Comparing Leadership in Shakespeare’s Roman Plays

Some quotes from Shakespeare about leadership:

“We cannot all be masters, nor all masters / Cannot be truly follow'd.” (Iago in *Othello,* Act 1 Scene1)

“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.” (*Henry IV Part 2*, Act 3 Scene 1)

“One fire drives out one fire; one nail one nail.” (Aufidiusin *Coriolanus* Act IV Scene 7)

*Julius Caesar*

* Opening scene, celebrations as Julius Caesar has just defeated Pompey
* Public perceptions of leaders, loyalty to leaders?
* Caesar’s characteristics as a leader
* Cassius’ conspiracy to overthrow Caesar
* Brutus’ motivations for joining conspirators
* Rome without Caesar
* The role of women
* The public’s reactions to Caesar’s death
* Battle for the power of Rome: Cassius and Brutus as leaders and Octavius and Antony as leaders – The triumvers
* Suicide and leadership

*Antony and Cleopatra*

* Opening scene, Philo’s comment on Antony’s leadership
* Contrast between Rome and Egypt
* Contrast between Antony and Cleopatra as leaders
* The private lives of leaders
* Antony’s alliance with Octavius
* Antony’s battle decisions
* Pompey the younger
* Octavius Caesar an emerging leader
* The leadership of minor characters like Enobarbus and Charmian?

*Coriolanus*

* Opening scene: power of the people
* Notion of a republic
* Coriolanus as a soldier and his naming
* Coriolanus’ personal rivalry with Aufidius
* Struggle for power in the patrician class and the plebians
* Coriolanus’ banishment
* Volumnia’s leadership and power over Coriolanus
* Coriolanus’ ideas of virtue and leadership