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# The Impact of Lord Burghley and the Earl of Leicester's Spanish-Speaking Secretariats

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## ABSTRACT

Whilst the literature of the Spanish Golden Age is itself filled with problems of representation, I will argue in this paper that the greatest misrepresentation of all did not occur in fiction but rather in the English court. During Elizabeth's reign Lord Burghley, working with his secretary Sir Francis Walsingham, systematically misrepresented Spanish culture, deliberately obscuring the English perception of Spanish Golden Age and casting over it a veil of fear. The Earl of Leicester, by contrast, working only to improve his own reputation as a literary patron and man of letters, inadvertently increased English access to Spanish literature as he patronized a coterie of Spanish-speaking scholars at the University of Oxford. These Spanish secretaries translated Spanish literature and created Spanish dictionaries. By analysing the propaganda created under Burghley and the dictionaries created under Leicester, I will show how the English perception of the Spanish Golden Age developed. How, one might ask, was Antonio del Corro's arrival at the university tied to the printing of the first Spanish books in England at the university press? Why did both Leicester and Burghley eventually sponsor Spanish-English dictionaries? How did these different media and dictionaries mediate the English perception of Spain? These are some of the questions my paper will address through examination of the Atye-Cotton manuscripts (now housed at the British Library), a series of pamphlets sponsored by Lord Burghley, and several English-Spanish dictionaries created in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.

KEYWORDS: Essex, Burghley, Leicester, secretaries, dictionary, Spanish.

## **The impact of Lord Burghley and the Earl of Leicester's Spanish-speaking secretariats**

Under Elizabeth I England's relationship with Spain shifted dramatically. Interest in Spanish language and literature that had flourished under Catherine of Aragon and continued in the reign of (Catholic) Mary was suddenly replaced with suspicion under Protestant Elizabeth (Ungerer 1965:178). Elizabeth's most trusted advisors influenced her foreign policy. Under these courtiers a dichotomy developed. During the 1580s the English relationship with Spain was influenced by Lord Burghley, who, as secretary of state, sponsored pamphlets which encouraged the English fear of war and Spanish cruelty. Meanwhile, the Earl of Leicester, motivated by a desire to cultivate a reputation for sophistication, sponsored Spanish works, giving rise to an academic trend at the University of Oxford that led to the printing of Spanish books in Elizabethan England.<sup>1</sup>

In 1569 Lord Burghley warned the English court that Spain was uniting with France (in obedience to papal command), in preparation for an attack on England (MacCaffrey 2010). Burghley's warning marked the beginning of a battle for public opinion: by the time of the first military encounter with the Spanish Armada in 1588 English markets were saturated with anti-Spanish propaganda. Lord Burghley promoted Elizabeth's defensive stance towards Spain and encouraged the development of an English aversion to Spain. The recipient of most of the intelligence that came into England from the continent, Burghley used a large Spanish-literate secretariat to circulate manuscript letters strategically in court while he hired pamphleteers to create terrifying Spanish threats which they then answered with English propaganda. In the continuation of a now familiar trope of the English Renaissance, Leicester thus found himself in opposition to Burghley. Leicester and later Essex both anticipated war, something which seems to have mitigated any fear of the Peninsula Leicester might otherwise have laboured under. In

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<sup>1</sup> William Cecil was created first Baron Burghley on 5 February 1571 by Queen Elizabeth. Regardless of this late date I will refer to him throughout this paper as Burghley for convenience. Robert Dudley was created Earl of Leicester in September 1564; similarly, he is referred to throughout as Leicester.

any case, Leicester patronized many Spanish projects, including several Spanish dictionaries, with apparently no concern for the potential problems that familiarizing an English readership with Spanish culture might cause. Using a secretariat made up of scholars and translators, Leicester selectively reintroduced Spanish literature to early modern England. Both Leicester and Burghley acted as patrons for scholars who created Spanish-English dictionaries. Leicester's dictionaries allowed English speakers to interact with Spanish literature in a way that was essentially unmediated, developing an organic relationship with Spanish through literature, rather than the highly cultivated opinions created by Burghley's pamphlets. Burghley, however, identified the persuasive power of the dictionary itself and hired men capable of creating the very biased *Dictionary in Spanish and English*.

Leicester and Burghley's shared interest in Spanish created employment for Spanish speakers in England. While Leicester's patronage gave rise to a coterie of scholar-secretaries at Oxford, Burghley surrounded himself with rough-and-ready Spanish speakers who poured libels from the presses of London. By examining the propaganda and dictionaries created by Elizabeth's most trusted advisors, I will argue that this secretariat was responsible for creating the Elizabethan relationship with Spanish literature.

### **Lord Burghley and Sir Francis Walsingham, and their pamphlets**

Lord Burghley's efforts had by far the greatest impact on the English perception of Spain in the 1580s. The propaganda he produced began the establishment of the "black legend" that coloured English relations with Spain for the coming century. Burghley engaged Spanish-speaking pamphleteers and translators who poured out libels against the enemy, creating an English fear of Spain that the failed invasion of 1588 solidified. Assisted by his own secretary, Sir Francis Walsingham, Burghley shaped public opinion regarding Spain almost exclusively through pamphlets. The extent of Burghley's mediation of the English picture of Spain demands a study in itself: As secretary of state Burghley was in charge of a large network of spies across Europe and in Spain that fed information to

the court. This article, however, focuses on the impact made by Burghley's two personal Spanish-speaking secretaries: Walsingham and Richard Perceval.<sup>2</sup> This detailed examination makes an excellent case study of the printed material Burghley circulated about Spain, first in pamphlets and then through dictionaries.

*La Respuesta* exemplifies the Spanish works created by Walsingham and Burghley. Written in 1588 apparently on behalf of the English Government by an anonymous Spanish immigrant, the Spanish pamphlet was licensed for printing under Walsingham's authority. Eventually translated by James Lea and titled *An Answer to the Untruths Published in Spaine*, the *Answer* so closely resembles other letters purportedly written by Spanish expatriates and issued by Burghley and Walsingham that it throws doubt on the letters' authenticity (Ungerer 1965:194). Ungerer points to the similarity between the *Answer* and *A Copie of a Letter Sent out of England to Don Bernardin Mendoza*.<sup>3</sup> Burghley likely produced the manuscript himself: an early draft of the letter is written in his own hand, with some indication that it has been edited by Walsingham (Lea 1589:A3r).<sup>4</sup> Beginning with the English relationship with the Catholics, both tracts focus on Sir Francis Drake's naval prowess and the inefficacy of Spanish propaganda. The two pamphlets praise Burghley and Walsingham's work, congratulating the English on the quality of their intelligence from the continent and lamenting the demoralizing effect the circulation of Spanish letters (like the *Answer* and the *Copie*) had on the Armada in the run-up to 1588. In particular, the *Answer* explains that "There was [...] such kind of other bookes printed in Spaine containing particular long descriptions, and catalogues of Armados of Castile [...] and detailing all the Spanish naval resources," which led to the Spanish defeat (*A copie of the letter sent out of England* 1588:7). In *The Copie* the author, or authors, (probably both jointly Walsingham and Burghley) makes clear that any Spanish propaganda that circulates in England only

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<sup>2</sup> Alan Smith's 1968 article in *The English Historical Review* masterfully details the lives and duties of the Cecils' personal secretaries but does not address the role of either Walsingham or Perceval in the production of Spanish dictionaries.

<sup>3</sup> S.T.C. 17131 and *A copie of the letter sent out of England to Don Bernardin de Mendoza Ambassador in France for the King of Spaine* 1588. S.T.C. 15412.

<sup>4</sup> London, British Library, MS Landsdowne, 03, folio 55. I am thankful to Gustav Ungerer for this reference.

motivates the English further, essentially declaring the efficacy of Burghley's efforts. According to the *Copie*,

no one thing hath done at this time more hurt to the action [of the Armada] than the hastie publishing in this realme before this Armie of Spaine was readie to come forth to the seas, of sundry things put in print, and sent into this realme to notifie to the people that all the realm should be invaded and conquered, that the Queen should be destroyed, all the Nobilitie and the men of reputation that did obey her or that wold withstand the invasion, should be with their families rooted out and in their places their houses and lands bestowed upon the conquerors: things universally so odiously taken, as the hearts of all sorts of people were enflamed: some with ire, some with fear, but all sorts almost without exception resolved to venture their lives for the withstanding of all manner of conquest. (*A copie of the letter sent out of England* 1588:7)

The *Copie* thus highlights the complexity of Burghley's plan: the Spanish, it is claimed, lament how their propaganda has motivated the English to fight. By creating such a letter Burghley and Walsingham account for any past or future failures to stop the spread of Spanish propaganda. When paired with the *Answer* the momentum of Burghley's campaign becomes clear. For while the "Spanish" author of the *Copie* is alarmed at how Spanish propaganda motivates the English, the *Answer* clarifies that the propaganda that motivated the English was in fact Spanish lies. The *Answer* responds to Diego Perez, postmaster of Logroño, saying:

Your honor saith, that if [Drake] be not prisoner he is slaine, in these words. *Drake is either taken or dead*. Yet if [Drake's] enimie fled from him, who tooke him or slue him? If your Honor in saieng Drake is prisoner or dead then added *he is prisoner to her majestie*, then I would be silent, for that he is so loyall a subject unto her, that, though free, yet waites in her prison, and sacrificed day and night to do her service. In saieng dead, had your Honor named the disease whereof he died, we would saie that howre come, wherein the Lord Almighty had called him unto himself: but finally he is both free and alive, and as loyall a vassal to her majestie as ever. (Lea 1589:3)

Burghley paints a picture of thoughtful Englishmen who recognize the duplicity of their enemy and thus are spurred on by Spanish propaganda to hate rather than fear their enemy. Together Walsingham and Burghley create a detailed model for the English

reception of Spanish, and in so doing draw heavily on material they attribute to Spanish sources, a tactic that would become common in the pamphlets produced by Burghley's secretariat and later would be rather ungracefully imitated by Essex.

These pamphlets created by Burghley and Walsingham intended to rouse English feelings against the Spanish also included *A True Discourse of the Assault Committed upon the Person of the Most Noble Prince, William Prince of Orange*<sup>5</sup> (Jáuregui y Aguilar 1582), *Ad Serenissimam Elizabetham Anglaie Reginam Theodor*<sup>6</sup> (Béze 1588), *A Libell of Spanish Lies: Found at the Sacke of Cales, discoursing the fight in the West Indies*<sup>7</sup> (1596), and *The Opinion of Don Alvaro Bacan, Marques of Santa Cruz, and High Admirall of Spaine, touching the armie of Sir Francis Drake*<sup>8</sup> (Bazan 1600). Works commissioned through Walsingham appeared almost entirely before the 1596 sack of Cadiz.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> S.T.C. 25713.

<sup>6</sup> S.T.C. 1998.

<sup>7</sup> S.T.C. 6551. This pamphlet is attributed to Henry Saville but appears to be a translation from Bernaldino Delgadillo de Avellaneda's *Copia de una Carta*. According to Ungerer, the copy was acquired by Saville, captain of the H.M.S. *The Adventure*, who had it translated into English and wrote the answer himself.

<sup>8</sup> S.T.C. 12626. Both the Spanish and English texts of this work were included in Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1600 3.530-534).

<sup>9</sup> After the sack of Cadiz Essex began a pamphleteering project that rivalled the scale of that of Burghley, though it lacked the subtlety and skill of Walsingham. Essex, responsible himself for looting the library of the Bishop Mascarenhas at Faro, answered the widespread criticism of his campaign in lively terms. In a volume held in the British Library some of the more interesting pamphlets cultivating the English relationship with Spain are bound-together. Most are not mentioned by Ungerer as they do not include any Spanish texts, instead addressing the Spanish in English (though at least one claims to be "translated out of Spanish into English by T.P"). Two short pamphlets at the end of the compilation respond to the Cadiz episode. The first of these is entitled *A Declaration of the Causes Moving The Queenes Majestie of England*. Printed by Christopher Barker, printer to the Queen, this pamphlet seems to stand alone as a defence of the attack upon Cadiz issued by the court. The second and much shorter defence of Cadiz included in this volume appears under the authority of the Earl of Essex and Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham. This three page declaration by the Earl of Essex definitively identifies him as commander of the Queen's navy and explains the attack on Cadiz as the only possible defence of Ireland. Clearly written both to appease the Queen and to justify his own actions, Essex declares the necessity of the campaign, characterizing the English as sorely put upon by their Spanish adversaries. *A Libell of Spanish Lies* was likely also created at Essex House. Following the format of *A Packe of Spanish Lyes*, a Spanish writer is refuted with facts presented by an English writer. The pamphlet explains that the report of Drake's death was "altogether received for an undoubted truth [in Spain], and so pleasing was this news



Burghley's defensive stance towards Spain may explain the emphasis on dishonesty that dominates in this propaganda (and is entirely lacking in literature patronized by Essex or Leicester). The *True Discourse* details the escape of Spanish assassins together with "writinges, depositions, examinations and letters of sundrie heinous offenders" as well as "wicked and cruel deedes," showing that "all the Spaniards in the worlde" could not contradict the author (Jáuregui y Aguilar 1582:14). The pamphlet makes clear that it was only through trickery that the Spanish surprised the Prince of Orange. Emphasizing the cowardice and villainy of the Spanish, the *True Discourse* produces exactly the Spanish enemy Burghley desires (Jáuregui y Aguilar 1582:16). This characterization will be the unifying factor between the propaganda produced under Burghley by Walsingham in the 1580s and early 1590s, and the dictionary created by Perceval and John Minsheu under Burghley in 1599.

The most structurally interesting example of this propaganda by Burghley's secretariat is a pamphlet entitled *A Packe of Spanish Lyes, Sent Abroad in the World*. This small book is printed in two columns, one claiming to be an English translation of "A packe of Spanish Lyes" and the other an answer "from England" (1588:2). The English retorts re-iterate the dishonesty of the Spaniard, as each English response begins with "Here followeth the mountaine of lies" or "All these untrue newes are sayed to have come from the Spanish fleete."<sup>10</sup> The *Packe of Spanish Lyes*, bears an even closer resemblance to *An Answer* than the *Copie* does, reiterating that the purpose of the pamphlet is to some extent to contradict the reports of the postmaster of Logroño (1588:2). Although no other Elizabethan pamphlets regarding Spain and Spanish treachery are formatted in two columns in this fashion, both *An Answer* and the later *A Libell of Spanish Lies* use Burghley's signature tactic of printing apparently

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unto the Spaniard that there was present commandment given to publish the letter in print. [...] The letter came to the hands of Henrie Savile, Esquire, who being employed in that service [...] hath caused the said printed letter to be translated into English. And that impudence of the Spanish Generall may be the more plainly appear, the said Henrie Savile doth answer particularly to everie untruth in the same letter contained."

<sup>10</sup> The British Library's edition of this pamphlet is bound with *Orders set Downe by the Ducke of Medina, Lord General of the Kings Fleet, to be Observed in the Voyage towards England* (1588). Printed by Thomas Orwin, this pamphlet claims to be "translated out of Spanish into English by T.P."

Spanish letters then meeting them with an English answer. Unlike *An Answer, A Packe* takes what it claims are direct quotations from “a letter of Diego Perez” and responds to them. The two together offer an interesting model of the self-generation of Burghley’s secretaries’ work: if Diego Perez’s letter is in fact an authentic document, it would have been delivered directly to Burghley from one of his agents in Spain. It would also have been at Burghley’s discretion that the letter was translated, and at his order that it received a relatively large-scale response from London pamphleteers. Thus the claim that Drake was killed in the 1588 battle with the Spanish Armada is created in England by Burghley’s agents, then reprinted in the *Packe of Spanish Lyes* along with the claim that the Spanish had “sunke two and twentie shippes and taken fourtie,” creating the opportunity for his secretariat to respond with further pamphlets and letters praising Drake’s prowess (1588:2).

Burghley and Walsingham worked tirelessly to cultivate a distrust of Spain. Their task became more complex after the sack of Cadiz led by the Earl of Essex in 1596, flooding the English court with Spanish loot, including books from some of the largest Spanish libraries.<sup>11</sup> The sudden influx of literature from a papist country, uncontrolled by Burghley and his agents, was a matter of concern: Sir Robert Cecil was warned by one of his Spanish-speaking sources that “there hath been brought from Cadiz, by sundry persons, a great number of printed books, as well Latin and Spanish, of which although some may be used, no doubt there are others that may do very much hurt.”<sup>12</sup> After 1596 Burghley and Walsingham seem to have stopped creating pamphlets: Burghley’s place as a promoter of propaganda was quickly filled by the Earl of Essex, who began to work tirelessly to defend his actions at Cadiz. Confident that Elizabeth would not take further aggression against Spain, Burghley continued to gather intelligence from the Peninsula, but significantly reduced his patronage of “Spanish” works. An exception to this policy seems to have been his promotion of a dictionary with such a bias that it ensured long term hostility towards Spain: thus it was

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<sup>11</sup> The topic of the books that entered England after the sack of Cadiz deserves a study in itself. Ungerer gives a partial description of which Spanish libraries were raided, who took books, and which Spanish books entered England.

<sup>12</sup> *Hatfield Papers* (1895, vi.375). The majority of these books are now housed in the Bodleian Library.

that Burghley brought the most successful English-Spanish lexicographer in England into his employ. It seems likely that Burghley's decision to encourage the work of Perceval and Minsheu was made in response to the success of the dictionaries patronized by Leicester. For just as Burghley cultivated an English distaste for Spain, Leicester's soft diplomacy, likely intended as self-promotion rather than in support of Spain, was re-popularizing the study of Spanish at both the universities and the court.

### The Earl of Leicester and the Oxford Hispanists

Vernacular languages were not formally taught at either university in Elizabethan England. Yet although no one at either Oxford or Cambridge officially studied Spanish, the two universities produced a number of scholars, statesmen, translators, and tutors who were well versed in the language. Appointed chancellor of Oxford in 1564, Leicester was determined to utilize the university to advance his reputation as a scholar and patron of learning.

Early in his career Leicester took an interest in foreign language dictionaries. He patronized Thomas Cooper's *Thesaurus* in 1565. The success of this dictionary kept Leicester's name prominently in the book-buying public sphere and created an association between Leicester's patronage and lexicons (Rosenberg 1588:2). Leicester went on to support both classical and vernacular dictionaries and grammars. Amongst these were the many successive editions of John Withals' *Short Dictionarie*. Established as one of the primary texts used in Elizabethan grammar schools, the *Short Dictionarie* was heavily revised and augmented by Lewis Evans. In 1579 Evans thanked Leicester for his past generosity, indicating Leicester's long-term patronage of the work (Withals 1579).<sup>13</sup> In 1581 Edward Grant dedicated to Leicester his *Lexicon Graeco-latinum*, an edition of the Greek-Latin dictionary compiled by Jean Crespin. It is noteworthy that even Grant, a special protégé of Burghley, sought Leicester's patronage for his learned dictionary: Grant explains his decision, mentioning the Earl's sponsorship of Cooper's successful thesaurus and likening it to his lexicon. Beyond these Latin lexicons, Leicester consistently and enthusiastically supported vernacular dictionaries

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<sup>13</sup> S.T.C. 25880.

and grammars. In 1578 John Florio dedicated his Italian language book *Firste Fruites* to him, and both Antonio del Corro and Thomas D'Oyley produced Spanish-language books while under his patronage as scholars at Oxford.

Unlike Burghley, who was himself responsible for some of the Spanish works published under him, Leicester did not compose any "Spanish" works, treatises, or translations. Although Leicester's protégés, secretaries, and scholars compliment Leicester's knowledge of languages, Eleanor Rosenberg argues that while Leicester had an enthusiasm for learning, he had little skill in any language except English (Rosenberg 1955:151). A passage from a letter addressed to the earl indicates the degree to which Leicester's secretaries mediated his interactions and the impact his secretariat had on Leicester's image:

[...] it is needless to give you exquisite precepts, because you have attending upon you one for the same purpose, sufficiently furnished, the benefit of whose service you have in use [...] if he be such a man indeed, as by your letters unto me directed and delivered, I do gather. (Rosenberg 1955:160)

This letter, which likely refers to Atye's skill in translating Leicester's correspondence into several languages, indicates how important Leicester's multilingual secretariat was, both to his ability to act as a statesman and to language study at English universities and at court.

Elizabeth encouraged Leicester to establish a substantial retinue when he was made an earl, which dramatically increased the secretariat in his employ. Almost all of Leicester's secretaries were drawn from either Oxford or Cambridge: Edmund Spenser, Edward Dyer, Edmund Campion, and Gabriel Harvey would all eventually serve the Earl as secretary.<sup>14</sup> However, although Leicester found his secretaries at both universities, he installed them almost exclusively at Oxford. In so doing Leicester not only founded the study of Spanish at the university, but this also led directly to the first complete Spanish book printed in England, a work that contributed to the wide-spread proliferation of Spanish in England at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>14</sup> Leicester's secretariat deserves far more attention than the length of this paper allows.

Antonio del Corro became the centre of a coterie of Hispanists in Oxford under Leicester, becoming the most prominent authority on the Spanish language at the university at this time. He came to England as a Spanish expatriate and ex-clergyman, arriving in 1567, twenty years after he had renounced Catholicism and left Spain to join the European courts as a Spanish instructor (Gordon 2010). Both Burghley and Leicester supported Corro as he became the pastor to London's recently disenfranchised Spanish congregation. The congregation was in disarray due to the recent flight of Casidoro de Reina, their pastor: Corro's arrival revived it. Only briefly accepted as a clergyman in London due to persistent doubts about the orthodoxy of his views, a conflict that would plague Corro began only shortly after his arrival in England. Corro responded to these doubts in seven letters addressed to Benza at Geneva, who transferred mediation of the conflict to Bishop Grindal (Gordon 2010). Grindal suspended Corro in 1569 for slander and obstinacy; Corro was not reprimanded for any doctrinal aberration. Burghley's support faded as Corro became an increasingly controversial figure. Corro's apparent inability to make friends in London made Leicester's eventual success installing him at Oxford all the more important for Corro's career.

On 5 March 1576 Leicester sent letters to the vice-chancellor and convocation of Oxford asking that Corro precede Doctor of Theology without fee (Foster 1891:44). By April the convocation granted the request on condition "that he purge himself of heretical opinions" (McFadden 1955:455). Corro reiterated his support for a conventional Protestant doctrine and was on track to enter the university, but controversy slowed his progress and it ultimately took Leicester two more years of campaigning before Corro was finally admitted to Oxford in the summer of 1578 as *censor theologicus* at Christ Church. Corro matriculated as a member of the college in 1586 (Foster 1891:44). Corro's relationship with his English patrons highlights the difference between Leicester and Burghley's sentiment towards Spaniards in England, for while Leicester continued to support Corro enthusiastically, Burghley not only withdrew his support but also apparently developed a deep suspicion of him. During Corro's later time at Oxford, Burghley used his complex intelligence network to keep track of the Spaniard. Burghley's associate William Davidson, ambassador to the Netherlands, employed Burghley's brother-in-law Sir Henry Killigrew (at the time one of Leicester's

secretaries), to report regularly on Corro, and the information Davidson collected was almost certainly relayed to Burghley (Rosenberg 1955:151). The suspicions surrounding Corro, as well as his own combative nature, created an obstacle to his publication of theological work and ended his hope of returning to his life as a clergyman in London. Instead Corro published the first Spanish grammar in England at the University press and successfully lectured on both theology and Spanish language for over a decade.

Of the many men supported by Leicester, Corro's work had the greatest impact on the study of Spanish in England. His *Reglas Gramaticales* was the first book printed entirely in Spanish in Elizabethan England in 1586. Printed by Joseph Barnes at the university's press, *Reglas* was dedicated to Leicester's friend, the Italian expatriate Sir Horatio Palavicino, but was a product of the position Leicester had made available to Corro. New to printing, Barnes was known for the avant-garde works he printed, for which he found a good market in Oxford. He produced various vernacular works in 1586 during his first year as the university's printer. Barnes was no fool: his decision to print Corro's *Reglas* was almost certainly a response to an increasing interest in Spanish at the university over the previous decade. As a bookseller himself, Barnes knew what demand existed at the university, and likely decided to go ahead with the edition after receiving requests for Spanish books from pupils of Corro and the other Spanish speakers at Oxford, including Arthur Atye, John Therie, and Thomas D'Oyley. Though the work was printed exclusively at Oxford, some of the editions appeared with a false Paris imprint and were sold on the continent, probably as a means of increasing Barnes' return on his investment. The Spanish language guide had far better hopes for successful sales on the continent. Only the Oxford-imprint versions of the book contained the dedication to Palavicino, indicating an expectation that the edition would circulate with at least some popularity in England, and that it would circulate not only at Oxford but also at court.

Four years later Corro followed the *Reglas* with his *The Spanish Grammar*, a guide to the Spanish and French language. Entered in the stationers' register on 7 April, the book was dedicated to John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury. In this version, adapted for English speakers by Corro's pupil John Therie, Corro claimed that the book was "snatched from [his] hands by some friends of Joseph

Barnes," and it does indeed seem likely that Corro had not intended it for publication in England (Ungerer 1965:197). Before Therie's modifications *The Spanish Grammar* was almost entirely inaccessible to English students. Therie translated explanations of Spanish grammar into English from both French and Spanish, but unfortunately he chose to leave all the examples throughout the book in French. Rather than translating the French examples to English, which would have greatly simplified the guide, Therie added a dictionary to make the Spanish examples used in the book accessible to English speakers. This choice made the *Grammar* the first English/Spanish dictionary printed under Elizabeth. Despite Therie's modifications the work remained so confusing that John Wolfe, the edition's printer, saw fit to use different typefaces to distinguish between English, French, and Spanish. After publishing Corro's work Barnes did not return to works in the Spanish language. However, John Wolfe took up the torch, printing a number of works over the subsequent decade composed by the Oxford Hispanists. Barnes' publication of Corro opened the door to printing in Spanish in Elizabethan England and his efforts, combined with those of Corro and Leicester's other Spanish speaking Oxford scholars, became a kind of soft diplomacy set in opposition to Burghley's loud propaganda. In the year following the publication of Corro's (and Therie's) *Grammar*, another Spanish dictionary originating in Oxford was entered in the stationers' register by Joseph Barnes for Thomas D'Oyley. Either D'Oyley's work was never printed or it does not survive, though traces of it can be found in Perceval's work (1591).<sup>15</sup> Arthur Atye was the only prominent

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<sup>15</sup> Perceval's *Bibliotheca Hispanica* asserts its superiority over "any that have gone before." Perceval implies that his dictionary is better because he is an Englishman who speaks Spanish, rather than a native Spanish speaker, as "those things that to [him] being a straunger to the toonge, appeared upon good reason to bee worth the observation: were so ordinarie with them, as they seemed needless to be drawn into rule." However, Perceval claims that he is "not so malicious as to detract from the labours of any that have gone before; but confesse, that [I] have both seene and used them where [I] thought it convenient." Perceval acknowledges a number of sources, maintaining that only 2000 of the words in the dictionary are his own. He explains that he met Thomas D'Oyley at a very fortuitous moment, just before he sought publication for his dictionary. He claims that although D'Oyley had "begunne a Dictionary in Spanish, English, and Latin," he saw that Perceval was "more forward to the press than himself [and so] very friendly gave his consent to the publishing of [Perceval's], wishing [him] to adde the Latine as hee had begunne in his; which [he] performed, being not a little furthered therein by [D'Oyley's] advise and conference." While Perceval provides an appealing description of the scholarly community

Spanish-speaking scholar under Leicester's employ at Oxford who did not eventually produce a Spanish dictionary. Unlike the works produced under Burghley the dictionaries from Oxford were relatively unbiased, creating a means of accessing Spanish literature without significant mediation. Although the proliferation of dictionaries under Leicester created this new access to Spanish in England, Burghley would waste little time before he modified the genre to suit his purposes. Leicester himself had little opportunity to learn the language and use dictionaries, so instead he employed his own mediators: Arthur Atye became the primary means through which the Earl accessed works in Spanish.

Atye, Leicester's primary secretary in the last two decades of his life, was one of Oxford's most prominent Spanish-speakers. Much before he was introduced to the University as a lecturer, Atye had received his BA from Christ Church in 1561 and his MA from Merton in 1562 (Foster 1891:64). There is no evidence that Atye had any knowledge of Spanish during his time as a student, but when the opportunity arose he attended the warden of Merton, John Man, on his embassy to Spain between 1566 and 1568 (Adams 1993:132). After this expedition Atye possessed a proficient command of Spanish that ultimately proved one of his primary assets in his service of Leicester.<sup>16</sup> Atye's expedition with Man, as well as most of his training at Oxford, seems to have been aimed at building a career in London, yet – Simon Adams observes – Atye possessed the innate qualities that made him an academic. Adams' claim seems to hold true (Adams 1993:132). Leicester frequently chose to keep Atye at Oxford rather than have him resident at Leicester House; Atye remained at the university even at times while he was serving as chief secretary (above up to six subsidiary secretaries).

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studying Spanish in the 1590s, it is unlikely that it represents the complete truth. Thomas D'Oyley's *Spanish Grammer* appears in the stationers' register, entered to John Wolfe in October 1590. It is likely that D'Oyley knew of Perceval's impending publication and in fact rushed to print before his competitor. While it is quite possible that D'Oyley helped Perceval with the Latin in his edition, it seems unlikely that he gave up his efforts as readily as Perceval implies. Similarly, although Perceval does not acknowledge Corro in his list of sources, he included every word in the appended dictionary to the *Spanish Grammer* in the *Bibliotheca Hispanica*, borrowing both the Spanish words and the English definitions.

<sup>16</sup> There is no evidence that his fluency pre-dated this position, though some knowledge of Spanish certainly would help explain his appointment.



Leicester likely met Atye in May 1572 when the university sent Atye to attend Leicester, the chancellor “durante tempore parlimenti.”<sup>17</sup> In fact, he was probably sent to protect the university’s interests in a long-term battle with the city of Oxford, following the university’s request to Leicester for parliamentary representation in March 1571. Leicester had also heard of Atye through Tobias Matthew, Leicester’s chaplain whom he had placed in an oratorship at Oxford during Atye’s time as a student there. Appointed in November 1569, Matthew deputized Atye in 1570. When Matthew resigned the oratorship Leicester named Atye his successor.<sup>18</sup> The Bodleian’s Rawlinson manuscripts detail much of what is known about Atye’s time at Oxford before he joined Leicester’s retinue. It is clear that he was operating as a very proficient scholar and prominent member of the university, but it is equally clear that in so doing he was preparing himself for a life concerned with the court. Scholarly debate surrounds the date Atye’s service under Leicester commenced. Rosenberg suggests that Atye was appointed in 1580 in succession to Gabriel Harvey. Rosenberg’s argument, which is based on Atye’s own correspondence, is followed by Gustav Ungerer in his description of Atye in *A Spaniard in Elizabethan England* (1955:150). This date has since been pushed back by scholars. Most recently Simon Adams has argued convincingly that Atye was probably in Leicester’s service as early as 1574 (Adams 1993:133), citing sights Atye’s 1574 endorsement of a series of Leicester’s letters beginning with a letter from 26 June to Guzman de Silva.<sup>19</sup> What has evaded discussion is the significance of the date Atye’s service to Leicester commenced as an indicator of the beginning of Leicester’s interest in Spain. As discussed above, Burghley began to warn Elizabeth regarding Spain as early as 1569, but he only seems to have begun actively creating anti-Spanish propaganda in 1582. If Leicester’s association with Atye pre-dates Burghley’s first pamphlets by nearly a decade, it is an indication that Leicester’s interest in language study pre-dates Burghley’s campaigns (rather than following in its footsteps as the publication of *Reglas* in 1586 might suggest). In all

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<sup>17</sup> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D 837, fol. 36.

<sup>18</sup> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D. 837, fol. 37-38v.

<sup>19</sup> London, British Library, Nero BVII, folio 179. Later letters from this series address Senior de Lumbres (Galba BXL, folio 246), John Strum (Harleian Mss. 692, folio 102), and Isabelle de La Touche (Titus B VII, folio 52).

likelihood, Burghley and Leicester's conflict was on-going, beginning with the circulation of Spanish letters by Burghley in 1569, followed by translations by Atye throughout the 1570s. Atye's endorsement is found in countless Spanish letters as well as in reports received by Leicester regarding various campaigns in the Low Countries.<sup>20</sup> There is abundant manuscript evidence that under Leicester Atye was engaged in making war seem attractive: British Library Additional Manuscript 48084 and British Library Additional Manuscript 48116 are both letters from Leicester's agents in the Netherlands, witnessed by Atye, reporting on the success of the English troops. These surviving letters idealize war, and are clearly intended for circulation at court as witnesses to English dominance. Yet although under Leicester Atye enthusiastically reported English successes against the Spanish in the Netherlands, his work never took a tone of propaganda: in fact, Atye's letters provide optimistic reports of the state of an ongoing English conflict. Only after Leicester's death, when Atye joined Essex's retinue, did he turn his attention towards projects that more explicitly condemned the Spanish.<sup>21</sup> However, by the close of the decade and following the sack of Cadiz, even Burghley had moved away from this traditional

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<sup>20</sup> Barbary Company Records, Oxford, Christ Church College, MS Evelyn 155 and 248. See also Willian (1959:188-190).

<sup>21</sup> The Earl of Essex, himself desperate for war with Spain, had his own relationship with Leicester's Spanish secretaries, particularly with Arthur Atye. Upon Leicester's death Atye began to translate Antonio Perez's *Relaciones*, a vitriolic work by the Spanish exile condemning the cruelty of the Spanish court. After struggling to find employment Atye eventually joined the household of the Earl of Essex; Antonio Perez also resided at Essex House. Atye sent his English translation of Perez's *Relaciones* on to Anthony Bacon on 27 March 1595 with the request that he amend the work where he saw fit. Atye's tone regarding the Spanish changed significantly under his new patron. Presentation copies of the translation were sent to many prominent members of the pro-war party, including the Earl of Southampton, Lord Henry Howard, Lord Mountjoy, Sir Robert Sidney, Anthony and Francis Bacon and Henry Watton. As inflammatory as the book was intended to be, Atye's translation stayed relatively true to the original text. Trained first as a scholar and only later as a secretary, Atye avoided creating strong propaganda. Furthermore, his translation was produced relatively quickly following the printing of Perez's work: translating the work no doubt proved sufficiently challenging in the time he had without editorially expanding the work. The translation represented Atye's largest and apparently final work. The *Relaciones* set the stage for Essex's campaign against Cadiz the following year. Atye's translation represented one of Essex's several desperate but ultimately unsuccessful attempts to enthruse the English for a war with Spain.

mode of propaganda, as he too adopted the dictionary as a means of instructing English relations with Spain.

### **Lord Burghley, John Minsheu, Richard Perceval, and the *Dictionarie of Spanish and English***

Although he joined Burghley's secretariat late in his career, Richard Perceval proved one of Burghley's most influential secretaries. More than any of the lexicographers working under Leicester, Perceval clearly understood that the dictionary could be used as a propaganda tool. Although he tried to make the dictionary's power of persuasion clear to the Earl of Essex, it was only when he entered the Cecils' service that Perceval's work achieved its potential. Perceval did his best to capitalize on the widespread interest in vernacular language learning that dominated in England at the beginning of the last decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Following the publication of Antonio del Corro's *The Spanish Grammer*, an interest in learning Spanish developed around court. Unlike many Spanish speaking scholars, Perceval was never attached to either university: upon returning from self-imposed exile in Spain after an unfavourable marriage he taught at the Merchant Taylors' School for several years, and likely during this time he produced the *Bibliotheca Hispanica* (Healy 2010). The original *Bibliotheca Hispanica* reflects Perceval's hopes to align himself with Essex as a secretary or supported scholar. The *Bibliotheca's* dedication uses a language of chivalry and congratulates Essex on his bold military victories. Although Perceval credited Essex with exactly the chivalric character he desired, Essex does not seem to have taken much interest in him. Regardless of the pro-war tone of the introduction to the first edition of the *Bibliotheca Hispanica* Perceval was only a few years from joining Burghley's retinue of secretaries and spies.<sup>22</sup> Perceval ends the dedication of this first edition by

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<sup>22</sup> In his first edition of the *Bibliotheca Hispanica* Perceval created exactly the chivalric rhetoric around Essex that became increasingly important to the earl over the course of his career. Perceval addresses his work to "the right honourable Robert Earl of Essex [...] [to] increase of honour of heroicall vertues." Perceval repeatedly refers to the earl's "valour" and in so doing creates a work that is distinctly political. Yet though Perceval declares that Essex "employed [him]selfe so honorablie against the Spanyards in Flanders, Spayne, and Portugal gained an immortall memorie with all

promising to polish his dictionary until it meets his audience's needs and expectations, a promise which indeed comes to fruition under Lord Burghley in the next decades with the oversight of John Minsheu.

Minsheu's version of Perceval's *Bibliotheca*, which he entitled *A Dictionarie in Spanish and English*, transforms Perceval's work into a discursive dictionary, but more than this, into a decidedly political work. Minsheu's dictionary functioned as a language guide, including instructions on pronunciation and grammar. There is evidence of Burghley's politics reflected throughout Minsheu and Perceval's collaboration. Although the introduction from Minsheu is a relatively straightforward explanation of the work and a call for patronage, the work itself reflects Burghley's politics. The instructive dialogues which comprise nearly half the work are both averse to Spain and against war with Spain. In their 1599 volume, Minsheu and Perceval emphasize the "evill" of the Spanish terrain, characterizing it as both impassable and fraught with lying peasants (returning to the cultivation of distrust that was a trope of Walsingham's pamphlets) (Minsheu 1599:35). Minsheu's dictionary presents Spain as a fortress of natural obstacles, making an invasion seem impossible and Essex's 1596 campaign appear foolhardy. The work takes an entirely different tone than the original *Bibliotheca Hispanica*. In another dialogue a speaker explains that the Spanish go either "ala guerra, o a un monastéro, o a la hórca," and thus in a single sentence depicts the Spanish as cruel, warring, and Catholic (Minsheu 1599:39). A particularly interesting edition of the *Copie* held in the British Library seems to refer to Minsheu's dictionary, which the reader of this copy likely used as a means of approaching some of the contents of the work. On a blank sheet opposite the first page of the work the reader has inscribed an address in Latin, "Have mercy on the Spanish and survive still," and further declares "Praeda licet Minseus non sit satis ampla Philippo Ampla Satis Mundo Praeda Philippus crit" ["although Minsheu is not a large enough prey for Philip, Philip is a large enough prey for the world"], implying that nothing achieved in war with Spain could equal the loss incurred in such a war (*A copie of the letter* 1588). The reader seems to pun on the word "mundus", substituting a reference to

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posterity and might perhaps encounter with them again upon like occasion," Essex misses his opportunity to utilize Perceval's work.

Minsheu but spelling the word “Minseus”, bringing together his means of accessing the work with his reaction to the work.

During his administrative career Burghley collected what may have been the largest Spanish library in Tudor England (Ungerer 1965:229). Ungerer’s work documents the extent of the library, and demonstrates that while Burghley worked to foster a fear of Spain, he was himself familiar with many aspects of Spanish culture beyond the content of his propaganda. The collection was far from utilitarian. Burghley owned several editions of *Amadis de Gaula* and *Amadis de Grecia*, as well as various other romances and classical works. It is thus not surprising that once Burghley felt war with Spain had been averted he took an interest in creating a dictionary that would substantially improve English interest in and access to Spanish (whilst still mediating this access with an appropriate bias) (Ungerer 1965:229). Though Burghley’s collection was likely motivated by a sense that his precise knowledge would help his defence of England, through it he became one of the most well-read Spanish scholars in Elizabethan England. Ironically it was Leicester, who was probably unable to read Spanish, who cultivated a study of the language in England by producing a community of Spanish-speaking scholars at Oxford. These Oxonian scholars opened the door for the printing of Spanish books in Elizabeth’s England as they cultivated an interest in the language in students and a demand for Spanish books at the university, leading to Antonio del Corro’s *Reglas* in 1586. Leicester’s scholarly sponsorship projects led inadvertently to one of the largest scale soft-diplomacy projects of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, dramatically increasing English familiarity with Spanish literature. The combined effect of the work of both the secretaries under Burghley and the scholars under Leicester created an English understanding of Spain at the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

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# **Shakespeare and Chess Again: A Proposal for an Alternative Reading of *pawn(s)* in *King Lear*, *King John* and *The Winter's Tale***

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## ABSTRACT

For the last three centuries, Shakespeare's plays have been continuously glossed, commented on and annotated. However, there still remain quite a few obscure passages and complex words which continue to puzzle and cause debate as to their precise meanings. One such word is *pawn*, glossed as a pun in some editions of *King Lear*, and passed over in silence in other plays where it appears in similar contexts.

This essay proposes an alternative reading of the word in *King Lear*, *King John* and *The Winter's Tale*. The hypothesis put forward is that Shakespeare was indeed hinting at the various senses of this word and exploiting its punning potential in these three plays. This suggestion is supported by a series of examples of similar rhetorical exploitation of this polysemic word as found in several contemporary authors. These examples will demonstrate that the various senses of the word were indeed very much alive in Elizabethan England – and quite probably in Shakespeare's mind.

KEYWORDS: Shakespeare's style, chess, metaphor, wordplay, pun.

You must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning [...] Never let a word escape you that looks suspicious. It is severe work; but you will find it, even at first, interesting, and at last, endlessly amusing.

John Ruskin *Sesame and Lillies* (qtd Foster 1908:xi)



## 1. Introduction

Shakespeare's plays and poems have been the object of scholarly study for more than three centuries now. During this time, they have not only been continuously edited, glossed and annotated, but also constantly commented on, analyzed and scrutinized. As far as their language and style are concerned, this critical activity became especially prolific in the twentieth century, boosted no doubt by the birth and development of modern linguistics. Indeed, ever since William Empson published his seminal work *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) and later *The Structure of Complex Words* (1951) – thus paving the way for the New Criticism – much has been said and written about Shakespeare's language. Since then, many approaches and theories have been proposed and used for analyzing his texts: from the traditional philological methods, like those by Clive S. Lewis (1960) or Molly Mahood (1957), to more theoretically-oriented approaches such as Patricia Parker's (1996) feminist-historical reading of Shakespeare's wordplay or Mary T. Crane's (2001) cognitive analysis of the same phenomenon in some of his plays.

Although one is tempted to think that three centuries of critical and editorial work should be enough to have settled any controversies over Shakespeare's meaning and exhausted all possible interpretations, there still remain quite a few obscure passages and complex words which continue to puzzle and give rise to debate as to their precise meanings. Only that may explain why, hundreds of articles, critical editions, glossaries and dictionaries continue to be published every year, proposing alternative readings that keep on adding to an ever-growing corpus of interpretations. This wealth of criticism seems to confirm John Dryden's famous dictum that, at least in the case of Shakespeare, "the last [word] is not yet sufficiently explicated," a view shared today by many scholars, like Norman Blake (1999), who believes that there is still much to discover about Shakespeare's meaning. The main reason why this is so – Blake argues – is that editors have for too long focused on the play's theatrical and cultural background, leaving language and its meaning relatively neglected (Blake 2002:28).

On the other hand, since new theories and analytical tools for approaching the study of language continue to appear, one still hopes that they can contribute to the debate on "Shakespeare's meaning" by providing new angles from where to approach the text

and explore it. One such new theory that has recently come to enrich the debate is Cognitive Linguistics. The interest of cognitivism in Shakespeare touches on various aspects of his language, such as metaphor, metonymy or polysemy, and is reflected in the works of cognitive stylisticians like Freeman (2002, 2004 [1995]), or cognitive literary critics like Crane (2001), to whom this essay owes much of its thrust. In her *Shakespeare's Brain* – a cognitive approach to the Shakespearean lexicon – Crane explores “what seems to be a special focus on polysemic words of various kinds, especially those that were taking on new meanings in this period in concert with significant institutional and cultural changes” (Crane 2001:25). She focuses on *villain* and *clown* in *As You Like It*, *house* and *home* in *The Comedy of Errors*, *suit* in *Twelfth Night*, *pregnant* in *Measure for Measure*, *act* in *Hamlet* and *pinch* in *The Tempest*. Although the readings that Crane produces may seem similar to the ones proposed by some of the authors mentioned above, she draws on a different theory of meaning and, consequently, her analyses reveal different features of Shakespeare's art and style.<sup>1</sup>

Like Crane's book, this essay focuses on the analysis of a word that corresponds to two homonyms whose meanings were being extended in Early Modern English to become polysemous: the noun *pawn*. Although this noun has five different entries in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*), attention will be paid only to *pawn n.*<sup>1</sup> and *pawn n.*<sup>2</sup>, as they are the ones which are relevant to my purpose here. According to the *OED*, *pawn (n.*<sup>1</sup>*)* is, in its first sense, “One of the pieces of smallest value in the game of chess.” It comes from Latin *pedo*, *pedōn-em* (in med. Latin a foot-soldier) and enters the English language in the fourteenth century through French (the chess sense was in Old French in 13<sup>th</sup> century). Later on (14<sup>th</sup> c.), it develops a figurative sense to refer to a person. On the other hand, *pawn (n.*<sup>2</sup>*)* is borrowed into Middle English from Old French *pan* (“pledge, security, surety”), the source of which could be either Romanic (L. *panus*) or Teutonic (WGer. *pand*) (see *OED*). In Early Modern English its primary sense is “A thing (or person) given,

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<sup>1</sup> Cognitive theory – Crane claims – offers “more than a materialist or historicist supplement to formalism, providing in addition a way of tracing in the text the interactions between culture, language, and cognition” (2001:25). She then goes on to spell out in detail those aspects in which her cognitive approach to the Shakespearean lexicon differs from previous studies on words, such as Empson's or Parker's, among others (2001:29-33).

deposited, or left in another's keeping, as security for a debt or for the performance of some action." Like *pawn* (n.<sup>1</sup>), its meaning was also extended later to apply specifically to human beings: "1d. a person held as a pledge or security for debt, and used as a slave."

Surprisingly, in spite not only of this word's stylistic relevance in some Shakespearian passages but also of its semantic potential – confirmed by the fact that it was used punningly by other well-known Elizabethan authors – its exact meaning seems to have passed almost unnoticed by most of the editors of the plays in which it appears; only *King Lear*'s *pawn* (I.i.155) seems finally to be receiving its due attention, as I will show, and in this case only recently. The same lack of attention is to be found in lexicographers, whose definitions and glosses refer almost exclusively to *pawn* (n.<sup>2</sup>) to the detriment of *pawn* (n.<sup>1</sup>), which does not even appear in the major glossaries and dictionaries.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Aims of this essay

The hypothesis put forward in this essay is that Shakespeare was indeed hinting at the various senses of this word and exploiting its punning potential in *King Lear*, but also in *King John* and *The Winter's Tale*, two plays where editorial silence on *pawn* remains almost absolute to date.<sup>3</sup> This suggestion is supported by a series of examples of similar rhetorical exploitation of this polysemic word as found in several contemporary authors. These examples will demonstrate that the various senses of the word were indeed very much alive in Elizabethan England – and, I would dare to say, in Shakespeare's own mind –, and that this word was part of the stock repertoire of puns at the time. Besides, the possibility of gathering evidence from other authors in order to cast some light on Shakespeare's meaning allows me to situate his work in the wider

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Foster (1908), Crystal (2004) or Schmidt (1971). Onions, who does not gloss the chess sense of *pawn*, at least concedes that in *King Lear*, whose *pawn* he explains as "stake", "there may be a reference to the pawn in chess" (Onions 1978:159).

<sup>3</sup> Of the dozens of editions of the three plays consulted for this survey, including Furness's Variorums (see references), only Honigmann (1954) makes a very timid allusion to the game of chess in *King John*; but he does not seem to identify any pun on the two senses of the word, which he glosses simply as "articles in pawn."

cultural and social context in which it was produced (Crane 2001:13; 25). By doing so, I am also trying to avoid not only the risks of taking for granted, and reproducing, the glosses and commentaries accumulated throughout the years but some of the disadvantages of drawing on Shakespeare's own language – and only on his – to explain Shakespeare's language.

Another reason that leads me to believe that there is more to Shakespeare's *pawn* than editors and lexicographers noticed up to now is the way in which the term has been translated into other languages, and more specifically into Spanish. In other words, my suspicion that the exact meaning of *pawn* "is not yet sufficiently explicated" – to borrow Dryden's words again – is reinforced by the fact that the word has given rise to disparate interpretations in some of the most widely read Spanish translations of *King Lear*, for example. Thus, whereas Valverde (1967) translates *pawn* as "prenda," Conejero *et al.* (1995) and Pujante (1992) opt for "peón" and "apuesta," respectively.<sup>4</sup> In this sense, I would like to think that close readings like the one proposed in this essay can be of some use to those who translate Shakespeare plays and poems, a difficult enterprise – always challenging and very often unfairly underrated – that requires the scholar's erudition, as well as the craftsmanship of the artist.<sup>5</sup>

In the following sections I will firstly present and briefly comment on a few instances of the word *pawn* involving some sort of wordplay from texts by other very well-known Elizabethan authors, namely, John Lyly, Francis Bacon and Thomas Dekker. Then, the

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<sup>4</sup> Astrana (1928) – the author of the most popular and widely-circulated translation of Shakespeare's works in Spanish – also gives "peón". Here are the four translations of Kent's sentence where *pawn* appears: "¡Mi vida! Nunca la he considerado sino como peón, para jugármela contra tus enemigos; ni tengo miedo a perderla, siendo el motivo de tu bien" (Astrana); "Mi vida nunca la he considerado más que como una prenda que poner en juego contra tus enemigos, sin temer jamás perderla cuando era cosa de tu seguridad" (Valverde); "Mi vida nunca fue sino un peón jugado en contra de tus enemigos; nunca temí perderla si era el motivo tu seguridad" (Conejero *et al.*); and "Mi vida siempre tuve por apuesta en las partidas contra tus enemigos y no temo perderla por salvarte" (Pujante).

<sup>5</sup> It might be argued that every new reading (especially when it involves some kind of pun) makes matters even more complicated for translators. However, good translators manage to push the resources of a language very far, and in view of the highly imaginative solutions that the aforementioned translators have come up with for other extremely difficult passages, I am convinced that they are not easily put off.

three Shakespearian passages that the essay is concerned with will be discussed, starting with the instance in *King Lear*, followed by those in *King John* and *The Winter's Tale*. For the “pawns” in these last two plays, I will be proposing some alternative interpretations which, far from invalidating previous ones, may serve, I hope, to complement and enrich them. The essay concludes that, as so often with Shakespeare, there may be more to an apparently unambiguous word than the notes and glosses of editors and lexicographers would lead us to believe; and so that, in the case of Shakespeare's texts, Ruskin's advice is worth keeping in mind today.

### 3. *Pawn* in Early Modern English literature

The earliest documented usage of *pawn* (*n.*<sup>1</sup>) – the homonym that denotes the chess piece – dates according to the *OED* from towards the beginning of the Late Middle English period (1369).<sup>6</sup> Out of this primary sense a figurative one developed in Early Modern English which came to extend the meaning of the noun to refer to human beings as well: “**b. fig.** usually of a person” (*OED*). This new sense is first documented in 1589, with a quotation from *Pappe with an Hatchet*, a famous pamphlet attributed to John Lyly as his contribution to the Martin Marprelate controversy on the side of the Anglican bishops. The nature of the controversy is relevant for reasons that the text of the pamphlet will make clear:

If a *Martin* can play at chestes as well, as his nephewe the ape, he shall knowe what it is for a scaddle pawne to crosse a Bishop in his owne walke. Such dydoppers must be taken vp, els theile not stick to check the king. (Lyly 1589 [1902. vol III]:394-395)

It may not be out of place to remember that the word *Bishop* was also used in Early Middle English to refer to the chess piece, hitherto known as *archer*, *prince* (*OED* 9. *Obs. rare*) or, still earlier, *alfin*. Incidentally, although this is the *OED*'s first quotation for this figurative use of *pawn*, John Lyly had already used the word with the same sense a few years earlier in *Euphues* (1578). Moreover, and this is perhaps more interesting, in this work the word also appears in a

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<sup>6</sup> For the periods in the history of English, I am using the same conventions as Traugott and Dasher (2002:xiv).

context in which the game of love and the game of chess are made to coalesce into a metaphor built upon several key words:

Ah, *Liulia*, *Liulia*, thy courtly grace [...] haue giuen me such a checke [that] sure I am at the next view of thy vertues I shall take thee mate: And taking it not of a pawn but of a prince [the] loss is to be accompted the lesse. And though they be comonly in a great choler that receiue the mate, yet would I willingly take euery minute [the] mates to enioy Liuia for my louing mate. (Lyly 1578 [1902 vol I]:212-213; my emphasis)

Whether or not Shakespeare ever read this passage is not necessarily relevant. What is important is the currency of the chess metaphor and its vocabulary for the possibilities that they afforded authors prone to punning and wordplay. Be that as it may, it seems more than likely that Shakespeare knew of Lyly's work. Critics have drawn our attention to Falstaff's parody of his euphuistic style in *Henry IV I* (Bevington 1998:199; 266), to a passage from *Euphues* as the source for the simile of the honey-bees in *Henry V* (see, e.g., Humphreys 1968, or Bulman 1985:37) or to the speech of Capulet's old servant in *Romeo and Juliet* (I.ii.34-61) in which Shakespeare ridicules the outworn conventions of Lyly's famous work (see, e.g. Tilley 1926).

The word *pawn* also occurs in a more serious play on words found in Francis Bacon's "Apologie [in Certaine Imputations Concerning the Late Earle of Essex]" (1604) to Queen Elizabeth. Towards the end of the text, Bacon expresses his feelings to the Queen after having fallen from her favour, likening himself to an insignificant pawn before the king (note the pun on a *pawn-upon* in the last sentence):

I dealt with her plainly; and said, Madam, I see you withdraw your favour from me, and now I have lost many friends for your sake, I shall lose you too: you have put me like one of those that the Frenchmen call *enfants perdus*, that serve on foot before horsemen, so have you put me into matters of envy without place, or without strength; and I know at chess a pawn before the king is ever much played upon. (Bacon 1604 [1857]:155)

The metaphor of the game of chess, a symbolic reflection of social order, is now turned upside down by Bacon to represent the real facts of life: his dramatic downfall in the social hierarchy from his role as a "knight" to that of a horseless, insignificant "pawn."

Again, there is no sure way to know if Shakespeare was acquainted with the text of the “Apologie,” let alone whether he may have found in it any inspiration for his own material. What we do know is that the letter was widely circulated, with a second impression issued in 1605 (Coquillette 1992:185). After all, this was Bacon’s aim in writing it: to defend himself publicly to “the vulgar sort,” against charges of being “false or unthankful” to the Earl of Essex.

The polysemic nature of *pawn* (*n.*<sup>1</sup>) already makes it an attractive and dynamic term for a Renaissance audience. If we add to this the literal and figurative senses of its homonym *pawn* (*n.*<sup>2</sup>), noted above, it is not difficult to understand why the word did not go unnoticed by Renaissance authors so sensitive to puns, quibbles and all sorts of wordplay. One of them, Thomas Dekker, takes advantage of the various senses that converge in this word in two of his works, “News from Hell” and *The Whore of Babylon*, both written around the same year (1606-1607). In both, he quibbles doubly on the same words, *pawn* and *knight*, giving rise to a double antanaclasis. Here is the text of “News from Hell:”

[...] because when I prepared to fight a battle on the chess-board, a knight was always better than a pawn: but the usurer my uncle made it plain, that a good pawn now was better then a knight.

The pun here hinges on the two senses of *knight* (chess piece and “man of noble birth and high social rank”) and *pawn* (chess piece and “pledge or security for debt”). The same pun is repeated in the form of a dialogue between Titania and Plain Dealing in *The Whore of Babylon*:

PLAIN DEALING. [...] It is the strangest chessboard in the world.

TITANIA. Why?

PLAIN D. Because in some games at chess knights are better than pawns, but here a good pawn is better than a knight. (*The Whore of Babylon* II.i.94-97)

In both cases what is highlighted with this pun is the great distance that exists between the old order, symbolized in the game of chess, where knights are worthier than pawns, and the harsh reality of the material world, where a good pawn, *i.e.*, money, is more highly valued than social position. Through this pun, Dekker

manages to fuse economic and social values, hinting at their evolution as seen through the evolution of the form *pawn*.<sup>7</sup>

## 4. *Pawns* in Shakespeare

### 4.1. *King Lear's pawn*

The repeated occurrence of these various quibbles on *pawn* suggests that Shakespeare must have been familiar with, and aware of, the stylistic potential of the word. Besides, even though allusions to the game may be rare in Shakespeare (Loughrey and Taylor 1982:13), that does not necessarily mean that he was not familiar with the game, as direct references to it appear in his plays – think of Ferdinand and Miranda engaged in a chess game in *The Tempest* (see, e.g., Poole 2004)<sup>8</sup> –, and some nouns and verbs like *check*, *mate* and even *pawn* seem to have been used by Shakespeare in a chess sense.<sup>9</sup> Besides, as Yachnin (1982) convincingly argues, one does not have to know or love the game to draw on its metaphors if need arises. James I himself had publicly declared his dislike for the game, but he had no qualms in invoking its authority in a speech before Parliament:

[Kings] have power to exalt low things, and abase high things,  
and make of their subjects like men at the Chesse; a pawne to take

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<sup>7</sup> Still one further example of the punning possibilities of this word is to be found in Jonson's *The Magnetic Lady*, not mentioned above because it involves a sense of the noun not used by Shakespeare: *pawn*, n.3 = a peacock (OED). See the note in Happé's edition (2000:67).

<sup>8</sup> In his edition of Middleton's *A Game at Chess*, Howard-Hill (1993) also includes *The Tempest* among the contemporary plays with references to chess. He talks about "the power of chess as a dramatic metaphor" fostered by the popularity of the game in Shakespeare's England and before: "Chess had a long history in European allegory, in which Caxton's *The Game and Play of Chess* (1475) is the Earliest English representative, and chess play had already been shown on stage (e.g. Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Fletcher's *The Spanish Curate*) when Middleton began to consider his play" (1997:28). Harper thinks likewise (1966). For a different view of the popularity of chess in Shakespeare's England, see Pujante (1985:15; and the introduction to his translation of Middleton's famous play into Spanish [1983]:33-34).

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the editorial comments on *queen* and *check* in *King John* II.i.123 and V.i.73 (Braunmuller 1989), *mate* in 2 *Henry VI* III.i.264 (Knowles 1999) and *The Taming of the Shrew* I.i.58 (Oliver 1982), or *pawn* in *King Lear* I.i.155 (Wells 2000).



a Bishop or a Knight, and to cry up, or downe any of their subjects.<sup>10</sup>

There seems to be little doubt today that Shakespeare exploits the homonymic and polysemic nature of the noun *pawn*, at least in *King Lear*, the only play in which editors seem now to agree that the chess sense is relevant to the context in which the word appears. The word occurs in the course of the heated argument between Lear and Kent in the opening scene, where the latter tries to convince Lear that his “youngest daughter [Cordelia] loves thee [Lear] not least.” The king orders Kent to stop but he insists. Lear warns him: “Kent, on thy life, no more.” Kent, picking up Lear’s *life*, replies:

My life I never held but as a pawn,  
To wage against thine enemies, never feared to lose it,  
Thy safety being motive. (*King Lear* I.i.155)

The quibble on *pawn* has indeed been pointed out by one of the play’s recent editors, Stanley Wells, who remarks: “pawn ... wage. Stake to wager (with a glance at the sense of *pawn* as the piece of lowest value in the game of chess)” (2000:108). Thus, in Kent’s words, the metaphor presents the double perspective made possible by at least two of the senses of *pawn*, supported and reinforced by *wage* (meaning both “to pledge” and “to make war”). On the one hand, Kent considers his life a pledge to be waged or staked in a war against the King’s enemies. On the other, in a soldier-like manner, he boasts that he never considered his life and himself but as a *pawn* or humble servant at his king’s service, waging war against those same enemies.

Even though nowadays Kent’s *pawn* is probably one of the few widely-acknowledged references to chess in Shakespeare, its editorial history demonstrates that Blake’s complaint about the lack of interest in studying Shakespeare’s language is not without foundation. The first editor to suggest that *pawn* here might refer to the chess piece was, according to Furness, Capell: “154 pawn] STEEVENS: That is, a pledge. CAPELL, followed by HEANLEY, strangely thinks that this refers to the pawn in a game of chess” (Furness 1880:24). In the twentieth century, as new critical editions of the play were published, *pawn* began to attract the attention of editors as a polysemic noun and, what is more important, Capell’s hypothesis of

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<sup>10</sup> Speech to Parliament, 21 March 1609 (qtd Yachnin 1982:317).

the *pawn* = chess piece seemed to gain ground. Thus, W. J. Craig, the editor of the Arden Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1901), differs slightly from previous editors in glossing *pawn* as "a stake which is hazarded in a wager," pointing out that this is "the only instance in Shakespeare of its use in this sense [...] he usually employs the word in the sense of pledge, something given as a security" (1901:15). Moreover, Craig, like Furness, also mentions Capell's reading, but unlike his predecessor he does not find it so far fetched: "Capell thinks there is an allusion to the game of chess" (*ibid.*). Later on, Kenneth Muir, Craig's successor as the editor of *King Lear* for the Arden Shakespeare (1952), contributes to the debate by providing some further evidence of the semantic complexity of the word. In his gloss to Kent's speech, he also interprets *pawn* to mean "a stake hazarded in a wager," and agrees with Capell that the noun is indeed usually employed by Shakespeare in the sense of pledge, but disagrees with him in his view that this is the only instance of its use in this sense in Shakespeare by pointing out two other quotations where *pawn* (v.) is used in the sense of stake: *Cymbeline*, I.iv.19 and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I.ii.83 (Muir 1952:13). In addition, Muir insists on Capell's hypothesis, which he seems to share: "Capell thought there was an allusion to the game of chess, and there may have been a concealed pun" (*ibid.*).

Some might argue that Muir, who had just published his well-known essay on serious puns in *Macbeth* (Muir 1950), must have found this an irresistible "uncomic pun." Be that as it may, the fact remains that today the editors who, following Muir, adhere to Capell's reading are more numerous than those who do not mention it.<sup>11</sup> For example, J. L. Halio, the editor of *The New Cambridge Shakespeare's King Lear*, glosses *pawn* as stake ("as in a wager"), and also agrees that the word "may involve a metaphor from chess" (1992:104). Mowatt and Werstine (1993:16) also find a play on words and explain *pawn* as "(1) something to be set at risk; (2) Chess piece of least value." Andrews (1993:14) introduces an interesting semantic nuance by distinguishing the figurative (b) and the literal (c) senses of the chess piece: "Pawn, (a) pledge (as in a gauntlet cast down to engage a man in chivalric combat), (b) lowly servant, and (c) humble

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<sup>11</sup> R.A. Foakes, editor of *King Lear* for the Arden 3rd series, does not seem to share Craig's and Muir's view, however. He glosses *pawn* only as "Pledge, to fight" (1997:168).

chess piece.” More recently, the quibble on the various senses of *pawn* has also been pointed out by Wells (2000:108), whose gloss has already been given above: “pawn ... wage. Stake to wager (with a glance at the sense of *pawn* as the piece of lowest value in the game of chess).”

#### 4.2. Chess and *pawns* in *King John*

Far less popular than *King Lear*, *King John* has received comparatively less attention and, in consequence, the figurative use of *pawn* in this play has gone practically unnoticed. The noun appears in plural form in V.ii, in the course of the speech delivered by Philip the Bastard before Louis the Dauphin on behalf of the King of England, in which he makes clear the consequences of failing to surrender. If they do not put down their arms, Philip warns them, the English King will fight them with the same hand that

[...] had the strength, even at your door,  
To cudgel you and make you take the hatch,  
To dive like buckets in concealed wells,  
To crouch in litter of your stable planks,  
To lie like pawns lock'd up in chests and trunks. (*King John*  
V.ii.141)

As can be seen, the context in which *pawns* appears in *King John* is very similar to that of *King Lear*. In both plays, the noun is used figuratively to refer to soldiers who serve their King. But whereas in *King Lear* Kent's likening of himself to a pawn brings into relief his soldierly qualities of humbleness and obedience, in *King John* what is brought into prominence is the poor quality of the French army, whose soldiers are characterized as pieces of the smallest value.

Once again, the play on *pawn* gives rise to a two-fold image: on the one hand, for the English, the French soldiers are nothing but objects left as security for a loan, locked up, and hence useless (Braunmuller 1989:252); and on the other hand, helped by the homophony *chests* = *chess* (see *OED chess*, n1 1.b), they appear as simple pawns, foot soldiers of the lowest rank, locked up in a game of chess = war, another recurring metaphor.

All the major editions I have consulted gloss *pawn* as “articles in pawn” or “pawned goods.”<sup>12</sup> Loughrey and Taylor (1982:13), in their article on the chess game in *The Tempest*, venture to suggest very tentatively that this could be one of only three references to chess in Shakespeare, together with Kent’s *pawn* in *King Lear* and another line from *King John* (1.1.155) where the words *queen* and *check* feature; but none of these, they say, is definitely an allusion to chess. However, it seems to me that Philip’s speech certainly contains a chess allusion, which can be plausibly explained not only on the grounds of the examples from Shakespeare’s contemporaries given earlier, but also with reference to his own words elsewhere in this play. Indeed, a few lines earlier, Philip the Bastard, angry that such an inexperienced soldier as the Dauphin dares to challenge the English, encourages his king to declare war on the French by using another chess word, *check*:

Shall a beardless boy  
A cocker’d silver wanton, brave our fields  
Flesh his spirits in a warlike soil [...]  
And find no check? (*King John* V.i.69-73)

It must be remembered that this word had already appeared at the beginning of the play in another chess metaphor/pun, the second most widely acknowledged reference to chess in Shakespeare after *King Lear*’s:<sup>13</sup>

Queen Eleanor [to Constance]:  
Out, insolent! Thy bastard shall be king  
That thou mayst be a queen and check the world. (*King John*  
II.i.123)

I do not think it is accidental either that only six lines before Philip calls the French soldiers “pawns” he has already insulted

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<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., Wilson (1936), Matchet (1966), Smallwood (1974), Bevington (1980), Evans (1997) or Beaurline (1990). As was pointed out earlier (see note 3, above), Honigsmann (1954) is the only editor who suggests a play on words in this passage, but in *chess*. In his gloss to “chests and trunks” he says: “chests (= chess) and trunks (a kind of billiards) were games, chests involving pawns, so he hints that the English played with the French” (130). In her *Dictionary of Shakespeare’s Semantic Wordplay*, G. West (1998) also points out this pun: “The Bastard claims that in France King John has already put the French to rout and shown he has “the strength [...] to make you take the hatch [...] to lie like PAWNS lock’d up in CHESTS and trunks.” Chess is spelled chests etc in OED’s 16th and 17th century examples” (West 1998:28).

<sup>13</sup> See references to glosses and notes on this pun in note 9 above.

them and questioned their “stature” as soldiers by referring to them as “boyish troops [...] this dwarfish war, these pigmy arms” (V.ii.133-135).

#### 4.3. *Pawn in The Winter’s Tale*

The word *pawn* appears three times in *The Winter’s Tale*: once in Act II (iii.165), and twice in Act IV (iv.801 and 816). In IV.iv., the words occur in close proximity, first pronounced by one character and then picked up and repeated by another. Although editors of the play take the word to be used in the same sense in the play – “pledge” (*pawn* n.<sup>2</sup>) –, <sup>14</sup> I suspect that its second occurrence in Act IV may also hint at one of the figurative senses of *pawn* n<sup>1</sup>. This is the context in which the words occur. In scene iv, the Clown and his father, the Old Shepherd, bump into Autolycus the rogue on their way to the king’s palace. Autolycus pretends to be a courtier, “one that will either push on or pluck back thy business there” (IV.i.731-732). The gullible rustics are fooled (“He seems to be of great authority,” says the Clown [794]), and offer him some gold to have their business undertaken for them at court: “Old Shepherd: Here is that gold I have. I’ll make it as much more, and leave this young man in pawn till I bring it you” (800-803). Here, the Old Shepherd uses “pawn” in its sense of “pledge”, i.e., he will leave his son as security for more money. Then the Clown, fearing that they may not be able to reach the palace, offers to double the amount: “Clown: I will give you as much as this old man does when the business is performed, and remain, as he says, your pawn till it be brought you” (814-815).

It seems to me that this second occurrence of *pawn* also involves the sense of *pawn* = “chess piece” when applied figuratively to persons. The context of the conversation in which the words are used would contribute to activate this sense. The Clown’s position on the chessboard of courtly life is that of a *pawn*, while Autolycus has been taken for a knight. In calling himself a “pawn” the Clown is loading the term with the aforementioned connotations of a lower rank, humbleness and even servitude, thus offering himself to Autolycus also as his servant. In other words, by confirming his father’s words

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<sup>14</sup> See editions consulted in References.

("as the old man says") the Clown assumes the sense of *pawn* n.<sup>2</sup>, "thing (or person) left as security for a debt," while simultaneously implying the figurative sense of *pawn* n.<sup>1</sup>, whose connotations turn him into a servant. Moreover, in Shakespeare the collocation "remain + servant" is not infrequent; examples can be found in *Antony and Cleopatra* (V.ii) and *Cymbeline* (I.i.), for instance.

Immediately after the exchange, Autolycus bids them to "Walk before" – an order that the Old Shepherd repeats ("Let's before, as he bids us"). Whether or not these directions have to do with the movements of the *pawn* on the chessboard is difficult to say. However, it may not be irrelevant to point out that in one of the Royal Shakespeare Company productions of *The Winter's Tale* (directed by Matthew Warchus, Stratford upon Avon, 2002), as the Clown offered himself as a *pawn* to Autolycus he took a leap forward, slapping his arms along his body in the posture of a soldier-pawn standing at attention.

## 5. Final remarks

I hope to have been able to show that, despite editorial silence, the word *pawn* still deserves some attention as one more example of Shakespeare's skill at playing with words on the margins of polysemy and homonymy. I also hope I have been able to demonstrate that drawing on the language of his contemporaries as well as on his own can help us cast some light on those dark corners of Shakespeare's meaning that still remain unexplored. Needless to say, whether any of these instances of *pawn* are definite allusions to chess is difficult to say; equally difficult is to determine whether Shakespeare was aiming to produce such readings when he wrote, or if he was conscious of his "choice" of words. In this respect I agree with Crane (2001:29) that we need not imagine that Shakespeare does this consciously, but simply that he does it. And when we suspect that there is the slightest possibility that he may be exploiting the full range of possible meanings available in ways like those I have shown above, then we should not hesitate to take our chances and explore what those meanings might be, for this is the shortest way to get closer to a fuller understanding of Shakespeare's meaning and style – and an effort worth making.

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# Film and the Uncanny, Shakespeare Making Possible Things Not so Held, Communicating with Dreams<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

This essay supports the view that present day cinema as an art form in its own right – rather than film always as adaptation of a literary text – provides an additional pedagogic and comparative opportunity for the analysis of aspects of Shakespeare's early modern texts. The essay takes as point of departure aspects of the uncanny as evoked in the cinematic experience. It then focuses upon aspects of experience and growth, as well as upon problems attached to language and narrativity as these are explored both in film-texts by Pedro Almodóvar and by Eytan Fox, and also in plays by William Shakespeare.

KEYWORDS: Cinema, pedagogic, comparative, experience and growth, language and narrativity, uncanny.

Studies of adaptation seek, amongst other goals, “to understand not individual texts, but rather the relationships that exist between texts.”<sup>2</sup> Comparative studies seek this too, but collocate usually very disparate texts, linked not by processes of adaptation but rather by

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<sup>1</sup> I should like to express my warm gratitude to the various readers of *Sederi Yearbook of the Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies* for extremely helpful criticisms, suggestions and advice in the writing of this essay.

<sup>2</sup> Cutchins, Raw and Welsh (2010): “Introduction.” Dennis Cutchins (2010:107) foregrounds the “persistent double-mindedness” which “the use of film in the classroom” engenders in students, although he speaks in the context specifically of the study of adaptations of literary works. Other more general studies of film and literature, but – differing from my present interest – of film as specific adaptations of literary works, include Davidson (1997); Carroll (2009); and Hopkins (2009).

symmetry of concern. As part of just such a second, comparative, endeavor, I want to collocate certain instances of cinema, one of the great art forms of the twentieth and twenty-first century, with some of Shakespeare's texts. In choosing contemporary cinema I am proposing that we actively use appropriate aspects of our present-day location and its cultural knowledges and practices as one additional point of entry for the study of Shakespeare's early modern work. We are after all, arguably, to a significant extent always, perforce, local readers, inescapably located within our own experience, knowledges and languages. I support, then, the view that films from our own time and place provide one additional opportunity for the reading of Shakespeare's texts.<sup>3</sup> I emphasize, though, that in exploring relationships between aspects of film and aspects of play, I never seek to imply by the terms "cinema" or "film" some kind of adaptation of Shakespeare's plays, or film as servant to the Bard, film as "subaltern" coefficient of a primary, Shakespeare master or mistress "text."<sup>4</sup> In what follows I have in mind, rather, a more dialogic engagement between different cultural artifacts, understood, in their equation, as equal, independent terms.

I begin this essay with brief delineation of some aspects of the uncanny, which the experience of cinema entails. Such aspects suggest not only processes initiated by the cinema, and apparent too

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Simkin (2006).

<sup>4</sup> There has been of course extensive interest in "Shakespeare and Film." Recent works, such as Cartelli and Rowe (2007) or Burnett and Wray (2006) continually broaden our understanding of processes of adaptation as well as increase our sense of the working of cinema. However, although interested in cinema, such or other work is always ultimately fixated on the Shakespeare text as origin and the particular film in question as adaptation. Keller (2004:1) for instance, seeks "sightings of Shakespeare" in popular culture, and "Shakespeare's artistic legacy" or "films that 're-cognise' Shakespeare, using him to support their social message." Starks and Lehman trace "the trajectory of Shakespearean cinema from its early role as agent of cultural mediation to its later incarnation as an agent of ideological agitation...disclosing the untold story of Shakespeare renaissance in the film industry while investigating the implications of our enduring fascination with the unspeakable preoccupations of this prolific playwright" (2002:20). Recently, even on a thread in the Shaksper List, regarding research into Shakespeare and Film, one correspondent writes of David Bevington's collection on the subject, "Yes, we did use [...] Bevington's text and as a teacher, I can say I found his book provided just the right context, one that included a balanced examination of text and film, with some energy devoted to live performance. In short, while students viewed comparative scenes from, say, four Macbeths, they never lose sight of the text and its primacy" (James 2010).

in the theatre experience but evident also in Shakespeare's plays. To illustrate this further I focus upon selected intersections of the presentation of education, growth, and problems of narrativity in Pedro Almodóvar's *Bad Education*, and in William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. The political unease evident in these two works as this relates to growth and education becomes my focal point in examining, more briefly, related aspects of Eytan Fox's *The Bubble* and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. These two works, in their presentation of youth, and matters of language, knowledge and education, foreground, especially, the political uncanny.

# 1

Certain aspects of Sigmund Freud's discussion of the uncanny lend themselves to consideration of the phenomenon of the uncanny precipitated by the cinematic experience. Freud (2003:134) famously argues that the uncanny denotes the apprehension of or the return of something strangely, disturbingly, familiar. He suggests, too, that a sense of the uncanny also involves in part "the idea of a 'double' (the *Doppelgänger*) [...] a person may identify himself [or herself] with another and so become unsure of his [or her] own true self, or [s]he may substitute the other's self for his [or her] own. The self may thus be duplicated, divided and interchanged" (Freud 2003:142). In her discussion of Freud's *das Unheimlich* (the uncanny, the "unhomely"), Susan Linville, (2004) helpfully uses the term "unhomey" for the uncanny, and, for Freud's *das Heimlich* (the familiar, the "homely") the term "homey." The process of doubling is, as Freud argues it, itself both "homey" and "unhomey," both a "defence against annihilation" and the "uncanny harbinger of death" (Freud 2003:142). For Freud, the uncanny brings with it, as well, a "feeling of helplessness that recalls the helplessness we feel in certain dream states" (144). It has the "feature of the unintentional return" (144).

In the cinema, as Nicholas Royle (2003:79) has it, "you are [always] in the dark and 'on your own,' in various ways, reminded of, and engaging in 'dream-work'" (77), confronted by celluloid images or by the "doubles" emanating from the "celluloid ghosts of ... actors' bodies" (78). Crucially, behind the silver screen there is nothing. The willingness of present-day audiences to return again and again to what the unknown darkness of the cinema may

prevision, is in itself suggestive of, on the one hand, a homey habit of return to a dream-like condition but on the other hand a return whose outcome remains partly unknown and potentially also unhomey, uncanny, always there and not there.

The uncanny is in its effects nothing if not complex. Freud himself emphasizes the aspect of terror that the uncanny entails, involving "a frightening element [...] something that has been repressed and now returns. This species of the frightening [...] would then constitute the uncanny" (2003:147). But Freud recognizes at once that the terror is mixed, also "homey" and familiar. "[T]his uncanny element is actually nothing new or strange, but something that was long familiar in the psyche and was estranged from it only through being repressed" (148). The (only temporary) darkness of the cinema auditorium enables the audience, within the fixed time of screen presentation, more easily to engage with or "play" with what appears, too, strangely familiar. Susan Linville noting the "potentially frightening interchangeability, doubling and lack of clear boundaries" that words such as "canny" and "uncanny" or "heimlich" and "unheimlich" themselves denote, observes at the same time that "[a]lthough such uncertainty is potentially terrifying in life, as Freud indicates, in art and literature, aestheticization can render such ambivalence enjoyably terrifying" (2004:16). Such "enjoyably terrifying" play, moreover, can have a range of implication. It may for instance represent, as Mark Pizzato suggests, inner mental processes,<sup>5</sup> display, as Susan Linville argues, deconstructive energy (Linville 2004:19-20),<sup>6</sup> or again, provide, as Maurizio Calbi and others maintain, means of addressing the

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<sup>5</sup> Pizzato suggests the extent to which characters both onscreen and onstage, "are phantom limb figures and spectral personalities projected from numerous neuronal mappings of Self and Other in the intersubjective, yet alienated, human brains of writer, directors, actors, technicians and spectators – through the creative sharing of specific plots and embodiments on the stage or screen" (2006:203).

<sup>6</sup> Linville in her critique of Freud's essay takes up this aspect, to propose for the "aesthetics of the uncanny", too, its "deconstructionist potential" as in Bhaba's argument which she cites, that "feminism makes 'visible the forgetting of the 'unhomely' moment in civil society" (1994:10-11). It thereby reveals "the patriarchal, gendered nature of civil society and disturbs the symmetry of private and public which is now shadowed or uncannily doubled by the difference of genders which does not neatly map onto the private and public but becomes disturbingly supplementary to them."

“other” in the self.<sup>7</sup> Such instances of play help to account too, for those very elements of attractiveness (the “homey-ness”) in the uncanny, despite its simultaneous “unhomey-ness.”

The uncanny is then, as is the case with our revisits to the cinema, compellingly reiterative but in mixed ways. In the darkness of the cinema auditorium the audience undertakes repeatedly not only to entertain sometimes pleasurable identification with the screen’s dream figures, but also to assume instabilities in identity and experience that partly informs imaginative engagement with “screen” characters, “screen” landscape, “screen” action. The element of the unknowable and the dangerous, attached to the uncanny that characterizes also the unpredictable turns of cinematic experience, may, lastly, also be juxtaposed against Freud’s interesting but itself also uncanny reluctance to acknowledge the intellectual uncertainty that the uncanny brings with it. This too is something familiar but frightening. He asks, “where does the uncanny effect of silence, solitude and darkness come from? [...] these are conditions under which children are most often seen to express fear” (2003:253). Freud ponders here the strangely disturbing, the “not fully knowing what we think we know or experience,” that childhood experiences, one amongst several marks of the uncanny. Significantly though, as if he himself enacts his own fears of it, from the start, but also intermittently throughout the essay, Freud repeatedly seeks to minimize the contention that the uncanny entails “intellectual uncertainty” (125). That this suggests an effort at repression or denial, however, at one point betrays itself directly. After discussing the fear of children, Freud admits: “And can we completely discount the element of intellectual uncertainty,

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<sup>7</sup> Thus Calbi discussing the play of the uncanny and focusing on aspects of the relation between images of the “foreign” and the viewer, observes, “as both Freud and Lacan insist, although in slightly different terms, the ‘estranging’ and foreign image that keeps on returning from without, is nothing but one’s own projected image” (2005:28). Linville notes how, from the 1980s, “theorists increasingly reworked Freud’s theory to historicize uncanniness within the frameworks of the ethnic, racial and sexual dynamics of particular nations, cultures and histories and especially in relation to post-colonialism, migratory labour and globalization” and she notes Julia Kristeva’s focus “on the foreignness of migrant workers within the modern metropolitan nation and on the correspondence between these strangers without and the uncanny strangers that exist within the psyches of native citizens” (2004:18).

given that we have admitted its importance in relation to the link between the uncanny and death" (153).

In these, amongst many other ways, it may be argued, too, that the movies, albeit commercially, "do" the uncanny – simulate the frightening and the non-comprehendable or fully knowable, as well as simulate playful aspects of the "there" and "not there-ness" of human experience – more successfully nowadays than a twentieth-first century performance theatre demonstrably on the decline. But the experience of cinema still helps to foreground for us what it is that, ultimately similarly, once enthralled or still, to a degree, enthralls stage audiences. As in the cinema, there is only on stage, for the moment of performance, a (ghostly) enacted "presence." In the theatre, we are, too, in the presence of stage sets and design (at least in present-day theatre performance) that are fabrications of a non-existent location, and in the "presence" of adults who "play" roles, who are uncannily "scripted," there on the stage, but not there, doubled, actors who "play" characters. In the theatre auditorium there are, too, adults, themselves en-scripted by their own discursive cultures and education but clearly willing to "play" – to engage in "dream-work" – with what may be both there in front of them on the stage, but not there, or with what may or may not be within themselves.

In such contexts, what used to be called "the willing suspension of disbelief" is now for us too easy a description for the complicated processes that may ensue from the agreement adults make when they watch a play that simulates, or re-shuffles, "life." Audiences in a theatre, like audiences in the cinema, allow an uncanny bringing into question, or "play", of who or what is "there" on stage. In this, they may be said, too, to entertain apprehension of the invasive or inflexible "there" and "not-thereness" of experience, or of learned (discursive) knowledges – sometimes, the presence or absence of their own learned knowledges, or the possibility of other knowledges. They face for duration of screening or performance, a bringing into question of who or what they themselves are, have been taught they are, or may be.



## 2

If experience can only be identified by means of language, both visual and verbal, we have long since registered the “there” and the “not-there-ness” that inevitably attaches to aspects of any narrative attempting to identify or report experience. The embodying or discursively constructionist nature of all language has also long since been noted. Such concerns are readily discoverable in aspects of the camera’s gaze in the schoolboy visit-to-the-country sequence from *Bad Education* to which I now turn.<sup>8</sup> They are evident, too, I will later argue, in the presentation of Leontes’s gaze in the early acts of *The Winter’s Tale*.

*Bad Education* is a film self-reflexively engaged with the uncanny nature of a schooled, rigorous (fascist and theological) “scripting” that nonetheless produces in the adults who emerge from it – in assumedly mature, that is, conventionally imagined, adult identities – a “not there-ness.”<sup>9</sup> It contemplates a “schooled” scripting that is, instead, in its impact and consequences, dislocatory and disjunctive. Almodóvar indicates in his film the institutionalized education of fascist Franco’s Catholic Spain, for example, by means of shots indexing sadistic authority and regimentation, juxtaposed repeatedly against images of boyhood rendered vulnerable to its practices and its discursive insistences. These are processes of educative growth that produce a doubleness in experience. A doubleness notably underlined, at the end of the schoolboy visit-to-the-country sequence by the close-up of the face of the child Ignacio. Literally split by such educative practice and the violent experience it masks, Ignacio says, after his literature teacher has tried sexually to abuse him, “Un hilo de sangre dividía mi frente en dos, y tuve el presentimiento de que con mi vida ocurriría lo mismo. Siempre estaría dividida y yo no podría hacer nada para evitarlo” [A trickle of blood divided my forehead into two. I had the feeling the same thing would happen with my life. It would always be divided and I couldn’t help it].

Amongst the multiple aspects of the working of the camera’s gaze during this sequence, we may briefly list Almodóvar’s use of

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<sup>8</sup> I use the translations provided in the Pathé edition of the DVD.

<sup>9</sup> The film is discussed in D’Lugo (2006); Strauss (2006); Acevedo-Muñoz (2007); Sotinel (2010).

panning shots from right to left, which suggest, against the more lyrical effects of the semi pastoral images or the lyrical aspects of the music-over sound track, a mood of unease. Indeed the song itself mingles haunting melody with lyrics that again indicate Almodóvar's interest in the mixedness, doubleness, unknowability of human experience.<sup>10</sup> Almodóvar uses multiple other cinematic devices to qualify or complicate his pastoral iconography. The closed frame shots of the bamboo undergrowth suggest a claustrophobic impenetrable containment of, at the same time, shots presenting ostensible youthful pastoral beauty. Again, the fixed unchanging proxemic range that separates the singing Ignacio and his teacher, the expressions we see on each, the one uneasy, the other timidly provocative, underline the boy's vulnerability and powerlessness. The long shot of him falling to the ground is yet a further filmic device that underlines the boy's complete aloneness.

If the gaze of cinema, and its consequent meanings, is in such or other ways partly the product of multiple camera and editing techniques, the early modern gaze may be said to be partly the product of the use of "technologies" of the tongue, that is, of rhetoric. It is true of course that while the cinematic audience is always dependent on the gaze of the camera, theatrical audiences

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<sup>10</sup> The song alludes to *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, a film in which Audrey Hepburn sings a song about two drifters, the subject of the film. *Bad Education* is also about two drifters (Ignacio and Enrique). Almodóvar rewrote the lyrics of the song for his film: "Moon river... no te olvidaré, | yo no me dejaré llevar | por el agua, agua turbia | del río de la luna | que suena al pasar. | Río y luna, dime dónde están, | mi dios, el bien y el mal, | decid. | Yo quiero saber | qué se esconde en la oscuridad | y tú lo encontrarás, | río y luna... adiós. | Mi luna, ven y alúmbrame, | no sé ni dónde estoy, por qué. | Oigo el rumor de aguas turbias | que me llevan lejos, muy lejos de mí. | Moon river... dime dónde están | mi dios, el bien y el mal, | decid. | Yo quiero saber | qué se esconde en la oscuridad | y tú lo encontrarás, Moon river... adiós." A loose translation of this version follows: "Moon river... I will not forget you, | I will not get carried away | By the water, muddy water | Of the river of the moon | Which sounds like happening. | River and moon, tell me where they are, | My god, right and wrong, | Tell me. | I want to know | What he hides in the dark | And will you find it, | River and moon... good-bye. | My moon, come and light me, | I know neither where I am nor why. | I hear the rumor of muddy waters | - they take me far, very far from myself. | Moon river[...] tell me where they are | My god, right and wrong, | Tell me. | I want to know | What he hides in the dark | And if will you find it, | Moon River... Goodbye" (taken from the internet: <http://ask.metafilter.com/14841/Moon-River-to-Spanish-via-Almodóvar-and-back-into-English>).

may more readily observe several gazes on stage. Indeed, although I have space to focus only on aspects of Leontes's diseased gaze, *The Winter's Tale* balances Leontes's particular, diseased gaze against that of others, most notably Hermione's and Paulina's, suggesting, in the argument of Susan Snyder and Deborah T. Curren-Aquino in the final scene, "a new, more exclusive patriarchal structure (at least by early modern standards), one in which the female presence emerges as strong, vibrant, assertive, and perhaps, most important, desirable" (2007:57).<sup>11</sup>

In the case of Leontes's particular gaze, cinematic techniques involved in the camera's gaze, are analogous to the rhetorical devices upon which he notably depends to clothe, identify, or articulate into being (schooled) hauntings of misogynist anxiety about the body and its sexuality. Certain of Leontes's extended early speeches in Act I register directly the potential ambiguity that is one condition within which the human gaze must operate: the "entertainment" he sees "may" be one thing or "may" be (like the cinematic dependence on particular techniques of camera photography and editing) another (I.ii.107-117). Indeed, during the lines containing the famous crux on "affection" his language registers further how projects of the mind may be lost in the language used to articulate them, may make "possible things not so held," may communicate [like the cinema] "with dreams [...] With what's unreal [...] [be] coactive" to fellow "nothing" (I.ii.137-141).

To handle, simplify and resolve his discursively learned fear of what he sees in the friendship between his pregnant wife and his close friend, with its culturally invited early modern misogynist ambiguities, he draws also in the opening act of the play on a plethora of rhetorical devices. In "But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers, | As now they are, and making practised smiles | As in a looking-glass, and then to sigh, as 'twere | The mort o'th'deer" (I.ii.114-117) or in, "[y]et they say we are | Almost as like as eggs – women say so, | That will say anything. But were they false | As o'er-dyed blacks, as wind, as waters, false | As dice are to be wished by one that fixes | No bourn 'twixt his and mine, yet were it true [...]" (I.II.128-133), he turns from one simile to another to convince himself

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<sup>11</sup> All quotations from *The Winter's Tale* are taken from Snyder and Curren-Aquino (2007).

that his (culturally learned) fears are reliable. Some of these comparisons are, in turn, also significantly proverbial and a glance at Snyder and Curren-Aquino (2007) shows how reliant Leontes also becomes upon such learned culturally reassuring proverbial articulation about experience to “order” his inner uncertainties. Proverbs were a respected rhetorical device in the early modern period, and hundreds of them were memorized at school. But in the manner in which Polonius in *Hamlet* uses them, or, indeed, as dramatic characters elsewhere in Shakespeare’s plays sometimes do, as easy and learned “authoritative” points of reference, proverbs can in such usages be an index of either, in Polonius’s case a conventional and lazy gaze, or, elsewhere the mistaken, insecure or anxious attempt to gloss over or contain the complexity or sometimes alarming incomprehensibility of experience. Thus Leontes, again to clothe his gaze, sometimes draws on the learned proverbial imagery of cuckoldry, referring not simply, and rather indirectly to that which his “brows” like not (I.ii.118) but specifically to the category of “neat” animals, “the steer, the heifer, and the calf” (123), or to the “rough pash, and the shoots that I have” (I.ii.127). Other of his inflammatory images is similarly indicative of overheated reliance, in the articulation of his gaze, upon “technologies” of rhetoric. Such repetitions foreground not merely the “infected” nature of the gaze of Leontes, but the uncanny doubleness involved in the (learned) discursive languages of the tongue that, like the art of make-up, or gardening, or costuming – or, indeed, the cinema – construct the gaze, em-body the tale.

*Bad Education*’s presentation in the sequence we have looked at, of an admittedly melodramatic but nonetheless iconic incident of violence, itself foregrounds the uncanny “there” and “not there-ness,” even the divisiveness, of present and of past experience or “schoolings,” that reside in memory, that cumulatively by way of visual or verbal language layer and process human comprehension. But Almodóvar and indeed Shakespeare both reflect and explore the intersection of narrativity and growth in human experience, in these works, even more directly.

In *Bad Education*, a succession of complicated visual shots – reminders that our pasts can only be remembered hauntings, known and not known, narrated, moreover, in multiple ways – everywhere layer Almodóvar’s presentation of Ignacio’s story. We might recall

that early in the film, Ignacio's entire tale in the form of a manuscript story entitled "The Visit" is offered to the film director Enrique. At the beginning of the visit-to-the-country sequence, we see Enrique reading Ignacio's account of this incident. As he reads, the audience sees the film Enrique envisions he might make of a tale which (although Ignacio's) is remade cinematically as Enrique's version of it. As we have noted, Ignacio's voice-over leads at once to shots of him singing the song "Moon River," to the accompanying guitar of the teacher priest. These shots are juxtaposed against shots evoking the quasi-pastoral harmony of the picnic as the boys rhythmically dive into or swim in the river. In turn these shots are framed by or juxtaposed against shots not only of the manuscript itself, but of the director Enrique reading the "tale". By such as well as other visual and aural juxtapositions, Almodóvar insistently reminds the cinema audience that what happened between the boy and the teacher has become, now, and can only be, a matter of memory, a re-making that is a haunting, one (amongst multiple) possible ways of "telling" (re-visiting) the past.

The "Ignacio" narrative voice-over, as Enrique reads, and what follows, offers to the audience what will be only one of several visual accounts or enactments or narrations of the same "past," that will in due course unfold in *Bad Education*. Later in the film in a different retelling of the past, Almodóvar intersperses shots of the camera crew filming re-enacted scenes of the tale of "The Visit," or shots of the actors moving out of the "doubling" their roles have, in performance, just required, and into their own everyday lives. Such a filmed enactment of the filming of the tale itself, or of the human beings who have, as actors, recently performed cinematic roles, turning again to their own lives, underlines Enrique's directorial as well as the actors' performative interventions in this particular retelling of the tale. Even later in the film, the literature teacher, Father Manolo in his new identity as the married father and publisher Mr Berenguer will offer yet another account of "The Visit." The past, there and not there, itself, becomes, in the very retellings of it, en-scripted by successive and in each case different (learned) discursive locations of gaze, active intervention, bias.

Such cinematic self-reflexivity implies too, unreliability in narrativity, which is our only means of identifying experience or recalling the past. As we know, each time experience is reiterated it

is also transmuted and re-constructed in the language chosen to articulate it. Experience is in this sense uncannily there and not there, always to be mediated, by those discursive “technologies” verbal and visual, selected in narration. In cinema these are (primarily of course) visual narratives. And as I remarked, by means of its narrative gaze *Bad Education* itself, situates, for audience in film auditorium, or private viewer and computer screen, the learned, discursive, but simultaneously uncanny “fixities” of a Fascist and Catholic Spain, within disjunction and dislocation.

The verbal tissue of *The Winter’s Tale* is similarly infused with a sense of, in physical and mental being and development, a possible sweetness in human experience reiteratively narrated, but at the same time dangerously not known as well as known. The play is also, as in *Bad Education*, haunted by the interface of growth, development, experience itself, on the one hand and education, culture, politics, the “technologies” of narrativity, on the other. It is rich with allusion or reference to education and sexuality, the discursive molding of childhood into adulthood.<sup>12</sup> Thus, as the play begins, we are told that Leontes and Polixenes were “trained together in their childhoods” (I.i.21) and we hear of the court’s expectations for the growth and future its royal children. We witness the presence on stage of a queen, almost at the full term of her pregnancy, surrounded by her son, himself only a child, and his father. During Act 1, Polixenes and Leontes contemplate their own past childhoods. They articulate, at various moments, processes of growing and learning, the acquisition, for instance of doctrines of “ill-doing” (I.ii.69), when Polixenes famously envisages an edenic

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<sup>12</sup> When, amongst the diverse aspects of childhood she explores, Carol Rutter, asks, “Can the adult remember childhood without contaminating it with adult knowingness?” (2007:98), she hints at the problem I am tracing in the present essay, which is the uncanny aspect attached to, in her words again, “growing up. Becoming adult” (100). She argues that contemporary productions of *The Winter’s Tale*, know “more about Shakespeare’s play than criticism does...Theatre knows the play starts with the child” (110). If Rutter is extensively concerned with contemporary theatre performance’s validation of the concern with aspects such as education in the play (see 96-153), I argue that the cinema provides an additional route to this concern, one engaged with the extent to which adult life is “rooted in the past...remember[ed] organically” (112-113). But in the present essay I am interested in this, specifically, as means of foregrounding the play’s concern with the uncanny aspects and effects of institutional education. See also Chedgzoy, Greenhalgh, and Shaughnessy, (2007) and Sommerville (1992).

pastoral boyhood, untainted by that “shameful” sexuality. This (in uncomplicated heterosexist and misogynist mode) he asseverates, albeit in polite jest, only girls and young women in time bring “to cross the eyes” (I.ii.78), of boys and young men. In turn, Leontes envisions the (partly sexual) danger|dagger that might lurk in the business of maturation, one that needs to be “muzzled|Lest it should bite its master and so prove,|As ornaments oft do too dangerous”(I.ii.155-157).<sup>13</sup>

When Leontes ruminates on how “like,” in his own childhood, he was to this “kernel, this squash,” his son Mamilius he challenges his son at one point with the question “Mine honest friend | Will you take eggs for money?” alluding to a proverbial expression, like countless others taught at grammar-school, *To take eggs for money*, which suggests naivety, foolishness, the propensity to be taken advantage of or to be gulled. Pleased at his son’s rejection of this proverbial mode of behaviour – “No, my lord, I’ll fight” replies the boy – he responds again by way of citation of another proverb drawn from learned and taught knowledge, or worldly wisdom, *Happy man be his dole* – which Stephen Orgel glosses as “may your lot be that of a happy man” (1996:104). He thereby now enscripts his son’s future growth with a proverbially cultural wish that in adulthood, he will earn and deserve what his independent reply (which dismisses the particular received proverbially learned warning about propensities for human gullibility) deserves. During her wide ranging examination of Mamillius in the play, Carol Rutter captures the “there” and “not-thereness” of adult constructions of childhood innocence set against its vulnerability when she writes about Leontes’s interactions with his son more generally,

Appallingly [...] we (adult spectators) can see in this scene a father spoiling the imagination, corrupting the son, a black joker prematurely wrecking childhood – Leontes lingo-ing Mamillius. Or we can see the child somehow safe from soiling – his mind not taken, tainted by what it can’t absorb. What the scene means, finally, will depend on how it’s played. (2007:129-130)

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<sup>13</sup> Rutter observes that, in the opening act, “nothing that happens here happens without childhood as its reference point. From the first, childhood...proposes the counter-text to adulthood that adults must measure up to, knowing that they can’t. The story of the adult, then, is a story of a ‘falling off’ (*Hamlet* 1.5.47)” (2007:128).

Of course, though, as Almodóvar particularly, in his film, is even more acutely aware, childhood itself cannot in life be played one way or another at will, as in a performance, but is itself always vulnerable, subject sometimes to the inexplicably violent or the deadly. In this sense, as it is, indeed, in terms of bodily growth and puberty, childhood is not the place of the Edenic innocence the adults of *The Winter's Tale* make it out to be in their language. It exists in the same world adults inhabit. This only heightens, however, our sense of the play's meditation on the uncanny burden that narration about experience entails. Thus Polixenes tells his friends, that his son "makes a July's day short as December, | And with his varying childness cures in' him, 'Thoughts that would make thick' his 'blood'" (I ii 167-169), foregrounding, in himself as adult, acquisition of intellectual articulations of knowledge about experience that "thicken" childhood "innocence."

The remainder of the play, too, intermittently meditates on what it might be that disrupts, complicates, imports doubleness into processes of healthy growth and education, renders disjunctive, the human gaze. At her trial Hermione angrily berates her husband for accusing a friend whose "love had spoke | Even since it could speak, *from an infant*, [my emphasis] freely" (III.2.68-9). Paulina registers the king's "jealousies" as "*fancies too weak for boys, too green and idle | for girls of nine*" [my emphasis] (III.2.178-180). Antigonus prays that the written account of Perdita, as well as the bundle he leaves with her will ensure her a good upbringing, "*breed*" [my emphasis] her "pretty" (III.3.46-47). And Acts IV and V meditate in a number of other directions, by way, say, of its play on pastoral, disguise and deception, on the growth of the young not only into sexuality and adulthood but into the dominant cultural and material formations within which they are located. These, in turn, re-iteratively foist roles upon them which they are sometimes themselves obliged to "play." I have in mind, here obviously, the attitudes of Polixenes as father and king which necessitates the flight of Perdita and Florizel. Perdita's "education" includes, too, what happens in this and the following act for, despite, early in IV.iv, her confident proscription of adulteration, the politics of her situation imposes compromise. She herself is forced to adopt disguise and to be complicit in the invention of a false narrative for the King of Sicilia.



The uncanny impact of cultural, political and institutional necessities is of course reflected in the misogynist, sometimes markedly Calvinist anxieties or doublenesses that critics have long since charted about the early modern body. Such anxieties inform the early modern English educative system. The entire first half of *The Winter's Tale* is haunted by those "discordant knowledges" of "bodily" adult heterosexuality, that narrate, name and thereby complicate understanding of or naming of human growth and development. It probes the unhinging and destructive aspect of such hauntings of the mind. It explores, in experience, the potential problems for the imagination and the gaze, which such discursive knowledges or narratives about sexuality entail. In Leontes's *tremor cordis* and the harm it does, the play manifests discomfort about the uncanny returns of culturally rooted misogyny that, as I have remarked, informs early modern narratives concerning the body.

From such points of view, the play may be said to be, in a way analogous to *Bad Education*, uncomfortable and uncertain about learned cultural knowledges and "technologies" of the gaze. Such learned knowledges, are uncannily there and not there, imbibed in childhood, or at school. They are discursively interpellating as well as, always, post *de facto* encapsulations in narration. They are, too, uncomfortably reiterative, impart ghostly anxieties, haunting presences, warnings, schoolings for the afterlife of adulthood.

### 3

Amongst other concerns, Eytan Fox's *The Bubble* also acknowledges the extent to which the young find themselves inescapably embedded in conventional language, knowledge systems, cultural practices, and, especially, a politics that proves often deadly.<sup>14</sup> *The Bubble* depicts the action of love between two young men located on opposing sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as within varying layers of (learned) heterosexist,

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<sup>14</sup> I have used Fox (2006). My point in choosing a relatively unknown Israeli film about which little has been written apart from reviews available on the internet, translated into English, is that films familiar to local audiences (and my present location is Israel and Palestine) may sometimes provide unexpected but facilitating points of access to aspects of the Shakespeare text.

political and social conventions.<sup>15</sup> Their love unfolds, that is, despite their respective “schoolings.” The location of its opening sequence is stark: a checkpoint crossing from the West Bank into Israel, where Noam, a disenchanted Israeli soldier, and Ashraf, a Palestinian crossing into Israel, encounter one another for the first time. Although they have yet formally to meet, they work together to contain the escalating crisis of a pregnant woman giving birth to what turns out to be a still-born child. The scene registers levels of the established military, cultural and political conflict within which all its participating characters are situated. The civilians at the checkpoint oppose the system in which they are located but within which they have limited agency. The camera indexes in turn, a woman in need of medical help, but forced to submit to the ritual of the body search, the controlled anger of other Palestinians subjected similarly to such a search. It shows, too, the doubleness the young Israeli soldier feels at the role he, in turn, is obliged to play, as well as the desire of Israeli journalists present at the check-post, to bear witness in the face of Israeli army hostility towards them. By means of extended neutral panning the camera often foregrounds the (alienating) objectification of its (and the system’s) subjects.<sup>16</sup>

The two young men, who encounter one another in this situation for the first time, attempt to work together to help the pregnant woman within an inflammatory situation that is divisive and always threatening to erupt. In so doing they push against the limits of a conflicted series of institutionalized procedures and assumptions that continually work both to mould and also to divide them. Some of the shots in the sequence foreground the difficulty, dangers, or frustrations faced by these men: the long empty road that stretches into a nameless distance, offers an unhomey backdrop for the disillusioned Noam, who has tried to help, as he walks away on his own, or a sudden burst of gunfire halts in his tracks the young Palestinian, Ashraf, who is, in turn, also merely seeking help for the

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<sup>15</sup> Elements of the adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, which might be explored here, are not of course part of my present concern.

<sup>16</sup> Although the (Israeli) makers of the film strive in this sequence towards an honest depiction of tensions and humiliations at such a checkpoint (underlined by the film’s introductory self-reflexive shots of determined journalists, defying the attempt at military censorship and insisting on filming what is in front of them) their gaze in this opening sequence shows no interest in engaging with issues of open violence, emanating from, indeed, either side.

ailing woman. The iconography of the camera repeatedly mingles images of action, dress or facial expression, that offer intimations of the human impulse towards the “homey” – working together, despite the location, to help a woman in childbirth – set amidst political dangers and returning impulses to violence that haunt and threaten their efforts.

The very focus of the remainder of the film on an action of young love that seeks to float, within a bubble of its own, over or through this fraught and conflicted situation, may be said itself to reflect the human yearning for the place of the *heimlich* amidst inherited and learned, established but often simultaneously disjunctively *unheimlich* political and cultural language and structures. In the case of these young men, this includes schooling into heterosexist behaviours and knowledges. The two young men find, a “there-ness” and “not there-ness” in the “homey-ness” of their love. They are located in a world that continually threatens to and ultimately does burst its delicate bubble.

In the case of *Hamlet*, several of its dramatic characters are young adults, as well. They are often students, imbricated, as in the case of Fox’s cinematic characters, within an established political system. The play shows them attempting to act, within a middle-aged world that seeks to advise and educate them towards conformity. Hamlet is famously thoughtful, often satirical about this world and its sometimes disturbingly apparently illusory values. His reply to Polonius’s enquiry, “What do you read, my lord?” “Words, words, words” (2.2.188-189)<sup>17</sup> may be insultingly dismissive of the King’s Councillor, but this apparent irreverence towards what he is reading, however testy, may also be set within broader early modern contexts skeptical about language. Although Arthur Padley cites Scaliger’s view that language “and hence mental concepts [were] a faithful reflection of natural phenomena. Truth [was] arrived at when there [was] an exact coincidence of speech with things,”<sup>18</sup> Timothy J. Reiss (1997:xiv) registers, for the early modern period, “the failure of language as a tool for discovery, and its eventual replacement in this epistemological domain, by mathematics and a new idea of rational method.” Epistemological uncertainty about

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<sup>17</sup> All quotations from *Hamlet* are taken from Thompson and Taylor (2006).

<sup>18</sup> Padley (1976:62-65), cited in Reiss (1997:56-57).

language is inflected in multiple ways in the play. It is not only to be discerned in the political rottenness that lies at its centre, juxtaposed against language asserting monarchy's legitimacy. It may be detected also in its characters' various searches for a form of healthy action, an "undiscovered bourn" that lies beyond the deceptiveness of conventional knowledges, beyond hegemonic limits and boundaries circumscribing what is "home" and "nation" within Denmark.<sup>19</sup>

This does not of course in any way imply that there is only skepticism about language and knowledge to be found in the play. Far from it; Hamlet longs to return to Wittenberg. But the return, again and again, of such skepticism or uncertainty – like the Ghost itself, strangely familiar – haunts the text. The play acknowledges the deadening effects of (returning) schooled and rehearsed limits, in, for example, the politically empty mouthings about the Divine Right of Kings of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, their exchanges with Hamlet, Polonius in his exchanges with his rulers, the language of Claudius in the court scenes and on his own, the King's and Queen's "schooling" of Hamlet in part of I.ii, Polonius's "schoolings" of Laertes and Ophelia (I.iii) and Reynaldo (II.i). The play is sentient, moreover, that such (ever-returning educationally, culturally and politically institutionalised) limits, uncannily sometimes masking the corrupt and the deadly, occur within and are part of an apparently discursively "known" Danish world: they emanate from within the "self", the "home", the "nation."<sup>20</sup> Such uncanny hauntings manifest the returning element of political rottenness that troubles the young, ultimately, in the play destroys them. When he writes that "*Hamlet* is a play of contagious, almost universal self-estrangement," Stephen Greenblatt points to the *Unheimlich* nature of its educative, cultural and political world. Greenblatt's primary concern in meditating "the apparition's

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<sup>19</sup> I have in mind, too, certain verbal endeavours to probe the limits of human "knowledge" – evident say, in the repeated ruminations in the play on cultural practice, whether it be drinking, mourning, play-acting or the characteristics of brotherly, familial, or heterosexual love.

<sup>20</sup> The play articulates this uncertainty at the outset, in its acknowledgement, that only intermittent security may be had from those articulations of knowledge that promise "known and believed" truths, such as the talk of the sanctity of Christmas Eve. It is suggested too in the the dawn that walks – but always only after the night recedes – "o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill" (*Hamlet* 1.i.166).

uncanny likeness to the king" is of course with the identity of the Ghost and its origins.<sup>21</sup> But *Hamlet* may be said to be a play of estrangement in terms of my present concern too, similarly informed by the hope of "homey" knowledges that are "there" and "not-there," haunted repeatedly by the sometimes deadly imbrications or returns of the fear that conventional discourse is a medium masking the unhomely and uncertain.

In its recognitions, then, of the limits of the language of reason and "conscience," the play continually evokes, an uncanny not fully knowing of what we think we know. If in this it fears and portrays potential political "rotteness," an *Unheimlich*, haunting the heart of the national home, literally embodied, indeed, as I noted, by the Ghost that haunts the play, the same fear is discernable, as I have suggested, in the opening sequence of *The Bubble*. This too presents, as I have also noted, human beings variously embedded within a rottenness of returning discursive and political discourse, struggling to act despite such deadly returns of contaminating institutionalized conflict, of unreliable, deathly "knowledges". It is embodied, especially, in the sequence's haunting central image of a stillborn child.

#### 4

I do not suggest that the collocation of aspects of contemporary cinema with Shakespeare's plays should in any way replace present-day scholarly approaches to the texts. But, in an age that increasingly operates by way of visual media as well as in cyberspace, I argue that our knowledge of the cinema may provide, certainly for many of our current students, an additional facilitating means of approach.

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<sup>21</sup> See Greenblatt (2002:212, 205-257). The Ghost is one obvious target for discussion of the play's concern with the uncanny and much criticism may be found dealing with this. Mark Pizzato (2006:116, 116-160) for example, argues that the play's "uncertain hero and demanding ghost, exemplifies the insecurities of the modern ego in its Renaissance beginnings" and traces the unfolding history of "the watching ghosts and absent gods" on the original stage to that in a number of twentieth- and twenty-first century film adaptations. Armstrong, again, suggests that "Hamlet's encounter with the Ghost constitutes, according to the Lacanian reading, a crisis in the register of the imaginary...such moments, when an imaginary unity splits into a threatening duplicity, represent the Lacanian version of what Freud described as the 'uncanny'" (2001:73-74). See also, Jones & Stalleybrass (2000:245-268).

I have of course only been able to focus on how appreciation of aspects of the uncanny in the cinematic experience may provide us with a means of registering aspects of the uncanny in Shakespeare, in matters of language, narrativity, education, and politics. This is of course only one of a number of ways in which “the past and the present might be put into meaningful dialogue with one another” (Simkin 2006:3).

But in proposing this I am arguing as well that as a tactical pedagogic move, especially for those of us living in communities that lie beyond the libraries of the Shakespeare metropolis in the United Kingdom and North America, the collocation of appropriate instances of cinema with Shakespeare is one additional way in which we may prevent what Michel de Certeau (1988:169) has called the “assimilation of reading to passivity.” If we are, each of us, local readers, limited to our own discursive locations, we want, perhaps, in de Certeau’s terms to be also active local readers. I argue too then, that appropriate collocation of the present-day predominantly visual art form of cinema and of Shakespeare’s predominantly verbal texts, is an enabling as well as an informative and challenging pedagogic and comparative strategy. We ostensibly read Shakespeare’s past texts at least partly in order to think and learn about ourselves. The past, according to *Bad Education* is always re-narrated by the present. But, according to *The Bubble*, layered entrenched cultural, sexual, and political discourses return in the end always to deaden that present. Such, or other films, may provide us and our students with additional and suggestive means to points of access to, or to the thinking anew about, *The Winter’s Tale* and *Hamlet*.

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## The Space of Identity and the Identity of Space in *The City Wit* by Richard Brome

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### ABSTRACT

My paper examines *The City Wit* (1629-1632), a city comedy by Richard Brome revolving around the unscrupulous trade world, where all the characters aim at social recognition, even trampling on feelings and moral values. My objective is to investigate the play as one of the earlier examples of strategic use of space in Brome's dramatic production. Firstly, I will consider the function of space in relation to the identity of the single characters. Secondly, I will show how space can be manipulated for the re-fashioning of a new identity, as in the case of Jeremy, a male servant disguised as a widow, who builds up a fictitious Cornish identity. Finally, I will analyze the geography of the play focusing in particular on the scene set in the Presence Chamber of Whitehall.

KEY WORDS: space, identity, fashioning, geography, gender.

From the very beginning of his career, Richard Brome proves his ability as a playwright with *The City Wit* (1629-1632), an entertaining and politically audacious city comedy, and an early example of "accomplished and theatrically intelligent writing" (Schafer 2010:intro §1). Here I propose to discuss *The City Wit* as one of Brome's earlier attempts at a strategic use of space. On the one hand, I investigate the geography of the play considering the places evoked through specific references and illustrating their different functions in relation to the identity of the characters: when they reflect the self of a single personage or when they contribute to the re-fashioning of a new identity, as in the case of Jeremy, a male servant disguised as a widow, who builds up a fictitious Cornish

identity to deceive his opponents. On the other hand, I analyze how Brome deals with the royal politics and the dishonesty institutionalized within the system by staging the Presence Chamber in absence of the monarch. *The City Wit* stands out as an *unicum*, since Act III, scene 4 is explicitly set in the Presence Chamber inside Whitehall, where nobody before Brome had dared to set a play, even for the celebration of a sovereign.

As its title indicates,<sup>1</sup> the play appears to focus both on the concept of wit and on city life: it revolves around the world of trade, a microcosm where all the characters attempt to establish business relations in order to reach the status of “city wit.”<sup>2</sup> According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word “wit”<sup>3</sup> had a variety of meanings in the Caroline period: “great mental acumen, cleverness, wisdom, quickness of intellect or liveliness of fancy, capacity of apt expression and talent for saying brilliant or sparkling things.”

Brome seems to use what Martin Butler (1984:159) calls the Middletonian brand of wit consisting in the characters’ “capacity to swindle,” that is achieving social recognition, even trampling on feelings and moral values, and taking advantage of other people. This increasing dominance of the economic motive in every sphere of human life thus implies that the power of money can buy everything: love, sex, friendship and respect. As the courtier Rufflit states, in a passage which is reminiscent of *Timon of Athens*, cheating other people in order to gain money is not only legitimate, but also natural:

Conscience! All things rob one another: churches poll the people;  
princes pill the church; minions draw from princes; mistresses  
suck minions; and the pox undoes mistresses; physicians plague

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Schafer emphasizes that the titles of numerous works of the period contain the word ‘wit’. She mentions *Wit at Several Weapons*; Brome’s own lost play *Wit in a Madness*; Middleton’s *No Wit No Help Like a Woman’s*, Glapthorne’s *Wit in a Constable*; Shirley’s *The Witty Fair One*; Fletcher’s *Wit Without Money*. I add Davenant’s *The Wits* (1636) and Greene’s *Groats-Worth of Wit*, which is considered among the main sources of the play.

<sup>2</sup> In the prologue, Sarpego claims to be “the city wit” of the title (“I, that bear its title”), Pyannet tells Crasy “note my wit” (III, 2, speech 429), to cite just a few of the numerous examples.

<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, as for the word “wit”, the OED quotes Brome twice, for *The Court Beggar* and *The Northern Lass*, without mentioning *The City Wit* where the word is repeated extremely often.

their patients; orators their clients; courtiers their suitors, and the Devil all. The water robs the earth; earth chokes the water; fire burns air; air still consumes the fire.  
 Since elements themselves do rob each other,  
 And Phoebe for her light doth rob her brother,  
 What is't in man, one man to rob another? (IV, 1, speech 620)<sup>4</sup>

Actually, *The City Wit* is the first dramatic descendant of *Timon of Athens* and what Lucullus says about Timon is also valid for Crasy, the protagonist of the play: "Every man has his fault, and honesty is his" (III, 1, 29-30). The bankrupt jeweller Crasy, akin to Timon, is "a formerly generous but now penurious hero who is confronted with ingratitude and employs a variety of intrigues" (Knight 1967:211) and disguises in order to regain what he has lost, after being defrauded by his creditors who refuse to pay him back. Richard Cave (2003:88) comments that Crasy's "generosity lays him open to cynical manipulation by the people he thinks he is helping. He recovers his lost fortune only by being a 'wit', that is by robbing his former 'friends'", his family, his wife Josina, the courtiers, the pedant Sarpego and the draper Linsy-Wolsey. The jeweller succeeds also thanks to his apprentice Jeremy, disguised as widow Tryman, and the servant boy Crack, with whom he revives the Jonsonian triumvirate of Subtle, Doll and Face in *The Alchemist*:<sup>5</sup>

Then let us be friends and most friendly agree.  
 The pimp and the punk and the doctor are three,  
 That cannot but thrive when united they be.  
 The pimp brings in custom, the punk she gets treasure,  
 Of which the physician is sure of his measure,  
 For work that she makes him in sale of her pleasure.  
 For which, when she fails by diseases or pain,  
 The doctor new vamps and upsets her again. (III, I, speech 396)

## Social dynamics

In the seventeenth century, English society, far from being an immutable caste system, is characterized by a marked social mobility owing to massive migration towards the city and the new forms of

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<sup>4</sup> All the quotations from the play are from Schafer's edition (2010).

<sup>5</sup> As for the connections with *The Alchemist* see also Andrews (1972 (1913):85), Clark (1992:172) and Schafer (2010:n9755).

individual acquisition (such as the purchase of titles or lands). Since rank is determined also according to the possession of money, the idea of advancement involves all the classes in a constant longing for power: "the countryman's eye is upon the citizen; the citizen's is upon the gentleman; the gentleman's is upon the nobleman" (Knights 1951:108). In *The City Wit* Brome clearly mirrors this order of society emphasizing the various manifestations of social interaction conceived in terms of *do ut des*: all the relationships are based on the idea of exchange so that people become thus both consumers and consumed (Newman 1989:506), subjects and objects of economic transactions.

The playwright dramatizes the social dynamics in its two dimensions: on the one hand, on the horizontal axis, he puts on stage a set of characters who wish to consolidate their position in their own class; on the other, according to the vertical lines of hierarchy, he presents both the traditionally established positions of dominance or subordination assigned by status and gender and the continuous rise of social climbers who play a decisive role in the dynamic court-city.

### **Spatial interaction**

The ever-growing tensions between the court and the city have become embedded in urban topography so that the London setting of the play clearly reflects the opposition between these two poles of the interaction in the citizen-courtier dynamic: the mercantile world (represented by the houses of the jeweller Crasy and the draper Linsy-Wolsey) and the court (the Presence Chamber and Sir Andrew Ticket's house).

The chart summarizes the interaction of the characters among themselves and the different places, pointing out not only the relevance of any single character but also how gender and class limits regulate the admittance to a place. The restricted number of people in the court scenes (six characters in the Presence scene and at Sir Andrew Ticket's house) reflects the hierarchical-elitist principles governing a space whose access depends on rank or on invitation. On the contrary, all the characters are granted free access to the urban space so that the scenes within the citizen milieu are much more crowded.

THE COURT			THE CITY												
	The Presence Chamber	Sir Ticket's House	Crazy's house										Linsy-Wolsey's house		
	III, 4	IV, 2	I,1	I,2	II,1	II,2	II,3	III,2	IV,1	IV,3	V,1	III,1	III,3	IV,4	
CITIZENS															
Crazy (11)	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Saepago (9)	x	x	x	x	x			x	x		x	x	x		
Josina (7)			x	x		x				x	x	x	x		
Pyannet (6)		x	x					x	x		x	x			
Linsy-Wolsey (6)				x			x				x	x	x	x	
Mr. Sneakup (5)	x	x	x					x			x				
COURTIERS															
Rufflit (8)	x	x	x	x			x		x		x	x			
Toby (8)	x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x		
Lady Ticket (3)		x	x								x				
Sir Ticket (7)	x		x	x			x		x		x	x			
LOWER CLASS															
Jeremy (3+2)			x	x							x				
Tryman (3+2)											x	x	x		
Crack (7)						x	x		x		x	x	x	x	
Bridget (5)			x			x		x	x		x				
Isabell (1)												x			
Jone (1)												x			

Kim Durban<sup>6</sup> (2010:14), who directed a production of *The City Wit* in 2007 in Australia, affirms that “Richard Brome [...] is not afraid to fill the stage with many characters, and wittily play them off against each other, using asides frequently to release the dramatic pressure. [...] The challenge is to stage the group-takeover as mob action, whilst keeping their individual contributions crisp.” At the beginning of the play, at Crazy’s home, the jeweller confronts all his debtors in front of his family and servants (eleven out of sixteen characters are mentioned). Discussing the confrontation, Durban (2010:16) describes it as “an artfully composed scene that is fiendishly difficult to stage. It uses a device that Brome repeats throughout the play – the scene starts with intimacy, swells to accommodate a crowd and ends with just one character, Crazy’s wife, Josina. This scenic structure, requiring the stage to fill and empty with a flow and ebbing of characters, continues throughout the play.” This happens also later, in III, 1 when courtiers and citizens rush to widow Tryman’s bedside at Linsy-Wolsey’s house (twelve characters). Finally, the city becomes the space where the

<sup>6</sup> Kim Durban staged *The City Wit* in Ballarat, Australia, with a company of graduating acting students. In order to delight her audience and emphasize the connections between the city comedy and contemporary times, she chose to set the play in the 1970s. I make reference to this and other productions of the play in order to clarify significant theatrical aspects of the performance.

*dénouement* in act V can take place in front of fourteen characters. Beside the main character Crasy, whose presence is due both to the plot and to his capacity for disguise, only Sarpego is on stage almost as assiduously as him. Moreover, the pedant and Toby are the sole characters who attend all four settings: as social climbers, they embody the idea of vertical mobility, since they know their way around the different social milieu and are adaptable to the places as far as their behaviour, attitude and language are concerned. Obviously, the courtiers' higher status allows them to attend most of the setting and to take part in the key moments of the play, such as the scene in the Presence Chamber and the reading of Tryman's will in III, 1. By contrast, the interaction of some characters is reduced to the milieu they belong to because of social restrictions: beside the servants Isabell and Jone, whose role is circumscribed, Crack and Bridget are similarly prevented from any kind of social advancement. Crack's fear of prison casts him in a marginal role, whereas Bridget's single attempt at a social rise is frustrated by Sarpego who breaks his promise to marry her. Thus, the two servants can only strengthen their position in the lower class through their own marriage. Class and gender boundaries limit Jeremy as well. He is neglected by the courtier world as a male servant, yet awakens interest as the attractively rich Tryman. Nevertheless, the widow's interaction with the courtiers only occurs when they enter her citizen space, since she is neither invited nor allowed to go to court.

Among the women, the most relevant role is played by Josina, who is involved in seven scenes in two citizen settings. Her interaction is limited to her own social milieu as she is not allowed to leave the citizen sphere owing to gender restrictions and her downscale marriage with the struggling tradesman Crasy. Gender restrictions are less effective for Lady Ticket and Pyannet. Enjoying more freedom thanks to her husband's courtly status, the former can take part in the scenes within the citizen sphere. The latter, on the contrary, by mastering the space and its rules, dares to invade a place which is above her socially (in fact she goes to Ticket's house to punish her husband for his presumed infidelity) claiming her hegemonic role within her family unit.

## The geography of the play

Besides the spatial opposition between court and city, space is given prominence through the numerous references to real places known or habitually frequented by the characters. Elizabeth Schafer (2010:intro §9) argues that “Brome may throw in a few real place names but he does not worry about creating much of a sense of London. [...] Apart from Josina’s speech in 1.1 [CW 1.1 speech 91], which is working to characterize Josina rather than evoke the city, there are only a couple of standard references to Bridewell, Clerkenwell etc. and nothing like the sense of a location that permeates, for example, *Covent Garden Weeded*.” On the contrary, like Darryl Grantley (2008:160-161), I am inclined to believe that in the play “the City is strongly realized in allusions.” All the hints at places, besides those mentioned by Josina in Act I, 1, show the different functions of space in relation to the identity of the single character within the social system or of a group. I identify three principal functions: firstly, a main function in which the topography of the place concurs to reflect the personality of the character; secondly, an evocative one when it conveys a further meaning independently from the geographical position of the place; finally, when space contributes to shape a new identity.

The first function tends to emphasize the relationship between identity and the place within the milieu as far as its position, history and social use are concerned. Josina’s references to space both evoke a female microcosm, and allude to some traits of her personality. As soon as Crasy leaves, his wife Josina starts a quest for a lover and sends her maid Bridget to contact some friends of hers in places in the Old City, the commercial part of London:

Go your ways to Mistress Parmisan, the cheesemonger’s wife in Old Fish Street, and commend me to her and entreat her to pray Mistress Cauliflower, the herb-woman in the Old Change, that she will desire Mistress Piccadell in Bow Lane in any hand to beseech the good old dry- nurse mother. (I, 1, speech 91)

Her allusions to the citizen space demonstrate her membership of the middle class, and seem to prove the existence of a widespread trade, a sort of sub-economy, among women, whose names refer to their professions, like Mistress Parmisan or Mistress Cauliflower. This may indicate the changing place of women of this class, like widows of merchants who reach new positions of economic power

or workers in their husbands' shops who are, *de facto*, full partners in the family business, though not holding "official" positions.

The names of the places also hint at the issues traditionally associated with women, such as shopping, fashion and sex. Bridget has to look for the herb-woman in the Old Change,<sup>7</sup> where drapers' shops were located in Brome's times. Then, the quest stops at Bow Lane<sup>8</sup> which is accessed from the port of Queenhithe. Since this is a popular shopping street, the name of the woman, mistress Piccadell, appears to be strictly connected with the idea of trade and fashion, as a piccadill was a decorative edging of cut work or vandyking, especially on a collar, sleeve, or ruff (*OED*, n. 1). Cheapside,<sup>9</sup> the market *par excellence*, is later evoked ironically as the place where Linsy-Wolsey is said to be going shopping to buy some fabric for the widow: "Among the mercers so troubled, as if all the satin in Cheapside were not enough" (III, 3, speech 460). The most relevant reference in my view is to Old Fish Street, called after a fish market operating since the Middle Ages. Its name is an example of the London habit of naming streets after craftsmen or the produce that used to be sold there. The same can be said of streets like Honey Lane, Leather Lane, Beer Lane, Shoe Lane or Butcher Row. What is relevant is that Josina's search for a lover starts in a place with strong sexual implications of the connections between fishmongers and

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<sup>7</sup> Old Change, also known as the Old Exchange after 1566, when the new Royal Exchange was opened, was a street in London running south from the west end of Cheapside to Knightrider Street. It was named after the King's Exchange for bullion and for the changing of foreign coins. It occurs also in Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (III, 3, 51), when Hammonds says: "there is a wench keeps shop in the Old Change." See Stow (1908 (1598): I.54, 312-313, 323) and Chandler (1929:500).

<sup>8</sup> Bow Lane runs north-south between Cheapside and Old Fish Street in the ward of Cordwainer Street. It owes its name to the church of St. Mary-le-Bow which was built on the south-west corner of Bow Lane and Cheapside and was originally called St. Mary de Arcubus, then before being renamed St. Mary-le-Bow by about 1270. This is the description of Bow Lane given by the 16th century historian John Stow (1908 (1598): I.81): "[T]his street beginneth by West Cheape, and Saint Marie Bow church is the head thereof on the west side, and it runneth downe south through that part which of later time was called Hosier Lane, now Bow Lane, and then by the west end of Aldmary Church, to the new builded houses, in place of Ormond house."

<sup>9</sup> In Medieval times it was known as 'Westcheap' to distinguish it from Eastcheap. It was open at dawn in winter and at six o'clock in summer and for half an hour before the close there was the ringing of a bell to warn the shoppers. From the Tudor Period, movable stalls were gradually replaced by permanent shops with houses above them, inhabited by rich merchants. See Hibbert (1969:36).



prostitution, as in *Hamlet* ("Excellent well. You are a fishmonger," II, 2, 174). Her reference thus could suggest the idea of a free moral conduct and the habit of attending this kind of place. A similar conjecture is made by Crasy: "Well Dol, that thou saist is thy name though I had forgotten thee, I protest. About London-wall was it (saist thou?). Well, I cannot but highly commend thy wisdom in this, that so well hast mended thy election" (III, 3, speech 456). When Tryman declares to have met Crasy before at the London Wall,<sup>10</sup> she alludes to an illicit sexual relationship with him. Despite admitting that he must have had sex with Tryman, the jeweller does not remember anything about it, which implies that he was used to having sex with prostitutes and that he had too many sexual partners to remember all of them in detail. When the audience realizes that Tryman actually is Jeremy in disguise, this episode becomes much funnier in retrospect. Place reflects the psychological identity of a character also in the case of Crack, Jeremy's brother: most of the references connected to Crack hint at crime or at lower-class places. Firstly, Crack is introduced as "one of the true blue boys of the hospital" (III, 1, speech 391). In fact, blue was a colour commonly used by servants, tradesmen and boys attending charity school, in this context, probably the Charterhouse school near Clerkenwell, where Tryman claims to be from. Secondly, Crack is threatened to be sent to Bridewell,<sup>11</sup> and every time the prison is mentioned it is always in regard to him. Interestingly, the name Bridewell originally refers to Saint Bridget (Bride is a form of Bridget) and the well near there, as if Crack's obsession for that place were personified by his love Bridget, Josina's chambermaid. Later, his preoccupation with prisons re-emerges while he is talking to Crasy: "Crasy: Thou art a brave lad, and in the high way of

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<sup>10</sup> This was once London's main rubbish disposal site. Its name, according to the 16th century historian John Stow, was derived "from that in old time, when the same lay open, much filth (conveyed forth of the City) especially dead dogges were there laid or cast."

<sup>11</sup> Bridewell was situated between St. Paul's and The Temple and it was once a Norman fortified palace; the kings as well as the court were lodged there till as late as Henry IX. It was rebuilt in 1522 by Henry VIII as a beautiful house purposely for the entertainment and the accommodation of the Emperor Charles V when he came to London. In 1553 it was given by Edward VI to be a workhouse for the poor and idle people of the city and he wanted it to be called the king's hospital or house of correction. Then, it became a prison for vagabonds and prostitutes. See Hibbert (1969:44).

preferment. Crack: Not the high Holborn way, I hope Sir" (III, 1, speeches 397-398). His sense of guilt makes him misinterpret Crasy's praise so that the only possible highway for him is Holborn Way, the road prisoners used to take from Newgate to their execution at Tyburn Tree.

Another function of place reference is evocative, when the citation conveys a further meaning independently from use and geographic collocation of the place. Before the wedding between Tryman and Toby, Crack sings an hymeneal song much to the shock of all those present:

CRACK: Was wont to be still the old song  
At high nuptial feasts  
Where the merry, merry guests  
With joy and good wishes did throng.  
But to this new wedding new notes do I bring,  
To rail at thee Hymen while sadly I sing.  
Fie o Hymen, fie o Hymen, fie o Hymen,  
What hands, and what hearts dost thou knit?  
A widow that's poor,  
And a very, very whore,  
To an heir that wants nothing but wit.  
Yet thus far, O Hymen, thy answer is made:  
When his means are spent, they may live by her trade. (V, 1, speech 914)

The song is justified by Linsy Wolsey as "a song [...] made by a couple that were lately married in Crooked Lane" (V, 1, speech 916).<sup>12</sup> The reference to this existing place near Eastcheap on the one hand reinforces the suitability of this song for such an occasion, but on the other it conveys a double meaning, as "crooked" evokes dishonesty and tricks which cast a shadow on their marriage.

Finally, space can be used by the characters to reshape a personality, like Tryman, who builds up a new identity and a past life through the references to real places and their cultural elements. The character seems to have a multiple identity since Jeremy plays the part of the prostitute Tryman disguised as a wealthy young widow. As a widow, she becomes immediately the target of some fortune hunters, a financial and sexual prey, hunted for her money.

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<sup>12</sup> "At the upper end of new fishstreete is a lane turning towards S. Michael lane, and is called Crooked lane, of the croked windings thereof." See Stow (1908 (1598): I.216).

Only Crasy knows that she is actually a prostitute since they are in league:

TRYMAN: Are they all gone? Now Master Doctor, what think you of the sick widow? Has she done her part hitherto?

CRASY: Beyond my expectation! Better than I for a doctor.

TRYMAN: You are right. And I am even the same for a widow as you for a doctor. Do not I know you? Yes good Master Crasy. I dare trust you, because you must trust me. Therefore know, that I, the rich widow, am no better than a lady that must live by what I bear about me. The vulgar translation you know, but let them speak their pleasure; I have no lands and, since I am born, must be kept. I may make the best of my own, and if one member maintain the whole body, what's that to anyone? (III, 1, speeches 385-387)

Crack claims that Tryman the prostitute is from Clerkenwell, a northern district of London, home of the Charterhouse where Brome spent his last years. The place reifies the two opposing aspects of the character: the respectable image of the widow, represented by the fashionable houses, and the dishonorable one of the prostitute by the brothels and the prisons. Clerkenwell, which took its name from the Clerks' Well in Farringdon Lane, was known as an elegant residential area:

In 1620 Clerkenwell had been a fashionable country village, despite the smell of the brewery and the noise of the forge in St John Street which, so the Earl of Exeter complained, made his dining room uninhabitable. Aristocrats and rich City magnates, who travelled by coach to their counting-houses each day, both lived there in pleasant harmony. As the century progressed, [...] Clerkenwell's aristocratic residents, including at one time the Earls of Essex, Carlisle and Ailesbury, abandoned its now displeasing atmosphere for more attractive places to the west. Also, there was a feeling amongst the well-born that it was somehow degrading to live too close to tradesmen, however rich. (Hibbert 1969:61)

Nevertheless, the area had also a well established reputation for burglary and was a notorious centre of prostitution; it was the site of Clerkenwell Bridewell, a prison built in 1616 as an overflow for Bridewell; later in the century, a new prison was built there to relieve Newgate. Posing as a sick, wealthy Cornish widow, Tryman manages to convince the courtiers and to a greater extent the citizens

during the reading of her will: "I, Jane Tryman of Knockers Hole, in the County of Cornwall, widow, sick in body, but whole in mind, and of perfect memory, do make my last will and testament, in manner and form following" (III, 1, speech 368). Knockers Hole is a real place in Cornwall, at St. Germans near Plymouth but, besides the geographical relevance, the name provides a pun: among the possible meanings of knockers there is "person of striking appearance" (*OED* 1.c), whereas a common usage of hole was "orifice," often in the vulgar sense of genital organs. Combining the genitive form of the former and orifice, the joke is quite evident. Tryman thus is from a place meaning orifice of an attractive person (Schafer 2010:n7390). All the details about the legacies to her assumed family members concur to give consistency to her character since the names of her heirs are coherent with her Cornish origin: many Cornish surnames and names of places have the prefixes "tre-", "pol-" or "pen-", as the old saying quoted by Tilley (T479) testifies: "By Tre, Pol and Pen you shall ye know all Cornishmen."

'Tis forty shillings. Item, to my nephew, Sir Marmaduke Trevaughan of St. Miniver, one thousand pounds in gold. Item to my nephew Master Francis Trepton, one thousand pound in gold. Item, to my kinsman, Sir Stephen Leggleden, I do forgive two thousand pound, for which his lands are mortgaged to me. [...]

Item, to my niece Barnara Tredrite, five hundred pound; my second basin and ewer, a dozen of silver dishes; and four dozen of silver spoons. (III, 1, speeches 375, 378)

Actually, one of Tryman's nephews is called Sir Marmaduke Trevaughan of St. Miniver (a coastal town in north Cornwall); another one is Master Francis Trepton; the niece is Barbara Tredrite. According to Schafer (2010:n7406), "tread" could also suggest a joke as the word is used for the copulation of birds (*OED*, v.8. a, b). Later, the same pun recurs in Pyannet's words: "How now Madam Tiffany! Will none but my cock serve to tread you? Give me my jewels, thou harlot!" (IV, 2, speech 672). Therefore, the name combines the idea of the character's Cornish origin and a sexual connotation which is appropriate to Tryman as a prostitute.

## The presence scene: an example of spatial interaction

In the play the contemporary English Court is given great prominence and, although there is no mention of the name of the palace involved or of “the royal person whose messenger Crasy pretends to be, it none the less strongly implies that the palace is Whitehall and the royal is Charles” (Steggle 2004:28). The picture of life at court allows Brome to show the strict protocol while mocking royal ritual as well as those who perform it. He also provides a vivid picture of the courtly world through its inhabitants, staging the contrast between new and old nobility and the different types of courtiers: the bachelor, the married male and the female courtier. Rufflit, the bachelor, exemplifies the perfect courtier:

a thing that but once in three months has money in his purse; a creature made up of promise and protestation; a thing that fouls other men's napkins: touseth other men's sheets; flatters all he fears; contemns all he needs not, starves all that serve him, and undoes all that trust him. (I, 2, speech 114)

Interestingly, despite being excluded from the Court, Pyannet shows thorough knowledge of Whitehall, of its etiquette and of the royal ritual. At that time, the palace was the largest royal palace in Europe containing some 2,000 rooms and covering twenty-three acres compared with Versailles' seven and a half, the Escorial's eight and a half, and Hampton Court's modest six (Thurley, 1998:4). Its topographic description is given by Pyannet, while teaching her husband how to master that alien environment space and how to behave. Before reaching the Presence Chamber, Mr. Sneakup has to pass through a succession of outer rooms since “the protocols of speech in the early modern court were made visible as protocols of space” (Smith 2004:103).

PYANNET: Now mark. I will instruct you: when you come at the Court Gate, you may neither knock nor piss. Do you mark? You go through the Hall covered; through the Great Chamber covered; through the Presence bare; through the Lobby covered; through the Privy Chamber bare; through the Privy Lobby covered; to the Prince bare.

SNEAKUP: I'll do't, I warrant you. Let me see. At the Court Gate neither knock nor make water. May not a man break wind?

PYANNET: Umh. Yes, but (like the Exchequer payment)<sup>13</sup>  
somewhat abated. (III, 2, speeches 435-437)

John Astington (1999:38) underlines the accuracy in Pyannet's description, though her instructions outline a fantastical version of a visit to Whitehall since the place was not accessible to a character like Sneakup in real life, owing to the strict rules and rigid measures of security which protected the monarch. Inside Whitehall there were four sorts of spaces: courts, galleries, large ceremonial chambers, and smaller rooms, each having its own social functions. The rooms "progressed from larger, more public space to smaller, private, and increasingly secure and inaccessible chambers." The Great Chamber, or Guard Chamber, was the first and largest room; the following chamber "was occupied partly by members of the royal guard, armed, and dressed in a fashion similar to their modern descendants, the Yeoman of the Guard" in order to mark "the boundary of a restricted and privileged area" and beyond this lay the Presence. Finally, the royal private apartments with the Privy Lobby, which was a private passage used as an ante-room and the Privy Chamber. In the following sequence, Pyannet pretends to be the King in a sort of rehearsal of Sneakup's visit to the palace. As in a play-within-a-play, she makes him play his part, the jeweller Crasy, with particular attention to words, movements and gestures. This enables Brome to create a parody of the increasing codification and ritualisation of the court etiquette. Actually the King "tried to make the court a microcosm of the kingdoms to be – an ordered and virtuous commonwealth under his paternal rule" (Young 1997:81). A fine example of this strict code of behaviour is the reference to the use of triple bowing at mealtimes introduced by Charles I ("my three legs" III, 1, speech 444).<sup>14</sup>

PYANNET: Suppose me the Prince. Come in, and present. Here sits the Prince. There enters the jeweller. Make your honours. Let me see you do it handsomely.

SNEAKUP: Yes, now I come in, make my three legs... and then...

PYANNET: Kneel.

SNEAKUP: Yes, and say...

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<sup>13</sup> Steggle (2004:29) takes this reference as a "sly remark about Charles's budgetary difficulties in the Exchequer in the years after 1628."

<sup>14</sup> See Steggle (2004:30).

PYANNET: What?

SNEAKUP: Nay, that I know not.

PYANNET: [*As CRASY*]. An't please your Grace, I have certain jewels to present to your liking.

SNEAKUP: [*As CRASY*]. An't please your Grace, I have certain jewels to present to your liking.

PYANNET: [*As the Prince*]. Is this Crasy, that had wont to serve me with jewels? [*As Holywater*]. It is that honest man, so please your Highness. [*As PYANNET*] (That's for Master Holywater, the by-flatterer, to speak.) [*As the Prince*]. You are a cuckoldly knave, sirrah, and have often abused me with false and deceitful stones.

SNEAKUP: [*As CRASY*]. My stones are right<sup>15</sup>, so please your Excellence. (III, speeches 443-452)

It is difficult for a modern audience to realize how audacious staging the Presence Chamber<sup>16</sup> "was as well as letting" a woman<sup>17</sup> take the role of the King in a play where the sovereign is nearly put on stage, and to do so precisely in the Presence Chamber where the "throne represented the majesty of the monarch even in his absence" (Sharpe 1996:213). Moreover, as Wilkinson (2004:introduction) remarks, "a woman who pretends to be the monarch encourages comparisons with the king that suggest something about his masculinity, particularly as he is being portrayed by a shrewish woman whose own gender identity is an issue of the play. There are

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<sup>15</sup> According to Elizabeth Schafer (2010:n7514) the expression "my stones are right" can have two meanings: "the jewels that I am selling are good ones" and "my testicles are functioning, I am able to father children", thus increasing the sexual overtones of the scenes at court.

<sup>16</sup> Actually, in a production of *The City Wit* at Royal Holloway, University of London in 2007, anything to do with the Presence was cut "as the jokes here were considered something a contemporary student audience would not be able to access" (Schafer 2010:intro §52). By contrast, in the Australian version it was turned into "a club indicated by the silken ropes needed to control a crowd. An orange sculpture, vaguely phallic in shape, was wheeled from place to place, used by various characters to hide behind, and in the denouement, hid Crasy himself behind a secret door" (Durban 2010:13).

<sup>17</sup> It is worth considering that in the production of *The City Wit* at Royal Holloway, Pyannet was dressed as Margaret Thatcher. Moreover, Michael Billington (*Guardian*. 20 February 1992), reviewing the 1991 RADA performance of the play directed by Gordon McDougall, claimed that "*The City Wit* was treated 'as the *Serious Money* of its day', making a comparison with Caryl Churchill's *Serious Money*. *A City Comedy* (1987), a play about the stock market in England in the 1980s while Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister.

other references made in the play that could be read as being derogatory about Charles and his appearance.”

The scene in the Presence Chamber is particularly significant as the way each character interacts with the space clearly reflects his social status. Six of the characters are involved in this scene, Sarpego, Crasy, Mr. Sneakup, Toby, Rufflit and Sir Andrew Ticket, who are part of complex dynamics of interaction. The scene is opened and closed by Sarpego who believes he has been invited to court by his pupil Toby. Only by saying “This is the Presence,” he creates the atmosphere of the court so that the audience has the impression of being inside the Chamber with him.

This is the Presence. I am much amazed, or stupefied, that Master Tobias Sneakup, my *quondam* pupil, attends not my conduct! Ha! So instant was his Grace, his importunity to enjoy me, that although I purchased the loan of clothes, yet I had not vacation, nor indeed variety, to shift my shirt. (III, 4 speech 481)

His interaction with the place involves also the appropriate apparel: Sarpego enters in gorgeous clothes<sup>18</sup> in order to try to compensate for the lack of nobility with clothing and language: “to appear the more perfect courtier at the first dash, I will say that though my outside were glorious, yet of purpose I left my inside lousy” (III, 4, speech 483). In fact, he is wearing a dirty undershirt suggesting that appearance can be deceptive and there is something rotten at the core of the court. Once he gets in, he immediately recognizes Mr. Sneakup who has to impersonate Crasy and is dressed like a citizen. Even before entering the palace, he feels awkward, out of place, jeopardizing a profitable interaction with a place he is frightened of. After a while, Crasy, in disguise as a royal messenger, comes in pretending to be looking for Mr. Crasy and his jewels. The stage direction “*Crasy at the hangings*” (“hangings” is “an infrequently used alternative for the curtain or arras that hung just in front of the tiring house wall” (Dessen and Thompson 1999:110) actually suggests Crasy’s attempt to conceal himself and the possibility of spying on other people without being noticed. He dominates the space since he knows where he can hide himself, whereas all his fellow townsmen are venturing into an unknown

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<sup>18</sup> For Durban (2010:14) “Enter Sarpego in gorgeous apparel” was “a delicious invitation to a costume designer.” She collaborated with the designer John Bennett who made richly allusive costumes like Pyannet’s who was dressed as a Versace diva.



place. As a consequence, when the stage direction reads “*Enter Crasy in haste*,” the character has been on stage for a long time, unnoticed by the other characters. This creates a comic situation since the audience is aware that the real jeweller is on stage, though in disguise.

With his convincing disguise as a court messenger, Crasy is able to cheat Sneakup into giving him the jewels (“You know me; give me the jewels. [...] But betwixt us both we’ll make a shift to cheat him. Stay you here. I will return instantly”: III, 4, speech 403) and Sarpego at the same time (“O Mr. Sarpego! Your pupil will come and conduct you presently” III, 4, speech 496). Obviously, Crasy avoids meeting both the courtiers and Toby, who stay in their own territory and have more detailed knowledge of the place. As soon as the courtiers arrive, the fraud against Sneakup and Sarpego is unveiled, and they both have to leave the Chamber. By virtue of his status, Mr. Sneakup finds refuge at court in Lady Ticket’s chamber in order to elude his wife’s anger after the loss of the jewels:

TOBY: Father, heaven pardon me, for sure I have a great desire to call you cockscomb. I sent no man, nor is there any so styled as Holywater about the Court. [...]

SNEAKUP: Son, I am not so very a fool, but I perceive I am made a stark ass. O son, thy father is cozened, and thy mother will beat me indeed unless your charity conceal me in the Court here, till her fury be over.

TICKET: He shall stay at my wife’s chamber. (III, 4, speeches 513-518)

Instead, when Sarpego realizes that he has not been invited, he is driven out of the Presence Chamber since his own presence is now unwarranted: “*Sic transit gloria mundi*. The learned is cony-caught and the lover of Helicon is laughed at. The last six-pence of my fortune is spent and I will go cry in private” (III, 4, speech 523).

In *The City Wit*, Brome gives a cross-section of the urban London geography as well as an honest and precise portrait of English society, where people are subject to appearances and conventions as if they had a script and a part to play in the performance of everyday life, as if “everyone in London wore a costume” (Ackroyd 2009:150) adaptable to suit to any occasion. The play contributes to the representation of the changing shapes of social life and of the social identity of the inhabitants during the

reign of Charles I, a turbulent period of the English history, in which the playwright recognized the early symptoms of the crisis which would lead in a few years to the Civil War and to the fall of the monarchy. *The City Wit* mirrors the demands that the monarch was failing to satisfy through the use as a setting of the Presence Chamber, the most powerful and evident symbol of power in London and of the sovereign. Brome's potentially subversive choice deprives the court of a degree of political and legislative importance and seems to suggest that the only laws in force in London are empty royal protocols.

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# Learning to Scrawl: The Evolutionary Strain in *Titus Andronicus*

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## ABSTRACT

Much has been written on the semiotic obsessions of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, less on their relationship with matters of theme. This paper argues first that the play's engagement with the mutual relationships between language, labour and society draws on classical and early modern accounts of the symbiotic evolution of language and civilised society. It then suggests that the play's particular rhetorical and kinesiological focus on hand and tongue anticipates the metonymies deployed in Darwinian accounts of human evolution. Key to this reading is the well-known *scrawl/scrowl* crux: far from opting for a definitive, exclusive meaning, the paper proposes that the semantic uncertainty unleashed at the crux mimics the play's representation of Rome's and, in the last resort, humanity's hesitation between literate civilization and creeping barbarism. No longer a merely lexical quibble over the competing, variously obsolescent and emergent, notions of crawling, gesticulating and scribbling, the crux becomes the touchstone of an evolutionary reading of the play. Just as *scrawl/scrowl* debates endlessly between different stages on the human evolutionary scale, so *Titus Andronicus* leaves its readers and audience in uneasy contemplation of Rome's – and their own – perpetual teetering on the brink of degradation.

KEYWORDS: *Titus Andronicus*, evolution, civilization, barbarism, language.

## 1. Introduction

Ever since *Titus Andronicus* more or less asserted its right to be taken seriously, it has become a commonplace of criticism to observe the semiotic obsessions of Shakespeare's first tragedy. Tricomi detects a dialectic between the falsifications of metaphor and the "irrefutable realities of dramatized events" (1974:11); Danson regards *Titus* as "a play about silence, and about the inability to achieve adequate expression for overwhelming emotional needs" (1974:12); Hulse reads the play as an attempt to bridge "the presumed gulf between language and action" (1979:111); Fawcett identifies a similar conflict between language and body, with the play's close "opening out language again" (1983:270); and Kendall exposes the same gap or chasm but believes the play is skeptical that it might be bridged (1989:308n).<sup>1</sup> For these critics, the play is a rather self-absorbed examination of metaphor and/or tragedy and/or silence and/or language and/or action and/or the body; its insistent picking at the tissues of language, eloquence and action (both rhetorical art of gesture and staple of dramatic semiology) is read as a sophisticated comment on its own linguistic, rhetorical and gestural physiology. What few attempts are made to interpret this obsession diegetically, as narrating some kind of story, often turn biographical and assert its appropriateness to a young playwright eager to demonstrate precocious mastery of his chosen craft; but in general, such criticism takes us no further than the impasse of, to adopt Bate's (1995:35) terms, "hermeneutic blockage or deconstructionists' 'aporia'."<sup>2</sup>

Another strand of criticism of the play attends to its political significance. Groundbreaking in this respect was James's (1991) contention that *Titus Andronicus* explores the implications of the contemporary theory of the translation of empire (*translation imperii*) westwards from Rome to Britain. For political readers of the play it therefore becomes important to consider how Shakespeare gauges the relative civility/barbarism of the Goths and the Romans, perhaps

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<sup>1</sup> More recently, Joseph M. Ortiz (2005:53-74) has suggested that Lavinia's voicelessness situates *Titus Andronicus* in a larger debate about the relationship between language and music.

<sup>2</sup> It hardly needs saying that such an interest in meaning is by no means exclusive to this play among Shakespeare's works, nor to Shakespeare among early modern writers.

to establish at what precise historical period Shakespeare sets the play, and to assess the moral worth of the alleged redeemer Lucius. In this latter connection, Taylor's (1996-1997) characterisation of Lucius as "the severely flawed redeemer of *Titus Andronicus*" sparked a flurry of responses (Bate 1996-1997, Hunt 1997-1998, Kolin 1997-1998, Taylor 1997-1998) which sought to establish a definitive position for the redeemer on various sliding scales of barbarity/civilization, paganism/proto-Christianity, and/or perfect/flawed *romanitas* – surely a very odd endeavour in an age which extolled Shakespeare's essential ambiguity.

Few critics have attempted to relate the play's semiotic obsessions to its historical or political preoccupations, or vice versa.<sup>3</sup> A notable exception may be Marti (2001) who, after demonstrating once more how the play runs the whole gamut of semiotic codes, including kinesics and proxemics, suggests that revenge is "the basic principle of communication" and that *Titus Andronicus* reminds us that, "just as Rome was founded on murder and rape" so "all our cultural achievements turn out to be based on origins which we now consider inhuman and beastly." In other words, for Marti, among other things the play's corporal semiotics serves diegetically to take us back to our beastly roots, thereby constituting an allegory of the distant origins of human civilization and culture.<sup>4</sup> For his part Kaiser (2006) argues that *Titus's* inscription of a dialectic between the univocal semiotics of male corporality and the ambiguity of its female counterpart attests the contemporary challenge on the socio-political plane to the patriarchal symbolic order associated with an obsolescent feudalism.<sup>5</sup> This paper will attempt to demonstrate how

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<sup>3</sup> The case is different with *Coriolanus*, another Roman play littered, on the figurative level at least, with body parts and interested in the semiotic potential of the body. Schabert (1997:165-9) relates the play to the function of scars in early modern male-self-fashioning, while Jagendorf (1990) reads its synecdochal dismemberment of the body as figuring the disintegration of Roman society.

<sup>4</sup> Marti's language is redolent of Walter Benjamin's famous assertion that "there has never been a document of culture, which is not simultaneously one of barbarism" (2005), although it is a moot point whether Benjamin's "barbarism" is meant literally or figuratively (in so far as it may denote class exploitation).

<sup>5</sup> In some ways related is Rowe's claim that "the tropes of dismemberment dramatised in *Titus Andronicus* are at odds with [the Hobbesian] notion of the 'acting person'. They imply that the capacity for effective action inheres not in persons but in the objects and instruments of action" (1994:280).

*Titus Andronicus*'s absorption in semiotics engages with the self-servingly feudalistic, classical and early modern aetiologies of language and civilised society, while its particular focus on hand and tongue anticipate the modern metonymies deployed by Darwinian accounts of human evolution. Key to this reading is the well-known *scrawl/scrowl* crux: far from establishing for it a definitive meaning, the paper will argue that the audience's inevitable hermeneutic oscillation between the poles of its ambiguity mimics the play's representation of Rome's and, in the last resort, humanity's teetering between literate civilization and crawling barbarism.

## 2. The crux of the matter

In the midst of their doltish jeering at Lavinia's freshly violated and disfigured body, Demetrius and Chiron indulge in some heavy-handed ironising regarding the communicative options available to their tongueless, handless victim. The lines are well-known, but bear repeating as only one instance of the play's relentless picking at the deficiencies of conventional means of communication:

*Enter the Empress' sons with LAVINIA, her hands cut off, and her tongue cut out and ravished.*

DEMETRIUS

So, now go tell, and if thy tongue can speak,  
Who 'twas that cut thy tongue and ravished thee.

CHIRON

Write down thy mind, bewray thy meaning so,  
And if thy stumps will let thee play the scribe.

DEMETRIUS

See how with signs and tokens she can scrawl.

CHIRON

Go home, call for sweet water, wash thy hands.

DEMETRIUS

She hath no tongue to call, nor hands to wash;  
And so let's leave her to her silent walks.

CHIRON

And 'twere mine cause, I should go hang myself.



DEMETRIUS

If thou hadst hands to help thee knit the cord. (2.3.1-10)<sup>6</sup>

"Scrawl" (2.3.5) is something of a minor textual crux. Beneath the apparently straightforward verb proffered here by the latest Arden editor, Bate, lurks a semantic quandary: to the modern reader "scrawl" means something like "scribble," but according to the *OED* that usage was not available to Shakespeare or his audience at the time the play was written and first performed. In his second series Arden edition, Maxwell (1953) had opted for "scrowl," simply modernising the spelling of Q1's "scrowle," an apparent *hapax legomenon* which either requires lexicographical explanation or straight rejection. Onions glosses "scrowl" as "a form of 'scrawl', to gesticulate, with a play on 'scroll', to write down" (1986:241). This suggestion is accepted by Maxwell, whose comment on the line discovers "an ironic anticipation of the final disclosure" where Lavinia will write with a staff (held in her mouth and guided by her feet) the names of her ravishers in the sand." Wells and Taylor (1987:214) reject Q1's "scrowle" and the Folio variant "scowle" in favour of "scrawl" and thus, together with Bate, establish a sort of up-to-date, scholarly consensus regarding the lexical form and the semantic meaning of the verb. In his note, Bate affirms that Q1's "scrowle" is merely an alternative spelling of modern "scrawl;" he is silent on F's "scowle." For Bate (note *ad loc.*),

Q1's 'scrowle' is a variant spelling of 'scrawl', 'to spread the limbs abroad in a sprawling manner' (*OED v.*<sup>1</sup>), with possible play on modern sense, 'to write carelessly or awkwardly' (*OED v.*<sup>2</sup>, but no example before 1612), and perhaps also on 'scroll', 'to write down' (but *OED* has no example of this verb before 1606).

What is curious in Bate's procedure is that, preferring a now obsolete meaning of "scrawl" (bodily gesticulation), he chooses to modernise the spelling of "scrowle" to "scrawl," thus inadvertently prioritising the modern meaning "scribble" which, if anything, was only emerging at the time Shakespeare was writing. It is odd, too, that despite his sensitivity to the play's stagecraft and kinesics, Bate makes no mention of the second usage of *OED v.*<sup>1</sup>, "To move with a scrambling and shuffling motion. = CRAWL *v.*<sup>1</sup>", a usage the *OED*

<sup>6</sup> Here and throughout this paper I quote from Jonathan Bate's Third Series Arden edition of *Titus Andronicus* (1995).

illustrates with a quotation from the Tyndale Bible of 1530: "All that scrauleth upon the earth" (*Leviticus* 11.41). In this verse the Deuteronomist referred to all those unclean verminous creatures (winged insects, mole-rats, jerboas, thorn-tailed lizards, geckos, chameleons, and the like) which crawl over the ground and whose consumption would have polluted the Children of Israel. In a play teeming with venomous creatures both literal and metaphorical and concerned with issues of ritual, sacrificial and dietary cleanliness and purity, it is odd that the Levitican resonance of "scrawl" has not been noticed.

Even if merely morphologically, "scrawl" seems to have some relation to "crawl." Indeed, the definition of its modern meaning, "to write or draw in a sprawling, untidy manner," is achieved by way of "sprawl," a verb which is still associated with writing in the collocation "sprawling hand" despite being more commonly used to mean "to crawl from one place to another in a struggling or ungraceful manner" (*OED* [1]b.) or, more generally, "to move the limbs in a convulsive effort; to toss about or spread oneself out; in later use, to be stretched out on the ground, etc., in an ungainly or awkward manner" (*OED* 1[a.]). There would appear, then, to be some justification in seeking to account for the overlap between the semantic fields of "scrawl" (untidy writing) and "crawl" (motion over the ground) which in modern usage are kept quite apart but in Shakespeare's day were evidently much closer. Is there some conceptual relation between two such apparently distinct actions, one related to language – more precisely written, verbal communication – the other to bodily motion? Language and motion merge in gesture and gesticulation, the non-verbal language of the body; or perhaps it would be better put to say that gesture or gesticulation (a special form of which is denoted by the Folio's "scowl") amounts to an intermediate communicative code, a halfway house between meaningless movement and meaningful speech which was visited by early modern writers like Wycliff, Phaer and Stanyhurst.<sup>7</sup> My own interpretation of Shakespeare's use

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<sup>7</sup> To illustrate the first usage of "scrawl v.1" = "to spread the limbs abroad in a sprawling manner", the *OED* draws severally on Wycliff (*Sermon* CXXX, c. 1380), Thomas Phaer's 1569 translation of the *Aeneid*, and Richard Stanyhurst's 1582 translation of books 1-4 of the same work and his rather free – or deeply imagined – rendering of Virgil's description of Laocoon struggling desperately to wrest the brace of sea-snakes from his neck: "Hee screams, and skawling to the skye brayes terribil

of “scrawl” will be deferred until some sketch has been hazarded of what conceptual relationship between “scrawl” and “crawl” might underlie their semantic common ground, lost to modern readers but known to Shakespeare’s audience.

### 3. Darwin and the orators

Through its apparent diversification to cover concepts belonging to three different semantic fields (movement along the ground, gesticulation, writing), the unremarkable verb “scrawl” encapsulates the three principal stages in the myth of human evolution – part and parcel of which were rhetorical accounts of language acquisition – that Shakespeare’s age had inherited from classical times and which remained current at least as far as the nineteenth century. It hardly needs saying that the basic motor capacities (first learning to crawl and then to walk) and linguistic capacities (learning to speak) are developed by infants in relatively close temporal proximity, learning to crawl usually preceding the first attempts at verbal utterance. In English, the close interrelationship between the two capacities is heard in the audible similarity of the two verbs “walk” and “talk.” According to Bruce Chatwin, it was “Wilhelm von Humboldt, the father of modern linguistics, [who] suggested that men walked upright *because* of discourse which would not let them ‘be muffled or made dumb by the ground’” (1988:276) on which they groveled on all fours.

Cicero’s version in *De inventione* of the foundational myth of eloquence speaks of “a time when men wandered at large in the fields like animals, and lived on wild fare; they did nothing by reason, but relied chiefly on physical strength” (1948: Li-ii).<sup>8</sup> Then along came the first orator who gathered together those who had lived “scattered in the fields and hidden in sylvan retreats” and “introduced them to every useful and honourable occupation.” At first they rebelled but,

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hoyseth” (*Aeneid* 2.222: “clamores simul horrendos ad sidera tollit”). For its first illustration of the modern meaning of “scrawl v.”= “to write carelessly or awkwardly”, the *OED* has to wait until Randle Cotgrave’s 1611 *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* and Richard Brindsley’s *Ludus Literarium* of 1612, with its admonition to scholars to “keepe their Greeke Testaments faire from blotting or scrawling.”

<sup>8</sup> Earlier formulators of the myth include Aristotle and Isocrates; see Gera (2003).

“through reason and eloquence” that Ur-orator “transformed them from wild savages into a kind and gentle folk.” Cicero restates this myth in *De oratore*, together with *Orator* one of the usual candidates for being “Tully’s Orator,” from which Lavinia read to Young Lucius (4.1.14): “To come, however, to the highest achievements of eloquence, what other power could have been strong enough to gather scattered humanity into one place, or to lead it out of its brutish existence in the wilderness up to our present condition of civilization?” (1926:1.viii.33). In short, for Cicero language raised man from a brutish, animal existence to life in society, civilization and productive labour.

In his preface to the 1560 edition of *The Arte of Rhetorique*, Thomas Wilson gave the Ciceronian myth a Christian and feudalistic gloss, locating man’s pre-lingual, animal condition in the dark, corrupted times after the fall when Cicero’s productive labour and living in society have been abandoned in favour of creeping rumination:

Long it was ere that man knew himself, being destitute of God’s grace, so that all things waxed savage: the earth untilld, society neglected, God’s will not known, man against man, one against another, and all against all order. Some lived by spoil; some like brute beasts grazed upon the ground; some went naked; some roamed like woodwoses; none did anything by reason, but most did what they could by manhood. (1999:74-75)

Cicero’s redeeming and civilising Ur-orator is transformed into certain God-appointed “ministers,” to whom He “granted [...]the gift of utterance” in order to “win folk at their will, and frame them by reason to all good order.” That “order” entailed knowledge of “what was gainful for mankind,” namely Cicero’s “useful and honourable occupation,” upon which Wilson enlarges as follows:

For what man, I pray you, being better able to maintain himself by valiant courage than by living in base subjection, would not rather look to rule like a lord than to live like an underling, if by reason he were not persuaded that it behooveth every man to live in his own vocation, and not to seek any higher room than whereunto he was at the first appointed? Who would dig and delve from morn till evening? Who would travail and toil with the sweat of his brows?

For Wilson, language’s great coup was to bring men together in society so that each, in the performance of his own trade or occupation, and without forsaking his position in the feudal scheme

of things, might labour usefully. Thus, language makes men “pass all other creature living” just as it keeps the majority of them in labouring thrall to a hierarchy that exploits their labour.

In a conventional elision of language and poetry, George Puttenham draws on the same myth in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) as filtered through Horace’s *Ars Poetica* (1928:II.391-369). He does not give it such extensive treatment as Wilson nor does he apply any Christian gloss; in fact, his Ur-orators are Amphion and Orpheus, the former building cities “to the sound of his harp,” the latter bringing “the rude and savage people to a more civil and orderly life” – “the rude and savage people” being figured by the “wild beasts” made tame by the “wholesome lessons [Orpheus] uttered in harmony and with melodious instruments” (Puttenham 1999:194, 220). Quite how language permits productive labour to be marshalled and labourers to be kept in their proper stations is overlooked by Puttenham, who is not so much concerned with a diachronic sketch of man’s evolution from bestiality to civilization as to determine a synchronic, class-based distinction between the language of the court and that of the lumpen; but the point is the same: linguistic capacity is a measure of civility, and the more refined and ornamental the language, the more civilized its user.

Consequently, when Shakespeare was writing *Titus Andronicus*, the conventional myth of language made of it the decisive criterion of civilization, that “Rubicon” which Max Müller, the great Sanskrit scholar, identified in his 1864 *Lectures on the Science of Language* as “the one great barrier between the brute and man” (qtd. Chapple 1986:131).<sup>9</sup> Divinely ordained civilization was characterised by the way language brought men to live together in society and inculcated in them the practice of productive labour and the imperative that each individual remain in his station with no chafing at the bit or shows of disobedience towards society’s governors. Naturally, this account of the evolution of civilized, human society has all the substance of the myth that it essentially is; but that is not to say that it wasn’t also a self-serving allegory which, in a period when feudalism was already obsolescent, was retailed by the ruling classes in order to justify their exploitative mastery of the teeming majority

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<sup>9</sup> No evolutionist, Müller believed that language ruled out any developmental sliding-scale from animal to man since “no brute ever uttered a word.”

on the grounds of their linguistic and therefore civil and human superiority. Moreover, it was a myth that persisted even as empirical evolutionary science developed in the nineteenth century and, far from debunking it, worked it out in greater metonymic detail and established for it a grounding in observable facts.<sup>10</sup>

As is well known, Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (1859) shies away from including man in the evolutionary equation. Nonetheless, his correspondence shows us that while navigating the Horn issues relating to barbarism and civilization, and to the role of language in distinguishing the latter from the former, were a constant cause for meditation. Writing to his sister of "the native Fuegian" or "untamed savage" on 30 March 1833, he remarks that "the difference between a domesticated & wild animal is far more strikingly marked in man: in the naked barbarian, with his body coated in paint, whose very gestures, whether they be peaceable [*sic*] or hostile are unintelligible, with difficulty we see a fellow-creature" (qtd. Chapple 1986:131). Yet see a fellow-creature he does; so too does he confer on the Fuegian's "gestures" some semiotic intention, albeit an "unintelligible one." On 11 April of the same year, in a letter to J. S. Henslow, Darwin narrates another encounter with indigenous South Americans: "I shall never forget, when entering Good Success Bay, the yell with which a party received us. They were seated on a rocky point, surrounded by the dark forest of beech; as they threw their arms wildly around their heads & their long hair streaming they seemed the troubled spirits of another world." Here Darwin's description of the indigenes greeting him with their arms a-kinber lands us firmly in the territory of *OED*'s "scrawl v.<sup>1</sup>" = "to spread the limbs abroad in a sprawling manner; to gesticulate," while "spirits from a troubled world" transports us fleetingly to Aeneas's descent to the underworld. Taken together with the earlier references to "untamed savage" and "barbarian,"

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<sup>10</sup> It is as much beyond the scope of this article to trace the persistence of the myth forward in time from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century as it is to trace the development of evolutionary theories backward from the nineteenth to the sixteenth century. It would not however be amiss to remember that Darwin's classic statements on the matter would have been impossible without earlier pioneers ranging from, say, Edward Tyson (1650-1708), Julien Offroy de la Mettrie (1709-1751), Denis Diderot (1712-1784), Charles Bonnet (1720-93), James Burnett, Lord Monboddo (1714-1799), and, most comprehensively, Darwin's own grandfather Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802). See, for example, Sambrook (1986:19-22) and Porter (2000:439-45).

this language acknowledges the origins of his discourse in the classical and early modern economy of civilization myths.<sup>11</sup> It is also a description that would be uncannily appropriate for the harrowing encounter of Marcus with his niece – that other “troubled spirit from another world” – in the forest.

More remarkable for its topical investment in that economy is Darwin’s description of “microcephalous idiots” (2004:45) in his discussion of “Arrests of Development” in *The Descent of Man* (1871). Intellectually impaired and incapable of speech, these “idiots” are given to scowling (“making grimaces”) and crawling (“ascend stairs on all-fours”). As if impelled by the original Greek meaning of “idiot” (= country dweller) or by the distant pull of classical and early modern evolutionary myth, Darwin is driven off to the forests and the hills in search of analogies and all but comes across Wilson’s woodwose; he notes too how a contemporary authority, Professor Laycock, calls “brute-like idiots *theroid*,” from the Greek noun for wild animal. Meanwhile, in their resemblance to “the lower animals,” Darwin finds a case of what he termed “reversion” and others “degradation” or “devolution.” One aspect of behaviour which signals such “reversion” is the use of the mouth to supplement the hands: the “idiots” used their mouths to assist their hands when grubbing around for lice; once she emerges from her forest, Lavinia will use her mouth to hold the stick which, in the absence of hands, her feet guide over the sand.

Darwin concurs with Cicero and Wilson on other points too. He judges, for example, that “primeval men, and even their ape-like ancestors, probably lived in society” and supposes that “the social instincts [...] must have been acquired by man in a very rude state, and probably even by his early ape-like progenitors”; man, apart from anything else, “is a social animal,” which we see “in his dislike of solitude” (Darwin 2004:132-133). Again, he speculates that “primeval men practised a division of labour; each man did not manufacture his own flint tools or rude pottery, but certain individuals appear to have devoted themselves to such work, no doubt receiving in exchange the product of the chase” (69). This consideration leads Darwin on to the following passage which

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<sup>11</sup> Chapple (1986:132) reports how Captain Fitzroy of the *Beagle* regarded such encounters as reworking Caesar’s coming among the ancient Britons.

throws into close proximity the hand and mouth, analogous cases of evolutionary specialisation:

One can hardly doubt, that a man-like animal who possessed a hand and arm sufficiently perfect to throw a stone with precision, or to form a flint into a rude tool, could, with sufficient practice, as far as mechanical skill alone is concerned, make almost anything which a civilised man can make. The structure of the hand in this respect may be compared with that of the vocal organs, which in the apes are used for uttering various signal-cries or, as in one genus, musical cadences; but in man the closely similar vocal organs have become adapted through the inherited effects of use for the utterance of articulate language. (69)

In many senses, then, the evolution of man is predicated on hand and tongue which, in the conventional accounts, become metonyms for civilization and are the body-parts most fetishistically foregrounded in *Titus Andronicus*.

As Gillian Beer has written, “the double issue of man’s language and of his place in nature was at the centre of mythography and anthropology in the 1860s and 1870s – and they were bound up with the conflict between degradationist and evolutionist views” (1983:189). Darwin’s own theory of the development of language is familiar enough:

language owes its origin to the imitation and modification of various natural sounds, the voices of other animals, and man’s own instinctive cries, aided by signs and gestures. [...] primeval man, or rather some early progenitor of man, probably first used his voice in producing true musical cadences, that is in singing, as do some gibbon-apes at the present day; and we may conclude from a widely-spread analogy, that this power would have been especially exerted during the courtship of the sexes [...]. (Darwin 2004:298-299)

Significantly, for Darwin language is not the Rubicon between man and beast it was for Müller; quite the contrary, “there is no fundamental difference between man and the higher mammals in their mental faculties,” any distinction residing not so much in “articulate language” – available also to “higher animals” such as parrots and gibbons, as in man’s “habitual use” (106-109) of it. But Darwin’s was not the most prolific contribution to evolutionist theorising about the origin of language and its relation to the rise of civilization. T. H. Huxley wrote at length on the matter in his



*Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature* (1863), while F. W. Farrar's *Chapters on Language* (1865) was a direct influence on Darwin.

Of particular interest is explorer and writer William Winwood Reade's *The Martyrdom of Man*, published in 1872, a year after Darwin's *Descent of Man*.<sup>12</sup> Written on Reade's return from his second African expedition (1868-1870), *The Martyrdom of Man* had originally been planned as an evolutionary study of human psychology – indeed, it was to be entitled *The Origin of Mind*; but as the work developed into a history of the world portraying how “the human race has been tortured that their children might profit by their woes” and how “our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past” (Reade 1948:437), he finally decided upon its definitive title. For Reade, as for Darwin and unlike Müller, language is not what distinguishes man from the beasts, for “all gregarious animals have a language by means of which they communicate with each other;” indeed, “with most animals the language is that of vocal sound, and its varied intonations of anger, joy, or grief may be distinguished even by the human ear” (336). As for man, “The language of our progenitors consisted of vocal sounds, and also of movements of the hands” (336). Then, over time a series of natural, geological events led to the scarcity of food, which in turn led to “the habit of incessant combat”; thereupon for their better protection, “inferior to the chimpanzee in strength and activity, and its superior in mental powers,” “our ape-like ancestors” began to live in groups or, in Reade's term, “in combination,” and this “power of combination was entirely dependent upon their language” (337). These ape-like ancestors first communicated by “intonation, in which ideas are arranged on a chromatic scale;” the next “stage of language was that of imitation”:

these animals [our ape-like ancestors] began to notify events to one another by imitative sounds, gestures, and grimaces. For instance, when they wished to indicate the neighbourhood of a wild beast they gave a low growl; they pointed in a certain direction; they shaped their features to resemble his; they crawled stealthily along with their belly crouched to the ground.

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<sup>12</sup> Reade's earlier work *Savage Africa* (1863), published after his first trip to the Dark Continent (1862-1863), had provided Darwin with considerable information about African customs and livestock.

It is to this stage of “imitative language,” the language of gesticulation, grimacing and crawling, to which Lavinia is reduced once trimmed of tongue and hands. Reade suggests that it was “the pleasure and profit obtained from thus communicating their ideas” that led to the invention of conversation in the third stage of “conventional” or, using a term Puttenham would have understood, “artificial” language. On a Radian interpretation, Lavinia’s scrawling would thus symbolize Rome’s intermediate position between brute savagery and civilization, between the crawling and the writing at tension in the crux.

If the first benefit of writing post-Darwin was Reade’s ability to presuppose a continuous line of descent from ape to man which could account for the existence of “natural” languages in those liminal territories frequented by other upper orders of animals (Darwin’s dogs, parrots and gibbons, for instance), the second was the availability of empirically grounded analytical categories to account for differences between apes and men of a sophistication and explanatory value that far exceeded early modern applications of simplistic naked/clothed or language/no-language binaries. Reade draws on the idea of adaptation or specialisation when discussing the hand, “the second weapon” in our species (the first being language):

With monkeys the hand is used as a foot, and the foot is used as a hand. But when the hand began to be used for throwing missiles it was specialised more and more, and feet were required to do all the work of locomotion. This separation of the foot and the hand is the last instance of the physiological division of labour, and when it was effected the human frame became complete. The erect posture was assumed – that it is modern and unnatural is shown by the difficulty with which it is maintained for any length of time. (1948:338)

In other words, the single (and most recent) physiological difference between monkey and man is the functional specialisation of the latter’s feet and hands, which led to man’s raising himself up from the ground and starting to walk. Once again, walking and talking are intimately related to man’s ascent over the beasts, whereas crawling and scrawling reduce him to their level. It is interesting too how, in order to find a term for what modern evolutionary science designates “functional specialisation,” Reade is led back to that same “division of labour,” now anatomical, which in

a socio-economic sense Wilson, following the hint in Cicero, had been at pains to justify, Darwin to explain in biological-evolutionary terms, and Marx and Engels to identify as a precondition of commodity production.<sup>13</sup>

In fact, it is a short step from Reade's evolutionary account of the origin of language to Frederick Engels's account in "The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man," probably written in 1876, but not published until 1896. Predictably, Engels reprehends the socially and economically iniquitous effects of Wilsonian, exploitative myths of human evolution, which, for the rest, he essentially restates except for rehearsing, as did Reade, the centrality to human evolution of the functional specialisation of the hand. For Engels, the adoption of an "erect gait" "*was the decisive step in the transition from ape to man*" (original emphasis), a step which relied upon the fact that "other functions devolved upon the hands" (1975:2). Unlike Reade but like Wilson, and despite his antithetical ideological agenda, Engels pays great attention to the motive force of labour in this process of manual adaptation:

Thus the hand is not only the organ of labour, *it is also the product* of labour. Only through labour, through constant adaptation to new operations, through inheritance of the special development thus acquired of muscles, ligaments and, over longer periods of time, bones as well, and by the ever-renewed use of this inherited refinement in new increasingly complicated operations, has the human hand attained that high degree of perfection that has enabled it to conjure into being the paintings of a Raphael, the statues of a Thorwaldsen, the music of a Paganini. (3)

So, for Engels it was man's standing up which freed his hand – no longer required for crawling – for other operations, thus becoming the "organ of labour." This process had a knock-on effect (in accordance with Darwin's "law of correlation of growth") on "the rest of the organism," particularly the larynx:

The progress of labour necessarily helped to bring the members of society closer together by multiplying cases of mutual support and joint activity, and by giving each individual a clearer consciousness of the advantage of this joint activity. In short, men

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<sup>13</sup> Marx's account in *Capital* (1976:201-203) of the division of labour is strikingly evolutionist. Elsewhere in the same work he makes an impassioned plea for a Darwinian history "of the productive organs of man in society" (493).

in the making arrived at the point where they *had something to say to one another* [original emphasis]. The need created its organ: the undeveloped larynx of the ape was slowly but surely transformed [...] (5-6)

Unlike Cicero and Wilson, Engels makes productive labour in society the cause of language, not its effect, and accordingly for Engels it is not language but labour which “is the characteristic difference between the troop of apes and human society” (7).<sup>14</sup> Like Darwin and Reade, Engels intimates a synergetic complicity in the evolution of hand and voice, the twin organs on which, like theirs, his account of man’s evolution from the ape hinge and which, consequently, assume a semantic surcharge as metonyms for human society and civilization. As we shall see, the benefits in terms of social construction and human civilization that labour might have are less than evident in *Titus Andronicus*.

The similarities between the accounts of Cicero, Wilson, Darwin, Reade and Engels easily outweigh the differences. For all, a salient distinction between man and his beast-like (pre-Darwin) or ape (post-Darwin)-ancestor is that the former walks upright while the latter crawl on the ground. For all walking precedes language, and language is a precondition of society<sup>15</sup> and (except for Engels, for whom labour necessitated language) organised, productive labour. What the early modern accounts lack is the insistence on the functional specialisation of the hand which either brought us out of the trees or raised us up from the ground; in nineteenth-century

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<sup>14</sup> In the introduction to his *Dialectics of Evolution*, Engels expatiates on this point: “Darwin did not know what a bitter satire he wrote on mankind, and especially on his countrymen, when he showed that free competition, the struggle for existence, which the economists celebrate as the highest historical achievement, is the normal state of the *animal kingdom*. Only the conscious organization of social production, in which production and distribution are carried on in a planned way, can elevate mankind above the rest of the animal world socially in the same way that production in general has done this for men more specifically” (1975:20). In *The Part Played by Labour*, he expresses his impatience with the Darwinians by whom “[a]ll merit for the swift advance of civilization was ascribed to the mind, to the development and activity of the brain. [...] even the materialist natural scientists of the Darwinian school are still unable to form any clear idea of the origin of man, because [...] they do not recognize the part labour has played therein” (1975:10-11).

<sup>15</sup> Reade suggests that our ancestors started to use language post-“combination”; Engels makes language prior to society, but labour is the necessary pre-condition of both.

evolutionary myths, the hand attains a near totemic force in its two-fold metonymic function as enabler and symbol of human society and civilization, predicated in equal parts on the development of labour and language. But the detail of the hand is all that is missing, the only other possible point of discord being the question of whether it was language *tout court* (as the early moderns upheld) or simply the degree of linguistic sophistication which, together with walking upright, distinguished men from beasts; but this was a question on which Darwinists themselves could disagree.

Across two millennia, then, language is indissociable from labour and society, while since Darwin it has been possible to identify the hand as at one and the same time the nexus between language, labour and society and the salient physiological factor which differentiates man and the beasts. It is the hand which released man from scrawling/crawling and would later enable him to scrawl/scribble. If for early modern evolutionists the arrival of language signalled man's rebirth into a state of social, civil and clothed grace, nineteenth century accounts simply emphasize the hand's role in delivering that rebirth; the rest is practically the same. As so often, the guiding spirit of human thought is continuity rather than change, a fact attested by the extent to which the metonymic economy of hands and tongues in Shakespeare's play is simultaneously consonant with early modern accounts of evolution and prescient of Darwinian accounts.

#### 4. *Viae crucis*

As it charts the ways of the cross traversed by many of its characters, *Titus Andronicus* is in many ways a no-holds barred comment on that Radian "martyrdom of man." Titus' descent into barbarism is first signalled when his hand is sliced off by Aaron. Almost immediately afterwards he paints an apocalyptic skyscape premonitory of his impending eclipse and Rome's crepuscular decline:

[...] for heaven shall hear our prayers,  
Or with our sighs we'll breathe the welkin dim  
And stain the sun with fog, as sometime clouds  
When they do hug him in their melting bosoms. (3.1.211-214)

This doom-mongering precedes the reduction of the tongue's functions to regulating the flow of vomit welling up from the bowels ("for losers will have leave | To ease their stomachs with their bitter tongues," 233-234). In other words, in an inversion of evolution, the loss of Titus' hand leads to an intimation of the degradation of the tongue from organ of speech to biliar release valve. This degradation is taken to an extreme when Lavinia's tongue is cut out; however, for the relegation of language before the aggrandisement of the corporal to be completed, it is necessary for Lavinia's hands to be cut off too. This way, her body is denied access to the two channels of verbal communication, air and text. Once denied all access to verbal linguistic expression, she is condemned to regress to the crawling – if "scrawl" is taken to mean "crawl" – and bestial or beast-like state of our pre-linguistic ancestors. In the scene (3.1) immediately following Lavinia's defilement, Titus lies down in order to plead for the lives of his sons Quintus and Martius: not only is this a remarkable parallel of Lavinia's immediately preceding kinesics of degradation, but Lucius's observation that there is no one to hear Titus' lamentations – "no man is by | And you recount your sorrows to a stone" (3.1.27) – locates his father in the same solitary, languageless condition of pre-social man, to which Demetrius has just abandoned Lavinia, leaving her to "her silent walks" (2.3.8). What is more, Titus' figurative efforts at writing "in the dust | My heart's deep languor" (3.1.12-13) is in telling anticipation of Lavinia's scrawling in the sand. In this pivotal scene, then, Titus traverses the devolutionary path from scrawling to crawling as he takes the first step on the road to his personal Calvary. Strikingly, the amputation of Titus' hand is soon followed by his and Lavinia's falling on their knees (SD at 3.1.208 and 210): his hand amputated, the sink from civilization to bestiality is further indicated by further kinesics of degradation. Quite when Titus and Lavinia regain their feet in the scene is a moot point, but it may be almost seventy lines later – a long enough time for such abasement by any standards.

It is chillingly congruous that the deflowering and pollarding of Lavinia takes place in what had been a *locus amoenus* considerably invented by Tamora so that Aaron, in the doldrums, might take cheer from the resultant picture of chirruping birds, docile snakes curled up in the sun and leaves quivering in the breeze, with the horns of Andronicus's hunting-party sounding off-stage. Tamora's thoughts are on a sylvan tryst in the manner of Aeneas and Dido's

amorous hunt interlude; but Aaron's thoughts cannot be swayed from revenge (2.2.30-46). Bassianus and Lavinia enter, the former reminding us that the scene is a forest (59), the latter locating the forest in a valley (84). When Chiron and Demetrius enter, Tamora effaces the fiction of her paradisaical *locus amoenus*, replacing it with a nightmarish description of what is now a de-elocuted "barren detested vale," where even in summer the trees are "forlorn and lean,| Overcome with moss and baleful mistletoe," where the sun "never shines," where "nothing breeds,| Unless the nightly owl or fatal raven," and where at night "A thousand fiends, a thousand hissing snakes,| Ten thousand swelling toads, as many urchins,| Would make such fearful and confused cries" (92-102). Not only has the landscape become wild and pregnant with death, it is also infested with a Levitical catalogue of teeming unclean beasts emitting inchoate sounds – a catalogue to which Lavinia, once soiled by rape and shorn of her tongue, will soon belong. And of course, once tongueless, Lavinia will be trimmed of eloquence just as Tamora has pruned the conventional tropes of the *locus amoenus*. As Marcus explains, the excision of Lavinia's tongue deprives her of *pronuntiatio* and, more significantly, *elocutio*: "O, that delightful engine of her thoughts,| That blabbed them with such pleasing eloquence,| Is torn from forth that pretty hollow cage" (3.1.83-5). It is when Lavinia calls "confusion" upon Tamora ("bestly creature") that Chiron presages her own fate of bestial linguistic confusion with his vow "Nay, then I'll stop your mouth" (2.2.182-184).<sup>16</sup> And once Lavinia's mouth has been stopped, Demetrius suggests she be abandoned to "her silent walks" (2.3.8), whereupon he and Chiron leave her to wander alone in the forest, in a trope which recreates man's pre-social, isolated existence in Cicero's "sylvan retreats." Shorn of the means of verbal communication, bereft of that eloquence it had been her pleasure to impart to Lucius by reading him "Sweet poetry and Tully's Orator" (4.1.14), henceforth Lavinia's only means of communication will be by "scrawling."

Marcus's discovery of Lavinia finds expression in a nexus of terms that confirm Lavinia's fall from the state of eloquent civility:

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<sup>16</sup> "Confusion" here, like the "confused cries" of the woodland fauna, is irremediably polysemous. But its connotations of disorder, particularly that social disorder where "noise" replaces language in a substitution symptomatic of civil society's degradation, should not be overlooked. Telling parallels are to be found in *The Tempest* (see Sell 2008:136).

“what stern, ungentle hands,” he asks, “Hath lopped and hewed and made thy body bare | Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments | Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in [...]?” (2.3.16-19). Lavinia’s loss of the physiological organs of language strips her body of the civilizing vestments of Puttenham’s ornamental eloquence; implicit too is Lavinia’s socio-political fall from station as she will no longer be a magnet for dynastic suitors. But most importantly, if, on the one hand, Shakespeare’s representation of Lavinia’s fall from linguistic grace touches most of the keys available in classical and early modern myths of human and civil evolution, on the other, by figuring that fall in the amputation of the hands and excision of the tongue, he also anticipates the metonymic detail with which Darwin was later to corroborate and make more scientific that myth. Lavinia’s “scrawling” at 2.3.5 is at best a gesticulation like that used by our ape-ancestors in Reade’s stage of “imitative language;” at worst, it is a crawling, animal supinity.

Shakespeare’s allegory of Rome at some evolutionary crossroads also anticipates Engels’s emphasis on the labouring function of the hand in man’s evolution from the ape, as if holding out the forlorn hope of a return for Lavinia to eloquent civility through labouring. Titus’ first reaction on seeing Lavinia’s mutilated state is expressed through polyptotonic word-play, paradox, oxymoron and conceits of doubtful taste but cloddish appropriateness which toy obsessively with the very organ his daughter is ostensibly missing (he doesn’t yet know about the excised tongue) and also call into question the worth of eloquence, if eloquence is to be like this:

Speak, Lavinia, what accursed hand  
Hath made thee handless in thy father’s sight? [...]   
Give me a sword, I’ll chop off my hands too;  
For they have fought for Rome, and all in vain;  
And they have nurs’d this woe, in feeding life;  
In bootless prayer have they been held up,  
And they have serv’d me to effectless use.  
Now all the service I require of them  
Is that the one will help to cut the other.  
’Tis well, Lavinia, that thou hast no hands,  
For hands to do Rome service is but vain. (3.1.67-81)

Apparently subscribing to the Wilsonian view that hands are meant to serve, Titus regrets the service his hands have done to



Rome, and envies Lavinia her own handlessness: "For hands to do Rome service is but vain." If, according to Cicero and Wilson, eloquence had persuaded men of the virtue of work and, according to Wilson, of quietist obedience to those above them in the social hierarchy, Lavinia's de-elocuted body suddenly reveals to Titus the extent to which he has been misled into serving Rome. The public good for which eloquence persuaded man to set his hand to work seems of little worth indeed once eloquence disappears, leaving in its slipstream nothing but the bare body; for society itself is dismembered, falls apart and becomes meaningless once language – both instrument and product of society, like Engels's hand – has been forcibly removed. But although Lavinia's loss of manual ornamentation makes Titus question his own labour record, he is nonetheless able to put her mouth to good employment, instructing her to bear his own hand, freshly chopped off by Aaron (after Titus' rhetorical bombast had failed to do so), between her teeth (3.1.283) in a tactless and gruesome fusion of the physiological organs of communication and metonymies of civilization.

Notoriously, of course, Lavinia's stumps are also put to work, guiding the staff while the mouth holds it in order to write in the sand the names of her rapists and the crime they perpetrated. In fact, the possibility for hands to be technologically enhanced and, almost robotically, to become of a piece with their engineered prostheses is present in the words with which Saturninus opens the play ("Noble patricians, patrons of my right, | Defend the justice of my cause with arms," 1.1.1-2); as James points out, "arms" punningly refers to both human limbs and the swords they may carry and the swords themselves are attributed communicative powers ("Plead my successive title with your swords," 1.1.4).<sup>17</sup> To Reade, Marcus's do-it-yourself ingenuity, thanks to which Lavinia is assisted to re-enter language, may have been a figure of martyred man's future redemption by intellect and technology. Certainly, the idea that Lavinia's scribbling in the sand may be somehow symbolic of her potential restoration to a state of grace is reinforced by Marcus's suggestion that she write "what God will have discovered" and his petition that "Heaven guide thy pen" (4.1.73-6). However, Lavinia's restoration is never completed; indeed, Reade's diagnosis of her

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<sup>17</sup> We might also note how Titus is alleged to have used his sword as a writing instrument: "he circumscribed with his sword [...] the enemies of Rome" (1.1.71-72).

pedal dexterity would have been that she had only reached the stage of the monkey whose “foot is used as a hand” (1948:338). Worse still, once she has produced her incriminatory testimony in the sand, the only value Lavinia has in the play is as a dumb *ficelle* whose services – or, more accurately, the services of whose stumps – may be recruited by Andronicus to support the basin into which he lets Aaron’s blood (5.2.181-200). That labour discharged, Andronicus cuts Lavinia off from language for good when his dagger seals her terminal redundancy (5.3.45-6). There is no cheering allegory of redemption here.

## 5. At the crossroads

Though necessarily selective, the foregoing discussion has demonstrated how *Titus Andronicus* is rife with evolutionary metonymies and kinesics. Like any art worth its salt, it is a play informed by the conceptual frameworks, ideologies and myths of its time, yet suggestive too of their future modifications. Shakespeare was no Darwinian evolutionist, but this play, like an ammonite thrust upwards by an anticline into a different geological stratum, is suspended between its own present and future, now our past. But more than that: in typically Shakespearean manner *Titus Andronicus*, not content merely to beckon towards new concepts, actually bequeaths new vocabulary to assist in that conceptualisation. This returns us to the crux with which we started.

As we saw before, the modern consensus seems to be that “scrawl” at 2.3.5 means something like “gesticulate,” with a possible pun on “scroll” = “write down,” which would ironically anticipate Lavinia’s later staff-writing in the sand. “Gesticulate” is no doubt right, an unnoticed point in its favour being Lucius’ command that Aaron’s son be hanged “that he may see it sprawl” (5.1.51) where, in a play that revels in verbal parallels, the near homophony recalls Lavinia’s convulsions. However, in view of the play’s evolutionary strain, I am not so sure of the pun on “scroll”: Shakespeare’s sights were set on greater game. It cannot be chance that on the level of plot the play’s interest in hermeneutics – how the characters interpret the signs produced by Lavinia’s disfigured body – is at its most intense between the “scrawl” crux at 2.3.5 and the writing in the sand at 4.1.76: the play’s hermeneutic crisis, in other words, is framed by

Shakespeare's deployment on the one hand of "scrawl" in one or other of two now obsolete usages and, on the other, by his dramatic representation of its now dominant usage which, at the time the play was written, was at best only emerging, at worst non-existent. "Scrawl" and the staff-writing not only mark the characters' sinking into and subsequent release from a hermeneutic quandary, but also pitch post-Brindsley readers into an inescapable interpretative dilemma, for the strength of the pull towards the modern meaning of "scrawl" = "scribble" is matched only by that of the intellectual effort required to reject it. As a result, the play's kinesiological creation of a new, as yet unwritten, meaning for "scrawl" leaves audiences and readers alike debating on the cognitive plane between obsolescence and emergence. In so far as the obsolete and emergent meanings of "scrawl" pinpoint two major epochs in human evolution<sup>18</sup> – bestial speechlessness and eloquent civilization – between which progress was enabled by the functional specialization of the very organs, tongue and hand, which the play practically fetishizes, that cognitive debate is a re-enactment of the play's depiction of Rome teetering on the brink of barbarism and civility; and that teetering is, on the broader evolutionary and, ultimately, ethical plane, an allegory of humanity's perpetual hesitation at the bifurcation where one path leads onwards and upwards, the other backwards and downwards, and both are signposted confusingly "scrawl."

*Titus Andronicus* offers no indication of which path humanity will ultimately take; yet that very indeterminacy is a salutary corrective both to the comforting wisdom that man's evolutionary development will always follow a glorious rising trend and to what Reade termed "the shabby-genteel sentiment" or "vanity of birth, which makes men prefer to believe that they are degenerated angels rather than elevated apes" (1948:315-316). Rather, the play fixes an unerring eye on man's evolutionary and moral intermediateness, where, as Reade puts it, "we live between two worlds; we soar in the

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<sup>18</sup> My use here, and earlier, of such terms as "obsolete", "obsolescent", "dominant" and "emergent" is a partial cooption of Raymond Williams's triad: "dominant", "residual" and "emergent" (2005:31-49). However, I am not engaged in a materialist reading of the crux, which is not to say that my "evolutionary" reading might not benefit from a materialist interrogation. Simply, Williams's terms are useful for the purposes of explanation, although given the context of my own discussion, I prefer the lexicographer's "obsolete" to the materialist critic's "residual."

atmosphere; we creep upon the soil; we have the aspirations of creators and the propensities of quadrupeds." If optimism is to be found anywhere it is in the play's instantiation of literature's capacity to engender new meanings for old words. So long as literature continues to refurbish the lexicon in anticipation of new conceptualisations of the world, so long may ever-emerging civilization creep just beyond the reach of barbarism, bestiality and obsolescence. That is the hope which even so rebarbative a play as *Titus Andronicus* is able to inscribe in a minor textual crux.

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# Performing Shakespeare in a Conflicting Cultural Context: *Othello* in Francoist Spain<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

The present article reviews the stage history of *Othello* in Spain and, in particular, it focuses on two performances of the play staged at the Español theatre during Franco's dictatorship, in 1944 and 1971 respectively. *Othello* was one of the Shakespearean plays programmed by the regime to give cultural prestige to the "national" theatre. By comparing both productions, this paper explores how the performance of *Othello* evolved during the dictatorship. Furthermore, it shows how the repressive force of state censorship was exerted to promote certain theatrical conventions and to prevent theatre directors and translators from offering new readings and updatings of the plays, in the case of *Othello*, for almost thirty years.

KEYWORDS: *Othello*, Franco's dictatorship, national theatre, censorship, translation.

We can trace the stage history of *Othello* in Spain back to 1802, when Isidoro Máiquez embodied the Moor in Teodoro de la Calle's untidy translation of the highly acclaimed French version by Ducis.<sup>2</sup> The rendering of Ducis's version, written in the shape of an epic romance, became the most popular Shakespearean play on the

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<sup>2</sup> It now seems clear for many scholars that Teodoro de la Calle is the pseudonym often used by José María de Camerero (see Gregor 2010:17-25).

Spanish stage during the first three decades of the nineteenth century (Calvo 2006a). This *Otelomania*, as Calvo points out,

indicates that there was at least one Shakespearean play that Spanish actors, theatre managers, and audiences quickly appropriated and dealt with as if it belonged to their native theatrical tradition. *Otelo* was “the Other” because he was a foreigner, but he was not a complete stranger to Spanish audiences used to adaptations of the plays of Calderón and other Golden Age playwrights obsessed with male-female relationships in which male honor feels threatened by the suspicion of female lack of virtue. (2006a:119)

This process of appropriating the Shakespearean play took a step further between 1828 and 1844, when the neoclassical Ducis-Carnerero tragedy of *Othello* was rewritten as comedy, in the comic one-act form of a Spanish *sainete* in which *Otelo* became “*el Caliche*”, a mocking low-born Spaniard from Valencia, Macarena or Madrid depending on the versions, a humorous jealous husband from the working class very familiar to the Spanish audiences. Surprisingly, Carnerero himself signed some of these famous burlesques, such as *Sainete Nuevo, titulado Caliche, ó el Tuno de Macarena* in 1828 or *Caliche, la parodia de Otelo. Sainete Trágico* in 1831 (Gregor 2010:34).<sup>3</sup> These strategies of cultural appropriation and naturalisation to transfer the play could explain the popularity of *Othello* on nineteenth-century Spanish stages. Par (1936-1940) registered forty-four performances in Madrid and eighty in Barcelona between 1802 and 1886. Apart from the success achieved on stage, *Othello* was also the most frequently translated Shakespearean play at the time, as ten different Spanish translations were published and continuously reprinted in the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

Moving forward to the first decades of the twentieth century, we find the highly acclaimed performance of *Otelo* at the Español theatre in 1936, with Enrique Borrás and Ricardo Calvo in the

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<sup>3</sup> For an exhaustive study of *El Caliche* see Calvo (2006a; 2006b) and Gregor (2002; 2010:34-37).

<sup>4</sup> Serrano (1988:19), following Par, enumerates the following six translations: Teodoro de la Calle (1802), Francisco Luis de Retés (1868), Laureano Sánchez Garay (1868), Matías de Velasco y Rojas (1869), Jaime Clark (1870-1876) and Guillermo Macpherson (1873). This work relies on the information compiled by Laura Campillo for the SHESTRA database ([www.um.es/shakespeare/shestra](http://www.um.es/shakespeare/shestra)).



leading roles of a production based on Luis Astrana Marín's prose translation, from which many adaptations of the period derived.<sup>5</sup>

During Franco's dictatorship, the Español theatre became one of the sites of the "national" theatre, whose repertoire mainly consisted of the classics of Spanish Golden Age drama and world classical plays.<sup>6</sup> The starting signal was Felipe Lluch's 1940 production *España, una, grande y libre* to celebrate the first anniversary of Franco's victory. Felipe Lluch, together with Tomás Borrás, presented the project on which the ideological principles of the national theatre were founded. Lluch was aware of the need for a technical renovation in the theatre and for finding new modes of direction and production. He also considered the role of the stage director essential inasmuch as this figure was mainly responsible for the achievements of a "national" theatre. Lluch's successor would be Cayetano Luca de Tena, who would be at the head of the Español for the next ten years, from 1942 to 1952. With an evidently conservative motivation, Shakespeare's plays – mainly tragedies – were regularly staged at the Español to serve the propaganda interests of the regime in promoting a "national" theatre. During the post-war period, Cayetano Luca de Tena produced *Macbeth* (1942), *Romeo and Juliet* (1943), *Othello* (1944), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1945), *Richard III* (1946), *The Merchant of Venice* (1947) and *Hamlet* (1949), commissioning all the translations to Nicolás González Ruiz, except for *Hamlet*. This appropriation of Shakespeare was partly achieved by neutralising any political reading of his works, as Gregor and Bandín point out,

The potentially subversive nature of some of these tragedies [...] was neutralized by having them doctored by self-censoring authors and, perhaps more decisively, by staging them in such a way that the texts' political context could be viewed as distant, both temporally and spatially, from the "time-space" of mid 20<sup>th</sup>-century Spain. The insistence in contemporary reviews of the performances on the "exterior" trappings of costume, music as well as the spectacular *mises-en-scène*, were a further guarantee

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<sup>5</sup> *El Sol*, 22/02/1936, p. 5. Luis Astrana Marín was the first to translate the complete works by Shakespeare.

<sup>6</sup> For a history of the Spanish "national" theatres see Peláez (1993-1995). See also the works by Gregor (2007) and Bandín (2008) on Shakespeare at the Español.

against “dissident” readings instilling themselves in potential spectators of the play. (Gregor and Bandín, *forthc.*)

The demand for contemporary reviews to avoid “dissident” readings is frequently found in every phase of a process that we can call a pre- and post-production propaganda campaign that aimed at placing the Spanish national theatre at the level of its counterparts in Europe. As Gregor (2010:89) states, “the ‘dignified’ production of Shakespearean drama, such that could compete with the very best of foreign productions of his work, was a possible vehicle for the recognition the regime so anxiously sought.”

In light of these premises, Cayetano Luca de Tena’s production of *Otelo*<sup>7</sup> was first performed at the Español on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1944.<sup>8</sup> This production was preceded by a propaganda campaign that started long before the premiere. The first step in promoting the play was the public reading offered by the translator, Nicolás González Ruiz, at the Español, which was attended by official representatives, on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1944. It was followed by a favourable critical reception, raising still more expectation among theatregoers. González Ruiz’s version was said to have been “made with dignity, elegance of style and exact understanding of the requirements of the modern stage, something which always characterises the versions of foreign classics offered by the distinguished playwright, with impeccable taste, to the stage of our foremost coliseum” (de la Cueva 1944:n.p.). Secondly, on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1944, official censorship approved the text without constraints for an audience of over 16 years old, claiming that Luca de Tena’s direction and González Ruiz’s translation guaranteed the success of the production, which was foreseen as another symbol of the *savoir faire* of the Spanish “national” theatre. The civil censor reported: “Nicolás González Ruiz’s version is faithful to the dramatic line of the original, just pruning some pointless speeches. [...] Success is guaranteed. [...] It is another success in the series of great adaptations that the theatre is

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<sup>7</sup> More details about this production can be found in the SHAKREP database: <[www.um.es/shakespeare/representaciones](http://www.um.es/shakespeare/representaciones)>.

<sup>8</sup> In that same season, theatregoers could also attend the premiere of *Fausto* 43, an adaptation of Goethe’s work by José Vicente Puente; *Baile en Capitanía* and *Norte y Sur* by Agustín de Foxá; and the national classics *Fuenteovejuna* and *Don Juan Tenorio*.

currently offering to the Spanish audience.”<sup>9</sup> Besides, the ecclesiastical censor stated that “[t]he play, being old and well-known by the learned audience, lacks, to my view, a noticeable pernicious influx. The uxoricide and suicide perpetrated by *Otelo* do not lead to imitation or acclaim. For these reasons, I consider that it can be authorised.”

Then, one week before the opening night, *Otelo* was announced as the next event at the Español, news heard of the production and staging boding a theatre evening of supreme artistic interest for the following week. Finally, as anticipated, the success predicted by censors and critics was confirmed on the day of the premiere. From the theatre reviews of the period, it can be inferred that the audience acclaimed the self-censored, abridged and toned down González Ruiz’s version directed by Luca de Tena with a standing ovation. Critics showered the production with praise: “superb staging,” “impressive performance” (García Espina 1944:n.p), and “great and authentic success” (de O. 1944:n.p) are just a few of the countless compliments to the company of the Español. The play ran for more than eighty performances at a time when an average popular play was not on stage for more than fifty (González Ruiz 1948:206).

As a result, González Ruiz’s translation became the authorised stage version of the tragedy during the period. Professional companies, such as José Tamayo’s “Lope de Vega,” usually performed it,<sup>10</sup> whereas commercial theatre companies, such as Ramón Enguidanos’s or Alejandro Ulloa’s, adapted Astrana Marín’s literary translation, probably to avoid legal issues concerning royalties. In this respect, it should be added that the Theatre Censorship Office banned the script submitted by Enguidanos in 1941 for its “lack of literary decency.”<sup>11</sup> Consequently, Enguidanos submitted a second text in 1942, which was included in the same file and approved with two crossings out relating to religious issues: “el

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<sup>9</sup> Censorship files for this period are found in the Fondo de Cultura at the Archivo General de la Administración (AGA) in Alcalá de Henares, Madrid. For this particular report on *Otelo*, see AGA (03) 046, SIG 73/08607, File 650-44. All translations are mine.

<sup>10</sup> It was part of the repertoire of this company since 1946 and there is evidence of performances until 1957, when the play was staged at the Teatro Romano de Mérida as part of the Festivales al Aire Libre. José Tamayo directed the Español between 1954 and 1962.

<sup>11</sup> AGA (03) 046, SIG 73/08338, File 2283-41.

sacramento" and "el cielo se mofa de sí mismo."<sup>12</sup> By contrast, the script signed by Alejandro Ulloa and Tomás Borrás to be performed at the Comedia theatre in Barcelona in 1957, which derived from Astrana's translation, was authorised for an audience over 16, the same report obtained by González Ruiz's text. In any case, *Otelo* was always staged according to the tenets of the regime through self-censorship of controversial passages regarding politics, religion, sex and through the avoidance of indecorous language.

Although González Ruiz acknowledged in the theatre programme that he "ha[d] worked on the English text as it appears in John Hunter's reading text for British universities" (*Otelo*. 1944. Theatre Programme), his views on fidelity towards the original source were politically contaminated.<sup>13</sup> He was a supporter of the official censorship (González Ruiz 1987; Gregor and Bandín, *forthc.*), which he practised himself, and he firmly believed that classical works should be adapted to the tastes and tenets of the new cultural context: "classical works should be adapted so that the mass audience like them, in such a way that their timeless values do not disappear shrouded in a myriad of small circumstantial obstacles" (González Ruiz 1948:207). Thus, Nicolás González Ruiz freely translated the Shakespearean tragedy by purging "those circumstantial obstacles," for example, the explicit sexual references from the opening dialogue between Iago and Othello in IV.i. Nonetheless, it is worth highlighting that the self-censorship practised by the translator is not restricted to the Francoist context, as this passage had also been suppressed in earlier translations to avoid official censorship (Serrano 1988:18). In short, translators adjusted to the tradition practised by their predecessors. But González Ruiz also restrained himself in IV.ii by toning down all the insults uttered by Othello in a repetitive way and addressed to Desdemona: the English original "whore" was omitted or replaced by the less impolite Spanish expression "ramera" ('strumpet'), or by "mala mujer" ('bad woman'), and "public commoner" was omitted.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> AGA (03) 046, SIG 73/08338, File 3162-42.

<sup>13</sup> It is likely that he refers to the edition by the Rev. John Hunter published by Longmans, Green and C<sup>o</sup> in London in 1908.

<sup>14</sup> Many other examples could illustrate the practice of self-censorship carried out by González Ruiz, but this paper does not intend to provide a full textual analysis. See Bandín (2007) for a descriptive-comparative analysis.

The first attempt to offer a new reading of the tragedy occurred in 1969, when theatre director Ángel Carmona produced an *Othello* “motivated by new meanings and allegories” (*Primer Acto* 1969:7) to be staged at the Romea theatre in Barcelona by *La Pipironda* theatre company. The performance text *Otel-lo*, based on the Catalan translation by Josep Maria de Sagarra, was authorised for an audience over 18 years old in view of the censors’ reports:<sup>15</sup> 1) “The Catalan version by José María de Sagarra, being so pithy and rich, does transmit the original play with all its dramatic force. As long as it is an acclaimed classic, I feel bound to propose its approval for the general public;” 2) “The well-known play by Shakespeare in Sagarra’s versification and for which the same report as the Castilian version should be issued.” Despite state censorship’s approval, Carmona did not succeed in transposing the Catalan version to the stage, to judge from the critical reaction. The reviewer of *Primer Acto* tells us how “the audience, or more exactly, part of the audience, soon started to show their disagreement, either with the actors’ performance or with the director’s approach to the tragedy. Carmona’s supporters retorted and the play was interrupted. Curtain fell” (*Primer Acto* 1969:7). For the critic, “this interruption reveals that Saturn-like tragedy of self-devouring, while only in the next door theatre placid spectators support placid productions by placid authors in the service of placid criteria, which would be unimportant if they did not rule the current course of the Spanish theatre” (*ibid.*).

The decade of the seventies witnessed the decline of the regime. However, the thirst for continuity in a crumbling state brought a more repressive period in terms of censorship. The Ministry of Information and Tourism moved away from the so-called “opening” of Manuel Fraga Iribarne towards the repression exerted by his successor Alfredo Sánchez Bella.<sup>16</sup> The direction of the Español was then placed in the hands of Alberto González Vergel from 1970 to 1976.<sup>17</sup> The chosen play for his debut was *La Estrella de Sevilla* by

<sup>15</sup> Reports signed by Morales and Barceló. AGA (03) 046, SIG 73/09708, File 135-69.

<sup>16</sup> For a historical and political account of the dictatorship see Biescas and Tuñón de Lara (1980) and Tusell (1998).

<sup>17</sup> See Peláez (1993-1995). Before being put in charge of the Español theatre, Alberto González Vergel had directed the Murcia TEU. He also worked in RTVE for 30 years, and directed the mythical *Estudio 1*, a TV programme devoted to the production of

Lope de Vega, first performed on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1970, the next season being the turn for two more classical works: *Medea* and *Othello*. It was on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1971 that Spaniards discovered a different reading of *Othello* on the national stage, this time with Marxist leanings.<sup>18</sup> This was not the first time that González Vergel had turned a classical work into a social and political critique, slipping past the censors. In a recent interview,<sup>19</sup> he confesses that his classical productions have always been political and sociological discourses: he set *Medea* in Peru in order to lash the Spanish colonial power, while *La Estrella de Sevilla* was a diatribe against absolute power and political tyranny. It caused such a great disturbance that the Theatre Censorship Office called him in to exclaim: *¡nos has metido un gol!* ("you've pulled the wool over our eyes!").

As opposed to previous productions of *Othello*, Alberto González Vergel's *mise-en-scène*, based on the text by Ángel Fernández Santos and Miguel Rubio, sought to displace romantic interpretations of the play by putting Iago at the forefront of the tragedy and presenting a sociological conflict, with both Othello and Iago as the oppressed victims of the capitalist system. The theatre text was submitted to the censors' approval and three different reports were issued.<sup>20</sup> The censor Barceló did not find any flaws in the new translation and, despite the fact that he had not compared it to previously submitted texts, he considered that the text should be approved as in other cases. However, Soria added that this new version took too many liberties and emphasised the harshness of some expressions. Thus, he proposed that the performance should be authorised for an audience of over 18 years old pending supervision of the dress rehearsal. Finally, Vázquez Dodero based his report on

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plays. He is considered the doyen of our theatre directors, his *Tiestes* by Seneca being produced in the Teatro Romano de Mérida only last year.

<sup>18</sup> More details about this production can be found in the SHAKREP database: <[www.um.es/shakespeare/representaciones](http://www.um.es/shakespeare/representaciones)>.

<sup>19</sup> <<http://www.laopinioncoruna.es/cultura/2010/07/25/alberto-gonzalez-vergel-lorca-censuro-franco-familia-prohibio-representarlo-regimen/405183.html>>. [Consulted 20/02/2011].

<sup>20</sup> AGA (03) 046, SIG 73/09879, File 481-71.

the comparison of the new theatre text with Luis Astrana Marín's translation and made two textual marks on the text:<sup>21</sup>

Page 27: "*eso que llamamos amor es una mierda.*" (Astrana: "*es un esqueje*"). ["What we call love is shit." (Astrana: "it is a scion")].

Page 86: "*puta*" (Astrana: "*impúdica*"). ["whore." (Astrana: "indecent")].

He concluded that "the play be authorised for an audience over 14 by suppressing 'shit' and 'whore' (not educational at all) and replacing them with 'disgust' and 'outcast by life', since the translator gives the play an up-to-date tone."<sup>22</sup> These were not the only examples of the many found in the text that illustrate how substantially modernised its language was. While in González Ruiz's version *Desdemona* was a "ramera" and a "mala mujer," here she is a "sucia ramera," a "zorra," a "puta" and a "cortesana."

The final report issued by the Theatre Censorship Office approved the performance for an audience over 18 years old, but pending a viewing of the dress rehearsal to ensure the appropriateness of the staging, as certain modern elements had been noticed in this new adaptation of *Othello*. The first innovation of the production was its length. Alberto González Vergel's *Otelo*, based on Ángel Fernández Santos and Miguel Rubio's adaptation, was advertised as the first full-length performance of the play in Spain, running for three hours and a half. The authors of this unabridged version justify their decision in the theatre programme that accompanied the performance:

If the Spanish spectator should have access to the great classical tragedies only when these have been previously doctored, and reduced for easy digestion, such behaviour implies the idea that the spectator is not, actually, an adult. Contrarily, our version of *Othello* is based on the opposite hypothesis: the Spanish spectator can and must face the entire poem without any kind of manipulation, without any sort of easiness. In the Spanish theatre jargon it is often said that the Spanish theatregoer cannot put up with a performance running for more than three hours. Going against this trend, the authors of this version of *Othello* try to

<sup>21</sup> Astrana Marín's translation was considered a "norm-model translation" (Chesterman 1997:65) in the target context.

<sup>22</sup> AGA (03) 046, SIG 73/09879, File 481-71.

demonstrate that such a convenient attitude to work is fictitious and it reflects falseness, under which a lazy intellectual attitude is to be lurking, harmful to the theatre professional and humiliating for the spectator. The most marked originality of this version of *Othello* is, for this reason, found in its comprehensive character.<sup>23</sup>

This innovation was welcomed by both critics and audience, as they were “three hours and a half immersed in that Shakespearian world: fabulous, brilliant, spine-chilling, hoarse, painful, cheerful, word for word, the magical power of language that can destroy the absurd and create entire worlds able to inflict on us a true catharsis” (Díez Crespo 1971:12). From the critic’s view, González Vergel had achieved something very important because “it was nothing less than a restitution of Shakespeare, a rediscovery of the witty Englishman in the suitable context, devoid of clichés and mystifications” (*ibid.*).<sup>24</sup> Although the three-hour performance was well received, critics did not unanimously praise the production as they did in 1944, voicing their disagreement with González Vergel’s sociological reading, as exposed in the theatre programme:

The romantic fake has reached indecent heights regarding the particularities of the great Iago, the core of the tragedy and, to certain extent, its absolute figure. The image of Iago as a personification of Evil, a kind of low class Mephistopheles, is still nowadays disrupting the real understanding of the fascinating personality of this man: a man of the people, a petty soldier gifted with an almost terrific intelligence and an extremely powerful sensibility, sharpened by being beaten everyday, to react against the oppression exerted over him. Iago is not a metaphysical

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<sup>23</sup> *Otelo*. 1971. Theatre Programme. Teatro Español. Version by Ángel Fernández Santos and Miguel Rubio.

<sup>24</sup> González Vergel, as in Ducis’s rendering, also considered that Othello was not black: “Because Othello is not – a new mistake of the Romantic iconography – a barbarous savage, is not the Beast who murders the Beauty inspired by Evil, is not Blackness desecrating Whiteness. Shakespeare makes no direct allusion to Othello being black. On the contrary, he only describes him as a Berber gentleman, with a dark skin burnt by an African sun able to dry the source of lowest passions. Othello is a Mauritian aristocrat who does not come from a savage tribe, but is a descendant of the Princes of the Desert; he comes from the caste of men who built the palaces of Granada and Marrakech, that is, a living depositary of probably the most refined culture in history. In other words, the opposite, the antipodes of the low business culture that spurs the Venetians, the first bourgeois of Europe” (*Otelo*. 1971. Theatre Programme. Teatro Español. Version by Ángel Fernández Santos and Miguel Rubio).



villain, but a historical one, an oppressed man conscious of the oppression being exerted upon him, a tireless radical fighter who does not know – from his unavoidable perspective of a socially resentful person – any other fighting method than revenge. Iago pulled all the strings that set the tragedy in motion when his understanding of injustice made him feel outraged. Everything works around Iago to see in him the features of a premature revolutionary, a man provided with such a powerful critical apparatus that allows him to knock down, with invisible blows, that coarse order of coarse merchants which traps him.

The critic's reaction was to blame González Vergel for trying "to turn Shakespeare's *Othello* into a manifesto against the consumer society" and "a revolutionary flag of the oppressed peoples against those who usurp power in order to turn the former into slaves" (Gómez Picazo 1971:n.p.). Gómez Picazo ironically criticises "the weird interpretations that both theatre director and adaptors extract from the play" (*ibid.*), although he also remarks that it is not the first time that odd and made up readings are extracted from Shakespeare's *Othello*. Apart from the "unfortunate sociological additions," it was a great work and the performance was acclaimed by the public (Valencia 1971:n.p.).

Despite the objections made by censors and critics regarding the harshness of the language introduced in an attempt to modernise the text, the impressive staging of González Vergel's *Otelo* made a great impact on the present-day audience and on the Spanish stage, since, as Gregor remarks:

A theatrically more impressive, and, at the same time, authentically "Shakespearean" production in the period is hard to find. The willingness of director, set-designer and musician to emulate companies such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, although within the carefully encompassed boundaries of the contemporary Spanish stage, and with the limitations of the existing troupes, marked an important change of attitude to Shakespeare among the Spanish theatrical fraternity. (2010:100-101)

The performance ran for six months and it broke box office records in Barcelona. After a long history of appropriation of the play to serve the propaganda interests of the regime, this innovative production was tolerated in the national theatre, almost thirty years

after the doctored version by Nicolás González Ruiz was first performed.

To conclude, it can be said that both productions at the Español, in 1944 and in 1971, can be considered landmarks of the stage history of the play during the period, among other reasons, because they were staged at the “national theatre.” Besides, they also show how the repressive force of state censorship did not just reside in its power to suppress conflicting passages but in the power exerted to promote certain theatrical traditions, while preventing theatre directors from offering new readings and updatings of the plays. Moreover, it can be seen that some critics contributed to the promotion of contemporary productions, bearing in mind that sometimes censor and critic were the same person. After thirty years of orthodox productions of *Othello*, González Vogel’s sociological production of the play was passed. It is likely that censors did not understand its critical views on the capitalist system. Even if they did, Shakespeare was still exempt from censorship on the national stage, regardless of the period.

One of the conflicts that theatre translators and directors usually face is to choose the texts to be translated and staged (Zatlin 2005:12). In the cultural context of Franco’s Spain, this conflict was stressed by the existence of a rigid state censorship mechanism. On the national stages the conflict also lay in offering new critical approaches to the classics. State censorship imposed a theatre tradition not only by purging the texts and watching over the staging carefully, but by accompanying the productions with a propaganda campaign to promote the “national theatre.” The self-censored version by Nicolás González Ruiz played a central role in the Spanish theatre until Fernández Santos and Rubio revisited the play and offered the whole text divested of “the multiple lies and misrepresentations accumulating around the Romantic clichés that have been attached to the original dramatic text until the present.”<sup>25</sup> The 1971 production of *Otelo* implied an innovative view of the Shakespearean work for a Spanish cultural context that was timidly breaking with

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<sup>25</sup> *Otelo*. 1971. Theatre Programme. Teatro Español. Version by Ángel Fernández Santos and Miguel Rubio.

the preceding tradition and, at least, was a breath of fresh air on the national stage.

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# Defrauding Daughters Turning Deviant Wives? Reading Female Agency in *The Merchant of Venice*<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Brabantio's words "Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: | She has deceived her father, and may thee" (*Othello*, 1.3.292–293) warn Othello about the changing nature of female loyalty and women's potential for deviancy. Closely examining daughters caught in the conflict between anxious fathers and husbands-to-be, this article departs from such paranoid male fantasy and instead sets out to explore female deviancy in its legal and dramatic implications with reference to Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. I will argue that Portia's and Jessica's struggle to evade male subsidiarity results in their conscious positioning themselves on the verge of illegality. Besides occasioning productive exploration of marriage, law and justice within what Morss (2007:183) terms "the dynamics of human desire and of social institutions," I argue that female agency, seen as temporary deviancy and/or self-exclusion, reconfigures the male domain by affording the inclusion of previous outsiders (Antonio, Bassanio and Lorenzo).

KEYWORDS: *The Merchant of Venice*; commodity/ commodification; subsidiarity; bonds/binding; marriage code versus friendship code; defrauding; deviancy; agency; conveyancing; (self)exclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> My reading of *The Merchant of Venice* with a view to agency that reconfigures the social structures is indebted to and informed by Margaret S. Archer's work on structure and agency, especially in her *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation* (2003).

The world of *The Merchant of Venice* constitutes a vast stage on which identities are shaped and performed, as Antonio's words imply: "I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano: | A stage where every man must play a part, | And mine a sad one" (1.1.77-79).<sup>2</sup> Within the space of one hundred lines that follow, Bassanio changes parts several times – from dearest friend to prodigal son returned, to lover in pursuit of his mistress, and, finally, to a new type of merchant – the investor – holding the key to Antonio's generosity: "[ANTONIO:] Within the eye of honour, be assured | My purse, my person, my extremest means | Lie all unlocked to your occasions" (1.1.136-138). Two acts later, Portia will show the same readiness to "lie" her own purse, person and means, only that in her case the beneficiary of such riches had to prove his *worth* in wit first, by "unlocking" the right casket, then in loyalty once ring-bound in marriage.

The two – Antonio and Portia – were brought into direct competition over Bassanio in the 2008 Royal Shakespeare Company production of the play not only during the trial scene (in which Portia appears disguised) but also openly at the ending of the performance (à la The Globe), which read Shakespeare's final stage direction "*Exeunt*" as "*Dance*". It is precisely the stage economics of this dance(d) finale that cues my reading of the *The Merchant of Venice* and my dipping into new economic criticism that follows in the present article.

"Deliberately only a kind of phantásia recapitulating the play," the dance – declared director Tim Carroll (9 April 2008) in the Director's Talk – was chosen for "neutrality [...] you could derive no sense of the production's attitude – I hope." This was true to begin with, as the stage was populated by the entire cast and the spectators had to work at reading both characters and choreography: against the magenta red stage one saw mostly grey suits (for men), a few splashes of colour (for women) and no Shylock. Once accustomed to the euphoric clapping and movements, one began to read (into) the dance routines. The exchange of gazes and the pairing of Antonio and Bassiano were sharply cut short by Portia, who took clear possession of her husband and by pulling him towards her and out

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<sup>2</sup> All quotations from *The Merchant of Venice* are from the 1987 New Cambridge Shakespeare, edited by M.M. Mahood, and will henceforth be referenced parenthetically in the main text.

of Antonio's reach. Antonio's physical exclusion from this triangle asserted heterosociality as the norm and could only be performed once he had been excluded from the socio-economics of the couple. In this production, Portia delivered the news that three of Antonio's "argosies [had] richly come to harbour suddenly" (5.1.276–277) suggesting that she was not ignorant either of their "riches" or of their "sudden return" but on the contrary, and deviously, that she was the one financing the whole affair.

Elsewhere on the stage, Jessica was "stolen" away from her familiars (Lancelot Gobbo and Tubal) by Lorenzo, an action which literalized the word used by Antonio in his mercy speech when sealing Shylock's fate (4.1.381). The fugitive couple slowly danced to the fore of the stage, still unsure of its position in the general socio-dynamics of the RSC's Venice. Key to the pairing and re-pairing taking place on the stage, Shylock walked up from the auditorium and onto the stage. His strictly choreographed movements that cut the stage in depth separated the parties in the play; his temporary joining in the dance (with Antonio, or Portia, or Lancelot, or Jessica) reinforced his position, one of evading and being evaded. In the increasing frenzy, Jessica and Lorenzo strived to lock Shylock into their dance; this was only momentarily achievable because the economics of the dance required continuous exchanges of partners, and was deviant because the dance routine only allowed for one partner at a time.

In the remainder of this article I will focus on Portia and Jessica, the two daughters who are in comparable positions at the beginning of *The Merchant of Venice*, and follow their journeys into wifedom culminating with the inverted "mirror image" Carroll's 2008 stage production proposed, and will do so with an eye to both their individual agency and the external economic infrastructure that helps to shape their subjectivity and actions.

Portia, we learn from Bassanio's account to Antonio, is "In Belmont [...] a lady richly left | And she is fair" (1.1.160–161). What transpires from his brief account is that Bassanio sets more store by Portia's financial assets than by her beauty. He states her *worth* (beauty and "virtues") in financial terms ("nothing undervalued") and declares that winning her, had he but had "the means," would bring "thrift" and make him "fortunate" (1.2.160–175). Bassanio then delights in playing with double meanings, as when he employs

"thrif" to mean success but also profit, and "fortunate" to mean luck but also acquiring a fortune. Antonio's use of "fortunes" in the following line, however, offers a complete disambiguation as he proceeds to decode it as "money," "commodity" and "credit" (1.2.177-179). In the following scene Nerissa initially talks of Portia's "good fortunes" as opposed to her "misery" only to qualify the pun a line later by talking about "mean happiness" and "superfluity" (1.2.4-7).

Like Bassanio, the competing suitors – the Moroccan Prince and the Prince of Aragon – make their choice of casket not so much by praising but by pricing Portia. Their speeches are replete with words related to coins and counterfeiting. Morocco comments on the inscription, "stampèd in gold" and "insculped upon" (2.7.56-57), and Aragon on "the stamp of merit," and their role in authenticating coins and coats of arms, respectively, being the warranty against "undeserved dignity" and "estates, degrees and offices | [...] derived corruptly" (2.9.39, 40-41). However, it is Bassanio who rejects the "gaudy gold" (3.2.101) as the mark of corruption. His lengthy anti-corruption plea not only refers to a woman's beauty being turned into lightness (i.e., wantonness) when "supposed fairness" is "purchased by the weight" (3.2.89), but touches on wider economic issues: "Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore | To a most dangerous sea: the beauteous scarf | Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word. | The seeming truth which cunning times put on | To entrap the wisest" (3.2.97-101).

More than a rhetorical figure catering to the Elizabethan dislike of dark skin,<sup>3</sup> the "Indian beauty," especially when accompanied by maritime vocabulary, signals the corruption of the English trade market by the infiltration of foreign gold, most likely of Spanish source, as Netzloff (2003:169) suggests, threatening to corrupt not only "the stability of the English domestic economy" but, more importantly, England's law, religion and colonial politics.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For more on Shakespeare's subversion and dismissal of this convention, see his sonnets 127 "In the old age black was not counted fair" and 130 "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun."

<sup>4</sup> Netzloff argues that, "[a]lthough an influx of specie was seen as essential to English commercial development, the economic effects of Spain's supersaturation with imported bullion were already evident in the late Elizabethan period; the influx of New World gold had caused massive inflation and a consumer economy wherein consumption could not keep up with inflated prices and devalued specie (Braudel,



Contemplating the second casket, Bassanio then rejects the “common” silver as the base commercial currency and as the currency of betrayal, finally settling on lead. Though heavier in weight than gold and in paleness resembling silver, lead is “devoid of evident origin, production” and, most importantly, void of transactional or “circulation” value (Netzloff 2003:167), thus symbolic of Portia’s evasive socio-economic status, somewhere between mercantile capital and rural gentry.<sup>5</sup>

As Netzloff (2003:167) argues, “despite [Portia’s] suitors’ commodification of her as the embodiment of value (Morocco), status (Arragon), or capital (Bassanio), or even [her] self-commodification” following Bassanio’s right choice of casket: “Myself, and what is mine, to you and yours | Is now converted” (3.2.166–167), Portia continues to escape the economic laws of Venice. Portia as “lord” of the mansion, “master” to servants, and “queen o’er” herself and all her assets are “converted” into the ring that binds Bassanio. In a sense, this wilful objectification deviates from the Venetian exchange rules in the same way as Shylock’s bond, a pound of Antonio’s flesh in exchange for 3,000 ducats for three months. Both the pound of flesh and the ring bear little intrinsic value; what makes their worth is the risk value bestowed upon or invested in them: it is literally Antonio’s life in the first case, and Bassanio’s in the latter. Should Bassanio “part from, lose or give the ring away” (3.2.172), his actions would return Portia’s financial freedom by entitling her “my vantage to exclaim on you” (3.2.174),

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*Wheels of Commerce 174–175*)” (2003:169). Bassanio’s entire speech may be read as a commentary on the Anglo–Spanish rivalry as in early modern England this economic, national and religious competition was heavily “figured in languages of gender and sexuality.” See Netzloff (2003:169).

<sup>5</sup> Several critics, such as Singh (2000) and Ross (2007), have argued that, far from being a fairy-tale world, Portia’s Belmont is as commercial as Venice. Taking the debate a step further, Noemi Magri (2003:2) shakes the myth of the old aristocratic world of Belmont when arguing that Belmont, rather than being passed from generation to generation of aristocrats, may in fact have been built and its riches acquired from recent merchant activity not very unlike Antonio’s: “In the 16th century, the Venetian nobility and rich merchants had started to invest their money in farms in the mainland more than in mercantile trade: this was due to the growing competition of foreign trade in the Americas. At the same time they built residences on the banks of the Brenta. In a few years, gardens and parks were planned, and the villas built in imitation of the Quattrocento or early Renaissance palaces on the Grand Canal became small courts where the nobility used to invite literary men, musicians, companies of players as they were used to do in their city palaces. [...] Belmont is [such] a place.”

in other words giving her the opportunity to denounce him, a contractual clause Bassanio agrees to: "be bold to say Bassanio's dead!" (3.2.185).

However odd this exchange of vows may seem, it was as binding as Shylock's bond. As Watt (2008:241, 243) argues, Portia's ring would have been recognisable to Shakespeare's audiences both as "a well-known method of transferring title to freehold land [livery of seisin]" and as a betrothal ring, but – significantly – not a "wedding ring, which did entail a moral (though not legal) transfer of property" (body + goods) but "was not passed until the marriage ceremony itself." Let us remember the sequence of events in act 3 scene 2: Portia gives in marriage the (morally binding) ring to Bassanio, who leaves for Venice having received the letter from Antonio, and the solemnisation and consummation of their marriage are to be completed upon his return: "First go with me to church, and call me wife,| And then away to Venice to your friend!| For never shall you lie by Portia's side| With an unquiet soul" (3.2.302–305).<sup>6</sup> Perhaps Bassanio's earlier line "there is such confusion in my powers" (3.2.177) following Portia's "oration" refers not only to his powers as "faculties," as Mahood, the CUP editor of the play explains in a footnote (1987:120, ff177), but also, unwittingly, to his confused legal powers and prerogatives.

Equally replete with references to economics and ambiguous when it comes to morally *versus* legally binding are the homosocial relations and verbal exchanges. In the relationship between Antonio and Bassanio we read the same *miscegenation* between money and desire/love; purse and person are interchangeable in this play much like in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, where (another) Antonio offers both his purse and himself to young Sebastian (in 3.3). Like "Cesario's offer to split his/her coffers with Antonio [when

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<sup>6</sup> As Greer comments, "Elizabethan marriage had three distinct parts, the contract, the solemnisation and the consummation, which did not always occur in that order" (2007:57). While solemnisation was important in so far as it made a claim on the person (promised to be taken in marriage), consummation as validation of marriage in Elizabethan England was essential in so far as there was no point of return once consummation had taken place; without it, the marriage contract could still be disputed. Shakespeare comments at length on the intricacies of the three parts of marriage and their order in *Measure for Measure*. For more on marriage contracts in early modern England, see O'Hara (2000), Ross (2007) and Watt (2008).

arrested],” Forman (2003:120) argues, Bassanio’s offer to double the sum then pay it ten times over in court “is not adequate substitution for returning the purse that [his] Antonio needs.” In *The Merchant of Venice*, Antonio’s “indifference to divergent categories of value” (i.e., purse and person) is read by Bassanio with a difference. To Antonio, they are synonymous in the offer he makes; in accepting the offer, however, Bassanio divorces the purse from the person even when he admits that Antonio’s purse gives him a new *lease* of life (pun intended): he is able both to pursue his personal desires and to purchase the necessary in order to do so.

This new life Bassanio seeks is that of an (independent) investor: he is eager to turn a profit (i.e., win Portia) on the capital from Antonio and readily invests the newly acquired capital (i.e., Portia’s money) to save Antonio (in 4.1.84, 206–208). In this sense, he *defrauds* both his friend and his wife by precisely divorcing person from purse, and forfeits both homosocial friendship and heterosexual marriage. Bassanio, however, is not unique in his practice; Lancelot Gobbo, too, has little time for the “person”; his choice of employment is made on the largesse of the master’s purse, and in doing so, he metonymically replaces the person of the master with his purse.

Unlike Antonio’s act of giving, which (since unscripted) remains ambiguous both interpersonally and financially, Portia’s giving (of herself and her assets) is legally and economically binding. In handing over her worldly possessions and herself to Bassanio, Portia reifies her position as an item of exchange, a mere commodity as Geary suggests (1984). But only temporarily and *deviantly*, I argue, because in her giving the ring and specifying the clause, Portia focuses on eliciting reciprocation from Bassanio, at once transforming the act of giving into an act of taking, as Watt suggests (2008:244). Instead of becoming a man of property (i.e., Portia and her assets) as he might have expected, Bassanio is appropriated (as husband) and also “propertied” (by the ring he wears): he is transformed into a commodity with exchange value (he had none before!), which can begin to generate interest on the Venetian market. Antonio will be the one cashing in on this twice: first in court (4.1), then in Belmont, at the end of the play.

What Bassanio forfeits, namely his loyalty to Portia, which he swears to give for Antonio, and potentially his property, as his wife

and her assets are metonymically contained in the ring, Portia pays off by counterfeiting. This becomes her new form of deviancy: first by being “young doctor” Balthazar, who counterfeits the letter from Bellario and in court literalizes the law in order to save Antonio’s life (another legal abuse much commented on),<sup>7</sup> then by furnishing three of his argosies and counterfeiting the letter delivering the news to Antonio. In rescuing both Antonio’s purse and person (both forfeited by Bassanio), old debts are cleared and in the process both men are commodified. Most importantly, in both cases Portia is defrauding by practising what Charles Ross (2007:98) calls “fraudulent conveyancing.” But she has proved no stranger to that before: as a daughter, she claimed property that was, as Jordan and Cunningham (2007:12) argue, “her husband’s under the terms of her father’s will,” cued Bassanio’s choice of the right casket with a song (which warned him against trusting outer appearances and whose first three lines rhymed with “lead”)<sup>8</sup> and literally “curbed” her father’s will when she devised the ring that bound Bassanio to her on her terms, not her father’s. Holding “the continent and summary of [Bassanio’s] fortune” (3.2.130), the scroll in the lead casket confirms that upon choosing the right casket Bassanio rightfully owns the fortune bound to Portia by her father:

You that choose not by the view  
Chance as fair, and choose as true.  
Since this fortune falls on you,  
Be content and seek no new.  
If you be well pleased with this,  
And hold your fortune for your bliss,  
Turn to where your lady is,  
And claim her with a loving kiss. (3.2.131–138)

As Jordan and Cunningham (2007:12) argue, in binding Bassanio in her own terms with the ring, Portia signals that “although she has been traded as a chattel, she is a person” and, moreover, “a determined agent of her own fate” (Ross 2007:97).

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<sup>7</sup> For critical takes on Portia’s legal abuse in the trial scene, see Tucker (1976), Fisch (1974), Jordan (1982), McLean (1996), Sokol (1998), and recently Tiffany (2006) and Bilello (2007).

<sup>8</sup> Portia: “Tell me where is fancy *bred*, | Or in the heart, or in the *head*? | How begot, how *nourished*?” (3.2.63–65).

Once betrothed, she preserves her agency and perseveres in being “deviant”: she instructs Bassanio what to do and how much to pay for Antonio’s life, then assumes judicial authority, and finally furnishes Antonio’s argosies with her husband’s money. Crucially, even after the ring is back in Bassanio’s possession (5.1.254–257) and thus herself as well as all she has is, again, Bassanio’s property, Portia still calls Belmont “my house” (5.1.273) and brings the news about Antonio’s fortunes having harboured safely – by unveiling the content of the letter before it is even “unsealed” by Antonio (5.1.276) – precisely because she is yet to be “possessed” for the morally binding to become legally binding.

Unlike Portia, who is an unwilling commodity, Jessica actively markets herself as one and aims to enhance her exchange value from the very beginning. If Portia flirts with fraud as a daughter, Jessica is guilty of it twice: she elopes and she deliberately steals from Shylock. “My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!” (2.8.12–15) is a father’s legitimate wailing upon being doubly defrauded. As Ross (2007:92) suggests, “in so far as she owed obedience to her father,” Jessica “could be compared to a debtor, and her elopement to fraud against him.” That this was a valid legal matter, the characters in the play make clear. Lorenzo knows that he can only obtain what Jessica steals and never inherit Shylock’s fortune. Antonio is only too keen to remedy this situation: first, when accepting half of Shylock’s wealth “in use” he vows “to render it | Upon [Shylock’s] death unto the gentleman | That lately *stole* his daughter” (4.1.379–381; my italics) and second, when concluding his mercy speech, he forces Shylock to “record a gift, | Here in the court, of all that dies possessed | Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter” (4.1.384–386).

Lorenzo’s desire and wooing of Jessica, like Bassanio’s of Portia, are openly associated with the pecuniary power of the ducat: “his affairs,” he freely tells his friends, are “wife thieving” (2.6.23–24). Fully aware of it, Jessica uses this knowledge to make herself more marketable: in listing the riches she bestows on Lorenzo, she speaks in a tongue Lorenzo will both understand and appreciate. Her instructions to “take her” and “what gold and jewels she is furnished with” (2.4.30–31) is fulfilled to the letter: “I will [...] gild myself | With some more ducats” (2.6.50–51). Her words “[h]ere, catch this casket. It is worth the pains.” (2.6.34) are transaction-like: Lorenzo

has been reimbursed for his part of the bargain, namely helping Jessica to “[b]ecome a Christian and [his] loving wife” (2.3.20).

Jessica shares with Portia more than the “fraudulent conveyancing” (Ross 2007:92), the same props (a casket and a ring) and theatrical device (disguise), and the apparent willingness to submit to the will of her suitor. Despite their outward obedience, both women display a degree of agency (albeit subversive) which, I suggest, manifests precisely in their theatrical and financial initiative (or risk) both in *defrauding* their fathers and in *deviating* from their wifely part. Both are masters in theatrical counterfeiting: Portia in the trial scene, and Jessica in choreographing her elopement – “she has directed | How this is to be accomplished,” Lorenzo confesses to his friends (2.4.30–31), and disguised herself as a “page.” Even when married and their property had become their husbands’, each of the women reasserts her position as owner. Portia still calls Belmont “my house” and disposes of money as if still hers (has it ever been?). All reports after Jessica’s elopement state that *she* “spent in Genoa [...] one night four score ducats” (3.1.85) and that a sailor had a “ring” of Shylock’s “*daughter* for a monkey” (3.1.93–94, my italics). Finally, in adopting male disguises, the women sacrifice their bodies, once again defrauding their husbands of what was rightfully theirs: the female bodies, which the women trade off (though Portia’s and Nerissa’s very bodies were bound in marriage through the ring giving in Belmont to Bassanio and Gratiano), and manliness, which the women temporarily assume. Unwittingly alluding to both these male anxieties, Gratiano confirms that the ring literalizes at once the marriage contract and female sexuality when he bawdily remarks upon retrieving his ring from the “doctor’s clerk”: “Well, while I live, I’ll fear no other thing | So sore, as keeping safe Nerissa’s ring” (5.1.306–307).

As Geary (1984:61) suggests, “Bassanio, Portia, Jessica, and Lorenzo share a sound grasp of what they have to gain from their marriages” and their exchanges of vows and promises are conducted in business “terms” (read: clauses and words). Like the men, the women are open about their self-interest: Portia is vocal both about her love for Bassanio and about her determination to have him as a husband; Jessica is equally clear that her interest is in salvation by becoming a Christian (’s wife).

Theatrically, Portia and Jessica may be playing the same part; though similarly deviant as daughters, their later financial deviancy takes rather different paths. The part Portia plays in *The Merchant of Venice* is not just that of *deus ex machina*, that is, doctor Balthazar, who resolves both the Antonio–Shylock bond and the Bassanio–Portia ring-bond. She also plays *deus ex mercato* as she is the “portion” and the “porter” (i.e., carrier) of all men’s financial security: Lorenzo’s (and his letter), Antonio’s (and his letter), Gratiano’s (by endowing Nerissa), and Bassanio’s “dear bought” (3.2.312) financial and personal freedom. Foolishly risky as Antonio’s 3,000 ducats loan to Bassanio may have seemed (Shylock most certainly believed and said so), in the end it yields much “thrift.”

However, it is not the kind of “thrift” either Bassanio or Antonio had in mind at the beginning of the play. Portia does not only prevent Shylock’s attempt to cut out Antonio’s heart but, as Geary (1984:66) suggests, “she cuts Bassanio *out* of Antonio’s heart” (my italics); ironically, by the same ring with which she bound Bassanio, she binds Antonio. As in his transaction with Shylock at the beginning of the play, Antonio doesn’t only accept the bond but *becomes* the bond. He eagerly offers his “soul upon the forfeit” (5.1.252), which Portia immediately accepts as “surety” (5.1.254) for her husband’s loyalty and fidelity rather than any “renewed oath from her husband” (Geary 1984:67). Unwilling to leave the space of triangulation (one he occupied in Venice and aims to occupy in Belmont, too), Antonio willingly enters into another bond for Bassanio – “I dare be bound again” (5.1.253). Having bound earlier his money and his body, Antonio throws his soul into the bargain, literally giving his “all” for Bassanio. As Weisberg (2007:298) comments, Antonio seems “forever bound to *stand in* for Bassanio” (my italics). By offering himself as “surety” precisely “on the oath and ring that sanctify the direct obligation of The Marriage Code!” both in Venice (4.1) and in Belmont (in the final scene of the play), Antonio challenges the marriage code with what Geary calls (1984:66) “the men-before-women principle of the friendship code.” In doing so he persists in his pursuit to *stand between* Portia and Bassanio: “My lord Bassanio, let him [Balthazar] have the ring. | Let his deservings and my love withal | Be valued ‘gainst your wife’s commandment” (4.1.445–447).

Antonio is bound to embark on “an age of poverty” (4.1.267), as Geary suggest, but it is, I argue, only one of emotionally poverty. Perhaps the most important lesson Portia has taught Antonio is to divorce his purse from his person. Financially, Antonio has been “given” both “life and living” (5.1.286) and survives to be both “the merchant” and “the Jew” (4.1.170), thus embodying another type of *miscegenation*, an issue the play takes to task in the Lancelot Gobbo subplot.<sup>9</sup> The law has ensured Antonio gains half of Shylock’s wealth – conveniently, this is provided as ready goods and money (one thing Antonio did not have to begin with). Through his mercy speech (4.1.376–386) he ensures his legal right to usury by “use” of this wealth until Shylock’s death, when it is to be signed over to Lorenzo, who would never have been regarded as Shylock’s lawful heir either by the Venetian court or by the English one.

The lesson Portia teaches Bassanio is about their relationship which is not just emotional, as Ross (2007:100) infers, but also explicitly commercial. She outwits him at his own game: in giving the ring to Balthazar, Bassanio “has bankrupted himself” not so much “morally” – as Ross argues (2007:107, ff18) – as financially. Much as Portia may have tried, through her ring-giving, to bind herself and all her assets, she only achieved it through rhetorical skills; legally, the ring remained binding only in property terms before the marriage was solemnised and consummated, as Portia herself acknowledges in 3.2. The two separate bonds she devises and achieves through the same ring leave the two men voiceless: “you have bereft me of all words,” says Bassanio (3.2.175); “I am dumb,” confesses defeated Antonio (5.1.279). As men and as merchants, they have been “outfaced” and “outsworn” by the “unlesson’d, unschool’d, unpractised” Portia (3.2.159) – another devious claim on

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<sup>9</sup> It is in this sense that Lancelot disapproves, at length, of Jessica and Lorenzo’s union. He sees it as a wholly unprofitable alliance in all respects, from social to religious and financial. With Jessica “damned both by father and mother,” there is no hope for her redemption (not even a “bastard hope,” should she be proven not to be her father’s daughter and her mother a Christian). Moreover, marriage to a Christian would only extend the “blame” onto Lorenzo: “we were Christians enow before, e’en as many as could well live one by another” (3.5.16–17). Conversely, he is quick to dismiss Lorenzo’s demand for “an answer [...] to the commonwealth” when the latter, commenting precisely on the kind of miscegenation Renaissance Venice (and England) explicitly forbade (“the getting up of the Negro’s belly”), reveals that “the Moor is with child [...] by Lancelot” (3.5.30–32).



her part? – who, as Geary (1984:68) suggests, “ultimately proves herself the most adept business [person] of them all.”

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## **In a Minor Key: Visual Effects in *Shake-Speare's Sonnets***

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### ABSTRACT

Students of the sonnets are no doubt aware that they abound in wordplay that rewards multiple readings. They may be less aware, especially if they are unfamiliar with the original 1609 Quarto edition, that the poems may have been arranged to have a visual impact as well.

The sonnet form itself is emblematic of a number of familiar referents, including an escutcheon, a "glass" (mirror), a leaf, and a seal. One might even see in the poems, as did Lady Mary Worth and John Donne in their "crowns" of sonnets, the links in a chain, or necklace. The sonnet form is roughly the poetic equivalent to the portrait miniature (a fad of the day) in art. I shall be pursuing these analogies in my paper.

The most striking visual effect occurs in Sonnet 126, the last of the "fair youth" sonnets, which consists of six rhymed couplets followed by two empty sets of brackets. Katherine Duncan-Jones and others have, in recent years, argued authorial intent for this alleged "printer's error." Duncan-Jones suggests that the open parentheses may signify the poet and the fair youth's "failure to couple," while John Lennard sees in them "the silence of the grave."

I hope to demonstrate that, by thinking in visual terms, we might one day be able to unlock the story behind the most enigmatic verse sequence in English poetry.

**KEYWORDS:** Renaissance, England, Shakespeare, sonnet, typography, book design.

Shakespeare's Sonnets have long been admired and studied by poetry enthusiasts from around the globe. They are often considered to be the supreme expression of love, in all its infinite variety, in the English language. The sequence may be unconventional, but when was Shakespeare not? In this paper I will explore the Sonnets from the point of view of their visual effects, with the goal of discovering whether a case might be made for the presence of an authorial hand in their printing. For purposes of getting as close to the originals as possible, I have consulted online facsimile editions of the poems (in particular the Chalmers-Bridgewater copy from the Huntington Library, courtesy of R. G. Siemens) and, where relevant, have reproduced spellings from the original 1609 Quarto (Q).

To begin with the obvious, the text of the quarto – which contains four pages of front matter, the sequence of 154 sonnets (which includes the “Cupid” epigrams) and the “complaint” poem, in rhyme royal – is spread out over 80 pages and 11 signatures (A-L, but missing, as was customary, J). Pages 1-4 include the title page on A1r<sup>1</sup> and the dedication on A2r (A1v and A2v are blank); pages 5-69 (B1r-K1r) are given over to the sonnets themselves; and pages 70-80 (K1v-L2v) contain the 329 lines of *A Lover's complaint*. With only three exceptions (Sonnets 99, 126, and 145), the poems consist of 14 lines and are in iambic pentameter verse, each beginning with a large capital letter and ending with an indented, rhymed couplet.

Two ornamental headpieces appear in the quarto: one on the title page and the other on B1r, which begins the sonnet sequence. Numbering of the sonnets starts with Sonnet 2 (“When fortie winters shall besiege thy brow,” also on B1r). The sequence concludes with the word *FINIS*, in caps and followed by a period, with the letters K (for the signature) and A (for the catchword to *A Lover's complaint*) beneath. The book itself concludes with the word *FINIS*, again in caps, followed by a period and an ornamental border. One of the curiosities of the text involves the spelling of Shakespeare's name on the title page; it is as we have come to spell it today, with the addition (found elsewhere) of a hyphen between *s* and *p*; the hyphen repeats in the headers on the verso pages of the sonnet sequence. It also repeats on the title-page of *A Lover's complaint*, and in the

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<sup>1</sup> The abbreviations used by Elizabethan printers for *recto* and *verso* are *r* and *v*.

headers in that section as well, only this time it is accompanied by the author's Christian name, William – its only appearance in the quarto, although the diminutive, *Will/will*, is punned upon in several of the sonnets, notably 135-136 (both poems are complete on Ilr), where it most often appears in italics. To return to the hyphen in *Shake-speares Sonnets*, however, James Shapiro (2010:256) alleges, in *Contested Will*, such a spelling was probably a compositional necessity, given that “when setting a ‘k’ followed by a long ‘s’ in italic font – with the name Shakespeare, for example – the two letters could easily collide and the font might snap. The easiest solution was inserting a letter ‘e,’ a hyphen, or both.” According to Shapiro, it was “a habit that carried over when setting roman font as well.”

I am not directly concerned with whether the publication of the quarto was authorized, although the more we note of “design” in Q, the more difficult it becomes not to discern an authorial hand in its composition.<sup>2</sup> Instead, I propose to look at the visual features apparent in a handful of sonnets and then to comment on what may be seen as “unifying features” in the design of the sonnet sequence and in that of the quarto itself. *Visual*, for my purposes, may refer to any typographical or design elements in the poems that are immediately apparent to the naked eye, even in those cases where the eye must first be directed to them. *Visual* may be used in its customary relation to the poet's imagery as well.

Much speculation has focused on what will here be termed the “clock” sonnets – numbers 12, 52, and 60 – so it is perhaps appropriate to begin with these. The obvious thing to say is that these sonnets appear to have been placed<sup>3</sup> in Q so as to suggest a correspondence between their subject matter and the number of hours on a clock (Sonnet 12), weeks in a calendar year (52), and “minuites” in an hour (60). The poet's insistence on marking time in the “clock” sonnets, by way of their number, is a standard of analysis, but the poems contain other visual features as well. In Sonnet 12, for example, lines 1-2 protrude further into the right margin than do lines 3-6, producing a kind of canopy effect, perhaps

<sup>2</sup> For an exploration of the notion that the *Sonnets* are a “bootleg” of Shakespeare's poems, see Clinton Heylin's *So Long as Men Can Breathe* (2009).

<sup>3</sup> Don Patterson says “The numerical position of the sonnets often turn[s] out to be a little meta-pun, providing more justification for the belief that we can read the author's hand in [...] the sequence” (2010:40).

as a visual complement to the trees that in Line 6 “which erst from heat did canopy the herd.” The poem announces its key image – “When I doe count the *clock* that tels the time” – in its first line. The word *clock* appears but one more time in Q, in Sonnet 57. It is surely no coincidence that  $5 + 7 = 12$ .

Subsequent references, in Sonnets 77 and 104, are to a “dial,” rather than to a clock, but the poet’s choice of time as a theme in the sonnets serves to foreground the image of a clock face, which may be figuratively mirrored in the very outline of each poem.<sup>4</sup> Sonnet 12 also introduces (by name) the figure of “Time’s scythe,” which, in various incarnations,<sup>5</sup> cuts its way across the sequence, as in Sonnet 100, where this number’s Roman counterpart, the numeral C, is evocative of the scythe’s shape, a suggestion effectively reinforced by the compositional “swipe” taken out of line 11 (“I any, be *Satire* to decay”), which is radically foreshortened. The figure of the scythe, or sickle, also anticipates the absence of two lines that have been literally lopped off at the end of Sonnet 126, the last of the Fair Youth sequence, and one of the three poems in the sequence that does not conform to the Shakespearean sonnet form. Here, the missing couplet has been replaced by two sets of empty parentheses, or brackets, in which one critic discovers the figure of an hourglass (Kalas 2007:263-264); while another sees in them a “quietus,” a product of the Fair Youth’s “failure” to couple and produce an heir (Duncan-Jones 2007:366); and yet a third finds “the mute effigy of the rendered youth” (Vendler 1997:538).

Sonnet 52 is one of a sub-sequence that begins with Sonnet 50; it does not, however, as do the other poems in this sub-sequence, concern a journey; rather, it reverts to a theme first treated in Sonnet 48, that of the speaker’s “treasure.” The central image in 52 is of a “key,” the only mention of which in Q is in line 1 of this sonnet: “So am I as the rich whose blessed key.” I shall be returning to keys in due course, but both sonnets, 48 and 52, refer directly to a chest (or casket) said to contain jewels or other “up-locked treasure.” In

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<sup>4</sup> In addition to a mirror and a clock face, I shall identify additional objects that may be suggested by the sonnet form below.

<sup>5</sup> The sevens in Sonnet 77, which is located at the halfway mark into the sequence and whose numbers add up to fourteen, may be said to mirror one another (the word “glass” repeats in lines 1 and 5); they may further represent the repeated figure of a scythe. Indeed, the first two lines of Sonnet 77 are “cut off” from lines 3-14 on E4v.

Sonnet 52, the treasure is compared to “feasts,” or “Holy days,” as David West (2007:169) calls them: “Like stones of worth they thinly placed are, | Or captain Jewells in the carconet.” The setting of such jewels in a carcanet, or “ornamental collar or necklace” (OED) may remind one of the sequencing of sonnets – as *verse* jewels – in a corona. Sonnet 52 is placed approximately a third of the way into the sonnet sequence; at two-thirds, we find sonnet 104, which is twice 52 and which is another sonnet concerned with time: three years to be exact, or 156 weeks (which is just two more than the number of poems in the sequence).<sup>6</sup>

Sonnet 60 is perhaps the most visually suggestive of the clock group. Helen Vendler (1997:286) contends the trochees that begin lines 1-2 of Sonnet 60 “draw attention to the hastening of the waves, the attacks by eclipses and by Time, and the countervailing praising by verse.” Fair enough; but one may also *see* the movement of the waves in the alternating long and short lines of the first and second quatrains of Sonnet 60, which might be said to mimic the tide’s ebb and flow as the waves “make towards the pibled shore.” Further, quatrain 2 is broken in the Quarto over two pages after line five, a fact which brings both “Crawles” and “Crooked” into relief.<sup>7</sup> The “ebb and flow” of the lines in Q2 may thus be said to mimic the vicissitudes of life. The preponderance of “C” and “Cr” words, including *contend*, *crown’d*, *confound*, and *cruel* (and perhaps *eclipses* as well) may recall the curved blade of the “scythe” in line 12, an image carried over from Sonnet 52.

Any sonnet may be discussed in visual terms, but some images are more fanciful than others. For example, one may see in the numerals that comprise the title, Sonnet 99, the nodding heads of flowers. Plus, I don’t think it far-fetched to see in Sonnet 111, perhaps the most narcissistic of the sonnets, a visual pun on “I, I, I.” I am not alone in my fancy. At least one writer, Nigel Davies (2010), author of the website *The Place 2 Be*, sees in the digits that make up Sonnet 55, which is overstuffed with alliterated “w” and “s” sounds, an abbreviation for the very title of the quarto: Shake-speare’s

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<sup>6</sup> Helen Vendler (1997:255) points out that “the word *robe* is literally hidden inside the word *ward-robe*” in line 10 of Sonnet 52: “Or as the ward-robe which the robe doth hide.”

<sup>7</sup> *Crawls* is spelled without the “e” as a catchword at the bottom of E1r.

Sonnets.<sup>8</sup> He also “notes” puns on the musical octave (which consists of 12 keys and eight notes) in Sonnets 8 and 128. In examining the Chalmers quarto, I have come to suspect that the monosyllabic widow line (“Thou blind fool love, what doost thou to mine eyes”) on 11r that begins Sonnet 137 contains two sets of eyes (my italics).<sup>9</sup> Moreover, may we not see the outline of a viol or lute in the figure 8 of Sonnet 8, which includes the lines, “Marke how one string sweet husband to an other, | Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering”?

The compact form of the sonnet is instantly recognizable on the page. However, the poet embeds images in the poems that repeat throughout the sequence leading to other, emblematic, associations, such as with those of the clock face or “dial” and carcanet of jewels, both of which are discussed above. Such images may include the portrait miniature (more of which later), the glass (or mirror), the monument (along with epitaph and memorial), the chest (or casket), the sail (Sonnets 80, 86, and 117), the seal, the escutcheon (or coat of arms), and even the theatrical stage – in particular with regard to the discovery space, concealed as it was by elaborate hangings (Gurr and Ichikawa 2000:6-7). But more of this later.

The sonnets may be examined individually, or they may be studied as a sequence. With respect to the latter, Marcy L. North (2007:219), who concedes that there are “vestiges of a manuscript origin” in the quarto, nonetheless suggests that its “patched-together arrangement, lack of an author’s epistle, and even the asymmetrical page layout” are “noticeably unconventional” (204). She concludes that the volume “shares some of the characteristics of the highly standardized 1590s sequences, such as quarto formatting, simple numbering of sonnets, and a fore-grounding of sonnets within a multi-genre publication” (208). The fact that more than one sonnet is arranged on a page, and that some are broken over two pages, creates “a kind of forward rhythm that cuts across the thematic divisions and connections in the sequence.” One might add that such an arrangement serves to keep the reader turning pages, no small feat considering the number of poems in the sequence. Only the final

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<sup>8</sup> This sort of “play” reminds me of internet emoticons.

<sup>9</sup> Not all such puns are innocent: Blogger Brooke Marshall (2008) argues for a ribald typographical pun in John Donne’s “The Flea” that depends on a confusion between the long *s* and *f* in the line, “It suck’d me first, and now sucks thee.”



sonnet, Sonnet 154, which is itself a variation on, or mirror-image of, 153, is given pride of place on its own page.

Elizabeth D. Harvey further identifies an ordering device involving color: "Readers of Shakespeare's sonnets have noted that the sequence moves along a gamut of color, from the 'fairest Creatures' of the first sonnet to the praise of 'black' in sonnet 127" (2007:314). This movement from white to black is visually complemented by the black ink on the "white" pages of the Quarto itself. The speaker alludes to other colors in the sequence, including "the 'living hue' of the Fair Youth in Sonnet 67 that 'blush[es] through lively veins'" (323), suggesting both the color of the rose (with its bloodlike hue) and the so-called "carnation," or "flesh colour" of the portrait miniature (Coombs 1998:16).

The overall composition of the sonnet sequence is punctuated by certain standard features of book-making in the period. These include the ornaments on A1r (the title page), B1r, and L2v. The last of these concludes the complaint poem, so it need not concern us here. However, I find the first two suggestive, especially after having read Bruce R. Smith's *The Key of Green* (2009) and Patricia Fumerton's "'Secret' Arts: Elizabethan Miniatures and Sonnets" (1986). Between them, these two works give me the temerity to suggest that the choice of headpieces on A1r and B1r is not fortuitous. Indeed, both ornaments may be said to "invite" the reader into the text, and not without playing up on certain themes that inform the sonnets themselves.<sup>10</sup> The compositor's (dare we say Shakespeare's?) precise choice of headpieces may not be significant. Indeed, most of the information I found on them on the web was intended to support someone's claim that Francis Bacon was the true author of the poems and plays. Not a very encouraging note on which to start to my investigation! The headpiece on the title page appears to feature two *cupids* flanking a possibly crowned, androgynous figure, but it's the "back-to-back" conies that catch Baconian eyes; they see in these figures an anagram of their candidate's name. Looking at the bigger picture, however, and taking the entire *mise-en-page* (with its titles and publisher's colophon) into consideration, might one not "see" the approximate outline of a Renaissance stage, empty except for the

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<sup>10</sup> I had a hard time finding information on the headpieces, and I am indebted to Georgianna Ziegler (2010) of the Folger library, with whom I communicated by email, for information on the use of headpieces in the Renaissance.

words announcing the title and for the claim that the poems are “Never before imprinted,” rather ingeniously playing upon Shakespeare’s reputation as a playwright (and actor) and inviting the reader to take part in a drama? The headpiece itself may be said to represent a tapestry or stage hanging, perhaps drawn up to reveal the title in a sort-of discovery space.<sup>11</sup> The lines that appear beneath the period after “Never before Imprinted.” represent the perimeter of the stage.

What then of the second headpiece? Is it doing double-duty as a stage hanging? Perhaps, but *Shake-speares Sonnets* is a multi-genre text that includes two epigrams (perhaps echoed in the cupids of the first headpiece) and a complaint. The public was invited to a viewing of the non-lyric works of the Quarto as to a drama played out on a public stage. But the 154 poems that make up the sonnet sequence are of a more private, one might even say claustrophobic (with their dramatis personae reduced to two or three players), nature than the Cupid epigrams and complaints, whether autobiographical or not. The second headpiece, which appears in place of a number above Sonnet 1 (and which is a variation on the headpiece used in the 1623 Folio) is said, by R. L. Eagle (1947:38), to feature “a key suspended from the centre urn or vase.” He then goes on to list other volumes, by Shakespeare and others, that carry the same headpiece.<sup>12</sup> This key may well look forward to Sonnet 52, of which we have already spoken, but might it not also refer to the dedication on A2r, which begins “TO.THE.ONLIE.BEGETTER.” and which may be said to approximate the shape of a keyhole?<sup>13</sup> And what attaches to a keyhole but a private space – not a discovery space, such as is found on a public stage, but a bedroom, perhaps, or a casket containing something precious to its owner? Patricia Fumerton (1986:57-59)

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<sup>11</sup> I am basing my assumption as to what a Renaissance stage might have looked like on engravings such as those by Thomas Rawlings and John Payne, found in Bruce R. Smith’s *The Key of Green* (2009:224).

<sup>12</sup> For whatever reason this particular headpiece was selected, it happens to be the one we find in the Quarto; it may have been selected by the compositor because it was the most convenient to hand, but it *was* selected.

<sup>13</sup> Another interpretation might be that the dedication is so arranged as to suggest one V stacked over a second, the double V’s representing the letter W, for William. Elizabethan printers often used two v’s to represent w when they ran out of w’s. [Also of interest is Don Paterson’s assertion that “if we count W’s as two V’s” the letters in the dedication add up to (sonnet?) 144 (2010:4).]

relates the story of a meeting between Sir James Melville and Queen Elizabeth I that involves the viewing of a portrait miniature of the Earl of Leicester in her majesty's "bed-chamber." The movement described is from a public space (the palace) to a private space (the bed-chamber) and on to an even more private space, the "cabinet" containing the portrait. A similar passage may be implied by the placement of headpieces at certain liminal or threshold spaces within the quarto itself. The stage hanging represented on the title page opens to reveal a discovery space on B1r; the discovery space, like Elizabeth's bed-chamber, contains a cabinet, this one holding, not portrait miniatures, but the sequence of 154 sonnets. Fumerton herself views the sonnet as a verse counterpart to the portrait miniature:

The leading Elizabethan artists of miniatures and sonnets [...] particularly address problems of self and self-expression, and while in ironic contradiction, find an answer in the same "game" of secrecy: in representing through "public" forms (of ornament, convention, rhetoric) the "private" and "true" self, a representation that necessarily could never be presented. (1986:59)

Rather than a stage hanging, the headpiece to the sonnets (B1r) more closely represents a canopy or curtain panel, such as was used to conceal that most intimate of spaces in the home, a bed. As in the case of Elizabeth and Melville's progress from bed-chamber to cabinet, the poet's sequence takes us from the Fair Youth sonnets to the most intimate sub-sequence of sonnets, numbers 127-152. The parentheses that conclude the Fair Youth sequence<sup>14</sup> may then be said to conclude one act, while raising the curtain on yet a third space, this one concealing the most private act in the poet's drama, his adulterous affair with the Dark Lady.

A quote from Stephen Greenblatt's *Will in the World* will suffice to show how natural it is for scholars to resort to the stage as a metaphor when discussing the sonnets (my italics): "the whole enterprise of writing a sonnet sequence precisely involved drawing a translucent *curtain* – of one of those gauzy fabrics Elizabethans loved – over the *scene*, so that only shadowy figures are visible to the public" (2004:233-234). He goes on to say:

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<sup>14</sup> These may also be explained as a compositor's attempt to sort out the number of lines on the page so they will equal approximately 36 (Atkins 2003:511-12).

The sonnets are a thrilling, deeply convincing *staging* of the poet's inner life, an intimate *performance* of Shakespeare's response to his tangled emotional relationships with a young man, a rival poet, and a dark lady; and the sonnets are a cunning sequence of beautiful locked boxes to which there are no keys, an exquisitely constructed screen behind which it is virtually impossible to venture with any confidence. (249)

Greenblatt insists upon the absence of a key, but might not the Q compositor's design effects, which include the dedication page and the headpieces, have been meant as a compositional "key" to guide readers through the maze of said "boxes"?

Are there precedents for such an assertion? There may well be; perhaps we have just overlooked them. The Renaissance preoccupation with word games and the like is well-grounded in Shakespeare, as Stephen Booth and others have demonstrated, but it hardly stops there. Sir Philip Sidney punned on his own name when he took the sobriquet *Astrophil* for his sonnet sequence, not published until after his death (1591). Photographs of sonnet quartos by Shakespeare and his contemporaries that appear on G. R. Ledger's (2009) website illustrate the custom of centering the text on the title and dedication pages, in a self-conscious appeal to the visual, often with striking results, as on the title page of a 1591 printing of *Astrophil and Stella*, with its mirroring effect. In an age of perspective drawing, *trompe l'oeil* was a favorite effect of artists (take, for example, the Sistine Chapel) and surely would have been known to English book compositors. The compositor's selection of a headpiece for a book necessarily involves a design choice, even if the reason for that choice is economy. I can easily imagine compositors amusing themselves by selecting headpieces and other design effects that might complement themes in the books they were working on. Perhaps this was part of their professional brief? And what headpiece would be more appropriate to a sequence of love poems than one (out of the many available) sporting an image of cupids?

Certain visual effects may suggest a carryover from the printed editions of Shakespeare's plays. I am thinking particularly of the italicizing of certain words for emphasis (*Will / will*) as a possible clue (or should I say "cue") to the reader of their thematic import. We are now given reason to believe that players' parts (rolls of paper containing an actor's words) might have contained actual stage directions, such as are implied by shared or incomplete lines in the

text.<sup>15</sup> Might this practice be echoed in the breaking up of text over two pages or the foreshortening of a line of text for effect in the sonnets? It is probably just a happy coincidence that catchwords function in much the same way as cues on the page.

The sonnet form itself is a “design” choice, this time of the poet. As I have attempted to convey, the sonnet’s very shape (suggestive as it is of a portrait miniature, a mirror, a clock face, etc.) may be intended to comment on themes associated with its subject matter, love.

The more we see of design in the poems, the more likely we are to sense a directing hand in their composition. The temptation then becomes to identify that hand as Shakespeare’s. The placement of ornaments in book design has been a chief concern of printers at least since the age of illuminated manuscripts. The monks working at Lindisfarne were probably not aware of the commercial potential of books, but by Shakespeare’s time, the physical appearance of a book (not to mention its size and cost) could easily affect its success. It is unfortunate that Shakespeare’s austere, yet lovely, book came out in the middle of a plague year; otherwise, it might more readily have caught the eye of aesthetically-minded book buyers. The “Shakespeare” name alone – and there it was, trumpeted to high heavens on the title page – did not, as it turns out, guarantee sales.

As mentioned above, Sonnet 154 takes pride of place in the quarto as the second of the Cupid epigrams and the last of the sequence. Ben Crystal (2009:151-52) recounts a friend’s suggestion that Shakespeare may have hubristically arrived at the number 154 for his sequence by considering the maximum number of syllables possible in an individual sonnet (Sonnet 20, because of its feminine endings, is just such a sonnet). True or not, Sonnets 153 and 154, the so-called Cupid epigrams have a kind of tacked-on feel for most readers. They are disappointed by their near-pedestrian and redundant quality. It has even been suggested that they might be Shakespearean juvenilia. However, their placement at the end of the sequence makes for a visual bookend to the appearance of the cupids in the headpiece to Q, and they conveniently stretch the sequence out in order for it to arrive at that “odd” number, 154. As

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<sup>15</sup> No such “parts” for Shakespeare’s plays exist. For a full discussion of their possibilities, however, see Simon Palfrey and Tiffany Stern’s *Shakespeare in Parts*.

Shakespeare's last "word," they may be anticlimactic, but they do serve to underscore his amatory theme and to function as a kind of *entr'acte*, if you will, between the intense drama of the sonnets themselves and the lighter fare afforded by the complaint poem.

Appropriately, the last word in Sonnet 154 is *love*.

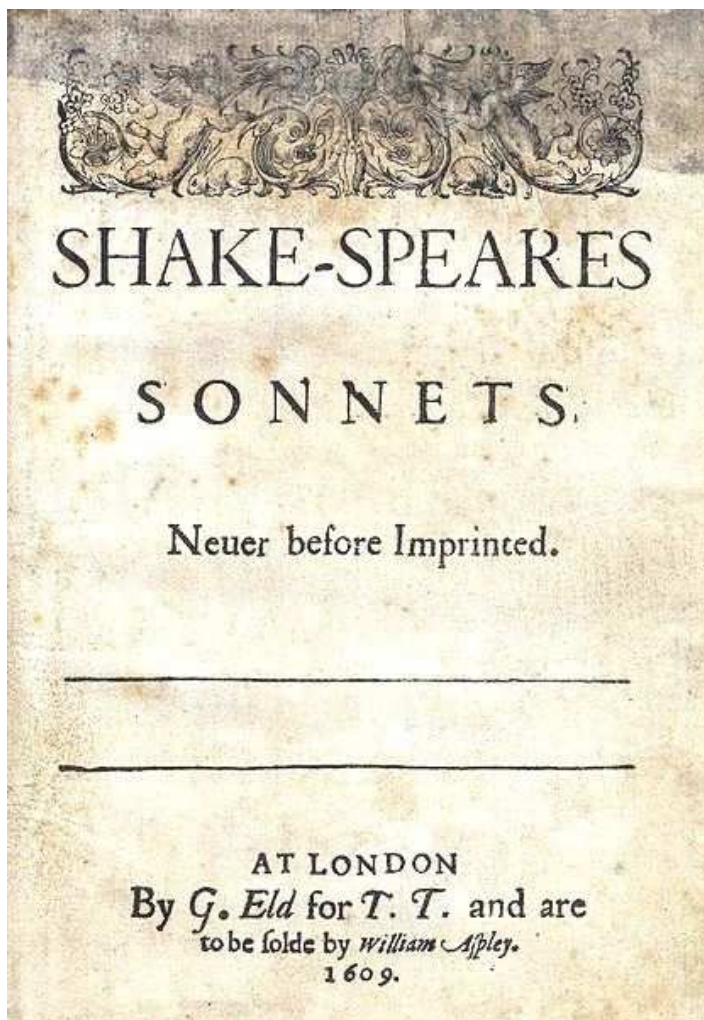


Figure 1. Title page (A1r) of the 1609 Quarto edition of the Sonnets

TO . THE . ONLIE . BEGETTER . OF .  
THESE . INSVING . SONNETS .  
M<sup>r</sup> . W . H . ALL . HAPPINESSE .  
AND . THAT . ETERNITIE .  
PROMISED .  
  
BY .  
  
OVR . EVER-LIVING . POET .  
  
WISHETH  
  
THE . WELL-WISHING .  
ADVENTVRER . IN .  
SETTING .  
FORTH .  
  
  
T . T .

*Figure 2.* Dedication (A2r) of the 1609 Quarto edition of the Sonnets

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**Jorge Figueroa-Dorrego and Cristina Larkin-Galiñanes**  
eds. 2009.

***A Source Book of Literary and Philosophical  
Writings about Humour and Laughter:  
The Seventy-Five Essential Texts  
from Antiquity to Modern Times  
Lewiston, et. al.: Edwin Mellen.***

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Jorge Figueroa-Dorrego and Cristina Larkin-Galiñanes have done humour researchers and teachers of comedy studies a great service in the compilation of this rich and wide-ranging anthology, the first of its kind for almost a quarter of a century, and undoubtedly the most exhaustive.

Featuring a generous selection of texts – many of which are not readily in print – the anthology aims to present the reader with the key discussions of humour and laughter from Plato to Henri Bergson, arranging the sections within three broadly-defined periods: antiquity and the middle ages; the early modern period; and what they term the “late modern” period. The anthology collects works from authors as varied as Aristotle, Descartes, Coleridge, Herbert Spencer and Charles Baudelaire, and from fields as diverse as literary criticism, philosophy, theology, experimental psychology, medical theory, political science, and conduct literature. As such, the form of the book serves to make an important point about one of the perennial problems of humour studies: how are we to define such overlapping and profligate terms, and to which discipline or disciplines do they properly belong? This is a question that Larkin-Galiñanes takes up in her helpful introduction, acknowledging the mobility of humour’s terminology and the difficulty inherent in trying to determine the object of study in any definitive sense. To aid

the reader, therefore, the editors offer a substantial and authoritative essay at the beginning of each section that seeks to locate the texts within their historical contexts and offer a gloss on the place of humour and laughter within their respective eras. This is, of course, a significant undertaking, but one that is accomplished admirably.

All of the texts that one would expect to be here are in evidence: Sir Philip Sidney on Elizabethan comedy, Thomas Hobbes' famous remark on laughter as a sign of "pusillanimity," and George Meredith on the socially-corrective purpose of the comic spirit. The stand-out sections, however, are the earliest texts, primarily because they are the hardest to find in reliable modern editions. These selections include the enigmatic and fragmentary *Tractatus Coisilianus* (anecdotally believed by some to present the blueprint for Aristotle's lost *Poetics* of comedy), and handily-excerpted selections from Cicero and Quintilian on the utility of laughter in rhetorical arguments. Also particularly welcome is the section on the early Christian tradition, reprinting the Bible's sparse comments on laughter alongside those of Church Fathers such as Basil of Caesarea, Clement of Alexandria, and John Chrysostom. The Christian tradition is central to western concepts of humour, but often overlooked in favour of a secular, literary tradition that runs from Roman New Comedy through renaissance humanism and into eighteenth century debates about the proper use of wit. This narrative can now be re-evaluated thanks to the material being made once-again accessible.

Omission is, of course, the necessary evil of all anthologizing, and there are some notable gaps – the inclusion of only a single text by a woman (George Eliot), for example, no Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*, or Asper's speech on humour in Ben Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour*, despite of the acknowledgment of Jonson's centrality in the General Introduction. The absence of some texts, such as the stanzas on comedy in Spenser's *Tears of the Muses*, George Puttenham's thoughts on comedy in the *Arte of English Poesie*, and the Congreve-Collier controversy of 1698, are rendered untroubling by coverage elsewhere. Others, such as the glaring nonappearance of Sigmund Freud, are surely explained by copyright issues beyond the editors' influence. One does wonder, however, why the selection stops so abruptly at 1900 when the subtitle promises us material up to "modern times" – surely a sufficiently capacious term to include

writers such as Francis Cornford, Mary Douglas, James Agee, Mikhail Bakhtin, Northrop Frye, C.L. Barber, Theodor Adorno, and the Cambridge Ritualists, among others. Similarly, there is a large body of poststructuralist and postmodern work on humour and playfulness now sufficiently entrenched within the academy to be anthologized. Again, the dual nuisances of copyright and clearance no doubt present an obstacle to extending the work far beyond its present form, but it does make one hope that the editors have the enthusiasm to produce a second volume. There is certainly an appetite for it, and it would be greatly appreciated. An invaluable source-book indeed.

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**Keith Gregor, 2010**  
***Shakespeare in the Spanish Theatre: 1772 to the Present***  
**London & New York: Continuum**

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In recent years there has been an impressive growth in critical surveys of the ways in which Shakespeare has been refashioned in specific national contexts within the wider academic framework of what has come to be known as European Shakespeares (Pujante & Hoenselaars 2003; Hattaway, Sokolova & Roper 1994). Similarly, since the late 1980's there has been a renaissance in critical work examining the cultural politics of Shakespearean performance that has positioned the aesthetic choices made by individual theatre practitioners or particular companies within a wider social and political context (Hodgdon 1998; Massai 2006).

Keith Gregor's stimulating and wide-ranging history of the performance of Shakespeare in Spain can be located at the intersection of these two international trends and integrated more specifically with the important work by Spanish Shakespeareans such as Ángel-Luis Pujante (2007), José Manuel González (1993), Clara Calvo (2006), and Rafael Portillo (1994) to uncover and make available the diverse experiences of Shakespeare in Spain. Indeed, Gregor himself has already contributed to this work in a series of articles in national and international publications (2003, 2004). As a book-length study that aims to provide a historical survey of four centuries of Shakespeare for English-speaking readers, from *Hamlet* (1772), the earliest "Shakespearean" drama, to the present day, *Shakespeare in the Spanish Theatre* faces two immediate challenges. The first is how to link individual, often highly localised, performances to wider cultural trends, in order to give a sense of changes and continuities in Shakespearean performance over this

long period. The second is how to balance the need for detailed information about what is specific to Spanish Shakespeares, whilst also suggesting what elements the Spanish experience might have in common with performances of Shakespeare in other national contexts.

With regard to the first of these challenges, the book's claim to being representative rather than exhaustive enables it to chart connections between particular performances, national political developments and European aesthetic tendencies. Examples of this would include analysis of the differences between neo-classicists and romantics over the Shakespearean texts within the changing context of Spain's political relationship with France, or the tension between innovation and traditionalism in stagings of the plays under Franco's dictatorship. As for the second of these challenges, there are several examples of intriguing Spanish particularities in the book, such as the appearance of Shakespeare himself as a transgressive figure in several plays or the vital panorama of regional diversity that is so characteristic of Spanish theatre work. Yet there are also features with which readers from other national contexts, like myself in Portugal, may sense clear affinities. These include the reliance of early Spanish translators on Jean-François Ducis' eighteenth century French versions of the plays or the use of the 'symbolic capital' (86) of Shakespeare to bolster the cultural pretensions of a dictatorial regime.

In the introduction to the book, Gregor describes the history of Shakespeare in the Spanish theatre as:

a history of "false beginnings," of sporadic and often eccentric attempts to swim against the theatrical tide, to present aesthetic alternatives before an institution weighed down with prejudice and – despite Spain's own rich dramatic tradition – historically ill-prepared for the kind of revolution Shakespeare's work entailed.  
(5)

As this quote suggests, the writing of such a chequered history represents a departure from traditional historiography, which tends to smooth out contradictions and implicitly or explicitly base itself on a narrative of national progress. Although Gregor's approach lacks the certainties of this kind of traditional history, its benefits may be seen in the study's exploration of a wide variety of examples of Spanish Shakespeare and a more complex notion of the forward

and backward movements of the historical process. In this respect, Gregor's final chapter deals with the performance of Shakespeare in the crisis-ridden new millennium, which has produced what he labels "Shakespeare on a diet" (149), based on a limited number of actors and a strong desire to cut or adapt the texts. This suggests that an intermittent tradition of Shakespearean performance in Spain is by no means only a thing of the past. The question that remains after reading the book, however, is the extent to which this phenomenon of intermittent performance has contributed positively or negatively to the Shakespeare that has been performed in Spain. While, on the one hand, it might be seen to necessarily demand a continual and needless reinventing of the wheel from Spanish theatre practitioners, on the other, the lack of a sustained Spanish tradition of Shakespearean performance could also be seen as liberating, in the sense that practitioners have not felt the same weight of tradition when they performed the plays as, for example, was felt in the United Kingdom.

Gregor's history is also one which does not detach the phenomenon of Shakespearean performance from performances within the theatrical culture of other national and international dramatists. For instance, he highlights the curious paradox that Spanish theatre practitioners often chose to perform Shakespeare rather than Spanish dramatists like Calderón de la Barca or Lope de Vega, either because the rhythms of Shakespearean language in translation were considered more accessible for Spanish actors or in order to promote regional languages over the Castilian of the Spanish state. Such an approach raises some intriguing questions about the type of cultural work Shakespeare is put to when appropriated in non-Anglophone national contexts.

As the earlier quotations suggests, *Shakespeare in the Spanish Theatre* is in many respects a counter-cultural history of those translators and performers who have dealt more consistently or more imaginatively with Shakespeare. Indeed, they often take centre stage here rather than being consigned to the wings as marginal, as is often the case in traditional histories of Shakespeare. This provides a clearer notion of the importance of exceptional individuals and remarkable productions in the history of Shakespeare in Spain. Such individuals, ranging from the pioneering modernist director Adrià Gual to the *La Barraca* actress Margarita Xirgú, the first Spanish

woman to play Hamlet while in exile in Argentina, emerge as truly groundbreaking figures within a theatrical sphere where conformity seems to promise greater rewards than experimentation. Gregor stresses in particular the role of regional Shakespeares in providing alternatives to standardised performances in Madrid, right up to the present where companies in the regions have developed their own performance spaces, theatre personnel and networks. He also draws welcome attention to the fascinating history of gender in Spanish performances of Shakespeare, when discussing, for instance, the public furore over Juan Guerrero Zamora's 1975 *Taming of the Shrew*, which became a plea for equal rights between men and women and undermined traditional patriarchal readings of this ever-popular play.

It could be argued that it is in the context of the Franco dictatorship that such counter-cultural productions assume their greatest importance. Gregor's skilful detailing of the contradiction between the innovatory rhetoric of the Falange and the conventional banality of performances for elite audiences in the nationalised theatres during this time makes clear just how different these counter-cultural performances were and continue to be. However, the charting of the theatrical mainstream in tandem with the counter-cultural avoids what is often the major deficiency in counter-cultural histories of Shakespearean performance, which is a tendency to write their histories without a clear sense of what these performances aimed to offer alternatives to. Here, the contrast between the controlled hyperbole of performances under Franco and the patient determination of someone like Lluís Pasqual, who has sought a more profound relationship with the plays, is clearly drawn and the inclusion of both in the book illustrates two starkly different ways of engaging with the Shakespearean repertoire in Spain.

This book will be of obvious interest to Spanish Shakespeare scholars, for whom it constitutes an invaluable resource, particularly those Spanish Shakespeareans with research interests in translation and performance. It will also be of interest to those exploring the histories of non-Anglophone performances of Shakespeare, both in Europe and beyond. It sets itself an ambitious task, for the historical scope of the book ranges from the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries, yet each chapter of the book is clearly argued, fluently written and accessible to specialist and non-specialist audiences.



There is a strong sense of historical changes in approaches to Shakespeare as well as of the popularity of specific aesthetic tendencies at particular times. There is a clear distinction between the earlier appropriation of the Shakespearean text in Spain and the much later recognition of its performative potential. However, these tendencies are not allowed to solidify into hard and fast conclusions about what constitutes Spanish Shakespeare as a whole. If the critical history of Shakespeare in Spain, like the performance of Shakespeare itself, can be seen as a series of false beginnings, with impassioned individuals doing their best to construct a sense of a multifaceted tradition, *Shakespeare in the Spanish Theatre* is an important contribution to a complex and often contradictory critical history which also points to the ways in which the construction of such a tradition is inevitably criss-crossed by politics, history and difference.

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**Dennis Kennedy and Yong Li Lan eds. 2010**  
***Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance***  
**Cambridge: Cambridge University Press**

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As a collection of essays, Dennis Kennedy and Yong Li Lan's *Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance* (2010) is an innovative and illuminating work, which considerably contributes to our understanding of Shakespeare's *oeuvre* in an Asian cultural aesthetics. In spite of the fact that the outset of the postmillennial period has witnessed an enormous number of volumes devoted to the study of Shakespeare in specific Asian countries such as China, India or Japan (Ruru 2003; Huang 2009; Trivedi and Bartholomeusz 2005; Kishin and Bradshaw 2005; Minami, Carruthers and Gillies 2001), the current volume is actually one of the first works in bringing to the fore productions of the entire continent.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the publication of Kennedy and Lan's volume, Alexander Huang's works had substantially shaped Asian Shakespeare(s) as a new field of study. Though his contributions basically examine the reception of Shakespeare in China, his special issue "Asian Shakespeares" for the journal *Borrowers and Lenders*, devoted exclusively to reviews of two Asian Shakespeare film adaptations – *The Banquet* (dir. Xiaogang Feng, 2006) and *Maqbool* (dir. Vishal Bharadwaj, 2003) – and his co-edited volume with Charles S. Ross (2009) are now mandatory references in the field. While the special issue analyzes the intricacies of two Asian visual texts, the collection of essays edited with Ross goes beyond, and focuses on the current cultural flows linking

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<sup>1</sup> Another volume on the topic of Shakespeare in Asia has been published this year (Trivedi and Minami 2010). The approach, though, is consistently different since this takes the shape of an "encyclopedia" of performances of Shakespeare's plays on the Asian stage, covering productions in geographical locations never analysed before.

Hollywood, Asia and the digital age, and how they influence our understanding of Shakespeare. Thus, the scope of Huang and Ross's work is considerable, and it is not limited to the reception of Shakespeare in Asia. Kennedy and Lan's volume *Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance* offers an approach to the subject that differs significantly from its predecessor in that, rather than being interested in how the new paradigms of global culture affect the way Shakespeare is experienced, it attempts to develop, (re)negotiate, and examine Asian Shakespeares/Shakespeare in Asia as an entity *per se* through the theoretical background of interculturality.

Outside the comfortable "zone" of Anglophone cultures, Kennedy and Lan's work clearly emerges from the increasing interest in the cultural exchanges provided by Shakespearean intercultural performances as successful as Ong Keng Sen's trilogy. One of the book's greatest virtues is its layout since, rather than allotting a chapter to each production, this collection is divided into complex and stimulating sections ("Voice and body;" "Shakespeare in Asian popular cultures;" "Transacting cultures;" "Intercultural politics"), which have the ever-present interculturality as nexus. Each section is sensibly preceded by a succinct introduction, which allows the expert in this field, as well as the novel reader, to follow the argument effortlessly. Contrary to the readers' expectations – if they are familiar with Dennis Kennedy's theatrical background – the book is not simply limited to the interpretation of Shakespeare on the Asian stage. In fact, one of the most valuable assets of the book is the wide range of cultural products it discusses – from the "localized" traditional performances of Shakespeare's plays to Manga comics and Bollywood movies – this volume offers a forum for discussing a diversity of Shakespearian afterlives in several media, including instances of popular culture, which are often neglected in scholarly books.

Instead of providing only a summary of the subsequent essays in the volume, Kennedy and Lan's introduction is informative *per se*, not only for its enriching content, but also for its exemplary economy of style and exciting structure. Asking themselves questions concerning the role of Shakespeare in non-western productions as apparently simple as "what is it that endures when he is deprived of his tongue?" (21) or concerning the active role of the spectators in them, the editors want to examine the possibilities and failures of

these productions which play on a “double marketability,” advertising both the name of Shakespeare and their “Asianness” or exoticism. The editors implicitly suggest that these new modes of representation are opening up a future for Shakespearean plays – where corporeal performance is crucial – which would never have been imagined in the Western tradition. One of the key elements of this introduction is the concise and interesting list that includes the different solutions for the appropriation of the Bard: nationalist appropriation (in China), colonial instigation (India), and intercultural revision, which is innovative, and refers to productions that adapt the text to foreign modes of performance and is not associated with any geographical space. The rest of the introduction basically advances the ensuing discussion concerning the differences between traditional western approaches and the modes of representation, re-negotiation and re-invention of Shakespeare in the Asian countries, where speech/dialogue is not the most important element, and is simply subject to the other strategies for adapting the plays.

The first section of the volume “Voice and body” addresses the issue of speaking Shakespeare in foreign voices from different angles. In his essay about “Shakespeare and the *Natyasastra*,” John Russell Brown states that *Natyasastra* acting methods – based on *rasas* (sensations) – can be useful for English-speaking actors. Daniel Gallimore explores how a text changes and is transformed considerably in the throat of an actor through the medium of *Rodoku* – Japanese methods of verse recitation. Much more interesting from an intercultural perspective is the analysis by Fei Chunfang and Sun Huizhu of the experience of mixing *Othello* with the style of the Beijing Opera for the Chinese theatre in 1983 and for American would-be actors in 1994. Their findings show that while in China it was Shakespeare that was appropriated, in America it was the Chinese Opera. With a clear twist to Rustom Bharucha’s argument according to which all appropriations are doubtful, Chunfang and Huizhu conclude their chapter by highlighting the idea that although appropriations may lose something in the process, refreshing and enlightening new meanings can also be produced.

The second section “Shakespeare in Asian popular cultures” brings together the most exciting essays in the entire book, devoted to the reception and understanding of Shakespeare in Asian popular

modes. In a chapter that includes both old and recent Bollywood movies that refer somehow to Shakespeare's plays such as *Shakespeare Wallah*, 36 *Chowringhee Lane*, 1942: *A Love Story* or the box-office hit *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*, Richard Burt traces the marginalization of Shakespeare in Bollywood cinema to the colonial past. Moreover, the chapter also shows how the localizing of Shakespeare in Bollywood movies is in fact crucial to his entrance into the "glocal" marketplace. As the only essay that delves into films, Burt's chapter provides an oasis to the cinema lovers in the book, although the inclusion of films from the late 60s and from the 80s may distort Burt's hypothesis and the reader is sometimes lost, waiting to see the direction the article takes. Burt's chapter is nevertheless an invaluable contribution to the field of Shakespeare in Bollywood, still so little studied. In a well-structured and highly readable chapter, Minami Ryuta engages with the reader in a satisfactory search for Shakespeare in a Shōjo Manga – a comic addressed to girls. The strength of the essay resides in the reading of a Shōjo Manga *Twelfth Night* as a clear case of hybridity, being indebted to Shakespeare's play as well as to the all-female Takarazuka Company's house style by means of the androgyny of the male impersonators and the cross-dressing plots. The experiment to see how Shakespeare's cachet works with popular cultural products ends with the chapter by Kumiko Hilberdink-Sakamoto about Shakespeare's villains in Japan. Focusing on Noda Hideki and Ryuzanji Jimusho's adaptations of Shakespeare in 1990 and 1992 – written in a crucial period for Japanese theatre, the Shōgekijo boom – the author reworks and expands the concept of the villain in Shakespeare's plays. Kumiko Hilberdink-Sakamoto also suggests that Shōgekijo adaptations – considerably altered from the original text, and addressed to a female audience – encouraged another kind of "Shakespeare," targeted at contemporary Japanese audiences. Although the three essays included in this section seem unrelated to each other since they are concerned with different aspects of popular culture, the three show how Shakespearean works are considerably altered – sometimes reduced to the mere plots – to address contemporary audiences.

In the third section "Transacting cultures," the three essays revolve around the idea that Shakespeare is regarded as one of the most wanted tools for cultural exchange. Unlike the articles in the previous section, the three essays are closely related. Suematsu

Michiko looks into the presence of Shakespeare in Japan, which has gone through different stages – the import of “authentic” Shakespearean productions aiming to imitate the western model in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, closely followed by the export of “authentic exotic Japanese Shakespeares” from the 1970s on. Yet, thanks to the 1990s productions, the simplistic binary formula has now disappeared, paving the way for a wider spectrum of performances that goes beyond the traditional boundaries. In an excellently contextualised chapter, Li Ruru concentrates on three Shakespearean productions in China to show that each director was aware of the necessity of clinging to Shakespeare in order to convey his meaning. Ruru concludes her chapter claiming that “the story of Shakespeare in China is more about China than Shakespeare” (185). If the previous chapters focused on the overview of Shakespeare in Japan and in China respectively, Yong Li Lan explores Ong Keng Sen’s three adaptations of Shakespeare’s plays – *LEAR* (1997, 1999), *Desdemona* (2000), and *Search: Hamlet* (2002) – as true intercultural performances. The bold approaches taken by the productions with different theatrical forms and spaces, multicultural casts and multiple languages to play each character favoured a clear intercultural reading. The linear and binary conception of Shakespeare in Asia is complicated and challenged by this chapter, which in fact regards that notion as old-fashioned and conservative since interculturality is now “the global circulation” (206) due to the continuous flows of people and media. Therefore, this section moves from abstract instances of interculturality to a concrete example in Ong Keng Sen’s adaptations.

The last section of the volume “Intercultural Politics” takes a political angle. The three essays contained in this last part undertake a thorough discussion of the politics and possibilities of interculturality in contemporary Asia. Shen is concerned with an analysis of intercultural practices as right or wrong, whereas John Phillips actually wonders if intercultural performances of Shakespeare are possible. The collection ends with the well-known article by Rustom Bharucha previously published in *Theatre Journal* “Foreign Asia/Foreign Shakespeare,” in which he de-canonizes these two entities. He examines Ong Keng Sen’s productions, postcolonial criticism in relation to native theatrical forms and European-Asian cultural exchange in sceptical terms, as if there was no future for the issue of interculturality, which is left at stalemate.

Although the reasons to end with this chapter are easy to grasp, the book leaves the reader full of *angst*. Seeming to contradict some of the previous arguments, this section, in spite of being entitled “Intercultural Politics,” does not provide the longed for conclusion regarding interculturality, and ends with an open-ended debate in which the reader is invited to participate – just as good intercultural productions move the spectator to play an active role, so does Kennedy and Lan’s collection.

In spite of its title – “Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance” – this collection does not show a well-balanced geographical coverage, and privileges productions from some geographical areas – basically China and Japan – over performances from other Asian regions which do not even have a nominal presence, such as Malaysia, Indonesia or Korea, or which are scantily mentioned, like India. With the exception of the *Kathakali Othello* analysed briefly by Rustom Bharucha, famous Indian performances in theatrical traditions such as Kaliyattam or Jatra have been completely ignored. The reader may also suffer from a surfeit of certain productions like Ong Keng Sen’s trilogy, which is discussed in several chapters, and may feel an appetite for more contemporary performances. The lack of variety and breadth in the productions discussed is disappointing at times. Another shortcoming of this collection is the contributors’ conflicting views, which tend to end in continuous back-and-forths – Chunfang and Huizhu and Yong Li Lan contradicting Bharucha’s arguments and Bharucha himself harshly criticising John Russell Brown – which rather than enriching the arguments, render the theorizing of interculturality even more difficult than it is.

And yet, no one expects interculturality to be easy to tackle. The considerable number of contributors from different traditions and backgrounds and their lively, on-going scholarly debates are two of the strengths of the book. Fresh, illuminating and well-structured, Kennedy and Lan’s volume is more than a mere welcome and an interesting contribution to the field of Shakespeare in Asia, and, thanks to its added political, theoretical and ideological dimensions, it will become an indispensable reference for future research.



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**Gary Taylor *et al.* 2007**  
***Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works***  
**and**  
***Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture***  
**Oxford: Oxford University Press**

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In truth this long-awaited publication is more than a collected works. Unlike orthodox scholarly collections, for example the recent Cambridge edition of the plays of John Webster, but like the 1997 Norton Shakespeare (based on another, rather more orthodox collection, the Oxford Shakespeare of 1986), it includes critical essays on a range of topics relevant to students of early modern literature, theatre, and culture. It is then rather a hybrid: a scholarly edition which properly seeks to identify and present the Middleton canon, and a resource which aims to provide the latest scholarship on the kinds of areas with which specialists and non-specialists alike might reasonably be expected to be familiar. This servant of two masters, divided into two volumes (which raises a number of issues related to form, content, and target audience[s]) is packed with material totalling more than 3,000 pages. Perhaps appropriately for a writer who worked in so many genres (and not for the playhouse alone), the Oxford Middleton is a sprawling assortment of texts, contexts, and scholarship designed, as its general editor and driving force Gary Taylor declares, to do for Middleton what wasn't done for him by a Heminges and Condell.

Like Marlowe, Webster, and the majority of early modern English dramatists, Middleton was a quarto playwright: if his plays were published at all it was in octavo or quarto, some within months or a couple of years of composition and performance, others much later. Unlike those of Shakespeare, Jonson, Beaumont, and Fletcher,

the plays linked to Middleton, either during his lifetime or subsequently, did not appear in a collected edition until two centuries after his death, though several were included in the Beaumont and Fletcher compendium of 1647, for example. A number were first printed some time after his death. *The Changeling*, his celebrated collaboration with William Rowley, was licensed in 1622 but not printed until 1653; *The Witch* appeared only in 1778, and derives from a manuscript in the hand of Ralph Crane which the Oxford editors date to c.1625, some ten years after the play was written. This piecemeal publication (which in many cases, as was common, did not identify Middleton as the author) meant that in the absence of a collected edition he did not enjoy the kind of *literary* reputation that would favour Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Shakespeare in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though as Sara Jayne Steen (1993) has shown, a small number of his plays continued to enjoy some success on stage in the Restoration and beyond. T.S. Eliot's observation in his 1927 essay that Middleton's is "merely the name which associates six or seven great plays" (Eliot 1927:84) could have been made at any point between the mid-seventeenth century and the end of the twentieth.

The absence of a collected edition in the seventeenth century meant not only that Middleton's reputation took a long time to become established but that the plays were not *collected* and a canon identified – or, at any rate, a *name* promoted, let alone recognised. As a consequence, the history of Middleton scholarship has been one of protracted debate over the canon, needless to say a necessary prerequisite for a project such as this. A good deal of ink has been spilt since the late nineteenth century arguing for and against the ascription of a number of plays that may or may not have been partly or wholly written by him, and more recently (and indeed contentiously) the nature and extent of his collaborative relationships with other writers and the plays (and textual complications therein) this labour produced. The Oxford Middleton draws on the work of two scholars who have been central to the identification of the canon: David Lake (1975) and MacDonald P. Jackson (1979) – the latter one of its general editors. Few scholars contest the view that *The Revenger's Tragedy* was written by Middleton (and not Cyril Tourneur, as a later seventeenth-century document asserts), while other, less celebrated plays once associated with Middleton, such as *Blurt, Master Constable* and *The Family of*

*Love*, are no longer, and consequently are omitted; conversely, plays included in the 1647 Beaumont and Fletcher folio, such as *Wit at Several Weapons* and *The Nice Valour*, are brought back into the fold. But such decisions are barely noticeable compared to what is clearly the most provocative feature of this edition, namely the claim that in fact Middleton *was* published in folio in his own lifetime – in the most famous and culturally-significant collection of all time, published in 1623.

In fact scholars have long considered *Timon of Athens* to be a Shakespeare-Middleton collaboration, but the inclusion of this play in a *Middleton* collection, and particularly the re-designation of *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure*, has raised eyebrows (Vickers 2010). Material common to *The Witch* and *Macbeth* suggests some kind of textual collaboration, possibly (the orthodox view) because Middleton revised *Macbeth* after Shakespeare's death, incorporating parts of *The Witch* (which may have been politically problematic or otherwise troubled, as its dedicatory epistle appears to suggest) for a revival by the King's Men. Gary Taylor and John Jowett have argued strongly that Middleton revised *Measure for Measure* in 1621 (Taylor and Jowett 1993). All three plays were first published in the 1623 folio: no quartos exist, so it is not possible to compare "Shakespeare" and "Middleton" versions – or to separate them. That these three plays were included by Heminges and Condell means a number of things; but most importantly it guaranteed their survival. Their representation as Middleton texts – or rather collaborations in which he had a hand – is provocative but defensible: after all, if scholars are correct, they are all Shakespeare-Middleton collaborations (in the case of *Measure for Measure*, and probably *Macbeth*, "posthumous", textual revivals, which the Oxford Middleton terms "adaptations", Middleton reworking property of the King's Men, which is what the plays were). Heminges and Condell included these plays in the 1623 folio as "Shakespeare" plays, but the application of modern technology has enabled scholars to add yet another chapter to the tortuous textual history of the compilation of the first folio. More importantly for Middleton scholars, it sheds further light on the career of this remarkable dramatist.

The irony of course is that any notion of a "Middleton" canon has to accommodate the fact that a significant number of "his" texts were collaborations. With *The Roaring Girl* and *The Changeling*

Middleton's name overshadows those of Thomas Dekker and Rowley respectively, playwrights who contributed significantly to these plays, and with whom he worked on more than one occasion; with the first folio texts the boot is on the other foot. This raises important issues. MacDonald P. Jackson's essay in the companion volume, "Early Modern Authorship: Canons and Chronologies", provides a thorough and even-handed account of recent studies in attribution, the application of computer technology to authorship studies, and the recent shift in scholarship (stimulated by Jeffrey Masten's work) towards a recognition that collaboration was central to early modern theatre practice, rather than (as earlier generations of scholars supposed) a subset (and poor relation) of "authorship". Writing for the playhouse was not at any stage an "individual" enterprise, for it was a process over which dramatists had very little control; acknowledging – as textual scholars must – that surviving printed texts are rarely "authorial" in provenance presents ticklish questions for editors, especially where multiple authorship is involved. In the case of the Shakespeare-Middleton texts the editors are caught between two stools. On the one hand, the *collaborative* nature of drama supports the inclusion of these texts; on the other hand, their presence requires explicit justification. Departing from their practice with the other collaborative texts (including *Timon of Athens*), the general editors have elected with *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure* to incorporate their findings into the presentation of the text. In *Macbeth*:

Passages apparently added or rewritten by Middleton are printed in bold type; passages apparently deleted or intended for deletion are printed in grey; transposed passages are printed in grey where Shakespeare probably placed them, and in bold where Middleton apparently moved them. (*Collected Works*, 1170n)

These "apparently" and "probably" will give readers food for thought, and the format may trouble some; but since students can readily find these first folio plays elsewhere the less than ideal reading experience in the presentation of "*Macbeth*" is more than offset by the integration of textual matters into an otherwise accessible publication. Here the "hybrid" nature of the project is most apparent: its principal strength is its fusion of "academic" and "student-friendly" textual and contextual material; but this comes at a price.

A case can be made – as it is here, both explicitly and implicitly – for Thomas Middleton to be recognised as one of the most accomplished writers of the age; certainly, as the career mapped out in these pages shows, he was one of the most flexible – both an artistic and financially-advantageous quality. In addition to the plays and the accompanying introductory essays we encounter material for the specialist: the early poetry, and later examples, such as the moving tribute to the King’s Men’s famous actor Richard Burbage (1619); pamphlets (such as those written when plague closed the playhouses); occasional prose pieces; and the rather better known civic pageants Middleton wrote to celebrate the inauguration of the Lord Mayor. These theatrical-political forms have received considerable attention in recent years, and it is right that they share equal billing with the familiar tragedies (and less familiar plays of his early and middle period). By no means untypically, not all of the Middleton *oeuvre* survives, and it may well be of course that there are unrecorded texts, now lost, that we do not know about. Together with accounts of Middleton’s *known* career, the edition provides brief essays on these lost works, such as, for example, the pageant he wrote for the coronation of Charles I in 1625, which was first delayed due to the plague (just as James’s 1604 entry to London had been, to which Middleton also contributed) and then cancelled for financial reasons. Given Middleton’s dexterity in using public occasions such as his first (and greatest) pageant written for the Lord Mayor’s show in 1613, *The Triumphs of Truth*, to articulate a subtle critique of the city authorities, reminding them of their responsibilities (Bromham 1995), it is a nice question as to how he might have approached his royal commission for the new king.

Middleton was most famous in his own time for his satire on the Spanish Match, James’s plan to marry Charles to the Infanta, and although *A Game at Chess* is unlikely to compete with *The Revenger’s Tragedy*, *Women Beware Women*, or *The Changeling* on the modern stage it is for this remarkable play that his artistic and political sensibilities are most highly regarded by scholars. Fittingly, this episode is the high point of this collection. For all that some of its claims will be disputed by readers – and if Middleton is to receive the attention that the army of scholars behind this project evidently hope, then such debates ought to be welcomed – few will cavil at Gary Taylor’s magisterial work on *A Game at Chess*, which will stand as a monument to his scholarship on Middleton; his 150-page

account of the relationship between the textual witnesses of this play is unlikely to be surpassed. This play survives in a remarkable number of versions, both in manuscript and in print. Following the privy council's ban in August Middleton went about producing manuscript versions with the King's Men's principal scribe Ralph Crane and others, as Harold Love's authoritative essay "Thomas Middleton: Oral Culture and the Manuscript Economy" sets out. It was printed in quarto (three times) the following year. The Oxford Middleton presents two texts, *An Early Version* and *A Later Form*, the latter reflecting the revisions made prior to its staging. Here as elsewhere the Oxford editors adopt a range of both orthodox and innovative – some would say eccentric – presentational devices to highlight both the complexities of early modern textual production in the printing house and the challenges facing modern editors, issues that are discussed in several of the essays included in the companion volume, such as those by Adrian Weiss, John H. Astington, and Cyndia Susan Clegg, who write authoritatively on printing practices, visual culture, and the early modern book trade respectively.

Inevitably an enterprise on this scale involving some sixty (named) contributors makes for a degree of unevenness. The value of the edition is, of course, that Middleton's texts (of all hues) are gathered under one roof, and the cross-referencing between individual contributions is excellent. Yet in some cases the (necessarily brief) introductions to each text are overshadowed by the meatier essays in the companion volume, and it is fair to say that (where comparisons are possible) the Oxford introductions are generally inferior to those available in stand-alone editions published in the long-established Revels or New Mermaids series (though Jackson's introduction to *The Revenger's Tragedy* is superb). (But this is in keeping with the growth of "student-friendly" Cambridge and Blackwell companions, which favour topic-focused essays many in number, short on words; see the new Gossett collection, for example.) To some extent this may be a reflection of the format chosen by Oxford University Press. Like the 1986 Oxford Shakespeare (for which Gary Taylor also served as a general editor), this edition opts for a single-volume edition of the texts, accompanied by a second volume focusing on textual matters. The demands on space in the first volume clearly preclude the fuller introductions many readers would prefer or expect; indeed, the

textual apparatus required for scholarly editions is contained in the second volume, so readers are required to consult both: the second volume is not an “optional extra” but an integral part of this publication, and indeed it is here too that the bulk of the specialist essays (under the subheading “The Culture”) may be found. Although both volumes are handsomely produced they are not easy in the hand – or hands – and one is reminded, once again, of how in format and content this publication aims to satisfy both scholarly expectations (and it does) and appeal to a market ranging from the student to the specialist. This is not necessarily a criticism, rather that it is perhaps a measure of how scholarly editing (and publication) has changed. Whether students will be able to afford the set is another matter; as indeed are the impracticalities of this edition as a teaching text for the classroom. A paradox, then: the “six or seven great plays” identified by Eliot will continue to be published in single-text format, and for all that the Oxford Middleton is intended to promote its subject it remains to be seen whether the less-prominent (and culturally less-valued) texts will receive the wider attention hoped for here. As a work of scholarship it is a considerable achievement, but it will probably have greatest impact in the scholarly community.

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## Abstracts and keywords in Spanish and Portuguese<sup>1</sup>

### Articles

Hannah Leah Crummé, The Impact of Lord Burghley and the Earl of Leicester's Spanish-Speaking Secretariats

#### RESUMEN

Mientras que la literatura de la Edad de Oro española está llena de problemas de representación, en este artículo aduciré que la representación errónea más grande de todas no ocurrió en la ficción sino en la corte inglesa. Durante el reinado de la reina Isabel, Lord Burghley, junto con su secretario Sir Francis Walsingham, representó sistemáticamente de manera errónea la cultura española, oscureciendo deliberadamente la percepción que los ingleses tenían de la Edad de Oro española y arrojando sobre ella un velo de miedo. El conde de Leicester, por contra, trabajando únicamente para mejorar su propia reputación como mecenas literario y hombre de letras, incrementó involuntariamente el acceso de Inglaterra a la literatura española al auspiciar a un círculo de eruditos de habla hispana en la Universidad de Oxford. Estos secretarios españoles tradujeron literatura española y crearon diccionarios españoles. Analizando la propaganda creada bajo el mandato de Burghley y los diccionarios creados con Leicester demostraré cómo se desarrolló la percepción inglesa de la Edad de Oro española. ¿De qué forma estuvo relacionada la llegada de Antonio del Corro a la universidad con la publicación en la imprenta de la universidad de los primeros libros españoles en Inglaterra? ¿Por qué tanto Leicester como Burghley auspiciaron finalmente los diccionarios español-inglés? ¿De qué forma intervinieron estos medios y diccionarios en la percepción inglesa de España? Estas son algunas de las cuestiones que tratará este artículo a través del examen de los manuscritos Atye-Cotton (ahora en la Biblioteca Británica), una serie de panfletos promovidos por Lord Burghley, y una progresión de diccionarios inglés-español creados a finales del siglo XVI.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Essex, Burghley, Leicester, secretarios, diccionario, español.

#### RESUMO

Reconhecendo embora que a literatura do *siglo de oro* espanhol está permeada de problemas de representação, este artigo defende que a maior das representações errôneas ocorreu, não na ficção, mas antes na corte inglesa. Durante o reinado de Isabel, Lord Burghley, juntamente com o seu secretário, Sir Francis Walsingham, representou sistematicamente de modo

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<sup>1</sup> Translations into Spanish by Tamara Pérez Fernández. Translations into Portuguese by Rui Carvalho Homem.

distorcido a cultura espanhola, obscurecendo a percepção inglesa do *siglo de oro* e recobrando-o com o véu do medo. O conde de Leicester, pelo contrário, empenhado apenas em promover a sua reputação como mecenas e homem de letras, expandiu inadvertidamente o acesso inglês à literatura espanhola ao patrocinar na Universidade de Oxford um grupo de estudiosos cuja língua era o espanhol. Esses secretários espanhóis traduziram obras literárias e elaboraram dicionários de espanhol. Através de uma análise da propaganda criada sob a égide de Burghley e dos dicionários elaborados sob a protecção de Leicester, mostrarei a evolução da perspectiva inglesa sobre o *siglo de oro*. Que relação – perguntar-se-á – existe entre a chegada de Corro à universidade e a impressão dos primeiros livros espanhóis em Inglaterra pela imprensa da universidade? Por que razão vieram Leicester e Burghley a patrocinar dicionários de espanhol-inglês? De que modo vieram tais recursos a intervir na percepção inglesa de Espanha? Estas são algumas das questões a que o meu artigo se dirigirá através de um estudo dos manuscritos Atye-Cotton (presentemente guardados na British Library), de um conjunto de opúsculos promovidos por Lord Burghley e de uma sucessão de dicionários de inglês-espanhol elaborados em finais do séc. XVI.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Essex, Burghley, Leicester, secretários, dicionário, espanhol.



José Luis Oncins, Shakespeare and Chess Again: A Proposal for an Alternative Reading of *pawn(s)* in *King Lear*, *King John* and *The Winter's Tale*

#### RESUMEN

Durante los últimos tres siglos las obras de Shakespeare no han dejado de comentarse y anotarse. Sin embargo, aún existen algunos pasajes oscuros y palabras complejas cuyo sentido exacto sigue dando lugar a debate. Una de estas palabras es *pawn*, glosada como un juego de palabras en *King Lear* pero de la que nada se ha dicho en otras obras en las que aparece.

Este trabajo propone una lectura alternativa de este término en *King Lear*, *King John* y *The Winter's Tale*. La hipótesis que se plantea es que Shakespeare explota en estas obras las posibilidades significativas de este sustantivo a través de varios juegos de palabras. Esta hipótesis se apoya en una serie de ejemplos de otros autores contemporáneos que utilizan este mismo retruécano, demostrando así que el potencial semántico del término estaba vivo en la época – y muy probablemente en la mente de Shakespeare.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Estilo de Shakespeare, ajedrez, metáfora, juego verbal, retruécano.

## RESUMO

Ao longo dos últimos três séculos, as obras de Shakespeare têm sido incessantemente anotadas e comentadas. Contudo, existem ainda alguns passos obscuros e palavras complexas cujo sentido exacto continua a suscitar debate. Uma destas palavras é *pawn*, glosada como um jogo de palavras em *King Lear*, mas sobre a qual nada se disse com referência às outras obras em que aparece.

Este trabalho propõe uma leitura alternativa deste termo em *King Lear*, *King John* e *The Winter's Tale*. A hipótese que se coloca é que Shakespeare explora nestas obras as possibilidades significativas deste substantivo através de vários jogos de palavras. Esta hipótese apoia-se numa série de exemplos de outros autores coevos que utilizam este mesmo termo polissémico, demonstrando assim que o potencial semântico do termo estava vivo na época – e muito provavelmente na mente de Shakespeare.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Estilo de Shakespeare, xadrez, metáfora, jogo verbal, polissemia.



Martin Orkin, Film and the Uncanny, Shakespeare Making Possible Things Not so Held, Communicating with Dreams

## RESUMEN

Este artículo apoya la idea de que el cine moderno como forma de arte de pleno derecho – más que como adaptación de un texto literario – aporta una oportunidad pedagógica y comparatista adicional para el análisis de algunos aspectos en las obras de Shakespeare como textos de la modernidad temprana. El artículo toma como punto de partida los aspectos de lo insólito tal y como se evocan en la experiencia cinematográfica. A continuación, se centra en aspectos de la experiencia y el crecimiento, y en problemas ligados al lenguaje y a la narratividad, tal y como se exploran en películas-textos de Pedro Almodóvar y Eytan Fox, así como en las obras de William Shakespeare.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Cine, pedagógico, comparativo, experiencia y crecimiento, lenguaje y narratividad, lo insólito.

## RESUMO

Este artigo assume o ponto de vista de que o cinema de hoje, entendido como uma forma de arte autónoma (que não mera adaptação de um texto literário), oferece uma oportunidade pedagógica e comparativa adicional para a análise de aspectos da obra de Shakespeare – ou seja, de um conjunto de textos de inícios da Idade Moderna. O artigo toma como ponto de partida aspectos do insólito tal como são evocados na experiência cinemática. Em seguida, foca aspectos da experiência e do crescimento, bem como problemas associados à linguagem e à narratividade tal como são

explorados em filmes-textos de Pedro Almodóvar e Eytan Fox, bem como em peças de William Shakespeare.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Cinema, pedagogia, comparatismo, experiência e crescimento, linguagem e narratividade, insólito.



Cristina Paravano, The space of identity and the identity of space in *The City Wit* by Richard Brome

#### RESUMEN

El artículo trata sobre *The City Wit* (1629-1632), una “comedia ciudadana” de Richard Brome, que se desarrolla en el mundo sin escrúpulos del comercio, donde todos los personajes aspiran al reconocimiento social, aunque sea pasando por encima de los sentimientos y los valores morales. Mi objetivo es analizar la pieza teatral como uno de los primeros ejemplos del uso estratégico del espacio en la producción dramática de Brome. En primer lugar, voy a considerar la función que tiene el espacio con relación a la identidad de cada personaje. A continuación, voy a mostrar cómo se puede manipular el espacio para reconstruir una nueva identidad, como en el caso de Jeremy, un criado disfrazado de viuda, que inventa una falsa identidad de nativo de Cornualles. Finalmente, voy a analizar la geografía de la obra, centrándome en concreto en la escena de la Presence Chamber de Whitehall.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Espacio, identidad, configuración del ser, geografía, género.

#### RESUMO

Este artigo estuda *The City Wit* (1629-1632), uma comédia de cidade, de Richard Brome, que se organiza em torno do universo sem escrúpulos dos negócios, em que todas as personagens têm por objectivo o reconhecimento social, ainda que à custa dos sentimentos e dos valores morais. O meu objectivo é investigar a peça como um dos primeiros exemplos do uso estratégico do espaço na produção dramática de Brome. Em primeiro lugar, considerarei a função do espaço em relação à identidade de personagens individualmente consideradas. Em segundo lugar, mostrarei como o espaço pode ser manipulado para a reconfiguração de uma nova identidade, como sucede com Jeremy, um criado disfarçado de viúva, que elabora uma identidade fictícia como sendo natural da Cornualha. Por fim, analisarei a geografia da peça, concentrando-me em particular na cena que decorre no ‘Presence Chamber’ de Whitehall.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Espaço, identidade, configuração do ser, geografia, género.



Jonathan P. A. Sell, Learning to Scrawl: the Evolutionary Strain in *Titus Andronicus*

## RESUMEN

Se ha escrito mucho acerca de las obsesiones semióticas de la obra de Shakespeare *Titus Andronicus*, pero menos sobre su relación con cuestiones temáticas. Este artículo sostiene primeramente que la forma en que la obra trata de las relaciones mutuas entre lenguaje, trabajo y sociedad se inspira en los relatos clásicos y de la temprana edad moderna sobre la evolución simbiótica del lenguaje y la sociedad civilizada. A continuación, sugiere que el énfasis retórico y quinesiológico que la obra pone especialmente en la mano y la lengua anticipa las metonimias utilizadas en los relatos darwinianos de la evolución humana. Una clave para entender esta lectura es el conocido dilema entre “scrawl”/“scrawl”: lejos de optar por un sentido definitivo y exclusivo, este artículo propone que la inseguridad semántica desencadenada por el dilema imita el modo en que la obra representa la fluctuación de Roma, y, en última instancia, de la humanidad entre una civilización alfabetizada y una barbarie paralizante. Este dilema, al dejar de ser una mera sutileza léxica en torno a las nociones en disputa – a veces obsoletas, a veces emergentes – sobre los gestos arrastrarse, gesticular y garabatear, se convierte en la piedra de toque de una lectura evolucionista de la obra. Del mismo modo que el dilema “scrawl”/“scrawl” debate incesantemente sobre las diferentes etapas en la escala de la evolución humana, *Titus Andronicus* deja a sus lectores y a su público una visión incómoda acerca de su perpetuo tambaleo – el de Roma y el suyo propio – al borde de la degradación.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Titus Andronicus*, evolución, civilización, barbarie, lenguaje.

## RESUMO

Muito se escreveu sobre as obsessões semióticas em *Titus Andronicus*, de Shakespeare, mas muito menos sobre as suas relações com questões temáticas. Este artigo sustenta, em primeiro lugar, que o confronto da peça com as relações mútuas entre linguagem, trabalho e sociedade se apoia em relatos clássicos e proto-modernos da evolução simbiótica da linguagem e da sociedade civilizada. Sugere, em seguida, que a ênfase particular que a peça coloca, em termos retóricos e quinesiológicos, na mão e na língua anticipa as metonímias empregues em relatos darwinianos da evolução humana. A conhecida incerteza textual “scrawl”/ “scrawl” é crucial para esta leitura: longe de optar por um sentido definitivo e exclusivo, o artigo propõe que a incerteza semântica desencadeada nesse passo mimetiza a representação que a peça oferece da hesitação de Roma (e, em última análise, da humanidade) entre a civilização da literacia e a barbárie emergente. A famosa dúvida textual torna-se a pedra de toque de uma leitura evolucionista da peça – que não o objecto de uma mera disputa lexical sobre noções rivais (ora obsoletas, ora emergentes) sobre os gestos de rastejar,

gesticular e escrever. Assim como a alternativa “scrawl”/ “scrawl” propõe um debate incessante entre estádios distintos na escala da evolução humana, também *Titus Andronicus* deixa os seus leitores e público a contemplar com desconforto a perpétua oscilação de Roma (e de si mesmos) no limiar da degradação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Titus Andronicus*, evolução, civilização, barbarismo, linguagem.

## Notes

Elena Bandín Fuertes, Performing Shakespeare in a Conflicting Cultural Context: *Othello* in Francoist Spain

### RESUMEN

El presente trabajo revisa la historia escénica de *Othello* en España y, en particular, se centra en dos representaciones estrenadas en el Teatro Español durante la dictadura de Franco, en 1944 y 1971 respectivamente. *Othello* fue una de las obras programadas por el régimen para dar prestigio al teatro nacional. Al comparar ambas producciones, este artículo explora cómo la representación de *Othello* evolucionó a lo largo de la dictadura. Además refleja el poder ejercido por la censura estatal para promover ciertas convenciones teatrales y evitar que los directores escénicos y traductores ofrecieran nuevas lecturas o actualizaciones de las obras, en el caso de *Othello*, durante casi 30 años.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Othello*, régimen de Franco, teatro nacional, censura, traducción.

### RESUMO

O presente trabalho passa em revista a história cénica de *Othello* em Espanha e centra-se, em particular, em duas produções estreadas no Teatro Español durante a ditadura de Franco, respectivamente em 1944 y 1971. *Othello* foi uma das obras programadas pelo regime para dar prestígio ao teatro nacional. Ao comparar ambas as produções, este artigo explora o modo como a representação de *Othello* evoluiu ao longo da ditadura. Adicionalmente, reflecte o poder exercido pela censura estatal para promover certas convenções teatrais e evitar que encenadores e tradutores oferecessem novas leituras e actualizações das obras encenadas – no caso de *Othello*, durante quase 30 anos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Othello*, regime de Franco, teatro nacional, censura, tradução.



## Nicoleta Cinpoes, Defrauding Daughters Turning Deviant Wives? Reading Female Agency in *The Merchant of Venice*

### RESUMEN

Las palabras de Brabantio “Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: | She has deceived her father, and may thee” (“Vela por ella, Moro, si tienes ojos para ver. | Ha engañado a su padre y puede engañarte a ti”) (*Othello*, 1.3.292-3) le advierten a Othello de la naturaleza cambiante de la lealtad femenina y del potencial de la mujer para desviarse. Examinando de cerca a hijas atrapadas en el conflicto entre padres ansiosos y futuros maridos, este artículo se aleja de esa fantasía paranoica masculina y en lugar de ello se propone explorar la desviación femenina en sus implicaciones legales y dramáticas con referencia a la obra de Shakespeare *The Merchant of Venice*. Sostendré que la lucha de Portia y de Jessica por huir de la subsidiariedad masculina da lugar a que se sitúen conscientemente al borde de la ilegalidad. Además de proponer un análisis productivo del matrimonio, la ley y la justicia dentro de lo que Morss (2007: 183) califica como “la dinámica del deseo humano y de las instituciones sociales”, argumento que la intervención femenina, vista como una desviación temporal y/o de auto-exclusión, reconfigura el dominio masculino al permitir la inclusión de personas que habían sido extraños previamente (Antonio, Bassanio y Lorenzo).

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *El Mercader de Venecia*, comodidad/comodificación, subsidiariedad, vínculos/vinculaciones, códigos matrimoniales frente códigos de amistad, fraude, desviación, agencia, transmisión de propiedad, (auto)exclusión.

### RESUMO

As palavras de Brabâncio ‘Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: | She has deceived her father, and may thee’ (*Othello*, 1.3.292-3) avisam Otelo da natureza volúvel da lealdade das mulheres e do potencial feminino para comportamento desviante. Este artigo estuda o caso de filhas envolvidas num conflito entre pais ansiosos e futuros maridos, mas afasta-se de tais fantasias paranóicas e masculinas para considerar o desvio feminino nas suas implicações legais e dramáticas, com referência a *The Merchant of Venice*, de William Shakespeare. Defenderei que a luta de Pórcia e Jéssica para se evadirem à subsidiariedade masculina as leva a posicionarem-se conscientemente no limiar da ilegalidade. Defenderei que os seus protagonismos, vistos como desvio temporário e / ou auto-exclusão, levam a uma exploração produtiva do casamento, da lei e da justiça no âmbito do que Morss designou como “the dynamics of human desire and of social institutions” (2007: 183); mas, para além disso, reconfiguram o espaço do poder masculino ao permitirem a inclusão de figuras que antes lhe eram externas (Antonio, Bassanio and Lorenzo).



PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *The Merchant of Venice*, bens materiais, subsidiariedade, contrato/contratualização, códigos do casamento / da amizade, fraude, desvio, agência, direito de transmissão, (auto-)exclusão.



Alan F. Hickman, In a Minor Key: Visual Effects in Shake-Speare's Sonnets

#### RESUMEN

Aquellos que estudian los sonetos son conscientes sin duda alguna de que estos abundan en juegos de palabras que favorecen múltiples lecturas. Pueden que sean menos conscientes, especialmente si no están familiarizados con la edición original del Quarto de 1609, de que los poemas podrían haber sido forjados para tener también un impacto visual.

La forma del soneto es en sí misma emblemática de un gran número de referentes familiares, como el escudo, el "cristal" (espejo), la hoja, y el sello. Incluso se puede ver en los poemas – como en las "coronas" de sonetos de Lady Mary Worth y John Donne – los eslabones de una cadena, o un collar. La forma del soneto es, a grandes rasgos, el equivalente poético del retrato en miniatura (una moda pasajera de aquel tiempo) en el arte. En mi artículo desarrollaré estas analogías.

El efecto visual más sorprendente está en el Soneto 126, el último de los sonetos dedicados al "hermoso joven", que está compuesto de seis pareados con rima seguidos por dos pares de paréntesis vacíos. Katherine Duncan-Jones y otros autores han sostenido que este presunto "error del impresor" tuvo su origen en la intención del autor. Duncan-Jones sugiere que los paréntesis abiertos pueden significar la "unión fracasada" entre el poeta y el hermoso joven, mientras que John Leonard ve en ellos "el silencio de la tumba."

Espero demostrar que, si pensamos en términos visuales, puede que algún día seamos capaces de desentrañar la historia que se esconde detrás de la secuencia de versos más enigmática de la poesía inglesa.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Renacimiento, Inglaterra, Shakespeare, soneto, tipografía, diseño de libros.

#### RESUMO

Quem estuda os sonetos de Shakespeare sabe que eles abundam em jogos verbais que proporcionam leituras múltiplas. Mas poderá não estar tão ciente, em particular se não conhecer a edição original *in quarto* de 1609, de que os poemas terão sido concebidos para terem também um impacto visual.

A própria forma do soneto é emblemática face a vários referentes familiares – incluindo um escudo, um espelho, uma folha e um selo. É ainda possível

ver nos poemas, como com as “coroas” de sonetos de Lady Mary Worth e John Donne, os elos de uma cadeia, ou as pedras de um colar. A forma do soneto é ainda, nalguma medida, o equivalente poético do retrato em miniatura (que gozou de alguma voga na arte da época). Pretendo, neste artigo, explorar tais analogias.

O efeito visual mais marcante ocorre no soneto 126, último dos dedicados ao “belo jovem”, composto por seis dísticos rimados a que se seguem dois conjuntos (vazios) de parênteses. Katherine Duncan-Jones e outros críticos defenderam, em anos recentes, que haveria intenção autoral por detrás do alegado “erro de tipógrafo”. Duncan-Jones sugere que os parênteses poderão significar a “incapacidade de serem um par” exibida pelo poeta e pelo belo jovem, enquanto John Lennard encontra neles “o silêncio do túmulo”.

Pretendo demonstrar que, se pensarmos em termos visuais, poderemos um dia descobrir a história por detrás da mais enigmática sequência da poesia inglesa.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Renascimento, Inglaterra, Shakespeare, soneto, tipografia, história do livro.