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Leadership and Strategy in Shakespeare

A comparative case-study of Julius Caesar and Henry V

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Abstract

This dissertation focuses on the leadership figures of Julius Caesar and Henry V through a double perspective, historical and Shakespearean, trying to evaluate if they convey any lessons for the leaders of today and tomorrow. The combination of historical and literary analysis expresses the two main purposes of the dissertation: exploring the strategic challenges Caesar and Henry had to face when in command and how they acted upon them, as well as a reflection on the relevance of Shakespeare's work to the study of leadership. In regards to the first objective, it is argued that despite being inadequate to build a contemporary leadership framework from the lives of these men, they fit into a modern model of leadership which encompasses six characteristics - influence, purpose, direction, motivation, accomplishment and improvement. Moreover, their profiles also convey lessons on how to think strategically and how to adapt to changing circumstances. In regards to the second aim, it is claimed that Shakespeare's work should not be taken as a structured portrait of individual leadership skills, but instead as a subtle analysis of the dilemmas inherent to any position of power. Ultimately, the inclusion of both historical and literary approaches can broaden the scope of leadership studies, adding a human dimension to this field of research.

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When I joined the *MA in Governance, Leadership and Democracy Studies* in the Institute for Political Studies of the Catholic University of Lisbon (IEP) in February of 2014, I knew beforehand that I had been accepted in a very prestigious school with a programme known for its depth and excellence. Obviously, I rejoiced at the possibility of finally studying a subject which I had always been passionate about and in a place on which I had great expectations. To the IEP and its competent teachers I can only express my gratitude for surpassing my high hopes.

Nevertheless, my expectations were not prepared for the moment when, in a Wednesday afternoon, two professors entered the classroom to lecture us on "Leadership and Strategic Challenges". These two professors were Raquel Vaz-Pinto and Miguel Monjardino, and their opening remarks on the necessity of reading – and reading a lot – to learn how great men thought strategically, paved the way to what was probably the most rewarding experience I had in my academic life. It was in their classroom that this dissertation was born and it was due to their incentives and guidance that my Shakespearean endeavour was pursued. To them I owe the most sincere thank you.

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Introduction

The subject of this dissertation is leadership and strategy. Its structure revolves around the case studies of Julius Caesar and Henry V not only from the historical point of view, but above all from the perspective of William Shakespeare, who chose them as central characters in two of his most celebrated plays. The aim of this work is twofold: first, to understand the main challenges great men face when leading the destiny of a nation and what strategies they used to overcome them; and second, to reflect upon the relevance of Shakespeare to the study of leadership.

Several voices claim that we are facing a worldwide crisis of leadership today. According to the World Economic Forum, 86% of the respondents to the Survey on the Global Agenda 2014 (Shahid, 2014) agree that there is an evident lack of leadership in their nations, making it one of the top 10 trends to follow in 2015. Far from being a "western world" issue, data from the same report show that such perception is global, ranging from Europe to Asia, passing through the Middle East, though with greater pre-eminence in North America and Sub-Saharan Africa, where only 8% of the respondents are satisfied with worldwide leadership. But the problem is not new. If we look back to the history of the 20th century, the one name that springs to mind as a paradigm of leadership is Winston Churchill[1]. Since then, hardly another figure has emerged and reached such a level of consensus regarding leadership skills and strategic vision. It is perhaps true that the democratic regimes make it harder for statesmen to leave their mark in history, such is the brevity of their mandates. Nevertheless, Churchill was a member of a democratic government and, as such, bound to the will of the British people – who chose not re-elect him prime-minister in 1945 just after the Allied victory

[1] Naturally there are other important leaders we could mention such as De Gaulle, Eisenhower, Roosevelt or even Hitler and Stalin, and those just in relation to the Second World War. But in our view is that none has achieved the status of Winston Churchill.

of the Second World War, but put him back in charge in 1951 – and still he managed to carve his path into our history books. So our question follows the motto left by the Portuguese historian Filipe Ribeiro de Menezes in his recent piece for the 50th anniversary of the British leader: "where are the heirs of Churchill? Where are the visionary, refined, brave and generous men and women capable of dragging us out of a crisis that is undermining the confidence in the destinies of our continent and our common civilization?" (Menezes, 2015).

In a lecture delivered in 2009 by William Deresiewicz at the United States Military Academy of West Point entitled "Solitude and Leadership" (Deresiewicz, 2010), this problem is tackled in a very concise way. The premise of Deresiewicz' speech is that solitude is a crucial necessity for true leadership, and the problem he points to is the existence of a leadership crisis in America due to fact that education has long been creating technocrats instead of leaders. What is valued nowadays, he argues, is conformity instead of creativity, specificity instead of strategic vision and getting things done instead of understanding why things are done in the first place. This does not mean that these characteristics are bad or undesirable, they are indeed crucial to fulfil goals or ask questions, they simply are worthless if we want someone who sets those goals and asks those questions, someone who can think and argue on his own. There is an evident lack of thinkers in our society, and the ability to "think things through for himself" and follow a line of action in accordance - or in other words developing a strategy - is, above all other things, exactly what makes a leader.

Therefore, our argument is that, in this context of a global leadership crisis, there is a necessity of revisiting leadership models provided by history and literature alike in order to understand the strategic mindset of those men and women, who managed to

overcome situations of extreme distress and succeeded in guiding their nations to prosperity. First of all, to understand if there are any lessons we can take from these models and second, to evaluate the extent to which these lessons can be applied nowadays. With this in mind, our choice of case-studies rested on Julius Caesar and Henry V. But why these two? What do Caesar and Henry V have in common?

At a first glance it may seem odd to put both in the same stage. The first was a Roman citizen who, through shrewd ambition, bravery and opportunism, rose to Rome's political elite eventually becoming dictator, forever changing the history of the Roman Republic. The second was an English monarch, born almost 1500 years after Caesar who although never meant to be king, sat in the throne, restored his kingdom's order and honour and launched a successful invasion of France. From this superficial outline, apart from commanding the destinies of their nations, it seems quite a stretch to find common ground to analyze their paths in parallel. Nevertheless, the main reason why we believe it matters to look into the life of these two characters is exactly to understand how these men steered their people and overcame the inevitable obstacles that positions of leadership always entail.

Furthermore, there is at least one more thing that Caesar and Henry V share: they were both subjects of William Shakespeare's plays. But posing the same question we did before, why did he choose these two characters in particular? More than the dramatic value of the characters used for the sake of amusing the audiences, more than the historical significance of depicting the lives of such remarkable men, what Shakespeare offers is a portrait of leadership and a take on the subtleties of power and authority. Based partly in historical sources and partly in sheer creativity, both plays are an important complement to the historical figures in the sense that they delve into their psyche, allowing us to put ourselves in their places and understand how they reflected,

analyzed and reacted to specific challenging circumstances. In few words, Shakespeare depicts the way leaders think and the core dilemmas every leadership position entails.

With the premise established it matters now to look to the approach we propose to follow. First and foremost, it is important to acknowledge that the topic has undeniable literary contours which on the one hand, cannot be bypassed because of their importance to our analysis, and on the other hand must not be over-emphasized, for it would be a deviation both from the aim of the dissertation and from the MA's fields of study. Thus, this dissertation will attempt to intertwine both historical and Shakespearean perspectives, but always within the specific framework of leadership and strategy.

In regards to structure and method, our dissertation will be built around four main pillars: Leadership, Shakespeare, Julius Caesar and Henry V. These cornerstones will be translated into four main chapters: «What is leadership? », «Julius Caesar», «Henry V» and «Shakespeare's Leaders – Julius Caesar vs. Henry V ». While the first three will attempt to present its topics in a separate way, the fourth will consist of a comparative analysis of the two Shakespearean figures, making a contrast between their strategic challenges as well as the similarities and differences of their Shakespearean portraits.

The first chapter – « What is leadership? » – will be divided into three sections aiming to clarify the operating concepts underlying our analysis. Firstly, we will define the concept of leadership and draw an overview of the evolution of its theorization. Secondly we will go through the concept of strategy, its development over time and its connexion with leadership. Finally, we will analyse the concept of grand strategy underlining its link with individual leadership. This chapter has an obvious conceptual

nature and its main aim is to introduce the framework of leadership which will help in our analysis of Caesar and Henry V.

The second chapter – «Julius Caesar» – will follow a threefold structure, covering the main aspects of the life of the historical figure and the underlying strategic challenge. The first section, «Family Context», will describe Caesar's upbringing and initial career, trying to answer the question of who was Julius Caesar when he reached power. Furthermore, «Political Context» will address his main life accomplishments and most notable episodes: the Gallic and Civil Wars and the end of the Republic. In the third part we will identify Caesar's main strategic challenge – the Republic-Empire transition and the tension between personal leadership and the strategy of Rome as a nation and political entity – and how it was overcome.

The third chapter – «Henry V» – will have the same structure as the previous one, with three sections with similar titles. It will begin with a section covering Henry's education and youth, trying to understand how the to-be leader emerged. The second section will analyze the first years of King Henry V's reign, focusing on his capacity as an administrator as well as the reasons which led to the French invasion. Moreover, we will also identify his strategic challenge as the invasion of France and the consolidation of England, analysing the major episodes of this period.

The fourth chapter – «Shakespeare's Leaders – Julius Caesar vs. Henry V» – will look at the figures of Caesar and Henry as depicted by Shakespeare. Besides a separate analysis of each character in the first two sections, we will also establish a comparative framework between the two leaders, intertwining history and fiction. Firstly, Caesar and Henry V's main divergences will be pointed out, making reference to the contrast between contexts, internal enemy and external enemy, as well as ambition versus duty. Secondly, we will also examine the common traits, namely the

fact that they were both unexpected leaders and the importance of military prowess and strategy in their careers.

Finally, in the conclusion of this dissertation we will draw on the lessons of leadership that can be taken from the preceding study of the figures of Caesar and Henry, trying to understand to what extent are they applicable to our current times. Shakespeare's relevance to the field of leadership studies will also be discussed.

In a final note, it seems clear that few of the leaders who came and went in the last decades left such an indelible mark as Julius Caesar or Henry V. Surely the circumstances are beyond compare – current social, political, economical and military realities are far away from those in Ancient Rome or Medieval England – but are their challenges so distinct and the nature of people so different that their lessons are worthless for the leaders of today and tomorrow? And is Shakespeare's insight on the complexities of human nature completely irrelevant to the study of leadership processes? We do not believe so, reason why we propose to analyze leadership and strategy in the work of William Shakespeare with a focus on Julius Caesar and Henry V where, as shown, great lessons on how to lead and think strategically are on full display.

Chapter 1 - What is Leadership?

"Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth."

James MacGregor Burns[2]

The words of James Burns portray a staggering reality: although our lives are ruled by the decisions of elected statesmen, who in turn have their lives and decisions incessantly scrutinized by the electorate, we still fail to understand what leadership positions entail and by which ideals we should guide when analyzing such phenomena. It is surely true that democratic regimes have brought some constraints to leadership, namely through public accountability and electoral mechanisms, but they surely have not made obsolete the role of leader (Heywood, 2013: 300).

With strategy a similar situation occurs. As ubiquitous as it is, there seems to be neither agreement on a standard definition nor on the limits of its realm of application. As such, its meaning "has become diluted through promiscuous and often inappropriate use" (Freeman, 2013: 11) and nowadays, much of the publications on strategy concern its economic and business variant and not the original concept.

As two of the central notions for the understanding of our study, the purpose of this first chapter is mainly the definition of leadership and strategy. We will analyze the central bibliography on those topics and come up with two basic definitions, which we will then use to define a third concept which supersedes the realm of strategy: grand strategy.

[2] In Burns (2010: 11).

1. Leadership

The theoretical notions of leadership are countless. As O'Neil (2008) put it "as many definitions of leadership exist as do authors who have studied the concept". Indeed the interest on the subject of power and authority, leaders and followers, rulers and ruled, can be traced back to Thucydides, Herodotus, Plato and even beyond. Nevertheless, comprehensive theorization on leadership emerged mainly on the second half of the 20th century, aiming not only to understand the behaviour of leaders but also to find ways to improve the performance of organizations and its members.

Traditional ideas during the 19th century focused on traits and attributes of character as the basic source of leadership, meaning that a leader was someone naturally predisposed to such position. However, after the Second World War and with the inclusion of analytics, studies tended to focus more on behavioural patterns and observable characteristics of leaders (O'Neil, 2008), further evolving into studies of leader-follower relationship and the importance of context in those relations. Although not being considered specifically a theory of leadership, one of the most important contributes was given by Max Weber (1970) through his studies on the legitimization of power, where he made the distinction of the three types of authority: traditional, legal/rational and charismatic. The absorption of these conceptions (especially the later two) and the evolution of leadership studies have culminated with the emergence of a division between two basic types of leaders: transactional and transformational. On the one hand, transactional approaches see leadership almost as a pragmatic and managerial task, where the leader-follower relationship focuses on "exchanging one thing for another" (Burns, 2012: 14), e.g. votes for higher salaries, in a democratic election. On the other hand, the transformational leader - a concept associated with James MacGregor Burns' *magnum opus* "Leadership" - is someone with vision, inspiration,

persuasive and motivational characteristics, who aims to engage and fulfil not only his personal aims, but also the goals of his followers. From these two views, Burns (2012: 640) develops his conception of leadership, one which is held by many as standard:

> *Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers.*

Although this definition is indispensable to understand most of the theoretical approaches to modern leadership, the nature of our case-studies – undemocratic and military leaders of the Classical and Medieval world – requires a more informal and practical concept, encompassing both the behavioural pattern of the leader, including his relationship with the followers, and his personal qualities, as suggested by Heywood (2013: 300). Thus, we will follow the concept provided by the US Army (Department of the Army, 2006: 1-2):

> *Leadership is the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization.*

This definition conveys the core aspects of the first dimension of leadership we mentioned – behavioural pattern – which are: influence, purpose, direction, motivation, accomplishment and improvement. To these we add the dimension of personal

character, as the main qualities we find indispensable in leading figures. These two dimensions will be the guidelines for our analysis of Julius Caesar and Henry V.

2. Strategy

"Everyone needs a strategy" states Sir Lawrence Freedman (2013: 9) in the preface of his colossal anthology "Strategy", emphasizing the pervasiveness of the concept and its application to innumerable fields of study and action. In fact, Freedman (2013: 9) goes on saying that "there is no human activity so lowly, banal, or intimate that it can reasonably be deprived of a strategy" which makes its realm and scope almost infinite. Moreover, as we will see, the use of the term has developed over time. Thus, the task of coming up with a definition broad enough to encompass its extension, yet concise enough to establish its limits without losing significance, has proven particularly challenging.

The etymological origins of the word strategy come from the Greek *strategía* or *strategiké*, which corresponded to "the set of skills of the commander in chief" (Comprido, 1984) or general (*stratégos*), which in turn "is the one who practices strategy" (Heuser, 2010: 4). The concept had extensive use in the classical world and its meaning continued to evolve until Byzantium, where by the sixth century it was already distinguished from *taktiké* (tactics) - a "science which enables one to organize and maneuver a body of armed men in an orderly manner" (Heuser, 2010: 4) and, as such, subordinated to strategy. However, the decline of both Greek and Roman civilizations was followed by a parallel decline of the use of the term. Until the French Revolution

not much was written about strategy in the West[3], but instead the focus was on military affairs and the «art of war», as in Machiavelli (2003[1521]).

With perspectives framed primarily by theoretical reflections and concerned by the definition of strategy either as an art or a science, early 18th century thought was completely shaken by Prussian general Carl von Clausewitz' considerations "On War", which were largely influenced by his observation (and actual participation) of the Napoleonic Wars and hence were applicable in practice. Clausewitzean formulation was quite simplified and straightforward seeing strategy as "the use of engagements for the object of the war" (Clausewitz, 2007[1832]: II.1). Nevertheless his definition of war as "an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will" (Clausewitz, 2007[1832]: I.2) was the notion which endured throughout time, giving room to the association the concepts of strategy and war, with the former seen as the pursuit of the aim of the later (Heuser, 2010: 6). Clausewitz notion was built upon by other thinkers such as Helmuth von Moltke and Raoul Castex, but it was still overly attached to military affairs, lacking the political dimension which is imperative in strategic thinking.

Although the maxim "war is merely the continuation of policy by other means" was established by Clausewitz (2007[1832]: I.24), the development of the linkage between war, strategy and politics is made by Baron de Jomini (2008[1838]: 46), whose categorization of wars and fields of strategy is paramount in taking "political aims into account as chief variable determining the character of any Strategy" (Heuser, 2010: 14). With the outcome the World Wars and the increasing blurring of strategy and policy, Basil Liddell Hart advanced with a paraphrasing of the Clausewitzean formulation which is understood by some as the modern definition of strategy: "the art of

[3] It is important to note that our analysis emphasizes Western contributions to the field of strategy. Naturally, eastern contributions such as Sun Tzu and his *Art of War*, generally considered the father of eastern military strategy, should not be ignored.

distributing and applying military means to fulfil the ends of policy" (Liddell Hart, 2011[1954]: 388).

Nonetheless, Liddell Hart's interpretation seems too broad and still exceedingly concerned with military affairs. In line with Beatrice Heuser (2010: 9-28) and Sir Lawrence Freedman (2013: 11-20), we believe that a definition of strategy must encompass four dimensions. Firstly, its connection with politics, deriving from the axiom that "war is an instrument of politics". Secondly, its presentation as a "clash of wills" in the sense that it is a process which implies the existence of a counterpart, thus requiring adaptability, flexibility and balance of power. Thirdly, strategy entails the interaction of "multiple and interdependent variables", hence demanding a careful harmony between ends and means. Finally, the fact that it must be present both in wartime and peacetime making it "an inherent element of statecraft at all times"[4]. Therefore, the definition we chose as guideline to the analysis of our case-studies is the one provided by Freedman (2013: 11):

> *[Strategy is] about maintaining a balance between ends, ways and means; about identifying objectives; and about the resources and methods available to for meeting such objectives. It is the art of creating power.*

3. Grand Strategy

In the aftermath of World War II and with the start of the Cold War, the definition of strategy was once and for all interwoven with politics. In an attempt to shed some light in an increasingly blurred notion the term «grand strategy» emerged,

[4] Heuser (2010: 26) in reference to Edward Mead Earle's famous volume *The Makers of Moder Strategy*.

with particular emphasis in Britain (Heuser, 2010: 27). Edward Luttwak (2001) defined it as:

> *A confluence of the military interactions that flow up and down level by level, forming strategy's "vertical" dimension, with the varied external relations among states forming strategy's "horizontal" dimension.*

The term is almost self-explanatory. Adding a sort of higher and broader scope to strategy, grand strategy entails state policy, diplomacy and foreign affairs, acting as rudder to leaders attempting to "chart a course for their nations" (Murray, 2011: 1). But pursuing the interests of a nation implies making difficult choices. As a result, according to Williamson Murray (2011) grand strategy involves four traits. Firstly, the capacity to *adjust* to different realities (economic, military, social, etc.). Secondly, *balancing risks* according to national priorities. Thirdly, *adapting national focus* to the ever-changing foreign environment. Finally, it needs *vision*, long-term goals and an ability to act "beyond the demands of the present".

Despite being an idiosyncratic process, surrounded by uncertainty, and so broad that it is hard to unveil its limits, grand strategy is important to our study for it comprises the overall course of nations, being largely influenced by individual leadership. Henceforth, we will try to understand to what extent did Caesar and Henry V pursue a grand strategy for their respective nations.

We have underlined in the introduction that the main focus of this dissertation is leadership. Although our aim is not to develop a comprehensive analysis of the leaderships of Julius Caesar and Henry V through the prism of leadership theory, we

believe that opening with a chapter that introduces the major ideas in this field helps to have an overview of the characteristics we will be looking for in these leaders. Furthermore, due to the fact that our case-studies are deeply connected with military command, we decided to introduce the concept of strategy even though it will not be explored in depth throughout our study. What we feel is that it is very difficult to dissociate the concepts of leadership and strategy, particularly when studying men who relied so much in armed forces and war enterprises as a source of power. In addition, the introduction of the concept of grand strategy matters because Caesar and Henry had the destinies of two great nations on their shoulders and as Williamson Murray (2011: 21) argued "perhaps the most important factor in the development and execution of successful grand strategy has been leadership at the top". Finally, the interlinking of this three notions will help us in the historical analysis of each of our leaders through the introduction of the concept of strategic challenge as the defining episode in their leadership, enabling to scrutinize their actions in perspective in order to understand how and why they behaved in such demanding circumstances.

Thus, the conceptual nature of this chapter rather than establishing a theoretical baseline that we would confirm or refute, matters to us as a background to the profiles of Caesar and Henry. In addition, from the first definition we derive a framework of leadership - consisting of the characteristics of influence, purpose, direction, motivation, accomplishment and improvement - which we will use in the analysis of both leaders.

Chapter 2 – Julius Caesar

«I could be well moved if I were as you.
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me.
But I am constant as the Northern Star,
Of whose true fixed and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks;
They are all fire, and every one doth shine;
But there's but one in all doth hold his place.»

Julius Caesar in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*
III.1.58-65

Caesar's boastful speech moments before being stabbed to death by his fellows in Shakespeare's play, may seem terribly ironic at first. Bragging about being "constant as the Northern Star" and "unassailable", he is quickly reminded of his mortality by his former companions, in what is undoubtedly history's most famous assassination. Nevertheless, the rest of the play seems to prove Caesar was right, with his eternal "presence" and influence constantly assailing his murderers and dictating the denouement of the play.

Julius Caesar lived fifty five years, but in that period of time he rose to power, conquered Gaul and started a Civil War that would forever change the destiny of Rome. Outstanding politician, ruthless general, skilled administrator and brilliant author, Caesar remains as probably the most famous character in ancient history.

In this chapter, we will trace a portrait of Caesar in order to understand his prominence as a leader and strategist. Starting with his background and rise to power, we will then examine the conquest of Gaul and the Civil War. Finally, our last but central section will identify and analyze the strategic challenge underlying Caesar's life.

1. Family Context

Gaius Julius Caesar was born on the 13th of July of the year 100 BC. He was a descendant of the Julii, an ancient patrician family that despite claiming a divine link to Aeneas and therefore to the goddess Venus had only produced one consul in the previous century (Goldsworthy, 2010: 229). The Julian family "had recently emerged from a long period of obscurity" (Caesar, 1967: 13) thanks to the marriage between Caesar's aunt Julia and Caius Marius, who managed to be elected five times as consul after saving Rome from the Cimbri and Teutones in the turn of the century. This figure not only had a major impact on the Julii but "had a decisive influence on Caesar's youth and subsequent career"[5], for example in his later facet of *popularis*[6], so important throughout his entire political career.

There are few accounts of young Caesar's education and youth, but everything points out to a classical education of a Roman nobleman, handled almost exclusively by the family. It is known that his mother Aurelia had a strong and enduring influence not only in Caesar's education, but also throughout his career (Goldsworthy, 2013: 56). As his fellow nobles he was educated to cherish the qualities of *dignitas* (more than dignity it entailed the importance and responsibility of the man), *pietas* (respect for the Gods and the family) and *virtus* (the military qualities of confidence, courage and virtue), as

[5] This is claimed by Christian Meier (1996:55) but other authors such as Goldsworthy (2013: 62) doubt that Caesar learned a great deal from his uncle Marius.

[6] The *populares* were the men who embraced popular causes with the intent of gaining the support of the people. Caius Marius had been a *popularis* at times, mainly due to his status of *homo novus*, the first of his family to ascend to political prominence.

well as the feeling of belonging to the Roman Republic, which granted them a superior and special status coupled with the duty of living according to Roman society's patterns (Goldsworthy, 2013: 57-61).

The first display of Caesar's character occurred around 81 BC following a dispute with Sulla[7], who wanted to break his marriage with Cornelia, daughter of Cinna, an old enemy of the regime. In a very bold move, young Caesar refused the divorce order being the only one amongst several to defy the authority of Sulla, which showed great courage but forced him to flee. He could only return after his mother interceded, with Sulla granting him a pardon and allowing him to start his political career.

This experience led to Caesar's departure to Asia (80 BC-78 BC) and to his first military achievements, being rewarded with the *corona civica*, one of Rome's highest civic awards. He then returned home for a brief period of time, when he first displayed his oratory skills as an advocate in the courts of Rome. Soon after, in 75 BC, he decided to go abroad, allegedly to study oratory with a Rhodian master. During his travels there was a specific episode, described by both Suetonius (1972: 11, IV) and Plutarch (1959: II), which gives an important hint on Caesar's character and capacity to turn a bad situation into a favourable one. In brief[8], during one of his trips Caesar was captured by pirates who demanded twenty talents for his ransom, amount that ashamed him and led to his suggestion that he would pay fifty talents for his own freedom. During the captivity he befriended the pirates with his fluency, but kept always a superior and provocative attitude, telling them that after they freed him he would have them crucified. After the release, what the pirates took as a joke actually happened: with undeniable persistence, Caesar pursued his captors, crucified them and recovered the ransom. Although we cannot be sure to what extent is this story true, Caesar's later

[7] Sulla (138 BC-78 BC) was a Roman general who held the office of consul twice, and was named dictator after his victories in Rome's first Civil War.
[8] For a detailed description of the event, see Goldsworthy (2013: 104-106).

acclaimed virtues of ruthlessness, persuasion, perseverance and even in a twisted way his clemency – he ordered the cutting of their throats before the crucification – were already unfolding.

We can say that Caesar's political career effectively started around 74 BC with his nomination for *pontifex* and soon after for military tribune in 73 or 72 BC. From the date he turned 30 (70 BC) he became eligible to run for office as a *quaestor*, "the lowest rung of the Roman career ladder" (Meier, 1996: 134), to which he managed to be elected and then sent to the province of *Hispania Ulterior* as aid to the governor. After his return to Rome, Caesar kept on rising in the Roman political ranks, first as curator of the *Via Appia* and in 65 BC as *aedile* – office dedicated to the internal organisation of the city. In these two offices he seized the opportunities to strengthen both his position as a *popularis*, granting the support of the masses, and his political career, by spending huge amounts of money in gladiatorial games and infrastructures for the people of Rome. To sum up this first political decade Adrian Goldsworthy (2010: 230) says that "In many aspects Caesar's initial career was conventional, but there was some extravagance in his behaviour that seems to have arisen public controversy and grant him many enemies".

Caesar's political escalation proceeded, and by the year of 63 BC, in a scandal of high stakes (his political career was at risk) and unprecedented bribery, he managed to be elected *pontifex maximus*, the highest rank among the priests of Rome, usually held by much older and consensual individuals. This episode is another proof of Caesar's enormous ambition and will to carve his own path at any cost: "It seems insanely daring, and one wonders whether it was not an act of desperation; at least it was an act of wilfulness" (Meier, 1996: 161). This same year he was also elected *praetor*, and one can suppose that from this moment onwards the young, restless and warm-blooded

Caesar started to turn into a more mature but no less wilful and ambitious man, probably focused on the potential office of *consul*. As a result of this nomination, he was sent to the province of *Hispania Ulterior* as a governor, for the period of 61 to 60 BC, where he competently reformed the administration and achieved important victories against local tribes. It was around this period that he allegedly declared, over a fight between two men for the administration of small village, «I for my part would rather be the first man here than the second man in Rome» - reinforcing the idea of his ambitious character (Goldsworthy, 2013: 198).

After his successful governorship, the Senate decided to give Caesar a triumph. Hearing about this, Caesar hastily returned to Rome, where he declined the honour for it would prevent him to run for *consul* the following year. It was then during the year of 59 BC, after ensuring the support of two major political figures in Rome — the city's richest man Crassus and the acclaimed general Pompey - that "Julius Caesar skilfully explored the major weaknesses of the Republic's constitutional system and the tensions between other potential candidates" (César, 2004: 53) and secured his election for Consulship. The brilliant move of uniting such old and powerful enemies like Pompey and Crassus by shrewd persuasion granted Caesar the leverage he needed to face Marcus Bibulus, the second *consul* backed by the conservative Senate. The First Triumvirate was thus born. Once again we are faced with a fantastic sense of opportunity, strategic thinking and extraordinary wilfulness that so far had made Caesar victorious in every stage. "For the present (...) the only certainty was that Caesar had found his own path, the path he had always sought" (Meier, 1996: 203) and that path would lead him to the two most important moments in his life: the Gallic War and the Civil War.

2. Political Context

During his term as *consul*, Caesar was assigned the military command of Cisalpine Gaul and Illyria – to which was later added the province of Transalpine Gaul – along with an army of four legions for the period of five years. This command was a huge opportunity for Caesar for three main reasons: first, because of the proximity of Cisalpine Gaul[9] to Rome; second, as a Roman legions' recruiting and training ground, it allowed him to raise an army, crucial for holding on to his power in Rome without depending so heavily on the other Triumvirs; finally, due to the fact that Transalpine Gaul was a very unstable zone that might provide the chance for war, synonym of fame and fortune for Caesar.

Arriving in Gaul by 58 BC, Caesar was unable by law to engage in war or conquest on his own enterprise - military intervention was only allowed if it was in Rome's best interest. However, in a stroke of luck, Caesar's chance arose with the *Helvetii*'s migration (Caesar, 1967: II.1) through Roman territory, a barbarian tribe that had inflicted a major defeat to Rome in 107 BC, which Caesar promptly used as justification to launch his offensive. After seizing this opportunity by defeating the Helvetians, Caesar was then prepared to launch full-scale war against the rest of Gaul. The next enemy he defeated was Ariovistus and the *Sequani* (Caesar, 1967: II.2) who had attacked the *Aedui*, tribe which had an old allegiance with Rome. In less than a year Caesar had successfully led two victorious campaigns that "would have satisfied any Roman governor, since they provided immense fame and plunder" (Goldsworthy, 2010: 242). Nevertheless, during the following years he proceeded to north-eastern Gaul to fight and defeat the *Belgae* (Caesar, 1967: II.3-4), the Veneti (Caesar, 1967: III.1) and

[9] Cisalpine Gaul corresponded approximately to the area between the Alps and the Apenins, in northern Italy.

every other tribe that crossed his path. In 56 BC he also managed to extend his command in Gaul for five more years.

Between the years of 55 and 50 BC Caesar led his armies through several victories in Germanic territory (Caesar, 1967: IV), two incursions in Britain[10] and the crushing of numerous tribal revolts, from which the one led by Vercingetorix (Caesar, 1967: VIII) was the most notable. As a result, by 50 BC virtually "the whole of Gaul was now conquered" (Caesar, 1967: 234).

In the nine years that lasted the Roman campaigns in Gaul, the borders of the empire increased immensely, a whole new culture was incorporated in Roman domains and the Gallic people greatly influenced by Rome's tradition. However, the process of conquest was restless, unscrupulous and brutal. The number of Gauls killed varies according to the sources, but Plutarch (1959) states it reached one million, without mentioning the captured and enslaved. But putting aside the monstrosities of war, which are sadly common to every conflict, what we witnessed in this period of nine years was the dawn of a military genius and the affirmation of a cold and pragmatic strategist. As told by Goldsworthy (2013: 457): "His conquest of Gaul was neither a long desired object nor an ambition in other sense than seizing all the possibilities of reaching glory. It was chance and opportunity that made him focus his attention in Gaul". It is also probable that, one way or another, the Gallic domains would eventually fall under Rome's dominance, for the city produced numerous capable generals throughout its history. However, more than probability or luck, Rome's decisive factor was Caesar's judgment. The ambition that led him to the supreme command of Gaul turned gradually into an ability of thoroughly "exploiting every opportunity of conflict and conquest" (Goldsworthy, 2013: 458) that resulted in the swift, ruthless and tireless process of

[10] The incursions in Britain are actually the examples of a rare bad judgement call by Caesar, as argued by Phillips (2004: 11).

dominance of this province and its fierce inhabitants. It is certain that Caesar had his frailties and for that he suffered the consequences of bad decisions (like the incontrollable lust for fame and glory which led him to invade Britain), but his capacity of quickly recovering from setbacks and, with an aggressive self-confidence, turning defeats into major victories made him not only incredibly rich and famous but also the leader of a powerful and devoted army.

In the words of Newell (2009: 18), "war is the crucible of leadership" and Gaius Julius Caesar's conquest of Gaul is a mirror image of that fact. But as his leadership grew and consolidated, so did his wealth and power, at such a rate that the Senate, which already had a suspicion on his character and intentions, started to worry. Caesar's next step would be taken towards Rome as his wish was to return home as an acclaimed victor, thus securing an election for Consulship once again. Nonetheless, Rome and its prodigal son – Pompey – had a say on that matter.

With the death of Julia – Caesar's daughter married to Pompey – in 54 BC and Crassus in 53 BC, the ties between the two remaining members of the Triumvirate suffered a severe blow and began deteriorating. Furthermore, while Caesar was fighting Vercingetorix, several mutinies in Rome led to the nomination of Pompey as sole Consul, granting him immense power to crush the rebellions and restore the city's order. In addition, he also got an extension of his command in Hispania. The following years of 51 and 50 BC saw an increasing pressure by the Senate for Caesar's lay down of the command of Gaul and consequent return to Rome. It appears that many failed attempts of finding a middle ground between the demands of both Caesar and the Senate took place, with propositions from both sides. However, as Lucan put it in his *Pharsalia*, "Caesar could no longer endure a superior, nor Pompey an equal"[11] and all the

[11] For a detailed description and analysis of the events that led to the Civil War see Meier (1996: 316-363) and Goldsworthy (2013: 463-489).

negotiations failed. The climax of this process is reached on the 10th of January of 49 BC: along with 300 horsemen and one of his legions, Caesar arrives at the Rubicon, a stream in the north of Italy. But much more than a small river dividing Cisalpine Gaul from Italy, the Rubicon marked the point of no return both for Caesar's career and the future of Rome. It represented the divide between loyalty and treason, shame and glory and eventually, life and death. So, armed with the conviction that we was defending the rights of the tribunes and his own dignity, Caesar crossed the Rubicon triggering the start of the Civil War – «*alea iacta est»,* the die had been cast[12].

In the first three months of 49 BC, Caesar's troops swept through northern Italy with few struggles mainly because "the cause against Caesar had little popular support and his army was neither making pillage nor having attitudes that might give reason to hostility" (Goldsworthy, 2013: 501). It was during this period that Caesar puts to work one of his propaganda tactics that became famous: his "policy of clemency"[13]. After taking the city of Corfinium, 50 senators and *equites* were captured and surrendered to him. But instead of taking their lives, Caesar made a speech where he stated his reasons for war and favours he had done to them in the past and set them free (Goldsworthy, 2013: 503). This strategy had a double purpose: first, to gain the favour of the people and second, to humiliate his enemies. Meanwhile, Pompey had fled to Greece where he hoped to raise an army and prepare for the ultimate battle with Caesar. However, after reaching Rome and securing Italy, Caesar turned his attention to Spain, where Pompey had his finest troops, with the purpose of neutralizing an obvious threat before

[12] Our source is Suetonius (1972: XXXII) but the debate around this episode is extensive as can be seen in Goldsworthy (2013: 488) and Meier (1992: 4).
[13] For a thorough description of this action and its reasoning, see Meier (1996: 367-381).

following the later to Macedonia. Swiftly and with almost no bloodshed (always repeating the policy of clemency), *Hispania* was dominated by August of 47 BC[14].

The final clash between the two commanders happened only one year later, August of 48 BC, starting with an important defeat for Caesar after crossing the Adriatic (Meier, 1996: 388-397). It was finally in the battle of *Pharsalus* that Pompey was defeated – fleeing to Egypt where eventually he was murdered – and the outcome of the Civil War decided, though the fight was far from over. After crossing the Mediterranean, Caesar became involved in Egypt's civil struggles, defeating Ptolemy and making Cleopatra not only queen but also his lover. In 47 he departed to Syria and defeated the enemy so quickly in the battle of Zela, that he pronounced the famous words "I came, I saw, I conquered" (*Veni, vidi, vici).* With increasing impatience he made an almost disastrous incursion in Africa by 46 BC, against the troops commanded by his old general Labienus, "but his talent for improvising and his refusal in questioning his own final success, combined with the quality of his officers (...), allowed Caesar's army to survive its initial frailty until the arrival of reinforcements" (Goldsworthy, 2010: 289).

For a brief period in between campaigns, he returned to Rome being named both dictator for ten years and Consul for the fourth time. At long last, the conflict reached its finale in 45 BC with the defeat of the remnants of Pompey's army, led by his son in *Munda*, Spain. With the Civil War finally over, he returned to Rome covered in glory and was named dictator for life, having the task of settling down Rome and maintaining peace between hands.

[14] See Caesar (1972: 55-92) for the detailed account of the Spanish campaign and the famous siege of *Massilia.*

3. Strategic Challenge

Shortly after his return to Rome, Julius Caesar was brutally assassinated on the ides of March of 44 BC by a group of conspirators led by his former companions Brutus and Cassius[15]. Ironically enough, he died at the feet of a statue of Pompey, his lifelong archenemy whom he had defeated not long ago. Caesar's legacy, as we will discuss, is immense and incredibly far reaching. Nevertheless, his premature death prevented him to implement whatever strategy he may have had for Rome in the short-term, leaving room for the most disparate conjectures. Still, the last part of Caesar's life, and as a consequence the bulk of his inheritance, is underpinned by the tension between personal motivations and the strategy of Rome as a political entity, which is intimately connected to the Republic's decay and culminated in the Civil War. We believe that this process constitutes the central strategic challenge for Caesar and thus we analyze it in detail.

The whole process of the *Bellum Civile,* with special emphasis on the crossing of the Rubicon, gives us proof of the magnitude of Caesar's persona. The events that led to the eruption of the War and the reasoning behind the conflict can be easily resumed in one sentence: a single man's quest for the defence of his honour, respect and reputation – his *dignitas*. Having always served exemplary his homeland – both in his consulship, passing important laws, and in his term in Gaul, immensely expanding Rome's domains – and thus receiving three victories from the Senate, Caesar could not understand the aggressive attitude of its peers, who wanted to take him to trial and strip him of his glory and recognition. "The simple fact of having to defend himself was a severe blow to Caesar's pride and *auctoritas*" (Goldsworthy, 2013: 479) because no other great man of Rome had had to endure such injury – the Senate "failed to see the absurdity of prosecuting a man who had done so much for Rome during the past nine

[15] According to Strauss (2015) and defying common belief, Decimus may be the key to the whole plot to kill Caesar. His recent work is the most thorough study of the causes and consequences of Caesar's death.

years" (Meier, 1996: 360). Consequently, he felt trapped and all options at sight but one seemed pointless. That remaining option was war, and Caesar decided to follow that path fully conscious of the outcome of his actions.

Julius Caesar knew that by leaving the Rubicon behind it would all come down to one ultimate issue: "Caesar or the republic" (Meier, 1996: 363). This is the reason that sets Caesar apart, not only from his younger self, but especially from the common mortal: being able to defy a whole system on the basis of defending his own *dignitas* and ignoring all the consequences. An alternative account of the Rubicon episode puts Caesar saying «Here I leave the basis of law, dishonoured as it is», quote that ultimately depicts the enormity of his deeds and his undeniable greatness. However, greatness in this sense must be understood as an ambivalent term (Meier, 1996: 362). On the one hand, the level of determination, resilience and courage to take on a challenge of this magnitude solely to defend his honour and prestige and, to certain extent, the rights of the tribunes and the people of Rome, is a gamble which only a great man would attempt. On the other hand, it is almost heinous to consider that one man would be capable of putting at risk the lives of thousands of Romans for a cause that lacked "nothing but a cause" (Meier, 1996: 5) and was fully centred on his figure. But perhaps before forming an opinion we should seek to understand how Caesar's motivations were formed and to what extent were the circumstances decisive in his judgment.

Around the second half of the II century BC the first signs of a crisis[16] started to arise, with brief periods of social unrest and political instability disturbing a long cycle of prosperous and stable expansion of the Republic. Though subject to major

[16] For a thorough description of the crisis of the late Republic and its connection to Caesar see Meier (1996, 26-50) and Goldsworthy (2013, 25-48). Naturally we only present here a brief and overall summary of the events in order to understand the broad picture.

disagreement among scholars[17], the causes of this crisis can roughly be attributed to two major factors: external and internal struggles. The expansion of Roman domination was escalating quickly and henceforth war, which until then had been mainly a seasonal endeavour, became a permanent activity. Consequently, mobilization of citizens was constant, which necessarily brought major socioeconomic changes (Raquel, 2005: 29). The core of Rome's economy was agriculture and consequently, the majority of men were farmers. Thus, the increasing necessity of a professional army[18] had necessarily to bring about a structural change in the fabric of Roman society. Moreover, the rise of commercial activity due to the expansion of the Republic caused the enlarging of the *equites* class, who despite being economically powerful had very limited political influence.

Naturally, social unrest kept escalating and the increasing cleavage between opposing factions in the Senate (the plebs and the aristocrats) paved the way to major internal struggles. One of the sparks was Tiberius Gracchus' agrarian reforms, emphasized by his brother Gaius later on[19], which pretended to increase the basis of landowners and limit state property. The equilibrium finally shattered around 91 BC with the burst of the Social War – a revolt of Rome's Italian allies[20] due to their claims for citizenship. Even after the defeat of the *socii* in the decade of 80 BC the situation did not stabilize, with the opposing political factions led by Marius and Sulla engaging in open war. The result of this conflict was the self-proclamation of Sulla as the first dictator in 82 BC, starting a reign of terror which would last until 79 BC. In the following years both internal and external conflicts kept raging, namely the slaves'

[17] The opinions on the fall of the Republic are prone to a large discussion as the numerous works on the subject prove. We underline the works of Holland (2003) and Syme (1939) as very important to understand the topic.
[18] Some of the most important changes in this matter were put in motion by Gaius Marius, Caesar's uncle.
[19] For a brief portrait of the Gracchus brothers, see Montanelli (2006: 129-135).
[20] Roman allies were entitled *socii*, hence the designation Social War.

revolt led by Spartacus and the struggles with King Mithridates (Holland, 2003: 161-199) in the province of Asia, adding to an already fragile situation. By the time Caesar was ravaging Gaul, the Senate was struggling with obscure power games, corruption an endless disputes between factions (Raquel, 2005: 36). Furthermore, the fame, fortune and influence achieved by Caesar in his campaigns were causing the envy of many patrician senators, who started acting in order to strip him of his glory.

According to Christian Meier's thesis, Julius Caesar rose in the Roman society as an outsider, mainly as a product of the late republic's increasing problems and contradictions[21], which we already described, creating his own self-centred world and his own independent reality, where he found both validation for his actions as well as an escape to the obsolete institutions of Rome. Meier (1996: 11) says:

> *His personal ambition had developed and consolidated itself in a powerful individual position, which was grounded in an admirable, if one-sided, ethos that embodied the old aristocratic ideal of achievement. (...) This goes some way to explaining Caesar's readiness to embark upon a war that could affect all men.*

But this exceptional trait of character distinguishing Caesar from other great Romans of his time is only one side of his paradoxical persona. His personality embraces a contradiction in the sense that although being an "outsider" that defied the rule of the Senate, broke the boundaries of the society and forever changed the destiny of Rome, he was nothing more than a product of the same society and the times he lived in, which were, as we saw, dangerously unstable.

[21] In our opinion, the best analysis of the last years of the Republic, tracing back the origins of the crisis to the paradoxes in it foundations can be found in Holland (2003). The seminal work by Syme (1939) is also recommended, especially for the later period between 60-14 BC.

Julius Caesar was an exceptional character. We saw that in regards to military talent he had few peers, managing to bond with his men, serve as an example and develop a strategic intelligence out of the ordinary[22]. Above all he "had tactical *coup d'oeil*, that is to say, the ability to perceive the decisive point, even the need to intervene personally in the fight when his army was on the verge of defeat or when the moment had arrived to move in for the kill" (Fields, 2010: 14-15). In terms of leadership skills, Caesar clearly fulfilled the core aspects we outlined in the first chapter. He was a great influencer, with major persuasive skills, not only in the battlefield but also in the political arena. His sense of purpose was deeply connected with his ambition, but he always managed to point out a direction to his followers, who were at all times motivated to the point of risking their lives for Caesar. Finally, in regards to improvement, it would be very controversial to affirm that the transition from the Republic to the Empire brought benefits to everyone; though assuming that he should bear full responsibility for the process of overthrowing the Republican rule is also very questionable. Besides, by analyzing the measures he took and what he managed to accomplish with his victories, it is hard to say that he did not do it for the better sake of the majority.

All in all, Gaius Julius Caesar "was an exceptionally talented individual, but he was also a product of his age" (Goldsworthy, 2013: 662), who more than challenging the law of man challenged the law of fate, showing that great man are responsible for carving their own destiny.

[22] For a very thorough and specific study of Caesar's generalship and military genius, see Kagan (2006).

Chapter 3 – Henry V

«From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered,
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne' er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day .»

King Henry V in Shakespeare's *Henry V*
IV.3.58-67

Despite being a discourse imagined by Shakespeare, King Henry V's Saint Crispin's day speech, delivered on the brink of the battle of Agincourt, is an impressive piece of oratory aimed at rallying Englishmen to a battlefield where they were greatly outnumbered. Besides its primary purpose, the speech is the apex of the literary portrait of a man who seems to be the model of the perfect leader: brave, righteous, just, ruthless and charismatic. However, an attentive reading of Shakespeare reveals an apparent blur of Henry's moral character, raising doubts about the true nature of power and leadership, which we will explore in due time.

Also known as Henry of Monmouth, Henry V had a short (1413-1422) but legendary reign. Breaking the tacit truce that marked the Hundred Years' War during the years prior to his coronation, Henry launched an offensive against the French which had its pinnacle in the famous battle of Agincourt, where he achieved an outstanding victory, regarded by many as one of the most important battles in British history.

Following the structure of the previous chapter, we will trace a portrait of Henry V in order to understand his prominence as a leader and strategist. Starting with his background and rise to power, we will then examine the invasion of France and the consolidation of English power. The final and central section will identify and analyze the strategic challenge underlying Henry V's life.

1. Family Context

Born in the Welsh castle of Monmouth in August or September of 1386 or 1387[23] – reason why he was known by Henry of Monmouth –, Henry was son of Henry of Bolingbroke, earl of Derby and Duke of Hereford, and Lady Mary de Bohun. Although not in the direct line of royal succession, he was grandson of the wealthy and prominent John of Gaunt[24], founder of the second House of Lancaster and King Richard II's eldest uncle and guardian[25].

Losing his mother at the age of seven and not seeing much of his father throughout his boyhood – Bolingbroke was campaigning and jousting in Eastern Europe and afterwards making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem – he received a regular nobleman's medieval education, being tutored by his uncle Henry Beaufort, distinct clergyman and politician, later nominated Cardinal and Bishop of Winchester. He spent most of his

[23] The uncertainty is due to Henry's distance to the line of succession to the throne, reason the date was not officially documented. As Allmand (1992: 8) states "no one expected him to become king".
[24] John of Gaunt was considered "the country's leading nobleman" (Allmand, 1992: 8).
[25] For a detailed contextualization of Henry of Monmouth's political, geographical and social background, see Hutchison (1967: 24-37).

youth during the "Quiet Years" of King Richard II[26], who grew very fond of him, favouring him several times (Hutchison, 1967: 18). After his father's banishment in 1398, young Henry was taken to Ireland by the King, both as protégé and hostage, where he was granted the order of knighthood at the age of twelve. With Henry Bolingbroke's invasion of England[27], Richard had to leave Ireland behind to defend his throne, leaving Henry of Monmouth imprisoned in the castle of Trim as protection.

The following course of events which culminated with Bolingbroke's usurpation of the throne might have had an effect on the young Lord, who knew Richard better than his own father and as such "it must have been with very mixed feelings that Henry of Monmouth suddenly found himself heir to the usurper" (Hutchison, 1967:20). Nevertheless, he stood beside his father, now King Henry IV, and was entitled "Prince of Wales, Duke of Aquitaine, Lancaster and Cornwall, earl of Chester, and heir apparent to the throne of England" (Allmand, 1992: 17), shortly after the coronation, forever linking the Lancaster's destiny with the crown of England. Before he turned twelve, Henry of Monmouth had already witnessed his mother's death, his father's exile, who deposed and killed a monarch which had been very close to him. He had also been acquainted to the arts of warfare in the Irish marshes and was even imprisoned for a brief period. Without a doubt the events of his childhood took its toll on the now heir to the throne, laying the foundations for the hard-resolved and implacable mind of the future king, as Hutchison affirmed: "the new Prince of Wales was old beyond his years" (Hutchison, 1967: 23).

Around the turn of the century, in the sequence of the coronation of Henry IV and entitlement of Prince of Wales to Henry of Monmouth, a rebellion broke out in

[26] For an overall account of Richard II's last years as King, see Ackroyd (2012: 229-335).
[27] Allmand (1992: 11-12) gives a clear and succinct description of what led to this event.

Wales, commanded by Owen Glendower[28], the self-proclaimed prince of Wales (Allmand, 1992: 19), who was determined to fight for independence. At first taken by the King as a petty revolt of malcontents, soon Prince Henry realized how his father had underestimated the strength of the Welsh national spirit, who, by 1402, had a full-scale army ready to fight the English. Learning the trade of warfare in the most brutal way due to Glendower's frequent and violent raids, the young Prince soon showed signs of the cold-blood and ruthless resolve that would mark his reign, burning villages, killing enemies and sustaining his army at his own expenses[29]. However, his first major battle was only in 1403, in the sequence of the Percy family's uprising. The clash took part in Shrewsbury and the Prince commanded the left division of the royal army alongside his father, who led the right division. With heavy casualties for both sides, the battle was invaluable for the sixteen year old Henry of Monmouth to prove himself and his peers as a soldier and a leader – shot in the face by an arrow in the beginning of the battle, he led his man until the end without tending to his grave injury – feats that made the King grant him general oversight of the war against Glendower (Allmand, 1992: 26-27).

The following years saw a growing surge of Welsh attacks, supported by the French crown, with Prince Henry never managing to confront Glendower in pitch battle. By 1406, Henry was reappointed Lieutenant of Wales and his army managed to capture and kill Glendower's eldest son. The rest of the Welsh leader's family was captured and brought to London in 1408 and 1409, and the rebellion started to fade out. Although he never managed to defeat Glendower (whose death circumstances are still unknown), Prince Henry's experiences in the battlefield against an overpowered and over-experienced enemy, along with the self-taught art of siegecraft in later battles, marked the coming-of-age of a young unproven nobleman, who by the young age of 20 was "a

[28] Also known as Owen Glyn Dwr or Owain Glyndwr.
[29] Hutchison (1967: 45) affirms that the Prince pawned his own jewelry. Allmand (1992: 25, 28-29) also gives evidence of the Prince bearing a large part of the war expenses.

fully qualified general steeled in the hardest of guerrilla fighting" (Hutchison, 1967: 53).

Although proved in the arts of warfare, Prince Henry still lacked the political experience and diplomatic skills required of a complete leader. The opportunity arose in the last six years of Henry IV's reign, marked by several intermittent illnesses which left him incapacitated. Prince Henry seized his place in the King's Council around 1406, and served as head of state for long periods of time during his father's absence, surrounding himself by the Beaufort side of the family (Allmand, 1992: 42). During the first years of the Prince's governing experience, the issues occupying the Council were mainly financial affairs and "control of the crown over expenditure" (Allmand, 1992: 40), which surely gave him the expertise as an excellent administrator, showed during his own rule. Meanwhile, he started meddling in French disputes[30], which derived from Charles VI alleged madness, supporting the cause of Burgundy in favour of the Armagnac (favoured by Henry IV). By 1411, King Henry IV recovered from a fit of infirmity and promptly ended the prince's control of the Council, excluding the Beaufort and thus creating the attrition with his son that would last until his death[31]. Prince Henry's succession was already at sight by the end of 1412, but it was only on March of the following year that King Henry IV succumbed to another bout of illness, opening the way for his son's coronation.

2. Political Context

Henry of Monmouth was crowned King Henry V on April 9th 1413 in the midst of a snowstorm, weather which was said to augur a "reign of cold and severity" (Ackroyd, 2012: 412). Initially discrediting this presage, his first act as a monarch was

[30] For a more detailed description of the French disputes and Prince Henry's role, see Vincent (2011: 434-435) or Hutchison (1967: 55-61).
[31] To understand the tension between father and son, see Allmand (1992: 50-58).

to concede an amnesty to a number of heirs of his father's old enemies, followed by a glorious royal funeral of King Richard II who had been secretly buried during Henry IV's reign. Both this acts showed not only a pious and clement side of the new king, eager to honourably reconcile with his enemies, but also shrewdness proper of someone who was strongly confident in his position as the future bond of a unified nation. As Allmand (1992: 61) put it "he was a man who already knew how to lead, who was confident in his ability, and was motivated to fulfil what he saw as the main tasks of kingship".

With the first symbolic gestures resolved and due to the inheritance of a "realm that was sufficiently peaceful, loyal and united" (Morgan, 1994: 199), Henry V's major "tasks of kingship" were two: first, the balance of the crown's exchequer aligned with the encouragement of national trade in order to secure England's wealth (Allmand, 1992: 61); and second, dealing with the Lollards' heresy[32], which was putting the country in a religious turmoil. As such, domestic policy in the first couple of years of his reign was mainly occupied with these two issues, and the political qualities which arose during his brief command of his father's Council were now completely mature. According to Ackroyd (2012: 413) "he proved that, with firm oversight, medieval governance was not inherently unstable or incoherent". Nonetheless, the qualities Henry V displayed as a skilled administrator dealing with internal affairs were only shown in full with the third "task of kingship": the preparations for battle arising from the conflict with France - which was undoubtedly a situation no new monarch could bypass (Allmand, 1992: 62), and the new king saw war as the basis of glory (Ackroyd, 2012: 413) and, as such, would not miss out on such an opportunity.

[32] For a better understanding of anti-clericalism in Medieval England, see Rigby (2003: 381-393). For Henry V's specific role in the issue, see Hutchison (1967: 76-83). Allmand (1992: 280-305) also provides a detailed take on Lollardy during Henry V's kingdom.

Before looking at Henry's *casus belli*, it is important to understand the reasons why the King was interested in quarrelling in France. It is usually argued that the young King's apparent motivation was derived from the will of the English people, who expected their suzerain to follow the steps of his ancestors like Edward III, pursuing a dubious claim to the French throne. Nevertheless, Allmand (1992: 66) advances with two factors which seem more plausible of having influenced his decision: first, Henry's responsibility as duke Aquitaine to preserve his domains; and second, his incessant pursuit of justice, in this case taking the shape of the Treaty of Brétigny (Allmand, 1992: 66) signed in 1360, which had been the core of English demands for decades. Moreover, Henry's security and confidence in his title as well as the conscience that rising levels of lawlessness in the realm, caused mainly by idle soldiers which would profit from a war scenario, were two additional political reasons he definitely took in consideration (Hutchison, 1967: 86-93). Finally, the incessant quarrels between French noble families (the previously mentioned Armagnac and Burgundy) and the insanity of King Charles VI contributed to a fragile socio-political environment in France, which together with the fact that the French had supported Glendower's revolt in Wales, served as excuse for Henry to launch his plans of invasion, constituting the bulk of his *casus belli*. It is surely unfortunate that the legendary act of defiance by the French Dauphin and his tennis balls which ultimately led Henry to cross the channel, so brilliantly depicted by Shakespeare, apparently has no historical authenticity.

A long period of diplomatic negotiation followed with both sides presenting several offers and counter-offers which were plainly rejected until the spring of 1415 when King Henry V, exasperated with the failure of the two embassies sent to Paris in the last months, decided that he had no other choice than drawing his sword and setting sail for France.

Despite the lengthy and failed negotiations to avoid war, it is believed that Henry's preparations begun shortly after his coronation (Church, 1889: 59). There is a general agreement on the impeccable planning of the war and King Henry's wide skills as administrator – Hutchison (1967: 94) claims he was "one of the most expert administrators England has ever had (...) his planning was prodigiously efficient". In regards to diplomacy, soon Henry tried to secure an alliance with John the Fearless duke of Burgundy[33], while managing and succeeding (at least after the Battle of the Seine in 1416) to destroy French's maritime assistance, which shows a very unusual knowledge of the importance of naval power, proving that he was a ruler ahead of medieval times. Internally, he crafted a cash loan and taxation system to finance his enterprise, which he managed to explain publicly in order to attract the support of the magnates of the realm (Morgan, 1994: 200). Above all, his military and logistics preparations[34] were astonishing, raising a professional army of around 2.500 man-at-arms and 8.000 archers[35], followed by a large retinue of supporting staff, where it is important to underline the presence of physicians and surgeons, a wholly disregarded issue in medieval warfare, showing again his capacity for military command, carefully planning to minimize the risk of failure (Church, 1889: 62).

3. Strategic Challenge

Christopher Allmand (1992: 66) affirms that "the conflict with France provides a thread with which to follow Henry's entire career as king" to which we add that its main events allow us to trace the portrait of a man with a mission. From the first day he sat in the throne, Henry had its goals clearly laid out in his mind and knew the twofold challenge he had to overcome. The first was to achieve unity in a country that, despite

[33] More on John of Burgundy in Allmand (1992: 69-71).
[34] See Barker (2006, 104-123) for a detailed description.
[35] Numbers from Hutchison (1967: 100) and Keegan (2004: 81).

peaceful and loyal, had been ruled by devious monarchs for more than 50 years (Allmand, 1992: 405) and was ravaged by religious turmoil and financial problems. We have already seen that the later issues were dealt with during the first years of reign, surely contributing to strengthen the sense of national unity, which was only to be fully achieved years later. The second challenge was the urge to deal with the conflict with France which had endured for over 60 years, and the restoration of justice regarding English demands in the neighbouring country. The conquest may not have been an immediate intention, but the fact that it was took on by Henry show not only his great ambition, but also the capacity to adapt his aims according to the circumstances. As we have partially dealt with the first objective in the previous sub-chapter we will now focus on the main episodes of the French conquest and their impact on Henry's leadership.

Disembarking in France around 14th of August of 1415, Henry's army marched to the fortified city of Harfleur. The choice of Harfleur as the first target was a purely strategic move for the city was the most important port of Normandy (Allmand, 1992: 79), controlling the estuary of the river Seine and thus giving access to both Rouen and Paris, allowing Henry to establish a base for future operations. However, the king "knew that its capture was unlikely to be a formality" (Allmand, 1992: 79), and indeed the siege was a thorny problem due to the bravery of the besieged who managed to prolong the clash for five weeks until they were forced to capitulate. This happened on the 22nd of September and was a severe blow to the French. Nonetheless, the Siege of Harfleur brought also severe consequences for the British as hundreds of men were either dead or disabled due to an outbreak of dysentery (Barker, 2006: 152-159). Apart from this, the capture of the city was a major step forward as King Henry managed not only to establish an important stronghold in France, but also changed the common

policy of war by immediately offering rewards to English merchants and craftsmen to become settlers (Hutchison, 1967: 114), instead of allowing the destruction and abandonment of a such strategically important point.

Against the advice of his Council and the will of the army, Henry decided to set out for Calais, an English safe haven 120 or 150 miles away from Harfleur. Condemned by "every military historian of any consequence since" (Hutchison, 1967: 116), Henry's reckless decision was in fact the result of weighing options. On the one hand, returning home with a partly broken army would have easily been understood as a retreat and greatly damage his reputation. On the other hand, if he managed to reach Calais we would have succeeded in establishing a connexion with the stronghold in Harfleur, having also patrolled the territory between this village and Calais. In the case of confrontation, he trusted deeply in the protection of God and the memories of his English ancestors[36]. He simply chose the "lesser of two evils" (Hutchison, 1967: 117).

After a generally unmolested half part of the journey, news about the approaching French army reached the British while preparing to cross the Somme. Forced to make a detour which took its toll in the men and after several days of parallel forced march for both armies, the clash was imminent (Allmand, 1992: 86). On the 24th of October, already with the French army at sight, Henry stationed his troops near the village of Agincourt and ordered them to deploy for battle. At this time, Hutchison (1967: 120-121) affirms that realizing that he was in a brutally inferior position, largely due to the overwhelming French forces, Henry was ready to make terms, releasing the prisoners and returning Harfleur to the French with all the damages inflicted repaid if granted passage to Calais. Fact or fiction, this episode shows a different side of the perfect, heroic and foolhardy leader the legends have immortalized, picturing for a

[36] Allmand (1992: 85) states that Henry might have been encouraged by the examples of both Edward III and his son the Black Prince, who managed to defeat much larger French armies that surprised them in their campaigns.

moment a human commander apparently conscious of the lives he had under his responsibility.

In the morning of the 25th, the English army stationed between the woods of Agincourt and Tramecourt to contain the attack of the French front. The ground was rain-soaked from the previous night, creating a muddy stage extremely tricky for hand-to-hand fighting. It is said that the French outnumbered the British by three or four to one[37] and while the first were divided between cavalry and heavy armed foot-soldiers, the later were mainly archers and a core of men-at-arms lightly equipped. Henry's archers planted sharp stakes in the ground in front of their line and prepared for battle. After a three hour wait, Henry ordered the bowmen to fire at the French host in order to provoke a reaction. Immediately after, the French cavalry charged but crashed against the barrier of wooden stakes and the arrows of enemy archers. French foot-soldiers advanced but their great number and heavy armours in the treacherous and soaked terrain were no match to the light vests and the swiftness of the English, who had dropped their bows and started carnage with clubs and daggers. Corpses started piling and many fallen Frenchmen died drowned in the mud or under their comrades' feet. Estimates say that French casualties were around 7.000 whilst English comprised only 500 (Hutchison, 1967: 125). The massacre lasted for no more than two or three hours (Vincent, 2011: 440), and was far from the battle portrayed by chroniclers and poets[38]. Nevertheless, it seemed that Henry V had managed to snatch a victory against all odds.

The battle was not yet over as movement from French riders was spotted heading towards the English rear. Both this happening and the fear from counter-attack by the remaining French line prompted the King to order the episode that would stain an

[37] According to Church (1889: 77). Numbers vary among sources.
[38] For a much more detailed and accurate study of the battle, see both Keegan (2004) and Barker (2006).

otherwise brilliant victory: the killing of all prisoners[39]. Englishmen's reluctance (greatly due to the ransoms they would be losing) forced Henry to name 200 archers to conduct the slaughter, which was against all laws of chivalry and medieval warfare, and serve only to underline his brutal ruthlessness and twisted sense of honour, which are according to Hutchison (1967: 124) "easy to excuse but difficult to admire". Other authors such as Christopher Allmand (1992: 95) have a milder opinion, underlining the controversy and uncertainty of the numbers and facts, stating that indeed it was "a tragic event whose extent has nonetheless been exaggerated".

Putting aside but never disregarding this dreadful event, the overall analysis of the upshot of the battle show a hard-fought but brilliant victory. Still regarded as "perhaps the most overwhelming victory of won against fearsome odds that [English] history as ever known" (Hutchison, 1967: 131), Agincourt is the proof of Henry's strategic genius and military skills. Although a fair share of luck has to be acknowledged, the victorious outcome of the battle owes much to the King's vision, carefully planning and the bravery of his men, enough reasons for it to be part of the English national myth. But as Ackroyd (2012: 420) put it "no overwhelming victory has ever had such tenuous result", France had not fallen and neither Henry nor his army were in conditions to pursue the final goal. Consequently, after reaching Calais the army rapidly set forth to England.

As the immense celebrations for the King's return emphasized, Henry's position was now greatly strengthened, not only at home but also abroad – "he had become the leading figure in the royal politics of Europe" (Ackroyd, 2012: 420), all this in the first two years of his reign.

This reinforced reputation opened several doors for Henry to display his diplomatic skills and reveal the real story of his success (Vincent, 2011: 440). In the

[39] See Allmand (1992: 93-94) for details on the tough decision process.

year following Agincourt, with a strong investment in the royal navy, the English managed to defeat the Genoese (allied to the French crown), giving an important step towards British naval domination which would mark centuries to come. Later in 1416, solely through shrewd diplomacy, he managed to secure the support of the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund, who had come with the mission of bringing France and England to terms[40]. The path was now completely clear for his great plans to fully unfold and the objective was now clear: Henry V was aiming to sit in the throne of France and conquest was the only way to get there.

"The great invasion of France began on August 1st, 1417" (Hutchison, 1967: 147) with a formidable fleet of 1.500 ships – carrying 10.000 men-at-arms and probably three times that number of followers and staff (Hutchison, 1967: 146) – landing in Normandy. With Paris in view, Henry launched sequence of sieges starting in Caen (where the population was massacred) and slowly advancing until Rouen[41], whose siege lasted from July 1418 to January 1419. With Normandy virtually conquered and with French's nobility in deep disarray (played off against each other by Henry) the English were at the gates of Paris by August. After harsh negotiations through Autumn and Winter, the French agreed on the Treaty of Troyes on the 21st May of 1420, which stated that Charles VI would disinherit his son while Henry V was recognized heir to the French throne and regent of France.

In the sequence of the treaty he married Charles VI's daughter, Katharine of Valois. These "were the conditions of a man who, through skill and perseverance, and a large measure of good luck which he turned to his advantage, had won sufficient political power to impose terms both on those who governed from Paris and on the areas which they controlled" (Allmand, 1992: 145). Henry was now "at the height of his

[40] Details on this visit on Allmand (1992: 104-109).
[41] More on the siege of Rouen in Hutchison (1967: 160-172).

power" (Ross, 2014), but not for long. Shortly after his once again magnanimous welcome home in 1421, he was obliged to return to France on the account of a number of local insurrections and following the successful siege of Meaux, his health rapidly deteriorated. After three weeks of pain and lingering in August of 1422, King Henry V died at the Château de Vincennes in the last day of the month, at the age of 36. Henry's immediate legacy was doubtlessly formidable. A man who at birth was never meant to be king managed to rule and unite England while subduing France, being the first and last English king to be welcomed in the gates of Paris as a conqueror.

In the seven years that lasted the campaigns in France, Henry V achieved several victories that produced an outstanding effect in the spirits of Englishmen, greatly contributing to the union of a nation which had been suffering from weak and devious leaderships during the previous generation. Analysing his short-term achievements, we can affirm that through the invasion of France he managed to successfully overcome the second challenge we outlined in the beginning of the chapter: the restoration of justice and the acceptance of English demands in France. He accomplished this mainly through his outstanding military skills, which in episodes such as Agincourt revealed that "as a leader, as a strategist bent on conquest, as an organizer of military power, Henry was highly successful" (Allmand, 1992: 438). We must acknowledge though, that soon after Henry's death his dream of a double monarchy shortly crumbled, revealing how the French endeavour, and particularly the settlement accomplished with the Treaty of Troyes, might have been, to a certain extent, a grave error of judgement (Allmand, 1992: 441). Nevertheless, as Allmand (1992: 443) affirms, we should avoid judging Henry as a megalomaniac adventurer, for his reasons to invade France were much more intricate and very much parallel to Englishmen's will at the time.

Regarding the first goal of national unity, we have already argued how the war in France contributed to merge the English people under a common enterprise. The administrative skill and the capacity to "rule with direction" (Allmand, 1992: 436), underlined in his two initial years as a monarch, contributed immensely to the unity effort, allowing him to detach from the rule of both his father and Richard II, thus fulfilling the popular hopes for change at the time of his accession. Indeed during his life and reign, Henry V displayed several leadership qualities that made him be "regarded as a king who had met many of his people's aspirations and had fulfilled the ideals of his office" (Allmand, 1992: 435), which are some of the factors that complete our conceptual framework of leadership: influence and accomplishment. Besides those two characteristics and to complete our sequence, we can affirm that Henry V provided a purpose to his followers through the reawakening of the French conflict and the imperative of restoring justice; he always fostered the engagement of the people in the military effort (taxation, settlements in France, religious effort) hence providing direction and motivation. Finally, his short-term achievements have doubtlessly improved the status of England, both internally (financial and social harmony) and externally (foreign reputation).

All in all, it is just fair to say that King Henry V does not have the epithet *Erasmus in Anglia*[42] in vain, he was indeed a magnificent leader who marked English history like few other and is probably one of the fathers of England's national spirit and union.

[42] "The Star of England".

Chapter 4 – Shakespeare's Leaders: Julius Caesar vs. Henry V

«Literature's freedom to explore endless or exquisite details, portray the thoughts of imaginary characters, and dramatize large themes through intricate plots brings it closest to the reality of "how the world really works".»

Charles Hill

In the previous chapters we have gone through an historical analysis of the lives of Julius Caesar and Henry V. In both cases we described their rise to power and the main episodes of their political careers, ending with the definition of their individual strategic challenge: the Republic-Empire transition for Caesar and the invasion of France for Henry. As we have seen, these biographical outlines are fundamental not only to trace a portrait of these men leadership style, but also to have a deeper insight on how they made their decisions. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge that historical analysis is (or should be) bound to the imperatives of truth, precision and impartiality, hence making the task of probing into the minds of great leaders a very speculative one.

In the prologue of "Grand Strategies: Literature, Statecraft and World Order" Charles Hill (2011: 24-25) argues that literature is the only discipline that is not methodologically constrained, having a much more honest and real take on reality, as the quote we began with clearly states. We find Hill's perspective extremely enticing and we feel indeed that between Thucydides and Tolstoy there are several examples of literature which are not only a window to the mysteries of the human condition, but also a profound reflexion on the mechanisms of politics and society.

William Shakespeare was perhaps the greatest master in this realm, and his importance for our case-study is enhanced for Julius Caesar and Henry V were both

subjects in two of his most recognized plays. Our aim in analyzing Shakespeare is to emphasize that there are important lessons on leadership and power embedded in his work which are timeless and universal. Such lessons can and should be used to complement history in order to give us a comprehensive account of leaders' thinking. Therefore, in this chapter we will first analyze Shakespearean portraits of Caesar and Henry V in separate, studying its main themes and motifs, and then compare them, joining fact and fiction in order to understand the points of contact and divergences between both men.

1. Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

Along with *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet, Julius Caesar* is one of William Shakespeare's most recognizable plays. Although critical opinion was never in agreement regarding *Julius Caesar* quality compared to later tragedies, "the play has a clarity of construction and felicity of expression that have made it popular with audiences and readers alike" (Shakespeare, 1958b: 333). It was probably written in 1599 and first performed in September of the same year at the Globe Theatre, according to the account of the Swiss traveller Thomas Platter (Shakespeare, 1958b: 333). The play is usually mentioned as one of Shakespeare's tragedies and more specifically as a part of the sub-categorization of Roman plays, given to the ones which deal with episodes of Roman history. As such, Shakespeare's main source was Plutarch's *Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans* (Bloom & Loos, 2008: xi), following closely the biographies of Caesar, Brutus and Antony (Dobson & Wells, 2001: 229) with obvious compression of time and suppression of events - the play's time span is roughly one month, while the real events, from the Feast of the Lupercal to Brutus and Cassius suicide, span over two and a half years (Zander, 2005: 6-7).

1.1 The Plot[43]

Julius Caesar's plot revolves around the assassination of Caesar by a group of conspirators led by Brutus and Cassius, his long-time companions. The play is divided in five acts but we could easily split the action into three parts: the events leading to the assassination (the conspiracy), covering the first two acts; the murderer, represented in the third act; and the aftermath, spanning the last two acts.

The play starts with plebeian festivities in tribute of Caesar's victories over Pompey's sons, and a dialogue between two tribunes, Flavius and Marullus, who condemn commoners' hypocrisy in such celebrations, when soon before they rejoiced at Pompey's achievements. Caesar enters the stage, parading through Rome surrounded by his entourage and is advised by a soothsayer to "Beware the ides of March" [1.2.18], warning which he soon dismisses. Brutus and Cassius talk alone about the qualities and flaws of Caesar, with the latter revealing his fear about Caesar's alleged wish to become king. Meanwhile, Caesar reveals Antony his deep distrust in Cassius. Cassius, in turn, keeps devising a scheme to bring Brutus along in a plot to kill Caesar. The second act opens with Brutus reflecting upon the pros and cons of Caesar's assassination and deciding that his death is the right thing to do. The conspirators come to his house to discuss practicalities of the plan and, after they leave, Brutus' wife Portia tries unsuccessfully to convince him to reveal what is bothering him. At the same time, in Caesar's house, his wife Calpurnia tells him about her nightmares and begs him not to leave the house in the morning. Dismissing her request at first, Caesar decides to stay after hearing the same advice from the priests. In the end, convinced by Decius, one of the conspirators, Caesar heads for the Senate with the rest of the group. Meanwhile,

[43] This section is based naturally in Shakespeare's original work (2007), but it was also written resorting to the summaries by Bloom & Loos (2008: 5-19) and Grosz & Wendler (2006: vii-ix).

Artemidorus, a roman citizen aware of the conspiracy, awaits near the Capitol to warn Caesar.

On the entourage's way to the Capitol, they run into both the soothsayer and Artemidorus, whose attempts to reveal the plot to Caesar fail. Afterwards, already in the Senate, while giving is famous speech claiming he is "as constant as the Northern Star", Caesar is stabbed to death by the conspirators. The commotion is installed, with the conspirators seemingly unaware of what to do next. After requesting to meet the conspirators, Antony pleads to speak at Caesar's funeral, being granted that opportunity by Brutus against Cassius' advice. When alone, Antony speaks to Caesar's dead body promising revenge, war and chaos. The next scene takes place in the Forum, where Brutus and Antony are to speak to the people on Caesar's deathbed. Brutus' speech is cold and rational, stating the reasons why Caesar's death was necessary for the preservation of the Republic's freedom; the commoners rejoice and ironically suggest to crown Brutus as Caesar. Antony's words, on the contrary, are very emotional and manipulative, emphasizing Caesar's deeds and love for the people of Rome. Starting to call the conspirators "honourable men" , Antony ends by making accusation of treason which set the mob on fire, causing it to leave in order to kill the conspirators and unleash destruction. The following assassination of Cinna the poet, taken by one of the conspirators, is an example of this.

The last part of the play (the fourth and fifth act) begins with the encounter of Antony, Octavius and Lepidus - the leaders who form the Second Triumvirate - to decide whom to kill when they have power over Rome. The next scenes take place in Sardis, where Brutus' army is camped, and involve a harsh discussion between him and Cassius, who make mutual accusations putting their loyalty and friendship to test. Eventually they reconcile and Brutus reveals that his wife Portia killed herself, news

that are further discussed with two soldiers and put Cassius in a state of shock. Later, in his tent, Brutus receives the visit of an apparition, allegedly the ghost of Caesar, who tells him he will see it again at Philippi.

The final act opens at Philippi, where the opposing armies stand for battle. The rival parties exchange insults and when Antony and Octavius leave, Cassius shows his superstitious fears about the outcome of the battle. After Brutus storms to battle, Cassius is left with his friend Titinius, whom he sends to the battlefield on account of a charge by Antony. Mistakenly informed that Titinius was captured, Cassius, in despair, orders his servant to kill him, acknowledging Caesar's revenge before dying. Later, Titinius returns victorious but at the sight of Cassius dead body he also commits suicide. Learning of his friends' deaths, Brutus guides his army to fight once again. Nevertheless, after seeing that loss is imminent, he impales himself on his sword, claiming that Caesar can now be at rest. The play ends with Antony and Octavius arrival and acknowledgment that Brutus was the only conspirator who acted with the belief he was doing the best for Rome. As such, Antony names him "the noblest Roman of them all" and Octavius promises to bury him with greatest honours before leaving both to celebrate victory.

1.2 The Character

Perhaps one of the most striking and debated feature about *Julius Caesar* is the fact that the character that lends his name to the play - making us assume *a priori* that he is going to be a *de facto* protagonist - merely appears in three scenes, speaking only 150 lines (around 5.8 percent of the whole text [Zander, 2005: 6]) and being killed even before half of the play has gone through. Furthermore, Peter Alexander has a point when claiming that "Shakespeare's picture of Caesar is certainly difficult to reconcile

with the notion that tradition has given us of him" (Shakespeare, 1958b: 333): someone who we usually imagine as a great, strong and powerful leader is presented in the play as a rather arrogant, self-assured and egotistic individual. But why then did Shakespeare draw his portrait in such light?

The central aspect regarding the character of Julius Caesar in the play is the dichotomy and conflict between private and public image (Zander, 2005: 7). In the brief moments he makes an appearance we can almost discern two dissociate personalities. On the one hand, the moments when he is with his wife Calpurnia both in the streets of Rome (1.2.1) and at home (2.1) show a superstitious man, believing in tradition and in the omens of augurs. In contrast, Caesar the leader, the public figure, always refers to himself in the third person, being greatly confident in his constancy, invulnerability and superiority ("I am constant as the Northern Star" [3.1.60] and "Danger knows full well/That Caesar is more dangerous than he" [2.2.44–45]). In the end, it was this inner conflict and the eventual supremacy of Caesar's public persona over his private self – he neglects Calpurnia's advice to stay home after knowing that the Senate decided to give him the crown – that caused his death. One reading might see this as a proper lesson against arrogance, ambition and tyranny, designed to teach that "someone who raises himself so far above other human beings and who thinks he does not consist of flesh and blood, must immediately afterward realize how much of he himself really does consist of flesh and blood" (Zander, 2005: 7-8).

Nevertheless, the second half of the play shows how such lesson was perhaps not the main concern of Shakespeare, who was "not actually concerned with Caesar the man, but rather with the nimbus this name has acquired" (Zander, 2005: 8). Against the beliefs of the conspirators that Caesar's death would set things right and restore the Republican way, what we see is the rise to prominence of what is called the "spirit of

Caesar"[44] or, in other words, Caesar's reputation and timeless influence, which dominates the destinies of every character in the remainder of the play, especially the plotters who "feared and hated what he stood for, but failed to understand where is strength lay" (Shakespeare, 1958b: 334). Hence, this reasoning makes the choice of the title obvious and the debate about protagonists quite pointless, because even assuming that Brutus is the tragic hero of the play it is undeniable that "the tragedy of Brutus depends totally on Caesar" (Zander, 2005: 8).

In the end, Shakespeare's portrait of Caesar may not be, at first, in line with what history has accustomed us to, for we see a boastful and pretentious man instead of a first-class leader and general. Nonetheless, the comprehensive reading of the play clearly shows how this idea is deceitful. The transition from an arrogant Caesar believing in his invulnerability but violently reminded of his mortality, to an ethereal presence influencing every outcome of the action, ultimately proves Caesar right when he claimed "I am constant as the Northern Star/Of whose true-fixed and resting quality/There is no fellow in the firmament". Shakespeare's supreme irony and his untraditional picture of Caesar is merely a device to purport his greatness and immeasurable influence, showing that more than a name, "Caesar" effectively represents a public institution.

1.3 Caesar and the End of the Republic

Understanding «theme» as a "unifying idea, image or motif, repeated or developed throughout a work" (theme. Dictionary.com, n.d.) it is easy to unveil dozens of them in Shakespearean plays such as power, love, treason, revenge and family. In the particular case of *Julius Caesar,* we have already mentioned the dichotomy between

[44] There are many references to the "spirit of Caesar" or "Caesar's spirit" during the second half of the play, being first mentioned by Brutus (2.1.167).

public and private self present in Caesar's character, but many other topics are addressed such as the question of fate versus free-will, the power of rhetoric and the misreading of signs. But there is another aspect, more deeply connected to the historical portrait of Caesar and the strategic challenge we defined previously: the decay of the republic and transition to a new political system.

In his essay «The end of the republic : *Titus Andronicus* and *Julius Caesar*», Andrew Hadfield (2005: 168) states that "*Julius Caesar* (…) depicts a dying and perverted republican Rome that has lost the ability to inspire its citizens to behave virtuously" and thus is unable to function, having necessarily to give way to a new system of rule. This is clearly mirrored in the first scene of the first act which joins two Roman tribunes and the city's populace, arguing about the tribute being paid to Caesar's victories. Harold Bloom (Bloom & Loos, 2008: 5) points out the importance of the scene for several reasons: first, it reveals the opposition and apprehension to Caesar's rule amidst Roman political elite; second, it introduces the mob, who is apparently happy with the current leadership and despite being malleable is doubtlessly a force to be reckoned with (as proved later in the play); finally, it shows how the tribunes are willing to manipulate the people, which can perhaps be seen as a sign of the corrupted political elite.

Furthermore, the imagery of a decaying Republic intensifies througout the play. The lack of a "shared political culture" represented by the stage division of the characters into small secretive groups; the rising superstions and abundance of supernatural elements contrasting with the "law and order" of the old Republic; the constant clash between classes (Hadfield, 2005: 171); all signs of how the times had changed. Even the death of the majority of the characters, most of them symbolic members of the Republic, helps to underline such state-of-affairs. According to Leggatt

(2005: 141) what we see is "Rome groping towards a new political structure in an effort to accommodate Caesar; the language of monarchy, dimly remembered from the past, is the only language they have for this new structure."

Julius Caesar biographical portraits are hardly consensual, and we have seen that his figure attracts admirers and detractors in equal fashion, but in regards to the issue of his personal responsibility in the process of suspension of the Republic – which we previously identified as part of his strategic challenge – the discussion seems to be even more controversial[45]. We briefly analyzed the complexities of the crisis of the Republic and Caesar's role in the second chapter, and apparently Shakespeare seems to agree with our conclusions for "the play gives little sense of the republican constitution [and] Caesar seems to be not overturning an established order but moving into a political vacuum" (Leggatt, 2005: 142). All in all, even though the play is not a tangible portrait of leadership such as *Henry V*, as we are about to see, Shakespeare's work is a deep study of the human condition and an analysis of a period and figure that allows us to project how those events might have unfolded in reality. As Jehne (2005: 66) claims "this is exactly what makes literature fascinating: it can create connections even where the historian has to helplessly face loose ends".

2. Shakespeare's *Henry V*

Shakespeare's portrait of Henry V depicted in his second historical tetralogy[46] – *Richard II*, the two parts of *Henry IV* and *Henry V* – is a magnificent character study of one of the most charismatic English monarchs, following his life from his reckless youth as Prince Hal, to his righteous kingship as King Henry V. The evolution of

[45] For a thorough analysis of the differences between Caesar's biographies and its connection to the main issues of the play, read Jehne (2005).
[46] Also known as *Henriad.*

Henry's character throughout the plays may not be the most historically accurate, but it is through such an astonishing moral transformation that Shakespeare apparently draws the consolidation of a true leader. Nevertheless, neither is this dramatic Henry V a unanimous character, nor is the play the most consensual, gathering supporters amongst patriots and detractors amidst pacifists (Torre, 2004: 13).

Like Julius Caesar, the play was finished in 1599 and performed for the first time in the Globe in the same year (Torre, 2004: 9). We have seen that it is the last play of the *Henriad*, but as the remaining three works it is part of Shakespeare's English Histories, the set of plays concerned with the two major historical episodes in 14th and 15th century England: the Hundred-Years War and the War of the Roses. His main sources were the chronicles of Raphael Holinshed (1577) and Halle (1548), as well as the anonymous play *The Famous Victories of Henry V*[47]. Our analysis will cover three main points: first, a brief synopsis of the play; second, a study of the character of Henry V, focusing mainly on his leadership; and finally, an overview of other relevant themes in the play.

2.1 The Plot[48]

Henry V's narrative follows the story of King Henry V, focusing on the initial stage of the invasion of France, namely the events leading to the Battle of Agincourt and its aftermath. The play is divided in five acts, each one of them introduced by a Chorus who "provides a patriotic voice and an idealistic view of Henry V throughout the play" (Bloom & Rolls, 2008: 5) giving it an epic tone (Dobson & Wells, 2001: 198).

The play opens with a Prologue where the Chorus first engages with the audience, apologizing for the inadequacy of the theatre to portray such a story. Act one

[47] (Dobson & Wells, 2001: 196) and (Torre, 2004: 11-12).
[48] This section is based naturally in Shakespeare's original work (2004), but it was also written resorting to the summaries by Bloom & Rolls (2008) and Floorman & Kestler (2015).

starts with a laudatory introduction of the King by two clerical figures who are debating the passing of a bill unfavourable to the Church, and devising a plan to divert Henry's attention to invade France so he does not pass the law. In a dialogue with the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury convinces him that his claim to France is rightful (arguing that Salic law – which prevented woman or those whose claim came from the mother side, like Henry, to take the French throne – does not apply in France[49]), urging him to advance for war. Henry calls in the French Ambassadors sent by the Dauphin, who deliver a crate of tennis balls mocking the King's youth and inexperience. Due to this provocation, Henry declares war.

Opening the second act, the Chorus makes reference to the eager preparation for the French campaign and transports the audience to Southampton, where a plot to kill the King is underway by the hands of Scroop, Cambridge and Grey. Before the plot scene though, Bardolph, Nym, Pistol and Hostess Quickly[50] quarrel and afterwards mourn Falstaff's sickness. Returning to Southampton, we know that the King discovered the plot and promptly fiddles with the traitors before exposing their plans and sentencing them to death. Meanwhile, King Charles and the Dauphin discuss the defence of French and Exeter, acting as an English ambassador, comes to present Henry's ultimatum.

The third act begins with the Chorus describing King Henry setting sail for France and starting the siege of Harfleur. It is also revealed that the war started because Henry rejected King Charles offer of his daughter Katherine and some worthless dukedoms. The first scene comprises King Henry's inciting speech where we cries "Once more unto the breach (…)" [3.1.1]. At the same time, Nym, Bardolph and Pystol attemp to desert the battle and are confronted by Fluellen, who is then called by Gower

[49] To understand this claim, see Bloom & Rolls (2008: 6).
[50] Most of them characters from *Henry IV* that used to be Henry's youth companions along with Falstaff.

and starts an argument with Macmorris and Captain Jamy. In the end, their truce symbolizes the four realm's[51] common necessity of fighting France and the union of Britain. Harfleur soon surrenders after Henry's threatening speech. Afterwards, in a scene almost totally in French, Katherine is introduced while practicing English. Meanwhile, the French noblemen are at shock with Henry's swiftness and try to plan a response. Returning to the English camp, a discussion regarding Bardolph's looting of a Church ends with the King confirming his execution, completely ignoring the fact that Bardolph used to be his youth companion. A French ambassador (Montjoy) appears, informing that the French army is ready to fight the English unless a ransom covering the expenses and humiliation from the invasion is paid to the Crown. Despite acknowledging the weakness of his troops, Henry informs them that they will fight and defeat the French army. The act ends with a scene depicting the frivolity of the French nobles, confident they will crush their enemy. In contrast, the English seem "tired, ill and fearful" (Floorman & Kestler, 2015), as noted by the Chorus in the opening of the next act.

Asking his men for some time alone, Henry disguises and wanders his camp, mingling with common soldiers. After meeting Pistol, who claims his adoration of Henry (but Henry the reckless prince, not the King), Henry engages in a debate with three soldiers, representing Englishmen's worries about the battle to come, who blame the King responsible for the souls of the soldiers who will perish in the battle. Henry and Williams (one of the soldiers) exchange gloves and promise to fight each other when they meet again. Alone, Henry delivers a soliloquy about the burden of kingship, briefly revealing his true personality. In a short scene, the French once again brag about their undeniable victory. In the English camp, while noblemen are discussing the fact that the French vastly outnumber them, King Henry arrives to deliver the famous St.

[51] Each character represents one of the Realms: England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

Crispin's Day speech - an impressive display of exhortative rhetoric, lifting his men's spirits to the fight by promising their deeds will be forever remembered. Again he refuses Montjoys' proposal to pay the ransom. In the aftermath of the battle, the French are desperate and lament their army's disarray. Meanwhile, due to a sounding alarm, Henry orders the killing of all the hostages, which fuels a discussion between Fluellen and Gowen in the next scene. Montjoy arrives admitting defeat and asking permission to collect French corpses. After naming the field of Agincourt, Henry gives the glove to Fluellen who afterwards fights with Williams, who is later pardoned and rewarded by the King. Hearing the casualty report, Henry attributes the victory to God's will, calling for a procession before sailing back to England.

The Chorus opens the final act praising the King's modesty and describing his triumphant entrance in London, where he is to negotiate peace with the Holy Roman Emperor. The initial scene brings Fluellen and Pistol together in a fight, because the latter made fun of a Welsh tradition. At the same time, Henry is negotiating peace with Charles and promises the hostilities will end as soon as the French accept his demands. Henry then woos Katherine in a clumsy way but she accepts to marry him, given her father's approval. The scene ends with Charles granting the English all that was asked. In the epilogue, the Chorus closes the play explaining that Henry VI ruined his father's achievements and Civil War broke out in England.

2.2 The Character

There is perhaps no other character like Henry V in Shakespeare's canon. The depth with which he explores the transformation of the foolhardy Prince Hal into the dignified King Henry V throughout the *Henriad*, allow us to trace a detailed portrait of an acclaimed leader's emergence. Our focus rests on *Henry V,* where Shakespeare is

apparently celebrating on full-scale the personality of Henry V, in all his facets as monarch (Johnston, 2000: 1) – as Peter Alexander (Shakespeare, 1958a: 272) claims: "Here at last is the true king, the darling of his countrymen, the example to posterity, the man whom the Poet might take as his Hero". Nevertheless, Shakespeare must always be read between the lines because where some view the glorification of a perfect medieval hero in *Henry V*, others view a satirical critique of the reign of "a very amiable monster"[52].

A noteworthy aspect of the play is the untainted sequence of spectacular successes attained by Henry V, who swiftly and gracefully crosses every obstacle in his path. Johnston (2001: 2) even claims that "no other political figure in all of Shakespeare is as consistently efficient and successful as Henry". As such, it is only natural that several authors and publications, particularly those related with management leadership, use Henry's example as a primer for leaders, for instance Corrigan (1999), Stevenson (1996) and Egan (2000)[53]. Following the leadership framework we devised in the first chapter, Henry seems to corroborate every aspect of a modern leader. First, he is a major influencer, engaging his fellow noblemen into action by providing "a sense of shared agreement, voicing their common feeling" (Johnston, 2001: 5), as the speeches to the French Ambassadors [1.2] and the talk about friendship [2.2.76-141/161-188] clearly portray. Second, he has a vision for England, and provides purpose and direction to his followers through his claim to the French throne, that justifies his major war enterprise[54]. Third, his magnificent rhetorical skills (see the famous Agincourt speech [4.3.42-69]) are responsible for instilling motivation in his followers, especially in

[52] Expression used by William Hazlitt in 1817 to describe Henry V in his fierce criticism of the play. The full critique can be read in Bloom & Rolls (2008: 95 - 102).
[53] Other examples we have also analyzed are McCombs (1992) and Etzold (2012).
[54] The fact that his claim is rather dubious and unfounded has no interest here. It is important to understand how profitable would a war be to the English people, who was eager to attack the French, and how such invasion could unite the realm. For a very interesting take on Henry's claim, see Sutherland & Watts (2000) essay "Henry V's claim to France: valid or invalid?".

moments when the spirits are low. Fourth, we have already made reference to his outright success in every aspect of kingship, and particularly the fact that he managed to subdue France is a proof of his capacity to accomplish the mission. Finally, the feeling we get is the one of a happy ending, from which England emerges victorious, stronger and more united, ascertaining Henry's role in improving the status of the nation.

To sum up, the impression we get from a first reading is that Shakespeare is indeed giving us the role-model of a modern leader, "the figure of the perfect public man" (Ellis-Fermor, 1969: 127). But why? As Johnston asks (2001: 2) what exactly makes Henry such a successful leader?

2.3 Success in Leadership

In her thorough analysis of Henry's character through the prism of transformational leadership theory, Jelena Walker (2009: 3-4) points out the fact that the studies that see *Henry V* as a textbook of leadership fail to understand the complexity of both the play and leadership theory. In fact, as we have noted before, this play is subject to fierce critical controversy[55] with one side seeing it as the acclamation of an outstanding warrior-king, whilst a second side sees Henry as an aggressive and immoral warmonger, dichotomy that should prevent us from making swift judgements.

Ian Johnston (2001) in his enlightening lecture on the character of Henry V clearly notes how, despite achieving successful results in every episode described in the play, we never have a clear insight of how the decision-making process developed. What is more, except in the scene in the eve of Agincourt where he delivers his famous soliloquy [4.1.223-278] he is never alone and we can hardly grasp any hint of his true personality. In fact, what we see most of the time is a gifted actor, adopting "whatever

[55] Bloom & Rolls (2008) compilation of the most prominent pieces of critique to *Henry V* since its publication is an essential read to understand different views on both the play and Henry's character.

public persona the situation requires" (Johnston, 2001: 3) while imposing his authority with such subtlety that everyone feels they took part in the decision that took place. Such situation is evident in the second scene of the first act, where Henry clearly "wants to be convinced that he has a valid claim to the French throne" (Pittock, 2009: 187) although he already sensed his noblemen will to fight and probably took the decision beforehand, perhaps even knowing that his claim had no real grounds. Similar situations occur first with the Southampton plotters, who are lured to act as their own hangmen, and second in Harfleur, where he delivers his bloodcurdling speech pretending he will not be able to stop his men's violence, being perfectly aware of his capacity to impose his army an iron discipline. Other intriguing aspect associated to most of these episodes is Henry's "detachment (…) from the emotional content of the role he has to play" (Johnston, 2001: 5-6), allowing him to switch roles within the blink of an eye (again see the brutality displayed in Harfleur turned into mercy once the goal - the city's surrender - is attained).

In short, what is unveiled in an attentive reading of the play is the portrait of a Machiavellian Henry V. All combined, his capacity to adapt to changing circumstances assuming the function any specific situation requires (Johnston, 2001: 4); his ability to quickly judge the surrounding environment and adjust his tone, working "on different people in different ways" (Leggat, 2005: 127); and his prolific rhetoric and intuitive manipulating skills are the secret to his success and to his incomparable political effectiveness. Johnston (2001: 8) even argues that Shakespeare is eventually implying that political success requires "an effective Machiavel style [that] smothers the individual's distinctively human personality under the need for the various public roles demanded of the king". Perhaps we wouldn't go to such heights, but we certainly agree that success in modern politics owes a great deal to versatility, adaptation and public

relations - or Bezio (2013) calls “performative leadership” - as our analysis of Henry’s behaviour shows.

Going back to Walker’s thesis, it matters to emphasize her conclusion that King Henry V is a “complex character, at certain times exhibiting qualities which can clearly be identified with modern transformational leadership principles, at other times behaving in a authoritarian self-interested manner” (Walker, 2009: 88), which seems to unite two opposing perspectives. In fact, we agree with her conclusions and we also believe that the dichotomic views regarding Henry’s character may not be mutually exclusive after all. In our reading, Shakespeare’s Henry was in fact a very good leader embodying all the qualities we emphasized earlier. Nevertheless, when using his character as a leadership primer, one must not fall into the trap of the perfection of “the mirror of all Christian kings”, for as we have underlined, Henry’s success owes greatly to his knack for “realpolitik”.

3. Caesar vs. Henry V

“Henry V is a play about a hero; so is Julius Caesar” asserts Alexander Leggatt (2005: 141) in the onset of his essay on the politics of J*ulius Caesar*, statement which coincides with our analysis in the previous subchapters. We have seen that, although in different fashions, Shakespeare focused on the life of these men above all to extol their greatness and, to some extent, their heroic qualities. He did it as well to portray the political settings behind each of them: Caesar’s Rome, which was synonym of power and much praised traditional values such as manhood and honour; and Henry V’s England, a strong nation towards unification and at the pinnacle of its warfare success.

In the previous sections we have focused on the individual portraits of our case-studies, both in history and literature, but we are still lacking a comparative analysis. Thus, this section will explore the main differences and similarities between Caesar's and Henry V's leaderships, underlining three core aspects in both and intertwining historic and Shakespearean perspectives.

3.1 Differences

3.1.1 Political *status quo* – decay vs. unity

Starting with the conjuncture surrounding both men, we see that the political *status quo* (besides the obvious differences between a Republican system and a Monarchy, which is not what we are trying to convey) is quite different in each case, almost taking opposite directions, aspect which is clearly portrayed by Shakespeare. On the one hand, as we have seen before, in *Julius Caesar* we are faced with a decaying Republic where the once virtuous citizens' behaviour seems to be corrupted and society seems to be looking for a new political solution. On the other hand, *Henry V* gives us an England confident in their ruler, and that despite its internal differences engages in war enterprise emerging more united and patriotic as ever. In regards to their leaders, "Henry is (…) the centre of a political structure his society takes for granted, one that gives him the key role: he is a king. (…) In Julius Caesar we see Rome groping towards a new political structure in an effort to accommodate Caesar" (Leggatt, 2005: 141).

In this case, Shakespeare's political sceneries run parallel with history. We have seen how Meier (1996:1-14/349-363) saw Caesar as an outsider, rising as a by-product of a late republic full of contradictions, and how in the end Rome embraced his cause choosing Caesar over the republican ideal which, as we emphasized, is conveyed in *Julius Caesar*. Similarly, *Henry V's* united England is a faithful portrait of the English

spirit during Henry V's reign. This spirit is described in the third chapter, where we analysed how Henry's campaign in France allowed him to tackle several internal issues emerging at the time (Lollardy, weak leadership and financial troubles), doubtlessly contributing to the unification of the country under a same banner and thus strengthening the power of the monarchy.

3.1.2 Internal enemy vs. external enemy

Related to the *status quo* of the political regimes, the issue of the enemy is also a point of divergence between the two leaders: whilst Julius Caesar was fighting an internal enemy (the dissenting factions in the senate, personified by Pompey), Henry V was face-to-face with an external opponent (France).

We identified Caesar's strategic challenge as the tension between his personal motivations and the strategy of Rome as a political entity, which came into being as the Civil War. This conflict arose simply because Caesar felt that the political system was depriving him of his honour and his reputation, thus deciding that the only possible solution was going to war, putting his compatriots and former senatorial fellows in the opposite side of the barricade. We see today that Caesar's fight against the "internal enemy" represents the first and crucial step of a clash between a decaying republic and the necessity to find a new political system which restored Roman values and order. This aspect, as we argued before, is one of the themes explored by Shakespeare in *Julius Caesar*.

Conversely, we defined Henry's challenge as the invasion of France and the consolidation of England's unity, which clearly point out to an external enemy. In contrast with Caesar, Henry V was the head of a nation which despite some internal problems had in its core a strong political office, one in which the people had faith in.

Thus, his major concern was to consolidate the unity of his realm and settle once and for all England's old disputes with France. Under those circumstances, as we have seen, a war enterprise against the French surfaced as the best solution and ended up being the defining aspect of Henry V's path as king.

3.1.3 Ambition vs. Duty

Although we have tried to outweigh Caesar's decision to cross the Rubicon and its responsibility in causing the Civil War with the decaying republic and the fact that he was a product of that same system, it is impossible to deny the magnitude of the deed and the boundless ambition that was behind it. Since its very beginning, Caesar's political career was guided by a lust for power and glory. From his early escalation in Roman political ranks to his achievement in Gaul, every step he took seemed to follow the rule that "each success made it harder for a man to turn back and the only real safety lay in more successes" (Goldsworthy, 2013: 660). Perhaps this was due to the inherent violence and fierce competition of Roman politics but, as Goldsworthy (2013: 662) claims, "in truth there can rarely have been a sterner or more determined ambition than Caesar's". This facet is hyperbolized in Shakespeare, where we see a presumptuous Caesar, overly confident in his superiority and invulnerability.

In comparison, Henry V was a man bent on doing what was right, always mirroring the sense of duty required of such a monarch. Naturally the political system was not at all similar to the Roman times, and he was not forced to fight his way to the throne (as to some extent his father did), which could justify a less ambitious personality. Nevertheless, his invasion of France could have been the endeavour of a man craving for more power and seeking to enlarge his domains for the sake of self pride. However, the impression we get is that despite the dubious nature of his claim to

the French throne, he set out for war mainly because of a desire for justice and the will to do his obligation as king. As Allmand (1992: 443) put it, Henry was "driven less by personal ambition than by what he saw as right". Despite our argument that he was a true Machiavellian politician, Shakespeare's Henry appears to be like this in most of the play, a pious and virtuous monarch always trying to carry out royal justice.

3.2 Similarities

3.2.1 Surprising leaderships

One aspect which is generally forgotten in the lives of our leaders is the fact that neither Julius Caesar nor Henry V were faded, at birth, to achieve the prominence they did.

We have seen that Caesar, though being a genuine Roman aristocrat, was member of an old patrician family who had lived better days. In 100 BC, although the antiquity and patrician descent of a family were of great importance, the "authority that derived from the political and military services it had rendered to the commonwealth" (Meier, 1992: 53) (namely the nomination for high offices such has consul) was a major source of power and wealth. The Julii had not produced high ranked officials in a long time and as such "enjoyed little prominence in public life" (Goldsworthy, 2013: 51) and did not possess a considerable fortune. Caesar's education was not different from any other Roman aristocrat and although he was destined to the Senate, the few accounts of his childhood and youth did not seem to point out to a career out of the ordinary.

Likewise, the man who was to be King Henry V was born Henry of Monmouth, first cousin once removed of King Richard II and thus not in direct line of succession. He was grandson of the powerful John of Gaunt and consequently a member of the House of Lancaster, who held a vast fortune and great influence in England, which

meant that he probably would have reached prominence amongst English nobility. Nevertheless, his destiny changed with his father's, Henry of Bolingbroke, quarrel with King Richard II, which ended in Bolingbroke's exile and consequent invasion of England. The usurpation of the throne turned Bolingbroke into King Henry IV, and Henry of Monmouth in his heir, changing his life forever.

3.2.2 Military command

Perhaps the most striking similarity between the two men is their outstanding military skill and the incredible success they achieved in their war enterprises. It is not by chance that both strategic challenges we have described previously are deeply connected with military matters.

The apex of Julius Caesar military career is the conquest of Gaul. The Gallic War lasted for nine years and what Caesar achieved there was doubtlessly the backbone of his future leadership, not only because it granted him the influence and wealth that consolidated his power in Rome, but also because it was there that he learned how to lead men and think strategically. The swift launch of his campaign against the *Helvetii* that marked the beginning of the war, reveal his amazing vision and sense of opportunity, and the majority of battles he fought and the successes he achieved are enough proof of his military genius. His aggressive battle style, always taking the initiative and remaining close to his men in the line of combat was typically Roman, but his leadership skills, motivating his men and giving them direction, combined with his fierce drive and belief in success, were what distinguished him from any other great Roman general (Goldsworthy, 2013: 458-459).

Henry V's military record is equally impressive, starting at a younger age than Caesar. At sixteen he was already in command of a large army responsible for breaking

the Welsh revolt, which we managed to end by himself before he was twenty one. In his first major battle he was shot in the face by an arrow, an injury that did not prevent him from leading his troops until victory was secure. Already with a very impressive war record behind, his major military achievements came after his coronation with the French invasion. An important aspect which cannot be ignored is Henry's outstanding capacity as an administrator, creating a very solid financial and logistic support, to which much of his success is owed. Likewise, his victories speak for themselves, being crowned by Agincourt, which is the greatest example of his strategic ability and mastery of tactics for defeating an enemy which greatly outnumbered him. Moreover, other battles show his multiple military qualities, such as the art of siegecraft at Harfleur and his investment in the navy (way ahead of its time) which granted the English control of the channel and the major line of communication to France. Although not focusing in the battle scenes itself, *Henry V*'s entire dramatic arc is warfare (Floorman & Kestler, 2015) and the various perspectives it entails. In regards to Henry's character, we see him planning the enterprise, negotiating with ambassadors, being ruthless in Harfleur and instigating his men to fight in tough circumstances; different situations which help us to spice historical accounts and give life to the monarch.

3.2.3 Twisted Archetypes - Heroes or Villains?

Finally, a curious aspect that characterizes Caesar and Henry V is their striking connexion with the literary concept of hero. On the one hand, both of them seem to largely fit the profile of the heroic figure of their times, respectively the Classical and the Medieval. On the other hand, for particular reasons, each of the archetypes they represent seems to be twisted, aspect which Shakespeare skilfully depicted (especially in regards to Henry V).

One of the themes explored in *Julius Caesar* is the struggle between the two forces underlying human existence: fate and free-will, struggle voiced by Brutus in the second scene of the fourth act:

> *There is a tide in the affairs of men. / Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; / Omitted, all the voyage of their life / Is bound in shallows and in miseries. / On such a full sea are we now afloat, / And we must take the current when it serves, / Or lose our ventures [4.2.268-274].*

This dilemma is at the centre of the Classical hero myth, who is also bound to "perform extraordinary feats" and die "in an unusual way" (Norman, 2003). The reason why Caesar is such a remarkable character is because he was capable of subverting and controlling not only his own destiny but the destiny of a nation, shifting the course of history by crossing the Rubicon on the basis of his free-will. Thus, we can say that his persona embodies a twisted archetype of the tragic hero, for despite conjuring a set of virtues (and some inevitable flaws) to perform enormous deeds that liberated him from the laws of fate, Caesar acted only for his own sake and honour rather than the greater good of mankind. Some call him an ambitious and amoral dictator, others a military and political genius who saw the end of the Republic before it happened and did what he could to ensure the future of the Rome. Regardless of the perspective one has, the truth is that throughout his life, taking the current when it served, Caesar proved that men are not predestined to succeed or fail, but rather by ambition, honour and commitment achieve greatness.

In regards to Henry V, we have already made reference to Shakespeare's depiction of him as a seemingly perfect medieval knight in the subchapter on *Henry V*.

Vera Norman underlines the main characteristics of this archetype as being war experience as a proof of manhood, good moral character, obedience to hierarchy, sense of chivalry and honourable principles; all aspects which fit the profile of Henry. Nevertheless, we have seen how this reading of the King's character is incomplete, for the play conveys a Machiavellian side of Henry which is ultimately the reason of his success, subverting the idea of a pristine medieval paladin. His piety and moral standards are also subject to questioning, and in the end we seem to be left with a completely blurred notion of good and evil in politics. But perhaps, this was exactly Shakespeare's aim because, as Johnston (2001: 13) suggests: "in a world ruled by an absence of trust and the importance of power, the system requires someone extremely skilled in manipulating others into some form of cooperative endeavour, even if that involves a war with little justification".

With this chapter we tried to offer a summary of how Shakespeare portrayed Julius Cesar and Henry V. With *Julius Caesar*, tough not offering a portrait of a leader, Shakespeare gives us an account of the last days of a dying political system with an outstanding man, feared by ones and loved by others, directly in its core. Whether we read it as a lesson on the consequences of tyranny and ambition or a tribute to man with an influence that goes beyond the grave, *Julius Caesar* is a timeless play dwelling with crucial issues for any leader as we will discuss in our last chapter. Much more clearly than in the first, *Henry V* presents a true character study and a detailed picture of leadership. Here the obvious theme is kingship and, as such, what we see is a heroic monarch performing every role his office demands and excelling at it: he is impartial, righteous, strong, patriot, determined and inspirational. However, as we argued, Shakespeare's subtlety suggests how these roles may simply be a necessity of politics,

showing how an ability to act according to the needs of the circumstances might dictate success.

In the second part, we put both men side by side and tried to see where their portraits converged or deviated. Joining history and literature we emphasized how different were the political conjunctures they lived in, how they were fighting different kinds of enemy and how one's drive differed from the other's. Nevertheless, we also saw how unexpected their leadership was, how outstanding military skill united them in achieving their goals and how their characters represent subverted portraits of heroic figures. However, after knowing these men both in history and fiction one last question remains: what lessons can we take from their rule?

Conclusion

«Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.»

King Henry IV in Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part II*

III.1.31

Throughout this dissertation we have attempted to draw a portrait of two leaders through the prisms of history and literature, trying to unveil if there were lessons we could extract from their examples. More than their historical prominence, our choice of Julius Caesar and Henry V was due to their connection with Shakespeare, who wrote two plays around them. Our aim with the analysis of the two Shakespearean characters side by side was to see to what extent can literature help us complement historical sources in order to have a better understanding of what is leadership.

In the first chapter - «What is Leadership» - we defined the three core concepts in our analysis: leadership, strategy and grand strategy. Although this chapter was, above all, a theoretical exercise, we emphasized the importance of these notions to analyse the path of the leaders we chose. Furthermore, the chosen definition of leadership allowed us to establish a framework constituted by six aspects we consider crucial for a successful leadership: influence, purpose, direction, motivation, accomplishment and improvement. This structure, aligned with the notions of strategy and grand strategy, was implicit throughout our analysis, namely in the definition of Caesar and Henry's strategic challenge and in the final remarks of each portrait, where it was analysed if they fit the leadership profile.

The second and third chapters of this dissertation - «Julius Caesar» and «Henry V» - covered extensive portraits of our case studies through an historic and biographical

analysis. In both we followed the same structure starting with their upbringing and family context, moving on to the most remarkable events in their career and finalizing with the analysis of their strategic challenge and its consequences. The introduction of the notion of strategic challenge as the main test our leaders had to overcome during their rule, allowed us to put their leadership in perspective and see how they reacted to particular circumstances. On the one hand, we saw how Caesar's quest for honour was the trigger for the Civil War, which ended 450 years of Republican Rule and was the first step towards an Empire which would last until 1453 AD[56]. On the other hand, Henry V's military campaign in France led to several astounding victories which culminated with the French capitulation making him (even if only briefly) regent of the neighbouring country and *quasi*-head of a dual-monarchy. Besides, we also confirmed how their leadership profiles fit the framework established in the first chapter.

Finally, the fourth chapter – «Shakespeare's Leaders – Caesar vs. Henry V» – is the central section of our study for it covers our analysis of Shakespeare's depiction of the two leaders. The chapter consists of two parts: the first covering each of the plays separately and the second analysing the characters side by side. In the first part, our intention with the inclusion of a plot summary of both plays was to introduce the main episodes covered by Shakespeare, giving a flavour of the characters involved and the overall ambience, in order to facilitate the comprehension of the following examination. In our analysis of *Julius Caesar* we presented the debate regarding Caesar's status as protagonist, which we demystified by showing how the dichotomy between public and private image, as well as the transition from arrogant mortal to ever-present spirit, served as a device to purport the immortality of the leader as a public institution. Furthermore, we also debated how Shakespeare provides an outstanding account of the political environment during Caesar's time, namely with the imagery of the decaying

[56] The date of the fall of Bizantyum and the Eastern Roman Empire.

republic, showing how Caesar was seemingly moving into a political vacuum instead of toppling a functional political system. In regards to *Henry V* we have tried to convey how Shakespeare attempts to transmit a two-sided portrait of leadership, emphasizing how the process of leading is not linear. On the one hand, we have a portrait of a glorious hero and the cast of a modern leader: inspiring commander, major influencer, great motivator, skilled politician and brilliant general. On the other hand, Shakespeare transmits the idea that Henry might be above all a true Machiavellian leader, showing an outstanding capacity of adaptation and a range intuitive manipulating skills that are responsible for his magnificent political effectiveness. In the second part, Caesar and Henry are put to comparison and their differences and similarities analysed. In the first case, we have underlined how political conjuncture, nature of the enemy and type of drive were the core points of divergence between them. In the second case, it was emphasized that unexpected leadership, military command and the fact that they both represent twisted heroic archetypes were the main points of convergence and, to some extent, central aspects to their success.

Our historical and literary analysis of the lives of Julius Caesar and Henry V was guided by the purposes of finding lessons for present leaders in the examples of these two men and understanding the relevance of Shakespeare to the field of leadership studies. Reflecting upon the work we conducted in the previous chapter led us to reach two sets of conclusions, parallel with the two aims we pointed out: the first regarding successful leadership profiles and the second regarding leadership in literary perspective.

The first set of conclusions derives from the framework of leadership we deduced from the concepts outlined in the first chapter. The study of both Caesar and

Henry V's biographies in the second and third chapters allowed us to describe the episodes in the lives of the two men which corroborated the six characteristics we had emphasized before as central aspects for a successful leadership. Our belief is that this framework of leadership - influence, purpose, direction, motivation, accomplishment and improvement - proved to be timeless due to the fact that we can easily apply it to the analysis of historical leaders and find common ground between two men who ruled separated by a time spam of almost 1500 years. Moreover, from both the examples of Caesar an Henry V we have seen how specific skills and traces of character are invaluable for the construction of a successful leadership like military proficiency ("war is the crucible of leadership" [Newell, 2009: 18]), outstanding vision (a "focus on acting beyond the demands of the present" [Murray, 2011: 2]) and a capacity to adapt to changing circumstances ("when faced with a new situation, each could draw from past experience and come up with the right answer" [Strauss, 2012: 31]).

In addition, it was also seen how these historical portraits are extremely prolific in examples of how strategy can be applied to several fields, from the battlefield to the senate, passing through family and even love affairs. In most of the crucial episodes in their lives these two men exhibited a capacity of thinking strategically which usually tilted the odds to their favour and allowed them to achieve the victories which today are found in history books. Certainly they were not morality paragons, since both of them have more than one situation which left their hands stained with blood, acting at times with an indiscriminate mixture of clemency and brutality, as Caesar's massacre in Gaul/clemency policy in the Civil War and Henry V's killing of prisoners in Agincourt/piety in Harfleur. Nevertheless, also from these episodes we can take lessons on the hardships of power, the tough decision-making processes every leader inevitably faces and the necessity to be ruthless when the situation requires. Ultimately, the

analysis of these characters actions and all the moral ambiguities that come along with them is where the value for present and future leaders resides. We have argued on the difficulty of building a leadership framework from our examples due to the socio-political differences between their time and ours (namely, the authoritarian political system), but instead we have shown that these historical portraits hold key insights on the practical aspects of leadership, which only corroborates Churchill's words: " Study history, study history. In history lies all secrets of statecraft".

The second set of conclusions deals with the Shakespeare's relevance to the study of leadership. One of the reasons that led us to choose this dissertation topic was the belief that literature brings added value to the study of leadership, idea which is transmitted by Nicholas Warner (2007: 1) who argues that "the capacity of the arts vividly to portray the personal dynamics of leadership can make artistic analysis a valuable complement to more empirically-oriented research (…) precisely because such areas of creative endeavour as fiction, theatre, and film focus on the nuances of human interaction". We have seen throughout our analysis that it is complicated to argue that Shakespeare's work should serve as a blueprint for current and future leaders, for there is no possible comparison between our times and the social, political, economical and military realities of both Caesar and Henry V. It is also true that, most of the time, Shakespeare seems not to be concerned with portraying the decision processes of leaders. Nevertheless, what we want to convey is that his insights on the way these men thought and acted, as well as his exploration of the complex human dilemmas that arise from leadership positions, are invaluable to build on our framework of what it means to be a leader.

On the one hand, in regards to Henry V, Shakespeare underlines the qualities and virtues of the leader-monarch, apparently portraying the archetype of a true

medieval hero: brave, loyal, upright and just. On the other hand, a second and more attentive reading of the same play casts a shadow on the character (uncovering multiple facets proper of a Machiavellian politician) and raising, as it was argued, dilemmas on the burden of power and the reasons for success in politics - judgement and versatility. Furthermore, his depiction of Julius Caesar, which despite any discussion about being the main character is without doubt the core and *raison d'être* of the play, is far from flattering and it revolves around the inner struggles between private and public image and the capacity (or lack of it) to adapt to changing times - the death of the republic. The themes and motifs Shakespeare develops could not be more relevant to a study of strategic leadership. We would risk affirming that there is hardly a more accurate and thorough portrayal of the challenges of leadership, whether the leader is a Roman consul, a medieval King of England or a twenty-first century politician.

A doubt that accompanied us throughout the development of this dissertation was the lack of a theoretical structure to back our analysis of the leaderships of Julius Caesar and Henry V. A possibility would have been to look at our case-studies, for instance, through the prism of transformational leadership emphasizing the analysis of the leader-follower relations, and it would probably have yielded more straightforward results than those we achieved. In fact, one of our sources had such an approach with *Henry V* and it was partly due to the interesting conclusions and final argument that "Shakespeare's own standpoint is essentially neutral and closer to real life, in which it is highly unlikely to find a leader who could be considered completely transformational" (Walker, 2009: 89), that we decided to undertake a more generalist approach, intertwining literature with history. Naturally, our conclusions have a more descriptive rather than prescriptive stance, and leave several open doors for further analysis. But

this is a reflexion of the ambiguous nature of leadership and the fact that it still is, as the quotation from John MacGregor Burns we used in our first chapter states, “one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth”.

Perhaps one path to a further understanding of the leadership phenomenon is to open this field of studies to areas with different perspectives like literature, fostering its link to leadership research, in order to give it a more human touch. Leadership is, above all else, a very complex human behaviour and like Burns (Bailey and Axelrod, 2001: 116) we believe that its causality is still the “most crucial question”. Shakespeare brilliantly captured its intricate nature in the line with which we opened this chapter: “Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown”, idea which is emphasized by the examples of Julius Caesar and Henry V, and certainly will not cease to be a faithful representation of every leader to come. As such, this is something we must always keep in mind when striving to find new approaches to leadership studies, so our leaders of tomorrow have a better grasp of how to perform their functions and thus have a less daunting task at hands.

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