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Pascale Drouet

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Abstract

This paper discusses the representation of popular discourse in Shakespeare's 1Henry IV and Coriolanus. Whether in the tapster of the Boar's Head or the mutinous citizens of Rome, poor eloquence and disrupted syntax emerge as permanent features of popular discourse. They bespeak simple-mindedness, doubt, flimsiness or mutability, and open interstices inviting manipulation, subversion or radical reversals, exploited either as sheer entertainment or in a political perspective. This paper finally addresses the dialectics of linguistic emergence and containment, and poses the question as to whether popular discourse can be more than a foil to the elaborate discourse of dominant ideology.

Résumé

Cet article s'interroge sur la représentation du discours populaire dans King 1 Henry IV et Coriolanus de Shakespeare. Le serveur Francis de la taverne d'Eastcheap ou les plébéiens en armes ont pour dénominateur commun la pauvreté de l'éloquence et la fragilité de la syntaxe. Les failles syntaxiques traduisent simplicité d'esprit, doute, ou versatilité, ménagent des interstices propices à la manipulation, à la subversion et aux retournements, et donnent lieu à une exploitation théâtrale destinée à créer du divertissement ou à mettre en relief une perspective politique. On se penchera sur la dialectique de l'expression et de la répression linguistique et on se demandera si le discours populaire a une vocation autre que de servir de repoussoir au discours structuré de l'idéologie dominante.

‘ANON, ANON, SIR’:
POPULAR DISCOURSE, SYNTACTICAL LIMITATIONS
AND IDEOLOGICAL CONTAINMENT
IN *1 HENRY IV* AND *CORIOLANUS*

This paper discusses the representation of popular discourse in Shakespeare’s *1 Henry IV* and *Coriolanus*. Whether in the tapster of the Boar’s Head or the mutinous citizens of Rome, poor eloquence and disrupted syntax emerge as permanent features of popular discourse. They bespeak simple-mindedness, doubt, flimsiness or mutability, and open interstices inviting manipulation, subversion or radical reversals, exploited either as sheer entertainment or in a political perspective. This paper finally addresses the dialectics of linguistic emergence and containment, and poses the question as to whether popular discourse can be more than a foil to the elaborate discourse of dominant ideology.

Cet article s’interroge sur la représentation du discours populaire dans King 1 Henry IV et Coriolanus de Shakespeare. Le serveur Francis de la taverne d’Eastcheap ou les plébéiens en armes ont pour dénominateur commun la pauvreté de l’éloquence et la fragilité de la syntaxe. Les failles syntaxiques traduisent simplicité d’esprit, doute, ou versatilité, ménagent des interstices propices à la manipulation, à la subversion et aux retournements, et donnent lieu à une exploitation théâtrale destinée à créer du divertissement ou à mettre en relief une perspective politique. On se penchera sur la dialectique de l’expression et de la répression linguistique et on se demandera si le discours populaire a une vocation autre que de servir de repoussoir au discours structuré de l’idéologie dominante.

Shakespeare’s plays “are centrally, repeatedly concerned with production and containment of subversion and disorder [...] above all in the plays that meditate on the consolidation of state power,” Stephen Greenblatt observes in *Shakespearean Negotiations* (40). Though Greenblatt does not discuss *Coriolanus*, it may be fruitful to consider his analysis of *Henry IV* in chapter 2 (“Invisible

Bullets”) in connection with *Coriolanus* and see how his approach can be extended to cover the Roman tragedy. The 1597 chronicle shows how Henry Bolingbroke, as King Henry IV, must prove he rightly deposed the legitimate King; the Roman tragedy is concerned with the troubled beginning of a democracy, a Republic in which the patricians have to deal with the unprecedented political representation of the people. Although I take here Greenblatt’s dialectics of subversion and containment as a starting point, I will however depart from New historicist practices to privilege close reading, paying attention to the interplay of language and rhetoric. The popular voice is heard in both plays and its discourse – however inarticulate – has subversive undertones that are ultimately silenced. The voice of those contemptuously described as “the many-headed multitude” (*Cor* 2.3.15) is indeed multiple, and its discourse, termed “popular” as opposed to princely or patrician, displays rhetorical skills or flaws that range from the mutinous citizens’ paratactic style to the tribunes’ manipulative rhetoric in *Coriolanus*, and from the parrotry of Francis to Falstaff’s witty eloquence in *I Henry IV*. I will focus on the speeches of “loggerheads”¹ and “drawers” (*IHIV* 2.4.4, 7), who are regarded by Prince Hal as “the very base string[s] of humility” (*IHIV* 2.4.5-6) but can turn into potential deserters or “revolted tapsters” (*IHIV* 4.2.28-29), and then I will address the speeches of the “tradesmen” and ‘apron-men’ (*Cor* 4.6.8, 100) that are scorned by Coriolanus. They are Thomas Smith’s “fourth sort of men,” who have “no voice nor [*sic*] authority in our common wealth” (Patterson 129).²

I will first underline the shabby quality of their eloquence, marked by the syntactical disruption of their discourse, which relies on mechanical assertions and repetitions, jerky juxtapositions and contradictory arguments betraying instability and fickleness, immaturity and malleability. I will then argue that such syntactical interstices can be interpreted as ideological breaches, and, as such, become propitious to manipulation and performance, for entertainment (*I Henry IV*) or for political purposes (*Coriolanus*). In both cases, the popular discourse is appropriated with more or less ironical distortion by men in high places, princes or patricians, aspiring kings or

1. “A thick-headed or stupid person; a block-head.” First occurrence, 1588.

2. References are to *King Henry IV, Part I*, ed. A. R. Humphreys and *The Tragedy of Coriolanus*, ed. R. B. Parker.

consuls. I will finally address the dialectics of the speech emergence and speech containment, and consider whether the fallible popular voice can be more than a mere foil to the elaborate discourse of dominant ideology, which is a discourse displaying verbal inventiveness, carefully-coined *copia* or implacable *parrhesia*.

In *1 Henry IV*, Francis is presented as “an undersinker, one that never spake other English in his life than ‘Eight shillings and sixpence,’ and ‘You are welcome,’ with this shrill addition, ‘Anon, anon, sir! Score a pint of bastard in the Half-moon,’ or so” (2.4.24-27). Even before he walks onto the stage, Francis is categorized as, and soon comes to epitomize, what Greenblatt calls “a drastic reduction of human possibility” (44). His impoverished vocabulary and limited syntax are highlighted, played with, and exacerbated by the Prince’s joke: he is simultaneously called by the Prince at one end of the tavern and by Poins at the other, caught in the crossfire and reduced to delivering a mechanical answer which sounds like a verbal tic: “Anon, anon, sir” (2.4.44). Although his words are repeated twice, as if to emphasize both his eagerness and efficiency, they are deprived of performative power. The sense of immediacy (supposedly) conveyed is (comically) contradicted by his temporary physical paralysis. Proxemics visibly belies semantics.³ The exchange between the Prince and Francis is therefore perverted from the start. Being constantly called by Poins, Francis can never complete his answers to Hal; his sentences break off with Poins’ “Francis!” (2.4.43) and give way to his mechanical “Anon, anon, sir.” He is not given the opportunity to show that he can have coordinated thoughts and express them with a correct syntax. The Prince’s conclusion mercilessly echoes his introduction: “That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot, and yet the son of a woman! His industry is up-stairs and down-stairs, his eloquence the parcel of a reckoning” (2.4.96-99). The tapster’s fragmented, repetitive syntax is metaphorically equated with items totted up on a bar bill, as if to

3. The notion of performative power was introduced by John Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). M. H. Abrams defines Austin’s “explicit performative” as “a sentence whose utterance itself, when executed under appropriate institutional and other conditions, accomplishes the state of affairs that it signifies” (240).

confirm that he is deprived of any syntactical horizontality, in keeping with the seeming mindlessness and subjection of Francis.

Like the tapster, the famished plebeians who have formed a mutinous crowd in the opening scene of *Coriolanus*, convey their determination through repetition and minimal syntax: “Speak, speak” (1.1.3), “Resolved, resolved” (6), “We know’t, we know’t” (9), “Away, away” (12), “Come, come” (46). As with Francis, their speech has lost its performative power and backfires, delaying their action not precipitating it. When individual (but still anonymous) utterances with a more elaborate syntax emerge here and there, they bear the hallmark of semantic contradictions, “Let us revenge this with our pikes ere we become rakes; for the gods know, I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge” (First Citizen, 1.1.21-23), “That we did, we did for the best, and though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will” (Third Citizen, 4.6.152-54), and simplistic binary oppositions or equations – plebeians “leanness” (1.1.18) is opposed to patrician “abundance” (1.1.20). When not, they are easily foiled, however true they may be, by the patricians’ carefully coined counter-discourses. But even before they are foiled, a close reading reveals the fallibility of their reasoning, as in the very opening of the forum scene:

FIRST CITIZEN. Once, if he do require our voices we *ought* not to deny him.

SECOND CITIZEN. We *may*, sir, if we *will*.

THIRD CITIZEN. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do. [...] if he tell us his noble deeds we *must* also tell him our noble acceptance of them. (2.3.1-9, italics mine)

The shifts from one modal to another betray the inherent instability of the plebeians’ position. The syntagmatic axis may be correct, but what we pay attention to is the paradigmatic axis of modality, which reads as a symptom of versatility.⁴ In Michael West and Myron Silberstein’s phrase, “their words mutate alarmingly” (316). Third

4. The distinction between the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic axis is a distinction between “paradigmatic relations (the ‘vertical’ relations between any single word in a sentence and other words, phonologically, syntactically, or semantically similar, that might be substituted for it) and syntagmatic relations (the ‘horizontal’ relations which determine the possibilities of putting words in a sequence so as to make a well-formed syntactic unit)” (Abrams 217).

Citizen then acknowledges their being called “the many-headed multitude” (2.3.15):

We have been called so [the many-headed multitude] 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. (2.3.16-22)

As Annabel Patterson observes, “what has many heads can have no single agenda, the composite phrase [the many-headed multitude] implied, defying the linguistic logic that ordains that any collective noun must be, in effect, oxymoronic, the many as the one” (130). The last part of Third Citizen’s description evokes the tremulous needle of a compass. The syntagmatic limitations and paradigmatic fluctuation of their speeches are spatially expressed in terms of a centrifugal movement undermining the usefulness of the compass and the coherence of cardinal points. Even when the plebeians are granted a micro-syntax – a linguistic code – they are still denied a macro-syntax – an ideological code. Hence Coriolanus’ rhetorical question, “Must these have voices, that can yield them now / And straight disclaim their tongue?” (3.1.36-37).

Mutatis mutandis, the Roman citizens find themselves in a situation similar to that of the British drawer: they too are caught in the crossfire of the opposite voices of the tribunes and the patricians. Although the stakes are poles apart – a practical joke in *1 Henry IV* and the exercise of political power in *Coriolanus* – the situations bear marked similarities. Francis comes to a standstill, and the citizens are similarly paralyzed when the lack of coherence of their acts and speeches is exposed. This may be due in both cases to their lack of maturity, whether political as regards the plebeians, who have just been granted a tribunate and have, according to Coriolanus, ‘children’s voices’ (*Cor* 3.1.32), or professional for Francis, who is still an apprentice and “puny drawer” (*IHIV* 2.4.30). Their syntactical limitations are signs of immaturity, and make them vulnerable to others’ designs. The popular discourse is appropriated by social superiors who use it for their own purposes.

The comedy of repetition induced by Francis’ “anon, anon, sir” is presented by Hal as a means “to laugh a little” and “to drive away the

time till Falstaff come” (*IHIV* 2.4.2, 28-29). It is the Prince’s good pleasure to orchestrate a gratuitous pastime: he plays with Francis’s parrotry, enjoyed for a while as entertainment, as an ante-show or rather, from Hal’s viewpoint, a sub-show. The comedy of repetition is not a sophisticated enough form of entertainment for Hal; it is too predictable and too literal. Even Poins is doubtful about Hal’s direction and the interest of such a performance, and finally asks, “but hark ye, what cunning match have you made with this jest of the drawer: come, what’s the issue?” (2.4.87-89). Hal wants to be entertained with the kind of linguistic skills that are required for improvisations or “play[s] extempore” (2.4.276). He relishes changes of register, semantic lavishness, parodies, the kind of verbal dexterity he shares with the fat rogue, and their common taste for flying or elaborate banter – “mock impoliteness for social harmony” (Culpeper 357). This is why he ultimately tells Poins “I prithee call in Falstaff; I’ll play Percy, and that damned brawn shall play Dame Mortimer his wife” (*IHIV* 2.4.106-8). We are made to feel that Francis’s parrotry has been no more than a stopgap set up by the Prince to be used for a short while and eventually discarded.

In *Coriolanus*, the popular voice is successively appropriated by the patrician tradition reluctantly epitomized by Coriolanus, and by the tribunes as part of a political ploy or set-up. The citizens’ voices are heard, but the discourse is no longer theirs. In the Forum scene, in which Coriolanus is made to entreat the people’s suffrage, the speech the citizens have to deliver, actor-like, is a traditional script in praise of patrician values, notably war valour and heroism. The popular discourse hence mirrors the dominant ideology and gratefully recounts Coriolanus’ feats. Third Citizen, who has internalized patrician tradition and values, directs the others: “For if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them; so if he tell us his *noble* deeds we *must* also tell him our *noble* acceptance of them” (2.3.5-9, italics mine). Although the syntax is correct, the implicit ideology is not progressive, but reflexive and conservative – the modal “must” working as a mirror ensuring the reflection of nobleness. The vote is metaphorically a mere reflecting surface, and appears to be an exercise in ventriloquism based on forced empathy. The “authentic” voice of doubt is relegated to asides and barely emerges in vague utterances and a telling aposiopesis before it is completely suppressed:

THIRD CITIZEN (*to the other Citizens*). But this is something odd.
 SECOND CITIZEN. An ’twere to give again—but ’tis no matter.
 (2.3.78-80)

They have politically given their voices; but depersonalized their own discourse in the process.

Though the tribunes claim to support the re-emergence of the popular voice, they actually counter-manipulate it, directing the citizens and imposing their own script with pre-dictated cues. They “spin” the situation. Those who have been elected to be the plebeians’ spokesmen unscrupulously turn them into their own megaphone.

Assemble presently the people hither,
 And when they hear me say ‘It shall be so
 I’th’right and strength o’th’commons,’ be it either
 For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
 If I *say* ‘Fine’, *cry* ‘Fine!’, if ‘Death,’ *cry* ‘Death!’ ” (3.3.12-16,
 italics mine)

Brutus goes further:

And when such time they have begun to cry,
 Let them no cease, but with a din confused
 Enforce the present execution
 Of what we chance to sentence’ (3.3.19-22).

The citizens are reduced to a mob, apparent in the shift from “say” to “cry,” similar to what Bourdieu, with a focus narrowed to the loud abrasiveness of their discourse, would call “des gueules” (127-28). They serve as bad-quality amplifiers, ultimately producing a “din confused” verging on cacophony, which is later confirmed by one of the senators’ injunctions to “Unshout the noise that banished Martius” (5.5.4). They have been deprived of a tongue of their own, articulate discourse, intelligibility – Coriolanus describes the tribunes of the people as “The tongues o’th’ common mouth” (3.1.23). They have been ascribed one of the crude functions of the crowd. They are no longer a distinctive group of men, but are only felt, or rather heard, as a menacing entity, which has a propagating, contaminating function. To ultimately equate the popular discourse with either “a din confused” (the plebeians) or parrotry (Francis) is a way to contain its content, reduce its impact, and reassert the dominant ideology as unquestionable.

The popular voice is usually heard in public places such as streets and forums (*Coriolanus*) or taverns (*1 Henry IV*). Yet some princely or patrician voice with better rhetorical skills is never far away. The popular voice is only temporarily allowed to emerge, before it is eventually contained, counterfeited, ridiculed and silenced. Francis's syntactical limitations and impoverished vocabulary serve as a foil to Hal's dazzling verbal inventiveness and wit, not to mention his use of words derived from the Old French, like "indenture" (2.4.47), "crystal" (68), "caddis" and "garter" (69), or from the Latin, like 'agate' (69), which suggests that "different stylistic dimensions correlate with lexical source" (Culpeper 183). The tapster is lost when the Prince asks him, "Wilt thou rob this leathern-jerkin, crystal-button, not-pated, agate-ring, puke-stocking, caddis-garter, smooth-tongue Spanish pouch?" (2.4.68-70). The accumulation of compound adjectives and metonymies is beyond Francis's understanding, and the drawer is unable to see who it is the Prince means. What is also beyond Francis's grasp is the Prince's ability to use the generic category of the blazon and give it a playful twist with gender inversion, a change from praise to mockery. The itemization at work in Hal's burlesque blazon testifies to his princely level of education and capacity to appropriate and subvert canonical categories. With Francis, itemization can only be "the parcel of a reckoning" (2.4.98-99), an example of which is given by Peto once Falstaff's pockets have been searched. On the "papers" (2.4.526) he has found there, he reads:

Item a capon	.	.	.	2s. 2d.
Item sauce	.	.	.	4d.
Item sack two gallons	.	.	.	5s. 8d.
Item anchovies and sack after supper	.	.	.	2s. 6d.
Item of bread	.	.	.	ob. (<i>IHIV</i> , 2.4.528-32)

The drawer's itemizing is a prosaic activity, a juxtaposition whose meaning is limited to verticality. Like repetition, itemization, when closely looked at, is a marker of linguistic differentiation: it points to Francis's capacity of expression in its most basic form, while bringing out the high standard of Hal's linguistic and generic appropriation. Such a differentiation is part of a larger personal and political scheme, the Prince's foiling strategy revealed in his "I know you all" soliloquy: "My reformation, glitt'ring o'er my fault, / Shall grow more goodly, and attract more eyes / Than that which hath no foil to set it off" (1.2.208-10). His "fault" will serve as a foil to his

“reformation,” as the “base contagious clouds” (1.2.193) do to the “sun” (1.2.192), as the tapster’s linguistic limitations do to his mastery of language.

Hal also masters different styles and registers, appropriating those that are not naturally his, like the drawer’s cant:

They call drinking deep ‘dying scarlet,’ and when you breathe in your watering they cry ‘Hem!’ and bid you ‘Play it off!’ To conclude, I am so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life (2.4.15-19).

It obviously does not work the other way round. Francis’s easy mystification shows that the pre-requisite for appropriation (leading to parody), i.e. understanding, is beyond him. Even Poins is not sure that he has got Hal’s point. “[H]is [Hal’s] ability to conceal his motives and render opaque his language offers assurance that he himself will not be played upon by another” as Greenblatt observes (45). The tinker’s cant is fully appropriated later, when it is impersonated and parodied in *2 Henry IV*. To Poins’s suggestion that he and Hal put on leathern jerkins and aprons to disguise themselves as drawers so as to spy on Falstaff, Hal answers, “From a god to a bull? A heavy descension! It was Jove’s case. From a Prince to a prentice? A low transformation, that shall be mine, for in everything the purpose must weigh with the folly” (2*HIV*, 2.3.166-169). His “anon, anon, sir” (2*HIV*, 2.4.279) puts the finishing touch to the “low transformation.” This exercise in low burlesque, what Gérard Genette terms the “disconvenance burlesque (descendante)” (198), while it temporarily “debases” the Prince socially is in fact a way for him to assert his linguistic superiority. The socio-political chords the popular voice may have struck are ignored; the voice is used only for its entertainment potential, and while Hal is far from the prototypical heir,⁵ his superiority is reasserted indirectly by linguistic means.

In *Coriolanus*, the rioters’ demands, juxtaposed assertions, binary equations, contradictions and abortive debate are countered and temporarily contained by the *copia* (verbal prolixity) of Menenius, which turns into *loquacitas* (meaningless verbosity), of which the long fable of the belly is the best illustration. The fable does not serve a strategy of conviction based on “cognitive argumentative lines” but

5. See Culpeper on “Prototype theory” (60-63).

rather a strategy of seduction which “exploits the outward appearance and seeming trustworthiness of the persuader” (Sornig 97). Menenius is presented as “Worthy Menenius Agrippa, one that hath always loved the people,” “one honest enough” (1.1.48-50). The citizens’ and Menenius’ respective discursive styles, verbal deficiency *versus* verbal prolixity, metaphorically re-enact the medieval combat of Lent and Carnival. The fat patrician’s rhetoric of excess is set in contrast with the famished plebeians’ rhetoric of meagreness. Although the fable works as delaying tactics, Menenius fails in his attempt to change the plebeians’ minds, “to fob off [their] disgrace” (1.1.91). We may assume that “Shakespeare intended to highlight the skill-lessness of Menenius’s oratorical strategy” (Riss 62). The plebeians’ disgrace is fobbed off when their limited syntax and fledgling ideas are set against Coriolanus’ coercive strategies and *parrhesia*, which Foucault defines as

a kind of verbal activity in which a speaker expresses his personal relationship to truth, and risks his life because he recognizes truth-telling as a duty to improve or help other people (as well as himself). In *parrhesia*, the speaker uses his freedom and chooses frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest and moral apathy. (Foucault 19-20)

Coriolanus’ straightforward micro-syntax is in keeping with his steadfast values and military macro-syntax. Like Hal, Coriolanus can appropriate and deride a language that is not up to his level, although he does so unwillingly, as when he is forced to “go fit [himself] to the custom” (2.2.141). When pressed he can prove demagogical but even so he remains on the verge of impoliteness and social disruption. In the Forum scene, the aspiring consul takes up the citizens’ words (“worthy sir” 2.3.75) and gives them a sarcastic twist (“two worthy voices begged” 2.3.76-77), even an antiphrastic twist (“Worthy voices” 2.3.132), but when in the same scene the plebeians echo Coriolanus’ “desert” (2.3.63) and “desire” (2.3.65), they merely signal their failure to understand him. Although pretending to be humble and polite, Coriolanus resorts to sarcasm and a strategy of impoliteness – “mock politeness for social disharmony” (Culpeper 357). He apes the market huckster whose enticing cry is marked by heavy repetition (“your voices” 2.3.121, 122, 125, 127). Although the low burlesque show is not pleasurable to him, Coriolanus succeeds in

depriving the popular voice of its substance. When used by Hal or Coriolanus, repetition is a marker of linguistic appropriation, aesthetic transformation, or ideological manipulation; when used by the people, it remains a sign of their syntactical and political limitations.

Undoubtedly the mastery of discourse goes hand in hand with ideological control. Hal’s linguistic superiority in *The Boar’s Head Tavern* is so blatant that he himself suggests transgressions to Francis, and paints masterlessness in glowing colours. Significantly, “An Acte for the Punyshment of Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars” was passed the same year the play was put on, in the wake of the 1572 “Acte for the Punishment of Vacabonds, and for the Releif of the Poore and Impotent,” which already “adjudged and deemed Roges Vacaboundes and sturdy Beggars”

all and everye persone and persones beyng whole and mightye in Body and able to labour, havinge not Land or Maister, nor using any lawfull Merchaundize Crafte or Mysterye whereby hee of shee might get his or her Lyvinge, and can gyve no reckninge howe hee or shee dothe lawfully get his or her Lyvinge.⁶

Masterlessness was widespread then. Once Hal hears that Francis has been a tapster for five years, he tests his resolve: “Five years! By’r lady, a long lease for the clinking of pewter; but Francis, darest thou to be so valiant as to play the coward with thy indenture, and show it a fair pair of heels, and run from it?” (*IHIV*, 2.4.45-48). But Francis’s answer is kept in abeyance because of Poin’s unceasing calls and Hal’s cascading questions and unclear comments. As Greenblatt puts it, “the momentary glimpse of revolt against authority is closed off at once [...] with a few obscure words calculated to return Francis to his trade without enabling him to understand why he must return to it” (44). Hal’s toying with Francis’s potential desertion and rebellion echoes in a comic mode York’s “seduction” and manipulation of Jack Cade in *2 Henry VI*.⁷ And, as the play unfolds, Hal’s ideological containment is given a broader scope, with Falstaff’s discouraging description of his pitiful, ragged army made up of “such as indeed [that] were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving-men, young sons to younger brothers, *revolted tapsters*, and

6. See also “An Acte for the Punyshment of Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars” (39 Elizabeth, c. 4), 1597 (Tawney and Power 2: 354-62).

7. See Drouet 1-20.

ostlers trade-fallen” (*IHIV*, 4.2.26-29, italics mine). This is an army of silent scarecrows rather than human beings.

Coriolanus provides a significant contrast to *I Henry IV*. Applying Foucault’s analyses of the Greek terms, Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin notes that Coriolanus’ *parrhesia* degenerates into *athuroglossos* (a tongue without a gate) or ‘bad *parrhesia*’ (noisy babbling) (143-44). As he loses his temper, his discourse becomes void of any sense of *mètrios* (fair balance), becomes fallible, and the reins of political power slacken. He finds himself deprived of the people’s voices and is banished from Rome because of his choleric mood and unruly tongue. His mistake is to resort to what Culpeper terms “negative impoliteness output strategies,” while Hal is subtle enough to have “positive impoliteness output strategies” (Culpeper 357-58). The smooth syntax and demagogical language that should serve the would-be consul fail him. This means that the ideological discourse fails if the speaker lacks the ability to appropriate any kind of rhetoric and adapt to any kind of audience. Coriolanus’ style of discourse, whether he addresses the patricians, the tribunes or the people, never varies – he speaks his mind. His pragmatic limitations paradoxically come to mirror the people’s syntactical limitations and find their source in his deep distrust of language, as opposed to Hal’s loves of words and sensitivity to their infinite inventiveness. *I Henry IV* was produced in 1597 and may bear out the analysis according to which “the popular stage that nurtured Shakespeare’s plays thrive on a love of language in its audiences, for the Elizabethan player was first and foremost a consummate rhetorician” (West and Silberstein 327). *Coriolanus* was performed nine years later, in the early seventeenth century, at a time when the scepticism about language and its rhetorical power increased (West & Silberstein 326). The interest may have shifted from the dialectics of linguistic subversion/containment to the calling into question of the supremacy of language and the sometimes perverse drifts of rhetoric.

Pascale DROUET

Université de Poitiers

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