputable companions", Hal has forsaken his noble path and has become an unhinged hoodlum and a prodigal prince. However, Hal's utterances prove that he is quite aware of who he is and wherein lies his destiny. With Hal's deeper self being concealed from those around him, he is, therefore, able to hide his true self from even those within his inner circle.

In the beginning of his soliloquy, Hal proclaims, "I know you all, and will a while uphold / [t]he unyok'd humor of your idleness …/ by breaking through the foul and ugly mists / of mists that seem to strangle him" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.196-1-210). Thus, Hal is operating from a vantage point, because while he plays along as one of the

gang members, he is learning firsthand about the nature of the common man and is able to aptly prepare himself for "breaking through the foul and ugly mists" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 1.2.209) like the sun. This emphasizes that Hal is not as superficial as he initially let on; he is constantly acting the role of a wayward son when he is in the presence of his friends, concealing his actual end game, which is his eventual return to his position at the court.

In Act 2, Scene 4 of *Henry IV, Part I,* Hal remarkably and skillfully plays dual roles, acting as both himself and his father in the Boar's Head Tavern at Eastcheap. Shakespeare, therefore, depicts Hal as a consummate and strategic actor and politician, having the innate ability to meticulously construct, deconstruct and reconstruct his private and public personas to maximize his future political capital. Further, this modal shapeshifting tendency elucidates his deeper understanding that his (Hal's) political prowess and kingship will rely heavily on the management of perception and theatricality (Greenblatt, 1981). Of note, however, is that while he is role-playing, he reveals poignant truths about the King, Falstaff and himself. In the playing of these roles, Hal displays his profound understanding of those within his social sphere, including his father. He also exhibits that he is quite conscious of his own personality and behaviour. This demonstration belies the ne'er-do-well character that he generally shows to those around him. It reveals a deeper, more introspective person than others would have known. It gives credence to the adage that one must never judge a book by its cover. Hal's everyday actions just barely skimmed the surface of the substance within the inner man.

In addition to the revelations shown by his roleplaying, Hal brilliantly, though subtly, discloses his understanding of and true sentiments with regard to Falstaff. The cloaking of his true intentions was successful, because Falstaff and the others read the portrayals only on the level of jest. Hal's alertness and understanding of the disparities between the royal and the common are revealed when Falstaff suggests that he should practice an answer. Hal immediately and rather condescendingly replies, "Do thou stand for my father and answer me upon the particulars of life" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 2.4.376-377). Here, Hal's language reveals his awareness of his superior standing in society, such that only his father, the King, can issue a command, whether directly or indirectly, to him. Thus, while he behaved as though he was equal with his peers, within himself, he was cognizant of the actual class divide whereby he held a superior social ranking. This superiority could be activated and triggered by a single utterance. Here is revealed the power inherent in language to signal and impress one's class and position of power upon others.

Hal's understanding of illocutionary force is seen in his response to and behaviour towards his father, the King. Hal does not retaliate or argue against the accusations that are railed against him by the King, as he might were the accusations made by his peers. He simply answers, "I will redeem all this on Percy's head, / And, in the closing of some glorious day. / Be bold to tell you that I am your son" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 3.2.137-139). The audience and the reader are able to learn much from these few words, such as Hal's deference and understanding of the role of Henry IV as father and king. His breeding and true character are reflected in the calibre of speech that he knows is required and uses in the presence of his father, the king.

When acting with Falstaff, it is clear that he was affronted by Falstaff's attempt to act as the king, even though it was pretense. He preferred to have Falstaff play his part rather than the part of the king. He disdainfully asks, "Dost thou speak like a king? Do thou stand for me, and I'll play for my father" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 2.4.446-447). It shows that Hal is clear about the extreme class divide between Falstaff and the King. That utterance revealed a condescending tone towards Falstaff, almost as though he is putting Falstaff in his place. His utterance to Falstaff also reveals Hal's awareness of the type of behaviour and speech that is required when one is in the elevated position of a King. Moreover, this underscores the fact that he was just acting the role of a rogue with his friends, while being aware of what is required of one acting the part of the exalted position of king. That Hal is very much at ease with his role is seen by the manner of words he uses (as king) to address his son (Hal, played by Falstaff). Hal's role as king also reveals that he is aware of his father's perception of his as a wayward son as seen in the utterance, "Ungracious boy … / Thou art violently carried away from grace" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 2.4.461-463).

When Hal (*as King*) declares to Falstaff (*as Prince*), "The complaints I hear of thee are grievous" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 2.4.457-458), Falstaff responds, in a manner unbefitting the royal breeding, "S'blood, my lord, they are false" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 2.4.459). This use of the swearing reveals that Falstaff was unaware or indifferent to court policy. Hal, on the contrary, was aware of what constituted unacceptable court manners. Hal immediately uses the opportunity to chastise Falstaff (*as Prince*) and possibly broadcast his ignorance of appropriate court language. Hal's (*as King*) swift and curt response is, "Swearest thou, ungracious boy?" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 2.4.460). Hal's familiarity and perfect knowledge of court mannerisms would have stemmed from his upbringing and breeding. In spite of his trysts with his friends, he had been cultured as a leader and a gentleman. This is instructive as it echoes the Biblical admonition and

dogma, "Train up a child in the way he would go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6 KJV). Hal's utterances and actions are testament to the veracity of this adage, showing that his early breeding while concealed in the presence of his friends, was very much a part of his character. Ofttimes, this is the case with children and young adults who tend to rebel against the confines of the rules within a home. While they may try to mingle with persons who are wont to be lawless, many times they are restrained by their early training.

Hal's dalliance with his friends could construed as him rebelling or enjoying his last days of freedom (before being made king), as many young men would. This interaction with the common folk would have been instrumental in granting him deeper insight into their lifestyles and worldview, which would serve him as king, helping him to better connect with his citizens at all levels. This parallels the biblical account of King David's development as a servant-leader, a journey that began with shepherding sheep in 1 Samuel 17 and culminated in the political wisdom and profound humility expressed in Psalm 23 (KJV). Thus, in what might be described as the trenches, Hal, like David, developed a balanced character and educated himself in the ways of the common man, that by word and deed, he might emerge a leader of men. He was able to wield his words in such a way as to show his superiority without displaying pomposity, making him a respected and even beloved leader.

Hal is pellucid about the "King*"* in the *"*Kid" and seemingly operates comfortably at the intersection of those two personalities. As underscored by Sarkar (2020), Hal as the Prince of Wales and future King is "the representation of youth who changes according to the demand of certain stages of life" (p. 29). However moribund it may appear, his behaviour is not uncommon. Many young persons who feel stifled by the restrictions of race, religion or class go through such a period of rebellion. They are dissatisfied with the isolation that they feel is imposed upon them. Thus, they tend to behave contrary to how they would have been trained. This does not mean that they cannot capriciously revert to their early training if the desire or need arises.

In Hal's case, according to Tillyard (1962, p. 265), he had a choice "between Sloth or Vanity, to which he is drawn by his bad companions". While 'drawn by' may imply some level of coercion by his friends, Hal's utterances reveal that he is very much in control of his choices and had other motives for following his friends' sometimes unsavoury counsel. Accordingly, Boyd (2008) describes Hal as "a protean prince" and insists that his "prodigality [is] simply one of a number of guises he assumes and discards at will" (p. 4). The ease with which he slips back into his role as crown prince gives credence to Boyd's (2008) assessment of his intentional pendular moves between being common and stately.

During Hal's and Falstaff's roleplaying in Act 2, Scene 4, the extent of Hal's keen observational skills and attention to details is displayed in his apt description of Falstaff, which reveals his knowledge and understanding of him, who contrariwise receives this description with levity, as Hal having just fun. This ability to hide in plain sight is part of what makes Hal such a great actor and one who is able to manipulate any stage. When he declares to Falstaff, "There is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat man; a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 2.4.461-466), we gather some insight into why Hal finds it reasonable and necessary to reject Falstaff as a close companion when he (Hal) is ultimately crowned king. In Hal's role-play, he is unwittingly decreeing that he views Falstaff as a useless, despicable being, who just abuses the system without having anything profitable or meaningful to add. This is further evidenced when he (as King) asks Falstaff (as Prince), "Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? …Wherein worthy but in nothing?" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 2.4.471-476) suggesting that Falstaff is not very useful as a companion.

In this scene, Shakespeare is foreshadowing why Falstaff must be rejected when Hal is put on the bigger stage of life, the stage of a king. As opined by Nuñez (2001), "Falstaff has to be rejected for the simple reason that he represents a threat to the order of the state and to monarchy" (p. 66). It is apparent that he does not fit the status quo of well-bred and ordered society that Hal would want to maintain as king. Bradley (1990) goes further in his analysis when he declares, "I would suggest that Henry's rejection of Falstaff is in keeping with his character" (p. 65). Thus, while Hal spends time with his merry companions, he does this more out of caprice than devotion to them. The real Hal, as averred by Nuñez (2001), is a "cold and calculating character" who has "embarked on a calculated and dishonest friendship" (p. 66).

Later in the play, when Hal is placed on the battlefield, he dismisses all fears that his father and the wider public may have had of his suitability to reign. Shakespeare achieves this by placing Hal in confrontation with a most formidable foe. Essentially, Hal is placed on a stage that was supposed to be dominated by Hotspur, whose fame was well known in the court. Even Hal's father reminds him, "Thrice hath this Hotspur, Mars in swathing clothes, / this infant warrior, in his enterprises/ discomforted great Douglas" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 3.2.115-118).

Therefore, the stage is set for Hal's greatest test of character, skill and strength - qualities well suited for a king. Hal understands the importance of this confrontation and tells his father in Act 3, Scene 2:

I will redeem all this on Percy's head,

And in the closing of some glorious day

Be bold to tell you that I am your son,

When I will wear a garment all of blood,

And stain my favors in a bloody mask,

Which washed away shall scour my shame with it. (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 3.2.137-142)

As Cohen (1992) posits, "Hal is a promise to commit a deed of 'good' violence," and "To Hal, his blood – covered features and the garment of blood are the necessary stage of pollution precedent to the promised regeneration" (139). Hal is quite cognizant of the fact that victory on this stage is critical to proving his worth and fealty to his father. Thus, when Hal meets Hotspur on the battlefield, he is sure to inform him of his intentions to be victorious. Thus, when Hotspur states, "My name is Harry Percy" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 5.4.61), Hal confidently replies, "Why then I see a very valiant name. I am the Prince of Wales, and think not, Percy, to share with me in glory anymore" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 5.4.62-65).

Hal does not deny the fact that Hotspur is a valiant warrior. In fact, Hal alludes to his Hotspur's greatness when he declares, "Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 5.4.66). Hal's utterances show, though, that while he recognizes Hotspur's talents, one of them has to emerge victorious. Hal is asserting that his (Hal's) status is more elevated than Hotspur's, and he intends to prove it in more than words. The excellence that Hotspur is renowned for on the field emphasizes Hal's great victory and makes his competence more credible.

Thus, when Hal conquers on the battlefield, self-governance and modesty are the real winners. These are traits that Hal has been quietly honing and is carrying within him as heir to the throne. Cohen (1992) avers that "He [Hal] is the most entirely self-controlled character in the play, perhaps in the canon" (140). Contrariwise, Shakespeare shows earlier, through Lord Mortimer, the unbending resolve of Hotspur and his inability to curb his passions, which were unsuitable for a leader. Of Hotspur's willfulness, Lord Mortimer declares:

You must needs learn, lord, to amend this fault.

Though sometimes it show greatness, courage, blood-

And that's the dearest grace it renders you-

Yet oftentimes it doth present harsh rage,

Defect of manners, want of government.

Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain,

The least of which, haunting a nobleman

Loseth men's hearts and leaves behind a stain

Upon the beauty of all parts besides,

Beguiling them of condemnation. (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 3.1.185-195)

This stands in stark contrast to the Hal and emphasizes that among Hal's seemingly vagabond traits, there lies within a light that was waiting to shine forth. This light embodies the Christian values of self-control, humility and moderation. Therefore, Hal is actually exalting the Christian virtues of moderation, humility and self-control by self-possessed,. Significantly, after Hal slays Hotspur, he paradoxically endorses and lauds Hotspur's merit as both a warrior and a man. In doing so, he not only elevates Hotspur's legacy in death and reputation in life, but also demonstrates his (Hal's) own capacity for grace and fairness. This action by Hal, along with his utterances, stresses the importance of the character traits of generosity, graciousness, and *government,* particularly in one who is part of the ruling class. Through his words and actions, Hal establishes his dominance and pedigree. On the contrary, Hotspur, in spite of his valour, proved himself to be devoid of self-governance and humility. While he may have experienced a measure of exaltation, his downfall was imminent and inevitable.

When as king Hal notices that the odds are against England in the war, he decides to mingle among the ordinary soldiers to verbally encourage them. Therefore, he becomes to his soldiers, as the chorus puts it, "A largesse universal, like the sun, / His liberal eye doth give to everyone, / Thawing cold fear, that mean and gentle all, / Behold, as may unworthiness define, / A little touch of Harry in the night" (Shakespeare, 1599/2011, 4.Chorus.44-48). In essence, the soldiers saw Hal as a light in the darkness, wherein he brightens their plight on the battlefield. Hal's going on to the field in disguise shows that he recognizes the value of role-playing and the power of rhetoric. He recognizes that a man sometimes has to assume a different identity to accomplish what may be impossible without disguise. Hal acknowledges that he is at a stage where he needs to do something innovative. He has, therefore, revealed his ability to strategize, lead and conquer, character traits that were bred in him from an early age. Thus, Hal depicts the qualities of a leader through his words and actions. He epitomizes what is required in a great leader, who is able to gain support through persuasive eloquence and demonstrative tactics.

Furthermore, Hal's ability to adapt to different roles is reflected in his critical charade, which he begins by informing Pistol, "I am a gentleman of a company" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 4.1.39). The theatrical word "company" resonates with the reader because of the play on the word. The pun is consequential, since Hal is indeed a gentleman of the company. Only, in this context, Hal uses not a sword but words, the persuasive weapon of an actor, to convince the soldiers that the fight was worth it and that the King is blameless. He declares:

The king is not bound to answer

The particular endings of his soldiers, the father of his

Son, nor the master of his servant; for they purpose not

Their death when they purpose their services.

Besides, there is no king, be his cause

Never so spotless, if it come to the arbitrament of swords,

Can try it out with all unspotted soldiers. (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 4.1.160-164)

Thus, Hal is able to use rhetoric to encourage his men. He identifies with them even in the presence of Westmerland, when he announces, "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 4.3.60). The use of 'brothers' underscores the tight bond that Hal has with his men; he is one with them on the battlefield, yet he is their leader. He does not sit idly by as some leaders do while his men are facing the fire of *the* battle. Essentially, Hal demonstrates that his Christian virtues were not merely in word but also in deed. Shakespeare presents Hal as the mirror of Christian kings, where his humility is evidenced even in the face of victory. Instead of taking the glory to himself when he had the opportunity, Hal exclaims, "Praised be God, and not our strength, for it" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 4.7.88-89). This act of humbly and ably fighting alongside his men would have endeared him to them. Subordinates tend to extol leaders who display selfless, sacrificial, noble, and humble characteristics, notwithstanding their valour. Having the battlefield as a stage, Hal seems to have been able to display all the admired virtues.

As though Shakespeare is determined to establish Hal's complete competence and command on any stage, he finally places him on the courtship stage. Here, Hal pursues the princess of France, Katherine, whom he addresses with such tenderness that one cannot help but admire his versatility as an actor. Hal addresses Katherine as "fair Katherine, and most fair" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 5.2.98) and shows his gentler, passionate side. This gentleness was achieved in spite of the fact that his courting was hindered by Katherine's inability to speak Hal's "English" (Shakespeare, 1597/2011, 5.2.102-103). The courtship stage allows Hal to display, more brilliantly, his political and romantic superiority in that he wins her heart, without the advantage of being able fluently communicate in her language. In spite of this, Hal's code-switching ability, and his understanding and appreciation of different cultures and languages are demonstrated.

Ultimately, as the king in Henry V, Hal continues taking control of his various roles in life, showing that he is indeed a man for all stages. Accordingly, Cohen (1992) expresses, "To Hal…history is a series of roles and staged events" (141). This reminds the reader of the magnitude of Hal's place in history as a man who was versatile and able to dominate any stage. Hal was not just a fictional character in a play. He was the living embodiment of someone who was able to occupy and dominate a variety of life stages. As declared by Patterson (1992), "[i]n the case of Henry V, the story of the text is inseparable from the political history that is both its content and its context" (166). This was accomplished through Hal's power to wield language and his ability to observe and read the other characters in his environment.

IV. CONCLUSION

Shakespeare has successfully established Hal's position as the mirror of Christian kings for all time. He skillfully achieved this feat by allowing Hal to shine and to be tested on a variety of stages. He presented a man with flaws and human frailties who was able to rise to the occasion and excel when and where it counted. He showed a man who was able to interact with all classes and be a leader on each level. On the various stages, different aspects of Hal's character are displayed and subjected to scrutiny as he is exposed to various challenges, which he overcomes admirably. This he does by utilizing the training and breeding that he would have gained from his court life, and the street smarts that he would have gained from his common friends. Added to these, Shakespeare has presented a character with many layers, one who also possesses enough intelligence and sophistry to take on the politics of kingship, and, thus, must never be underestimated. Ultimately, Shakespeare has presented a character who would hold his own anywhere, who could occupy and dominate all stages of life.

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