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# Articles

**Pro-match literature and royal supremacy:  
The case of Michael Du Val's *The Spanish English  
Rose* (1622)**

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ABSTRACT

In the years 1622-1623, at the climax of the negotiations for the Spanish-Match, King James enforced censorship on any works critical of his diplomatic policy and promoted the publication of texts that sided with his views on international relations, even though such writings may have sometimes gone beyond the propagandistic aims expected by the monarch. This is the case of Michael Du Val's *The Spanish-English Rose* (1622), a political tract elaborated within court circles to promote the Anglo-Spanish alliance. This article analyzes its role in producing an alternative to the religious and imperial discourse inherited from the Elizabethan age. It also considers the intertextual relations between Du Val's tract and other contemporary works in order to determine its part within the discursive network of the Anglican faith and political absolutism. The reasons why it may have exerted a negative influence on both the English and Spanish royal households are explored as well.

KEY WORDS: Spanish Match, pro-match literature, anti-match literature, political absolutism, Jacobean church.

I

Public interest in international affairs in the 1620s was unprecedented. The beginning of the Thirty Years' War in 1618 had given rise to a news boom intended to satisfy the curiosity of the English, who now viewed domestic conflicts within a broader framework. The political and religious confrontations in Germany

reminded them of the recurrent Catholic threat – as perceived by them – and warned them against any possible alliance with the enemy. To many readers of news, the Spanish Match was just one more stratagem of international Catholicism, led by Spain against European Protestantism, and now embodied in the figures of Frederick and Elizabeth of Bohemia.<sup>1</sup>

The means by which news was circulated of news circulation were numerous and answered to the needs of different types of readers. By this time, both printed news and pamphlets had become the main source of information about international affairs. They had a small format, and were cheap and easy to carry, which made them accessible to a wide range of readers, including members of the gentry, and the professional, merchant and aristocratic classes. Scribal publication also participated in the professional production of news, and scribes shared the same taste for continental politics as the authors of printed texts (Bellany 2007:93). Moreover, the same people who produced political pamphlets and printed newsletters also produced commercial manuscript news for a more elitist public, and were thus involved in the same circulation channels (Baron 2001:44-53).

As in earlier periods, preachers often raised outcries against the monarch, and from 1618 to 1624 several clergymen encouraged their congregations to defend the Protestant cause against the Spanish Match.<sup>2</sup> The fact that in August 1622 King James commanded the

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<sup>1</sup> In 1618, James's son-in-law Frederick V had accepted the Bohemian crown after the rebellion of the Protestant estates against their Habsburg King – and later Emperor – Ferdinand. The Palatinate question became then a major obstacle in the Stuart monarch's relations with Spain, which supported the Habsburg Empire. Defending a rebel could be risky as it could be used as an argument against the English King himself. This explains that James tried to secure the Spanish alliance with the Match in order to counteract Frederick's aggression and protect England from European struggle.

<sup>2</sup> See Thomas Taylor's *A Mappe of Rome* (1619), Thomas Gataker's *A Sparke toward the Kindling of Sorrow for Sion* (1621) and Thomas Jackson's *Judah must into Captiuitie* (1622). Some of these critical preachers had influential patrons, such as Lord Kensington and the Secretary of State, Edward Conway, who protected them from punishment, but they were not allowed to publish their sermons. However, other preachers, including John Everard, Thomas Young, Thomas Winniffe, Mr Clayton, Richard Handes and Samuel Ward, could not escape punishment and were reprimanded for their criticism of James's policy towards Spain and the Palatinate (Fincham and Lake 1985:171-172).

Archbishop of Canterbury to issue instructions to his clergy not to comment on affairs of state from the pulpit is striking, and shows the dangerous influence of this critical section of the Anglican clergy on public opinion (Abbot 1622:1-3).

These anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish prejudices were also prominent in literary works, mainly poetry, which made violent attacks on the Spanish marriage.<sup>3</sup> Most of this poetry circulated in manuscript form, thus preventing censorship. As Thomas Cogswell underlines, “the safety of the ‘underground’ manuscripts allowed contemporaries to conduct a steady, often violent political debate” and their ability to reach a wide, socially and geographically varied audience made them close to a mass media market (1995:287; Bellany 2007:93, 109-110). Moreover, many of these poets were associated with the theatre, which also became a useful means for the discussion of contemporary affairs, thus increasing theatre attendance and the sales of printed playbooks. Fletcher and Massinger’s *Sir John Van Olden Barnavelte* (1619), Middleton’s *Hengist, King of Kent* (1615-1620) and *A Game at Chess* (1625), Dekker’s *The Noble Spanish Soldier* (1622), and John Ford’s *The Welsh Ambassador* (1623) are significant examples of this trend (Marshall 2000:145-181).

King James was obviously worried about the growing popular debate on his foreign policy, hence his need to control the contents of printed matter, which more than ever focused on politics. For this purpose, “A Proclamation against Excesse of Lauish and Licentious Speech of Matters of State” was issued on 24 December 1620 and republished on 26 July 1621 (Larkin and Hughes 1973-1982:519-521). Although some historians have underlined the state’s effectiveness in pursuing those who published offensive material (Cogswell 1989:21), this seems to be only partly true as neither the authorizers nor the High Commission or the Stationers’ Company had always maintained a consistent and regular control over printing; at times, they even disagreed with the King’s views. In addition and according to Cyndia Clegg, “when censorship was employed propagandistically, the books concerned often remained in circulation or were suppressed only temporarily and returned to

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<sup>3</sup> “On the Princes Going to Spain” (Folger Library, V.a.418, fol. 48v); “On Mr Washington” (Folger Library, V.b.43, fol. 3); “An Elegie” (Beinecke Library, Osborn b197, 190-192); and “Illium Deploras” (Folger Library, V.a275, 11-12) (Cogswell 1989:46-48).

circulation when the political moment passed" (2001:17-18, 59). The "Proclamation against Seditious, Popish, and Puritanicall Bookes and Pamphlets" issued on 15 August 1624 revealed the increasing number of offensive texts that were still circulating in London, and James's unsuccessful attempt to control them (Clegg 2005:298-299; Larkin and Hughes 1973-1982:599-600).

## II

At the same time as anti-Spanish authors were writing against the Match, a parallel propaganda campaign was being launched by the state in order to counteract such critical attitudes. Some of these pro-Spanish works were accounts of Charles's arrival in Madrid in 1623, and described in detail the entertainments offered to the Prince on the occasion, but did not explicitly debate the advantages of the Spanish marriage.<sup>4</sup> Other writings, however, were political tracts that developed a number of arguments about the benefits of the Match and, in doing so, questioned the binary discourse that had offered a prejudiced image of Spain in sixteenth-century England (Stradling 1623; Tisdale 1623; Garrard 1624). These works proposed an inclusive religious alternative that confronted the traditional English nationalistic views inherited from the Elizabethan period, but most of all they intervened in a wider discursive network in which the nature of royal authority was being discussed. Michael Du Val's *The Spanish-English Rose* is a particularly relevant example in this regard.

*The Spanish-English Rose* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 23 July 1622 (Arber 1950:76). The conditions for its publication did not seem to be favourable, though, as is inferred from a letter

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<sup>4</sup> See, for instance, John Digby's *A True Relation and Journall, of the Manner of the Arrival, and Magnificent Entertainment Giuen to the High and Mighty Prince Charles, Prince of Great Britaine, by the King of Spaine in his Court at Madrid* (1623) and *A Continuation of a Former Relation Concerning the Entertainment, Giuen to the Prince his Highnesse by the King of Spaine in his Court at Madrid* (1623); Juan Antonio de la Peña's *A Relation of the Royall Festiuities and Juego de Cañas (a Turnament of Darting with Reedes after the Manner of Spaine) Made by the King of Spaine at Madrid, the 21 of August this Present Yeere, 1623. To Honour the Espousall Treaties of the Illustrious Prince of Wales, with the Lady Infanta Maria of Austria* (1623); and Andres de Almansa y Mendoza's *Two Royall Entertainments, lately Giuen to the Most Illustrious Prince Charles, Prince of Great Britaine, by the High and Mighty Philip the Fourth King of Spaine* (1623).

from Reverend Joseph Mead to a Sir Martin Stuteville dated 8 June 1622, in which Mead referred to the existence of a Latin edition of the text which had offended King James and whose open sale had been prohibited. He also mentions the problems the author had encountered in publishing the English edition of his tract (Nichols 1828:917-918).<sup>5</sup> This may explain why the authorship of the text is not clear. According to The STC and The Consortium of European Research Libraries (id: cnp00013827), Michael Du Val was probably a pseudonym, a possibility also considered by the author of the anonymous pamphlet *Boanerges*, who referred to him as a “fantastical man” (1624:29), thus implying that he might not exist. The author’s need to hide his identity emphasizes the precarious situation of those who debated the Match even from conciliatory positions. *The Spanish-English Rose* may have been intended to enhance the advantages of the Anglo-Spanish marriage and reinforce the authority of the English monarch against contemporary dissident voices, but it contains some paradoxes and controversial points that reveal the writer’s difficulty in satisfying all sides involved in the negotiations.

*The Spanish-English Rose* opens with a sophisticated emblematic frontispiece, and a set of poems in Latin, English and Spanish addressed to the royal couple; dedications to Gondomar, Charles, and Philip of Spain, which anticipate the encomiastic tone of the text itself, follow. The engraving shows Charles and the Infanta Maria joining hands before Jesus Christ, who blesses their union. Above them, a heart is held by two hands with a cloud and a garter at each end. The author explains the significance of the picture: “[...] The Hand|Is Royal FAITH, the Heart is CHRIST Above:|The Garter SYMBOL of the Peoples Love. |What can DISSEVER, What can ere DIVIDE,|So many Bonds and all so surely tied?” (sig. b4r).<sup>6</sup> The landscape behind the couple – countryside, on one hand, and seashore, on the other – may represent their respective countries and suggests the union of both nations through their alliance. Moreover, an idea of the balance of power is evoked by the symmetrical

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<sup>5</sup> Joseph Mead (1586-1638) was a well-known Hebraist and biblical scholar. From 1619 to 1631 he wrote regularly to his friend Sir Martin Stuteville. These letters contained transcriptions of news pamphlets from London in which he reported and commented on the Thirty Years War and contemporary political affairs (Jue 2006:15).

<sup>6</sup> Spelling has been modernized by the author.

arrangement of the scene, which includes both the Stuart and Spanish Habsburg coats of arms. The position of Jesus Christ in the middle clarifies any possible doubts about the Christian basis of the Match.

This same image had also appeared in a tract by Scipio Mirandula entitled *Cynthia Coronata* (ca. 1623). According to John Nichols, both texts, *The Spanish-English Rose* and *Cynthia Coronata*, could be found in Spain during Charles's visit to Madrid (1828:917-918), which implies, first, that the Spanish court was aware of their contents, and second, that Du Val's frontispiece was well known in English court circles, as its reproduction in this other work proves. It may be also assumed that this illustration, far from being innovative, was part of a common propaganda campaign intended to shape a new royal image of the English monarchy in conjunction with its Spanish ally. The negative comments of some anti-Match writers on this image underline its controversial reception in less moderate circles, in disagreement with James's approach to Spain and Catholicism. In relation to this, the author of *Boanerges* interprets the engraving in a completely different sense: "I am glad that Christ is between them, for then sure he will never suffer them to join together, except God give her so much grace, which seldom happens to a Spaniard, to come out of Babylon, and not be partakers of her idolatries" (1624:29-30). Such was indeed the general opinion among radical Protestant authors who encouraged their readers to support God's cause against the Spanish enemy. Similarly, the anti-Spanish faction at court, far from being persuaded by Du Val, would have been enraged by his conciliatory views. The author's allusion to the book's circulation in Edinburgh also shows that it was not only restricted to English court circles.

The author, however, counteracts such attacks in his dedication, in which he expresses his concern about so much popular disagreement with James's policy and the negative image of the English monarch offered to foreign deputies by anti-Match literature (Du Val 1622: sigs. a1r-a1v, b1v-b2r).<sup>7</sup> Instead, he highlights the

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<sup>7</sup> Many of these authors employed anti-Spanish discourse to criticize James's attitude. One of the most popular pamphleteers in this trend was Thomas Scott, whose virulent attacks were well-known both in England and abroad. For some examples, see Scott (1623:5, 22-26, 27-28, 33-36; 1624a: sigs. b1r-v, b2v; 1624b:3, 5 7), or his controversial piece *Vox Populi* (1620).

imperial – and thus, absolute and unchallenged – nature of English sovereignty, promoted here in connection with the myth of the Golden Age (1-2). Du Val implicitly refers to James's concern about Tacitus's growing influence on many English thinkers, who saw parallels between Imperial Rome and the Jacobean court with regard to corruption and deception (Salmon 1989:214-223; Tuck 1993:104-119). By contrast, the author identifies with the King's views on the Roman Empire as a source of peace and civilization.<sup>8</sup> However, the empire seems to require the union of both countries, and a key element in the traditional view of imperial England, her autonomy, is thus being called into question. In this sense, Du Val reconsiders the imperial discourse inherited from the Elizabethan period which justified opposition to Rome and Spain as a means of attaining colonial – and economic – power, as well as political independence.

In addition, the Golden Age myth is alluded to in relation to England's union with the Habsburg dynasty. Consequently, English national sentiments are invoked through an inclusive rhetoric that interprets Anglo-Spanish diplomacy in terms of cooperation rather than submission. Their mutual help in the context of an alliance is proposed as the only way to attain prosperity. Du Val's symbolic union of the Spanish pomegranate and the English rose works in the same direction, as both patriotic emblems here transcend their respective national boundaries in favour of this new imperial ideal. The fact that the pomegranate was part of Catherine of Aragon's coat of arms – incorporated into English heraldry after she married Henry VIII – creates a link with a historic past when Spain and England had previously been united.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, the Golden Age myth justifies one of the main attributes in James's iconography: his image as a peace-maker inspiring peaceful foreign policy. In this respect, the monarch is compared to the Lebanon cedar and to King Solomon (2). Such references support James's indirect comparison to Jesus Christ,

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<sup>8</sup> James himself had often employed such classical imagery, appearing in imperial dress in commemorative medals imitating ancient Roman coins, and he compared himself to Emperor Augustus, as a bringer of peace (Peck 1991:1-17; Stenhouse 2004:403).

<sup>9</sup> Images of both the pomegranate and the rose had featured in a pamphlet on the coronation of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon with similar significance (Hawes 1509).

mainly in his role as defender of the Protestant faith and shelter for his subjects. In addition, the cedar was largely used by Solomon in the building of the Temple, which allows for a link with the King of Israel.<sup>10</sup> Solomon's conciliatory attitude is preferred to King David's warlike measures (6), thus contradicting anti-Spanish pamphleteers, who often chose David when they suggested that the English sovereign should fight Spain. Here, their belligerent mood is silenced, and their threatening tone is replaced by a more merciful image of God – and by extension, of the monarch – as a promoter of repentance. Indeed, this was a recurrent theme in some other contemporary tracts and sermons intended to promote more tolerant attitudes to religious differences. Many of them proposed God's infinite mercy as a model good Christians must follow (Harris 1622:24, 28-29; Hayward 1623; Stradling 1623:12-13; Thomas 1622:52; Warburton 1623:34), an opinion shared by Du Val and the King himself, who in his work *A Meditation Vpon the 27.28.29 Verses the XXVII. Chapter of Saint Matthew* (1620) had declared that "a King should never punish, but with a weeping eye" (Sommerville 1994:249).<sup>11</sup>

In addition, Solomon's idolatry, often used to discourage a Catholic match, is reinterpreted. Du Val does not blame Solomon's Egyptian wife but his other women for his idolatry, stressing the fact that he repented soon afterwards. In his view, God's punishment was an act of mercy, not of revenge (63). By pointing to Solomon, and to David's sinful but contrite behaviour, Du Val re-appropriates both biblical characters and endows them with new meanings that are alien to previous, more radical Protestant readings. Nevertheless, the question of Solomon's idolatry is not fully resolved, and this kind of argument would have most probably given rise to some anxiety among many Englishmen concerned about Charles's potential conversion to Catholicism after his journey to Spain.

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<sup>10</sup> Comparisons between English monarchs and royal figures of the Old Testament – mainly, David and Solomon – had been common since the reign of Henry VIII as they helped justify the monarchs' religious authority in terms of *sacerdotium* – the power to order religion and punish dissenters. Thus, Du Val follows a long tradition that invested English monarchs with the powers of *imperium* – according to which, royal authority could not be contested – and *sacerdotium*, which pointed to the sovereign's duty to defend the true doctrine (Prior 2005:862, 865-866, 883).

<sup>11</sup> Spelling has been modernized by the author.

These apparent contradictions are, nonetheless, blurred by a hyperbolic description of James as the embodiment of princely Christian virtues (3-8). A redundant use of superlatives sets him above all the monarchs of Europe (3), while his imperial office and his claim of universal rights on the continent are portrayed as lacking any colonial ambitions; instead, James is presented as committed to bringing peace to all European nations (8-10). However, this view of his involvement in the welfare of other countries contradicts his alleged passivity towards Frederick and Elizabeth of Bohemia, which had been widely criticized in anti-Spanish literature. Neither is mentioned, and instead, the German war is shown as a disaster that could still be prevented if new attitudes were adopted (24-25). A conciliatory policy, rather than James's support to the Elector Palatine, is offered as the only guarantee to safeguard James's children and subjects.

In this context, an Anglo-Spanish coalition is proposed as the model other European nations should adopt to promote harmony on the continent. Du Val insists on congenial and political links among European rulers and believes that their divisions are easy to overcome by merely appealing to family union. In fact, the same proposal had been considered by King James in his tract *The Peace-Maker*: "If the members of a natural body, by concord assist one another; if the politic members of a kingdom help one another, and by it support itself; why shall not the Monarchal bodies of many kingdoms, be one mutual Christendom" (1621: sig. B1v).<sup>12</sup> In this way, the House of Austria's network of royal connections to most European powers is shown as the main reason for the Spanish Match, portrayed as a necessary instrument to put an end to international dissension (Du Val 1622:20). Nevertheless, the author's description of the military and commercial benefits England would enjoy thanks to her alliance with Spain questions James's altruistic and uninterested attitude (25-27).

In any case, James is described as mirroring God in the preservation of peace, which is considered the main responsibility of a Christian king; thus, a reference to the theory of order, the basis of

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<sup>12</sup> All further quotations are taken from this edition.

divine-right absolutism,<sup>13</sup> is introduced, paraphrasing James's own opinions on the subject:

The state of Monarchy is the supremest thing upon earth. For Kings are not only Gods Lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon Gods throne, but even by God himself they are called Gods [...] Kings are justly called Gods, for that they exercise a manner of resemblance of Divine power upon earth [...] And to the King is due both the affection of the soule, and the service of the body of his subjects. (James I 1609: sigs. A4v-B1r)<sup>14</sup>

Hence, his peaceful policy endows his actions and decisions with a clear divine nature. He is only answerable to God for the exercise of his office, which deflects any attack on his rule. By extension, such critical voices which could disrupt the *status quo* are denounced as Satanic, acting against their nation's good and God's will (Du Val 1622:67).

Such criticism of James's opponents is reinforced through a defence of his absolute power: he is depicted as a *primum mobile* directing his subjects' actions and protecting them from disorder and ruin (72). The idea of mutual collaboration evoked by the body metaphor in many anti-Spanish pamphlets is now reversed to promote a sense of order, necessary for the preservation of the establishment. Indeed, Du Val paraphrases James's words in *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies* (1598, 1603), in which he had promoted his subjects' obedience in the following terms: "The head cares for the body, so doeth the King for his people. As the discourse and direction flows from the head, and the execution according thereunto belongs to the rest of the members, euery one according to their office" (Sommerville 1994:76-77). Here King James and Du Val echo the early modern interpretation of the Roman theory of monarchy, according to which all members of the commonwealth should act in relation to hierarchy and status. In turn, the Roman prince's protection frees, rather than enslaves, them. The King's

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<sup>13</sup> This theory justified the monarch's discretionary authority. According to Weston and Renfrow, "the *raison d'être* of that authority was the conviction that the king as sovereign governor [and God's vicar] was possessed of a reserve of power with which to govern his kingdom and secure the public welfare" (2003:17, 21-22).

<sup>14</sup> All further quotations are taken from this edition. For similar examples in other contemporary texts, see Stradling (1623:6); Thomas (1622:124-128); and Warburton (1623:48, 51, 53).

paternal care for his subjects is turned into a vehicle of freedom, which remains closely associated with order and obedience (Stacey 2007).<sup>15</sup> Du Val makes use of the same figurative language as James, who alludes to the relation between sovereigns and subjects as follows:

As the Fathers chief joy ought to be in procuring his children's welfare, rejoicing at their weal, sorrowing and pitying at their evil, to hazard for their safety, travel for their rest, wake for their sleep; and in a word, to think that his earthly felicity and life stands and lives more in them, nor in himself; so ought a good Prince think of his people. As to the other branch of this mutual and reciprocal band, is the duty and allegiance that the Lieges owe to their King. (Sommerville 1994:65-66)

According to Johann Sommerville, the description of the monarch as the nation's father was common in patriarchal theories of royal authority in Early Modern Europe. Many absolutist thinkers used this analogy to defend the divine nature of kings and the fact that political societies were not self-governing democracies – as many common-law minds believed – but absolute monarchies governed by a king and father (1994:29-30; 1991). In this sense, Du Val's treatise is not merely an apology of the Spanish Match, but participates in contemporary debates on different models of government siding with absolutist tendencies which began to prevail in most European monarchies at this time.

Du Val's insistence on the motif of *Arcana Imperii* (the secrets of rule or mysteries of the state) works in the same way. According to this principle, subjects had no right to question a monarch's decisions, as they were inscrutable. In contrast to the rhetoric of counsel, which had been largely used by anti-Spanish authors to justify their writings,<sup>16</sup> the defenders of *Arcana Imperii* discouraged

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<sup>15</sup> The Roman theory and the theory of order were deeply interrelated to support the monarch's absolute power. In Lewis and Ibbetson's opinion, the Roman prince was not subject to the law, his sovereignty being independent of the community. He was "an arbiter of life and death who wields executive power over [...] [those] whom he rules [...] a trustee required to render ratio to God for persons placed in his hands." His rule was both *iure divino* and *naturale* as "it was natural for the people to submit to the rule of those placed in authority over them" (Lewis & Ibbetson 2007:77-78, 144, 147).

<sup>16</sup> This allowed for a degree of public debate about government policy. Thus, counsel was both a right and a duty of a good citizen attempting at the general welfare

such practices, regarding them as rebellious actions against the monarchy (Stradling 1623:6, 26, 32-33; Thomas 1622:119; Tisdale 1623:10).<sup>17</sup> The author identifies those attitudes with the opponents to the Spanish Match (52-53), counteracting their main arguments with the intention of discrediting them. In doing so, he deconstructs the anti-Spanish discourse inherited from the sixteenth century and questions, first, the traditional stereotype of the Spaniard, and second, conventional interpretations of key dates in English Protestant mythology:<sup>18</sup>

But they were Anciently your Dear and Honourable Friends, and never perhaps your Dishonourable Enemies. For though in the year 88 They came against you in Hostile manner, with a Mighty Navy: Yet did they not that, till they were first provoked by Grievous and Intolerable Injuries [...] By how many Robberies and Piracies were the Spaniards in those days from time to time, first Vexed by the English? [...] To say nothing of the Frequent and continual Auxiliary Forces afforded to the Rebellious Hollanders for so many years together against their Lawful and undoubted sovereign. (53-54)

Hence, Elizabethan anti-Catholicism, still a prevailing attitude among many disaffected English Protestants, is challenged. The reference to England's past support to Holland may remind readers of a similar situation when the Bohemian king had rebelled against Emperor Ferdinand. In both cases, a confessional foreign policy

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(McDiarmid 2007:22). This view on counsel had been a maxim in sixteenth-century republican theories on citizenship and began to be employed in the 1610s-1620s by those critical of James's policies.

<sup>17</sup> The King had addressed those critics in similar terms in a poem he wrote in 1622-1623: "You cannot judge what's truly mine, | Who see no farther then the rine. | Kings walke the heavenly milky-waye, | But you in by-paths goe astray. | God and King doe pace together, | But vulgar wander light as feather. | I should be sorry you should see | My actions, before they bee | Brought to the full of my desires: | God above all men, kings inspires. | Hold you the publick beaten way, | Wander at kings and them obey" (James I 1622/1623:143).

<sup>18</sup> Such anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish bias had been recurrent in Elizabethan England at a discursive level, which on many occasions had justified and promoted concrete action against Spain. However, it should not be forgotten that Anglo-Spanish cultural relations had been extensive since the late Middle Ages. English Elizabethans had also been sensitive to Spanish literature – mainly, lyrics, romances and plays, as well as works on history, science, religion and overseas expansion (Bouza 2007:58-60; Thompson 2006). Thus, the English view of Spain in the late sixteenth century cannot be reduced to the monolithic binary rhetoric of official Protestantism.

against other European powers is neglected, while radical nationalistic discourse is dismissed as senseless and dangerous to England's interests.

In addition, the Spanish are described as courteous, moderate and honest, and not different from the English. Spain is portrayed as a nation of "Great and Glorious Emperors," "valiant and Renowned Captains," and "innumerable Wise and Learned Doctors and Professors," a pattern of imperial government, military glory and wisdom (31). This complimenting of Spain's colonial power could have been distressing to some readers, who might have been upset about the idea of Spanish supremacy. In order to prevent any such fears, Du Val balances laudatory descriptions of Spain with similar praise of England's imperial identity (32-34). In any case, there is a clear tendency to show similarities between both countries, avoiding any xenophobic prejudices.

Despite these attempts to temper anti-Spanish sentiment, however, one of the main obstacles to dynastic union still remained, and was not expected to be resolved. The different religions of both countries were a significant diplomatic problem, seriously affected by Spain's misguided belief that Charles would eventually convert to Catholicism. For Du Val, the Prince's change of religion was out of the question, and so he tried to convince his coreligionists of its impossibility by eulogizing the strength of the English Church and pointing to the Infanta's weak female nature to justify her lack of influence on the English heir. Rather, he argues, "It is Much More Probable, That the Prince being Furnished with So Many GREAT Helps and Means, Should Draw His Royal Spouse to His Religion" (74).<sup>19</sup> As a result, diversity of religion is not shown as a potential source of division for the couple but as an element that may enrich their union (75).

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<sup>19</sup> For a similar argument see Garrard (1624:63-64). These opinions contrast with those of some less moderate Protestants who feared a general conversion of the country to Catholicism: "If the marriage go forward they will take the more heart and greater encouragement, no small number of subjects want teaching, and so are they more easily shaken. [...] The worst is yet, that there will be party children: for the mother will give herself no rest till she have [nursed?] some of them in her own religion, which would make the way very plain & easy for a change, because the head once corrupted, the infection will in short time spread itself over the whole body, and true religion is unsociable to sort itself with false worship, and will soon forsake his dwelling place" (Wood 1623:9). Spelling has been modernized by the author.

This defence of the Protestant faith may well have been the reason for the confusion caused by Du Val's work in Spain. In fact, a copy of the text had reached Madrid soon after its publication in England. F. Francisco de Jesús, court preacher to King Philip III, describes reactions to the tract:

It was altogether unreasonable by anyone to suppose that, even if this book could have been published without the knowledge of the King of Great Britain, it could have been spread abroad so publicly as it was, both at home and abroad, without his being aware of it. Considering therefore, the particular attention which he always paid to things of this kind, so that it would be an insult to suppose that he would do nothing without a special object, who could avoid being startled and frightened by the intentions which were disclosed by these facts? And by this occurrence, and by the urgency used by all who had to do with the negotiations, the confusion was greatly increased. (Gardiner 1869:187)

As can be inferred from the preacher's words, these conciliatory views only contented the moderate faction at the English court, without satisfying the Spanish. The propaganda campaign organized by the pro-Spanish circles at James's court not only intended to persuade those factions critical of the Match, but also the Spanish authorities, who considered Charles' conversion a basic requirement. This may also explain King James's alleged disagreement with some of the content of Du Val's treatise, as it may have clashed with his amiable relations with Spain by arousing suspicion at the Spanish court. Although the work was intended for English readers, its rapid circulation abroad would have increased the confusion, mainly in matters of faith, of a non-coreligionist audience.

However, far from keeping quiet about the controversial issue of conversion, Du Val insists on portraying inter-religious marriage as a model to be followed. He quotes from Saint Jerome's and Saint Augustine's writings to confirm the frequent practice of marriage among people from different religions in the Primitive Church (59), and gives a large succession of biblical examples (59-64). By alluding to these sources, he defends the Match from accusations of irreligion and challenges its detractors with the possibility of divine punishment. Instead, he denies that Charles's marriage possessed any ungodly stain, and describes it as blessed and dignified by God.

In addition, the author's list of precedents for inter-religious marriage in England and Europe deprives the Spanish Match of its

alleged novelty and naturalizes it as a common practice among European dynasties (57-59). Among a number of examples, he includes Catherine of Aragon's marriage to Henry VIII, as well as Philip of Spain and Mary Tudor's union. Both of these might seem questionable examples to support his argument: Mary Tudor's marriage had been a recurrent leitmotif in anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish propaganda for over seventy years and had been considered a backward step in England's autonomy; and the reference to Catherine of Aragon might create some uneasiness among those nostalgic for Elizabeth I's reign, as it questioned Elizabeth's relevant position in English Protestant discourse. But Du Val only cites them as examples; he does not include any further commentary and seems unwilling to highlight their presence. Moreover, and despite the fears such references may generate, he seems to be keen on rewriting English Protestant history, its icons and prejudices.

In any case, his defence of inter-religious royal households does not extend to the English commonwealth, although some apology for religious toleration is implied in favour of stability and order. In relation to this, Du Val dismisses religious persecution as useless and defends persuasion as the most common way to promote conversion to the Anglican Church (75-76). Hence, he responds to the demands of anti-Match writers for a stricter application of penal laws against Catholics, and justifies James's leniency towards them over the previous few years.

Theological controversy is discouraged as disruptive, and a similar attitude is demanded from the Anglican clergy, which is partly blamed for dissensions within the Church of England and the social unrest against Spain. The attacks of some contemporary preachers on the Spanish Match are therefore considered unchristian because of their dangerous capacity to mobilize their brethren against the *status quo*. Here Du Val echoes King James's *Speech in the Starre-Chamber* (1616), in which he had affirmed that "It is the Kings Office to protect and settle the trew interpretation of the Law of God within his Dominions: and it is the Iudges Office to interpret the Law of the King, whereto themselues are also subiect" (Sommerville 1994:206). The same ideas appear in works by other authors, such as Roger Tisdale and John Stradling, who suggest that the monarch should exert a more rigid control over those Englishmen who challenge his authority. Surprisingly, these writers criticise James's

leniency towards his detractors and observe Catholics with more indulgent eyes while transferring the focus to critical or less moderate Protestants. The publication of their works one year after *The Spanish-English Rose*, when the Spanish Match was supposed to be imminent, may explain their disapproval of the King's indulgent behaviour (Stradling 1623:11, 19, 23; Tisdale 1623:21). Du Val, instead, tries to be more cautious and does not comment on James's policy on this matter, though he rejects radical speech and claims a middle way for the Church of England, calling for it to maintain a perfect balance.

Thus nationalist views on religion are challenged in favour of a more international idea of Christianity, not limited to any single country or based on dual Calvinistic perspectives. Such transnational commitment allows for a general call for a Christian union against the Turk, portrayed as the epitome of the "other" against whom all should join arms. Providential rhetoric is employed to justify war against them, while similar arguments of necessity, often used by anti-Catholic authors, now work to validate belligerent attitudes against the Ottoman Empire (78-85). This last point, also present in other writings of the period (Stradling 1623:20-21; Warburton 1623:50), had been defended long before by King James, who in his poem *Lepanto* (repr. 1603), celebrating Spain's victory over the Turk in 1571, had revived the same idea of a *Respublica Christiana*.

As in these other writings, Du Val's defence of selective violence calls into question his previous apology of peace and reveals a manifold use of religious rhetoric. His appeal to a union suggests that the context for this kind of language and its purpose – to promote unity out of internal dissension – is always the same, and contributes to disclose the artificial basis of this type of discourse. An ecumenical view of Christendom is evoked then in order to do away with the religious differences generated by the Reformation. Protestant Churches are indirectly portrayed as responsible for Christian division, and a more conciliatory attitude among Christians is suggested as the only way to solve political, religious and military problems.

### III

*The Spanish-English Rose* ends with a view of prospective harmony in the near future. The Spanish Match is perceived as the beginning of a new era that would finally restore the Golden Age in Charles's reign. In addition, a sense of continuity and hope is evoked to forestall fear of change, while encouraging popular support and obedience to the Stuart king and his heir. As a result, England's prosperity is presented as being dependant on international alliances, while a new concept of Englishness opposes sixteenth-century views on England's responsibility to European Protestantism. In this way, while anti-Spanish writers tried to revive Elizabethan confessional views on war and diplomacy, Du Val and other moderate authors began to progressively distance themselves from Calvinist theology in favour of a more inclusive ecclesiastical model. Earlier discourses against Spain and English Catholics are challenged, first by dissociating one figure from the other – there is not a single reference to Spain's relations with English recusants – and secondly, by challenging their stereotypes and exposing their artificial nature.

*The Spanish-English Rose* thus contributes to the production of an alternative religious and imperial discourse within a discursive network in which moderate Protestant authors tried to re-elaborate the main lines of England's national religion in accordance with the King's views on his regal authority. In fact, Du Val and other pro-Spanish writers not only supported their sovereign's messages on royal policy, but also presented their texts as extensions of James's royal power. Hence, by paraphrasing the sovereign's words, they responded to contemporary demands for more interactive types of government while participating, insofar as they could, according to the restrictions laid down by James.

Du Val's attempts to accommodate his text to this new diplomatic scenario was not, in fact, successful, as the negative reception of his work by King James and the Spanish court makes clear. Such negative readings point to Du Val's failure – and the failure of both Spanish and English diplomats – to reconcile each country's requirements for the Spanish Match; but above all they emphasize James's unwillingness to allow anyone to discuss the English heir's possible conversion to Catholicism, fearing that it would interfere with the monarch's plans towards Spain. Despite Du Val's efforts to be more cautious and self-restrictive than other

contemporary pro-Match writers, *The Spanish-English Rose* could not avoid attracting some restrictions upon publication. However, its distribution in England, Scotland and abroad underlines the English monarch's inability to control debate on his foreign policy, even when it was sympathetic to the King's policy. The problems that the circulation and reception of this tract created exemplify the practical impossibility of writing, printing and spreading ideas in favour of absolutist regal power without challenging one main premise: that absolute authority was not open to debate. Hence, Du Val employs official political language quite subtly to, indirectly, reveal its limitations.

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# Towards a Miltonic Mariology: the word and the body of Mary in *Paradise Regain'd* (1671)

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## ABSTRACT

It is a recurring critical *topos* that John Milton's *Paradise Regain'd* (1671) is a revisionist poem, one that works towards reframing and redefining the epic tradition; what has certainly been less noticed is the central function played by the character of Mary, the mother of Christ, in this revisionist process. This article will try to prove that Mary's appearances in the poem are, though limited, essential to its content and to its perspective on the interrelated subjects of the revelation of God in history and the individual confrontation with historical forces; and it will try to do so by bringing together theological discussion and a gender-oriented approach.

There have certainly been approaches to *Paradise Regain'd* that have explored some of the gender issues brought about by the poem's modification of the heroic function: almost unanimously, these approaches have concentrated on the character of the Son. My intention here, however, is another: I will try to show how the function and voice of Mary in the poem set in motion a complex, rich network of implications (both ethical and theological) which are at the core of the poem's discourse and ideology. This focus on the maternal in *Paradise Regain'd* will not be carried out from a psychoanalytical perspective (though it is by no means incompatible with such an approach), but rather through reading the text via literary and theological categories that are recurrent throughout Milton's work. It should thus be possible to start working seriously towards establishing the presence of a serious and original Mariology (clearly not a Mariolatry) in Milton's last epic poem.

Overall, this will lead us to a reconsideration of *Paradise Regain'd* as an essentially innovative text, and one which is strongly heterodox in terms of its theology and gender discourse.

KEY WORDS: Gender, motherhood, selfhood, epic.

In a very literal sense, Milton scholarship is dominated by its tendency to return to the mother: despite its seemingly inexhaustible variety of approaches, it has always tended to situate the figure of the original mother of humanity, Eve, as one of its key centres of discourse, and will probably (and productively) continue to do so in the future. If this is abundantly justified by the powerful and ambivalent presence of Eve in *Paradise Lost*, it has largely implied the critical overshadowing of the other central motherly presence in the Miltonic canon: the figure of Mary, the mother of Christ, in *Paradise Regain'd*. This fact is all the more remarkable given the fact that this latter text is widely recognized as a theologically and formally complex, even revisionist poem; what has certainly been less noticed is the central function played by Mary in its conceptual and poetic structure.

The present article will try to prove that Mary's appearances in *Paradise Regain'd* are, though limited, essential to its content and to the poem's perspective on two interrelated subjects: the construction of selfhood in its relation to God's will and the revelation of Christ in history. I will show how the presence and voice of Mary in the text set in motion a complex, rich network of implications which are at the core of the poem's discourse and ideology. In the first place, I will put a special emphasis on the model of selfhood or self-building that her character exemplifies in Book II, lines 66-104, and which also serves as a key referent for the identity which the Son himself learns to develop; in the second place, and through a analysis of her voice as evoked by Christ in his first monologue (Book I, lines 196-293), this discourse on selfhood will be read as the basis for the theological significance that Milton projects into her character and its relation with her son (the Son), and which he adapts creatively from sources reaching as far back as the Patristic tradition. My focus on the maternal in *Paradise Regain'd* will be carried out through a complementary analysis of its ethical (in the Foucauldian sense of the term) and theological aspects; it should thus be possible to start working seriously towards establishing the presence of a serious and

original Mariology, though clearly not a Mariolatry, in Milton's last epic poem.

### 1. Critical/Theological Contexts

The serious lack of critical attention to the character of Mary through the history of the reception of *Paradise Regain'd* could indeed seem to be, in itself, an ironic reflection of the very attitude of modesty and self-effacement that she adopts in her speeches. Ralph Condee's long landmark article of 1970, that did so much to re-situate the poem at the forefront of Milton studies, made no more than a brief reference to the character, presenting her as embodying "the themes of concealment and discovery" that are at the heart of the short epic: her interrogative attitude towards her son, her desire to know more about his whereabouts and destiny, could thus appear as a reflection of Christ's own quest for his own identity and role (Condee 1970:360-361). The main theological discussions of the poem (such as those by Barbara Kiefer Lewalski [1975] or by Thomas Langford [1982]) have rigorously excluded the figure of Mary, in a movement that is coherent with the central theology of the poem itself (which is fully centred on Christ), but this is a pattern that has tended to repeat itself in studies concerned with other thematic or political aspects: for instance, in the case of Louis L. Martz's *Milton: Poet of Exile*, where she receives only the briefest of mentions, with the emphasis being put not so much on her role but on her voice, her stylistic austerity and "biblical simplicity of phrasing," which are opposed to the "high oratorical style" that is the prerogative of Satan (Martz 1980:256). A couple of major studies have examined the possible connections and parallelisms between the fictional representation of Christ and the personal and poetic situation of Milton himself when writing the poem (Corns 2003; Fallon 2007), but neither of them has paid any attention to the protagonist's mother. Finally, in one of the longest studies of *Paradise Regain'd* published in the last decade, Stanley Fish dedicates only a short paragraph to Mary, presenting her as the quintessential example of the inaction that is apparently celebrated in the poem as a whole: for Fish, "waiting is the only action that the characters in *Paradise Regain'd* ever take," and this applies to her as well: her "moving expression of a mother's anxieties is preliminary to a similar declaration of passivity" (Fish 2002:329). All of these responses to Milton's version of Mary are, in

their own way, correct; all of them are nevertheless insufficient, inasmuch as they lead us to overlook her major *generative* role within the text.

In order to appreciate the Miltonic innovations on the character all the better, it is necessary to situate his approach in the immediate theological context in which he operated: for his work proceeds here, as on so many other occasions, through an appropriation and a strong re-reading of previously existing traditions. To start with, Milton clearly moves away from any attribution of an intercessory role or of a heavenly superiority to Mary; in this specific aspect, he follows the mainstream Protestant tradition. John Calvin's attention to the character in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, staying safely away from any kind of Mariolatry, had been restricted almost exclusively to attributing to her a place in the lines of descent coming down from David, which in itself would be sufficient to ensure an adequate dynastic position for Christ:

Christ is not said to be made by a woman, but of a woman (Gal 4:4) [...] Wishing to prove that Christ derives his descent from David, he (the evangelist) deems it enough to state, that he was begotten of Mary. Hence it follows, that he assumed it as an acknowledged fact that Mary was of the same lineage of Joseph. (Calvin 2008:307)

In an approach which is essentially coherent with the one taken earlier by Martin Luther, Mary appears here as a channel or a human means through which Christ could become inscribed within the history of "David's seed," thus fulfilling and completing historically the ancient mission of Israel. Calvin certainly recognizes the miraculous nature of the incarnation, but the role that he attributes to Mary in it is little more than instrumental: a position especially favoured by grace and dignified by its physical proximity to the Godhead, but not one that can command a specific and detailed attention, in and by itself, in theological discussion. The approach taken by Milton in *Paradise Regain'd* will go, as we shall see, much further than this in several aspects, even while accepting the limitation and re-materialisation of Mary's role in contrast to her position in Catholic dogma. If we move closer to Milton's immediate political context, it is possible to appreciate that his approach to the subject owes something to the process of the English Reformation; this becomes clear once we listen to some of the leading theological voices in his time, voices from which his own thought might diverge

in several essential aspects, but which nevertheless had shared the climate of the English Revolution with him. The theologian John Owen, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell (and an explicit supporter of the execution of Charles I in 1649) had insisted in his treatise of systematic theology, *Animadversions Against a Treatise Called Fiat Lux* (1671, year of publication of *Paradise Regain'd*) on the difference between the Catholic veneration of Mary and the Protestant understanding of her dignified yet limited place in the scheme of universal salvation, in the following terms:

The blessed virgin is mentioned in our creed as the person of whom our Saviour was born, and we have therefore faith for her; that is, we believe that Christ was born of her. But do we therefore believe in her? Certainly no more than we believe in Pontius Pilate, concerning whom we believe that Christ was crucified under him. [...] We are past charitable hopes that she is ever blessed in heaven, having full assurance of it. (Owen 1671:324)

The abrupt shift in this passage from Mary to Pilate as possible objects of faith is certainly startling, and is an instance of John Owen's polemical intention: his aim is to situate the figure of Mary adequately, not in terms of her virtue or her exemplary role, but simply in order to position her clearly in the discourse of reformed worship. The object of belief must be Christ himself, and any displacement of that belief or trust in any alternative figure, be it Mary or any other, is an unequivocal sign of idolatry. For Owen, Mary has to be seen as one of the elect, and the believer must have "full assurance" that she is "ever blessed in heaven," but that is all: no further characteristics of divinity must be attributed to her, no role of mediation in the human drama of justification before God. Owen's perspective is characteristic of the strong reframing of Mary's role within Protestant doctrine, which excludes her explicitly from worship or faith, but which retains her as a valid example of the qualities of the elect. It is therefore as a human example that Mary can be vindicated: not as an object of belief, but rather as a valid example of the attitude of the believer. This is precisely the direction that was followed by other English theologians in the immediate context of Milton; and here a relevant example is furnished by Matthew Poole, who dedicated a special attention to the figure of Mary in his extensive commentaries on the Gospel of Luke. Poole, who started his career within the context of the Church

of England, was banished from his post in it because of his dissenting positions, and maintained these even after the Restoration in works such as the *Dialogues between a Popish Priest and an English Protestant* (1667). It is, however, in his *Commentary to the Holy Bible*, first published in English 1683, though originally offered to the public in Latin in 1669, that he dedicates a careful attention to Mary as she appears in the Gospel of Luke:

Once I have spoken, but I will not answer. In like manner the virgin speaketh: I will dispute no more, I am the lord's servant, let him do with me what he pleaseth. Her phrase, behold the handmaid of the lord, doth not speak her as the lady and Queen of Heaven, as the papists style her, but it speaketh her humility and readiness to give herself up to God's pleasure, her assent and consent unto God. She added a prayer that God would do according to what the angel had said unto her. (Poole 1683:286)

Once more, the interpretation of Mary is carefully contrasted with Catholic (or, as Poole puts it, papist) traditions: she is not to be seen as queen of Heaven, but as the "handmaid of the Lord:" not exalted beyond human boundaries, as in medieval Mariology, but set as an example of human faithfulness and trust in the Word. Thus her person is desacralized and framed within purely human dimensions, but it is precisely because of this that she can be upheld as a model of personal faith, a valid referent for the community of believers of which she herself is a part.

## 2. Waiting with patience (book I.66-104)

We can now proceed towards our encounter with the character as rewritten by Milton, and it will be necessary for us to begin by listening anew to Mary's only direct monologue in *Paradise Regain'd*, and by trying to identify the features that would have made it stand out in the poem at the time of its publication, in 1671. Her voice is heard at the beginning of Book II (lines 66-104), and it is worth noticing that she is not even described physically: the narrator only specifies that she is waiting for her son, and worrying over his absence after he has retired into the desert; that absence has raised "troubl'd thoughts" within her, which are "in sighs thus clad:"

O what avails me now that honour high

To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute,  
 Hail highly favour'd, among women blest;  
 While I to sorrows am no less advanc't,  
 And fears as eminent, above the lot  
 Of other women, by the birth I bore,  
 In such a season born when scarce a shed  
 Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me  
 From the bleak air; a Stable was our warmth,  
 A Manger his; [...] (*Paradise Regain'd* II.66-75)

The monologue's *exordium* is a rhetorical question, extended over the first three lines and closed by a semi-colon (rather than a question mark) which projects its contents over the rest of the speech. It phrases the contrast between the honour of being chosen by God and the suffering that it entails: to be "highly favour'd" and "blest" has not brought peace of mind to Mary, but only an increase in sorrows, and this already introduces the main subject of the poem, that will be exemplified in the figure of Christ: the paradoxical coexistence of divine election and human suffering. These first lines are also the most rhetorically complex of the whole speech; the rest of the monologue (the *narratio*, detailing the subject matter in its chronological development) is structured as a series of vignettes that evoke the main episodes in her life. The remembrance of Bethlehem is especially important, insomuch as it places a key emphasis on the physical conditions surrounding the birth of Christ: in lines 72-75, the very form of the verse tends to enhance the bleakness of the situation through a series of subtle stylistic devices: first, through the alliteration in line 72 ("In such a season born when scarce a shed [...]"), with a gentle play on sibilants; next, through a simple structural parallelism in lines 73-75 that insists on the humble, lowly sites of protection for both mother and child ("me"- "stable", "him"- "manger", both of them being opposed to the destructive action of the "bleak air"). In this way, the material form of the verse points to the material conditions of the protagonists; the original scene in which Christ enters history is also the scene in which he is first exposed to the elements, and first submitted to the limitations and pains of humanity.

Let us concentrate, before moving onwards in the monologue, on the transcendent significance of this particular insistence on the early suffering of both Mary and her child. From her viewpoint, to evoke that birth is to evoke memories of physical hardship, and this

is brought about through the very form of the verse, so that the reader is thus led gently but firmly into the central incarnational theme of the poem: the thoroughly material nature of Christ, capable of pain like any other human being. Milton's anti-Trinitarian perspective does not preclude his insistence on the significance of the assumption of flesh by the Son: after all, this is the event that brings about the redemption of humanity, and makes possible the reconciliation between men and God. The non-identity of Son and Father (something that we will have to return to later on) does not modify for Milton the importance of the essential notion of incarnation: on the contrary, the justification of humanity as such is only possible because of the actual existence of the Son in human form, subject to the same kinds of struggles and difficulties that all men experience. No doubt Milton must have always been deeply conscious of the significance of this aspect since his early readings of Church Fathers such as Tertullian, who had insisted on it in his treatise *Adversus Marcionem*:

The sufferings attested his human flesh, they contumely proved his abject condition. [...] He hungered under the devil's temptation, he thirsted with the woman in Samaria; he wept over Lazarus; he trembled at death (for "the flesh," he says, "is weak"); at last, he pours out his blood. [...] From this, therefore, we have a convincing proof that in it (his flesh) there was nothing of Heaven, because it must be capable of contempt and suffering. (Tertullian 2007:322)

In *Paradise Regain'd*, the experience of Christ also begins in physical hardship, in his exposure to the "bleak air" of Bethlehem, and it will have as its landmarks his troubled self-exile into the desert (explored in detail through the whole of the poem) and the ultimate agonies of the Passion (not represented in the text, but implicitly present as the culmination of his mission). It is highly significant, however, that the most threatening form that human troubles adopt in the childhood of Christ should be not natural but political. For the bleakest forces against which mother and child have to defend themselves are explicitly identified by her as the kings of the earth:

[...] soon enforc't to flye  
Thence into *Egypt*, till the Murd'rous King  
Were dead, who sought his life, and, missing fill'd  
With Infant blood the streets of *Bethlehem*;  
From *Egypt* home return'd, in Nazareth

Hath been our dwelling many years, his life  
 Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,  
 Little suspicious to any King. (*PR* II.75-82)

The physical event of the incarnation has situated mother and child at the centre of human experience, entailing not only their exposure to natural dangers, but their direct encounter with political conflict; their family life has to be constantly protected from the gaze of the dominating powers of their time and their aggressive intent. Of course, it is not a coincidence that these powers are insistently represented as monarchic (lines 76 and 82); the historical battles through which Milton himself had lived seem thus to insinuate themselves into the fabric of the poem. The maternal spaces evoked are, on the one hand, spaces of rich intimacy, of close contact between mother and son; yet on the other hand they are spaces which are deeply permeated and conditioned by the presence of history, *loci* where the personal has to define itself dialectically in its relation to external space, and very especially in a political sense. The domestic space, the site of the mother, is certainly idealised in the relationship between herself and the son, but only in that respect: it is certainly not seen as isolated from external reality, as a site of reverie or of liberation from conflict or social turmoil.

Mary's monologue then moves from her autobiographical perspective towards a subject that is openly and explicitly moral: the acceptance of suffering. In the first place, it brings in the subject through the image of Simeon's prophecy, adapted from Luke 2:34-35:

[...] I look't for some great change; to Honour? no,  
 But trouble, as old Simeon plain fore-told,  
 That to the fall and rising he should be  
 Of many in *Israel*, and to a sign  
 Spoken against, that through my very Soul  
 A sword shall pierce; this is my favour'd lot,  
 My Exaltation to Afflictions high;  
 Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;  
 I will not argue that, nor will repine. (*PR* II.86-94)

This image had been abundantly commented by the early Church Fathers, who had repeatedly taken it as an emblem of Mary's later suffering at the foot of the cross; in some cases, this very pain had been interpreted as a manifestation of doubt on her part, or as a momentary crisis of faith. This was the case, for instance, of Basil of

Caesarea, one of the post-Nicene fathers who had been abundantly read by Milton, and who had interpreted the scene in the following terms in his Letter 260:

Simeon called a sword the word that has the power to test and discern thoughts that penetrates unto the division of thoughts, of joints and marrow. Indeed every soul, at the moment of the Passion, underwent a kind of doubt. [...] Even you, O Mary, who learned about the Lord from above, will be affected by doubt. This is the sword. (Gambero 1999:148)

It is not possible to establish a direct textual connection between Basil and Milton here, but it is clear that the poet is thinking, as so often, in terms that are quite close to the Patristic mentality. In Basil the image of the sword not only emblematises and emphasises the notions of uncertainty and suffering, but projects these notions to a later moment in time, the culminating moment of the crucifixion; in Milton, it is read by Mary as anticipating not only the very situation in which she speaks her monologue (missing the adult Christ during his stay in the desert), but the whole of her vital experience in the future. Finally, and in the monologue's *conclusio*, the reference to the episode of the child Jesus' disappearance and Mary's subsequent discovery of him among the doctors of the Law (Luke 2:46-50) leads to a definitive statement of her existential position:

[...] But where delays he now? some great intent  
Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,  
I lost him, but so found, as well I saw  
He could not lose himself; but went about  
His Father's business; what he meant I mus'd,  
Since understand; much more his absence now  
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.  
But I to wait with patience am inur'd;  
My heart hath been a store-house long of things  
And sayings laid up, portending strange events. (*PR* II.95-104)

The episode of the loss of the child Jesus is read here not only as emblematic of the whole moral attitude of Mary, but as an anticipation of the situation in which she finds herself at the moment of speaking (with Christ lost once more, in the desert this time); both situations imply a similar confrontation with uncertainty and anxiety, and both require a similar firmness in trusting God. The final image in the monologue, an effective example of *meiosis* in which her heart is compared to a "store-house" of "things/and

sayings," also works in the same direction, emphasising her sense of herself as a witness and receiver of words and events which are then projected towards the future, "portending strange events." Any possibility of immediate action on her part remains here suspended, but this cannot be read as a position of mere defeatism: on the contrary, it implies the assertion of a constant perseverance in faith in the face of hostile or uncertain circumstances, even though this faith entails the acceptance of hardship.

From what we have seen so far it is already possible to establish some key aspects that can help us to define the Miltonic approach to Mary. This version of the character is characterised by a deep awareness of the passing of time and of the conflictive pressures of history on selfhood; her voice is, above all, expressive of an effort to attune the self to the development of the divine plan in its historical fulfilment, taking strength from the past in order to confront the hardships of the present and to project itself towards the future.<sup>1</sup> Insofar as the character is explicitly desacralized, and is presented as a modest instrument of God rather than as a paradigm of holiness, it fits coherently with the mainstream Protestant approaches to it; insofar, however, as she develops a specific sense of selfhood, of its relation to history and of its place in it, the character appears as a much more innovative construction, and one which is specifically and characteristically Miltonic.

This kind of self-construction, so alien to our present-day culture, can perhaps be understood better if we take into account Michel Foucault's warning in the prolegomena to his own project for a history of the forms of selfhood (and which he completed only partially, in the three volumes of his *History of Sexuality*). Foucault argued there that our histories of selfhood should not be focused on the various codes of sexual or moral behaviour, on the external rules of behaviour that are projected on the individual; careful attention must rather be paid to the varieties of inner subjectivation, to the different ways in which selfhood has been articulated and created through different "technologies." Foucault's own history of subjectivity/sexuality was left unfinished, but in its analysis of late classical antiquity and of early Christianity, it left a solid notion of

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<sup>1</sup> In strict correspondence with the perspective voiced by Mary here, the acceptance of suffering will be explicitly formulated by Christ himself later in the poem (*PR* III.188-194).

self as something that is actively constructed or built through a strenuous effort and through the practices that render it aware of itself, conscious of its need to adopt a specific form in order to fulfil its potential. Commenting on the third volume of the *History of Sexuality*, Pierre Hadot has underlined the process whereby the self reaches into transcendence, understanding this latter term not in a metaphysical sense, but as signifying its integration into a totalising system. Along with the movement through which “one seeks to be master of oneself, to possess oneself,” there is “another movement in which one raises oneself to a high psychic level [...] which consists of becoming aware of oneself as a part of Nature, as a portion of Universal Reason” (Hadot 1989:267). This process is achieved successfully by thinkers as different as Seneca or as Saint Augustine: working under entirely different paradigms, under opposing world-views, both of these philosophers are able to define forms of selfhood that can situate themselves in relation to an all-encompassing totality, whether that totality is defined as Nature or as God. The voice of Mary in *Paradise Regain'd* (and that of the Son, partially in reflection of his mother's) is likewise expressive of a perspective whereby the self has been able to place itself in relation both to itself and to a wider transcendence.

What Mary's monologue articulates at the beginning of Book II is her particular way of understanding her relation to the field of personal obligations and rules; her way of articulating her subjection to what she perceives as her vital purpose. What this implies for her is nothing more than the conscious and purposeful adequation of the personal will to the will of God (the same process that the poem as a whole delineates, in relation to its protagonist), and the specific form that this process assumes is none other than that of patience. Seen in this light, the character of Mary can be seen as one of Milton's major exemplifications of this “greatest virtue,” which he had early on classified in his *Commonplace-Book*, quoting Lactantius' *Seven books on Divine Institutes* (probably in its 1578 edition), as the main characteristic of the “good man” (see CPW I.364). As the poet well knew, chapter XIX of Lactantius's *Divine Institutes* glosses this theme abundantly, putting a major emphasis on the small value that the world will often give to the good Christian, who endures suffering quietly; as Milton had put it in his *Commonplace-Book*, “it happens that a good man has small value put upon him by all; and because it will be thought that he is not able to defend himself, he will be

regarded as sluggish and indolent” (quoted in *CPW* I.364, n.1). The original fragment by Lactantius clarifies and illuminates the full significance of this virtue:

Therefore patience is to be regarded as a very great virtue; and that the just man might obtain this, God willed, as has been said before, that he would be despised as sluggish [...]. Now, if when provoked by injury, he has begun to follow up his assailant with violence, he is overcome. But if he shall have repressed that emotion by reasoning, he is then able to rule himself. And this retraining of oneself is rightly called Patience, which single virtue is opposed to all vices and affections. (Lactantius 1886:185)

Mary’s own construction as a “just woman,” indeed her very existence as a subject, depends entirely upon her profound integration of the principle of patience, upon her turning that principle into the main practice whereby she regulates her own will. This is the same patience that figures so prominently in so many other moments of Milton’s work, the same virtue that speaks allegorically to the poet in sonnet XIX (“When I consider how my light is spent [...]”), and which is recommended to Adam by Michael in book XII of *Paradise Lost* (“Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love [...]” XII.583). In Milton’s later poems, and very especially in *Paradise Regain’d*, control over the will has a privileged place: it is the sign of the self’s adequation to the deployment of a much superior mandate that manifests itself in history, and whose ultimate purpose shall only be completed in a distant time. If the character of Mary as presented in *Paradise Regain’d* may appear to us simply as a paradigm of passivity, or as merely reactive, deprived of a will of her own, this is only because we are operating within a cultural climate that identifies selfhood with outward activity, and identity with personal assertion. What is at stake in the poem is something rather different: a sustained attempt to configure the self by framing it exclusively within the context of God’s plan, and by submitting entirely to it.

It is especially important not to mistake this process of self-creation for simple quietism or mere passivity: this is the essential oversight that has led an authority such as Stanley Fish to define Mary’s position as a “non-response” or a mere “gesture of resignation” to her “genuine needs” (Fish 2002:330). What occurs is in fact, and in a deep sense, the opposite: what the patient self develops is a strenuous and coherent sense of purpose, yet one

which does not express itself in outward or rash displays of action, but rather chooses to live in a serene and continuous expectation. In this particular form of selfhood, individual action and initiative can be deferred until the moment in which they become necessary, but this deferral only makes them more effective and authoritative when they come.<sup>2</sup> One such occasion motivates Mary's other key appearance in the poem: a defining moment in which, fulfilling the purpose for which she has learned to wait, she appears as a figure fully endowed with an active power over language and narrative. It is to that moment that we must now turn.

### **3. From the mother's word to the word of God (book I.348-402)**

The fact that Mary has been generally overlooked in critical discussions of *Paradise Regain'd* might be seen as a proof of her success in the adaptation of her sense of self to the requirements of patience, as I have described them in the previous section. But the poem also shows a complementary side of Mary, specifically the side that is made possible and strengthened through her patient waiting: in her other lengthy appearance in the poem, she not only appears as endowed with the full authority of knowledge, but as responsible for actively guiding and directing her son towards the future fulfilment of his mission. This occurs in a moment that is retrospectively evoked in Book I, in what is Christ's first monologue (*PR* I.348-402), which he speaks as he is entering the desert, immediately after his baptism.

This particular fragment must doubtless have been especially difficult for Milton, as it involves a stylistic *tour de force*: here the poet

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<sup>2</sup> Even though the political discourse of the poem is not the concern of this article, one does not need to look for a "special identification with the Son" on the part of Milton himself (as some critics have done: see, for instance, Fallon 2007:239-250) to situate the poem firmly within the post-Restoration context. The careful rewriting of the concept of patience that I present here clearly identifies *Paradise Regain'd* as a text that works towards keeping alive, in the absence of military action, part of the desire for change that had brought about the English Revolution; the idea of accepting a difficult position in the present, of containing any revolutionary impulse, certainly appears again and again in the writings of several English republicans and revolutionaries (authors such as George Wither, John Hutchinson, John Goodwin) between 1660 and 1671, the year in which *Paradise Regain'd* was published.

must give an appropriate voice to Christ as a literary figure for the first time in the poem, while simultaneously remaining faithful to the truth of the character as expressed in the Gospels. That difficulty is partially solved by allowing the voice of the hero to incorporate, even if very briefly, the accents and the values of the ancient epic: this occurs when Christ remembers the dreams of secular glory that he had harboured in his early childhood:

[...] Victorious deeds  
 Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts; one while  
 To rescue *Israel* from the *Roman* yoke,  
 Then to subdue and quell o're all the earth  
 Brute violence and proud Tyrannick pow'r,  
 Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd. (*PR* I.215-220)

These are the aspirations of a potential conqueror and warrior, the kind of fantasies that would have been appropriate for a character in the ancient, aristocratic epic. But they are presented here also as childish desires, and to a certain extent, as arbitrary: they may as easily take the form of leadership over a national liberation (“to rescue Israel from the Roman yoke”) as that of a more general, republican or anti-absolutist project (“to subdue and quell o're all the earth | Brute violence and proud Tyranni'ck pow'r”). It is true that both these projects could be related, to a certain extent, with the political aspirations that Milton himself had in his youth and his adult life, all through the process of the English Revolution: they are not devoid of nobility in themselves, but they are indicative of an early lack of direction, of a vital and psychological restlessness. And it is here that the mother intervenes: the initial ideals of the childish Christ are quickly attenuated and substituted by deeper and more focused ones as, thanks to her, he acquires true knowledge of his own identity and mission:

These growing thoughts my Mother soon perceiving  
 By words at times cast forth inly rejoyc'd,  
 And said to me apart: “High are thy thoughts,  
 O Son, but nourish them and let them soar  
 To what highth sacred vertue and true worth  
 Can raise them, though above example high:  
 By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.” (*PR* I.227-233)

Here the domestic space is represented as the site of a privileged relationship between mother and son; it appears as the place where the disciplining of the self is learned and achieved. And the mother's

presence is truly indispensable to this shift: it is specifically her voice, spoken in the privacy of home, that leads the character to his true destiny through true knowledge of himself, sustained and reinforced by the study of Scripture. This is certainly one of the passages of the poem which must have resonated very differently in 1671 than it does today: except for the fact that the hero of this poem is Christ himself, this kind of self-awakening to one's sense of purpose in life could easily be seen, in the seventeenth century, as an idealised representation of a Puritan coming of age. The boy acquires a new consciousness of his responsibilities not in the public arena, but in the environment of the family, and his sense of duty is strongly reinforced by his reading and study of Scripture (as becomes clear shortly afterwards, in lines 249-251: "I again revolv'd|The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ|Concerning the Messiah [...]") also undertaken at home and through the guidance of the familial (here maternal) authority.

The quintessential difference between the model of motherhood presented by Milton in this passage and those that have been theorised in our own time by psychoanalysis is, in itself, quite significant. The process of growth and development of the self through the family complex that is delineated in this poem could easily be seen as the reverse of the Lacanian description of the formation of selfhood: in *Paradise Regain'd* it is the mother that brings the boy to a full and rich knowledge of his Father; the Father, in his turn, is not a castrating or destabilising presence, but the enabling force that will oversee the Son's progress towards maturity, and whose influence will guarantee his sense of vital purpose. But above all (and at the farthest possible remove from the Lacanian model) what we have here is the description of a privileged relationship between self and representation, as the words of the mother become the guide that helps the son to situate himself adequately and satisfactorily in the world of language and signification: "[...] By matchless Deeds express thy matchless Sire" (*PR* I.233). In other words: the mother is here teaching her son to adopt his role as the Son. And in this scene he is not offered an entrance in the world of the Symbolic, where signifiers are perpetually severed from their respective signifieds, and where signs are always fatally divided from themselves. What is suggested here is precisely the opposite: a perfect and stable correspondence between external and internal appearances, so that the "matchless deeds" of the Son will become

the sign of his “matchless Sire;” indeed it is all a matter of adapting the self so that it becomes indicative of the divine will, fully attuned to it and expressive of it: the young Christ will eventually become a living sign, entirely readable in the terms established by the Father. From a psychoanalytic perspective, a situational paradigm such as this one, in which the paternal presence controls not only language but time and destiny themselves, would offer an ideal occasion for the destruction and destabilisation of the emerging self; and yet the Miltonian perspective sees this all-encompassing perspective as giving a full sense of purpose and direction to the Son, making it possible for him to build his sense of identity. This is the way in which the mother finally leads him to adopt this new awareness:

“[...] they (the Magi) knew thee king of Israel born;  
 Just Simeon and Prophetic Anna, warn’d  
 By Vision, found thee in the Temple, and spake  
 Before the Altar and the vested Priest,  
 Like things of thee to all that present stood.”  
 This having heard, strait I again revol’d  
 The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ  
 Concerning the Messiah, to our Scribes  
 Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake  
 I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie  
 Through many a hard assay even to the death,  
 E’re I the promis’d Kingdom can attain. (*PR* I.254-265)

This process is described as a quick, immediate response on his part: a new impulse is awakened within him, focusing and strengthening the uncertain desires that he had harboured until that moment; he moves from the word of the mother to the Word of God. It is in this way that he can know “what was writ” about himself, what was “known partly “ by the prophets, but will be fully realised in him: the mother’s guidance has led him to establish a new sense of himself by relating his subjective perspective to the divine will as revealed in Scripture. The mother here leads the young Christ towards the Father, and by doing so helps him to acquire a full consciousness of his mission and purpose: the form that the family romance takes in this fragment amounts to a reversal of the Lacanian paradigm. What has happened is best understood from another perspective: we can certainly speak here once more (as we did in the case of Mary’s monologue) of a full “construction of selfhood” in Foucauldian terms: a process whereby the subject learns how to become one, and starts a process of interiorization that will enable it

to construct its consciousness. As Pierre Hadot has specified, commenting on the Foucauldian concept of the “care of the self,” the ultimate result of this process is not an absolute sense of independence, but much rather a re-situation of selfhood in relation to a totality, a whole, of which it learns to become a part. This is how Hadot describes this operation in the case of Seneca, one of the protagonists of Foucault’s third volume of the *History of Sexuality*:

The best part of oneself, then, is ultimately a transcendent self. Seneca does not find his joy in “Seneca,” but by transcending Seneca; by discovering that he has in him a reason that is part of universal Reason, that is within all the human beings and within the cosmos itself. (Hadot 1989:262)

Despite all the cultural differences between the context of the Senecan access to self-consciousness and the evolution of the young Christ that is described in *Paradise Regain’d*, the essential aspect remains the same in both cases: self-construction is perceived as the movement towards a sense of a wholeness that transcends the subject, a wider space of signification and meaning in which that subject will find its place and function. The attitude that is encouraged here has nothing to do with simple passivity: we are once again in the domain of *patientia*, in a process of attunement to the will of God, in full confidence in a future in which action shall indeed become possible: a moment in which political and vital plenitude will be made manifest. It is in this way that the Son is able to become a “transcendent self” in Foucauldian terms: he is able to fit into a universal system, integrating himself, through a process of maturation, into a wider totality determined entirely by the Father. The language of militarism and earthly glory that he had initially used has been discarded, and the kind of desire for self-assertion that it involved has been substituted by something else: just as his desire for renown has been attenuated, so his desire to serve God has become the centre of his personality. This becomes evident in the resolution or *conclusio* of his monologue, which shows him accepting his present ignorance as to what awaits him in the desert:

[...]And now by some strong motion I am led  
Into this Wilderness, to what intent  
I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know;  
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals. (PR I.290-293)

Knowledge, for Christ as for his mother, is entirely secondary in self-construction: the confidence in the providential plan that both articulate must necessarily involve an attenuation of intellectual anxieties, as much as of the bodily ones. Such a submission of the will does not correspond to the *servo arbitrio* that Martin Luther had theorised, already established and predestined from the beginning of time for each person: this is a process chosen by the individual whereby he or she, consciously and of his/her own volition, learns to frame him/herself entirely in coherence with the demands of the divine plan.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the Son learns to live in the “not yet” (I.292) just as the mother has learnt to “wait with Patience” (II.102), and he learns to experience this model of subjectivity as enabling and fulfilling, just as his mother has done before him. In this process of subject-building, the mother not only precedes him, but teaches him: her word is his first and main guide in his gradual discovery of the Word.

It is especially important that we notice the structural and thematic similarities, and especially the proximity in terms of values, between the two monologues spoken by Mary and by Christ that we have discussed, and through which the character of Mary has been defined. Both of them begin by stating a doubt, a sense of unease and insecurity; both proceed towards a *narratio* (lengthier in the case of Christ, briefer in the case of Mary) that leads them to evoke central episodes in their shared life and in their family home; taking strength in these remembrances, both of them come to accept the indeterminacy of their present situation; finally, in the *conclusio* of their speeches, both banish any desire for knowledge that should go beyond what God chooses to reveal to them. Both of them also refer to each other thematically, by including references to a shared environment where the virtue of patience has been developed by them: by the mother, through accepting the unpredictability of the Son’s actions, and by the Son, through taming all kinds of worldly and military ambition. Rhetorically, both monologues are organized so as to dramatize a learning process, in which the speakers come to understand the need to attenuate personal desire and to “wait with

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<sup>3</sup> We must not lose sight of the fact that, in the case of Christ, this plan involves his own triumphal return in a better and more favourable future, anticipated in terms which are far from being politically innocent: his final arrival will be “as a stone that shall to pieces dash|All Monarchies besides throughout the world|And of my kingdom there shall be no end” (PR IV.149-151).

patience." Finally, and also in both cases, this waiting, inasmuch as it implies a transcendent confidence in the Father and an awareness of the deployment of his will in history, is presented as a the best basis for self-building: it is thus transferred out of the text and established as an exemplary attitude for the reader as well. The process of redemption and justification of humanity in which the reader is asked to put his/her trust has, in fact, been made possible by the incarnational process that has originated in the body and the attitude of Mary: the values that are articulated in her voice define themselves in relation to the process of universal salvation that finds its beginning in her very flesh.

## Conclusion

In this poem, Mary is at the origin of both discourse and action: the origin of the Son's self-discovery (through her language) and the physical beginning of the process of redemption (through her willing involvement in the development of God's plan in history). The feminine is located in this poem precisely at the juncture between narrative and theology, as the link that binds them together and allows them to be informed by each other. There is a clear parallelism between linguistic and incarnational processes here: the body of Mary is in this poem the *locus* where the historical transformation of humanity is made possible, just as her voice also marks and creates the beginning of the Son's self-recognition, and the definition of his ethical and political projection. The fact that this process of growing self-awareness should occur under the dominating form of patience does not invalidate at all its promise of future action: what patience implies in this poem is precisely, as we have seen, the constant and ongoing persistence of hope under the external appearance of conformity to adverse circumstances.

I would like to conclude by returning, like the poem itself does, to the place of departure: the home of the mother. The very last line in the poem brings her again to the forefront, as her son walks back home from his trials in the desert:

[...] Hee unobserv'd,  
Home to his Mother's house private return'd. (*PR* IV.638-639)

This last line is one of the most conceptually charged in the whole poem: it does not show the protagonist advancing gloriously to his

sacred mission, but returning home to the mother before even starting it. We, as post-Freudian and post-Lacanian readers, might be tempted to see this return as a purely self-repressive gesture, but this would be an erroneous and decontextualised reading: in this poem, the mother's house is the space where identity and virtue are formed, just as her body is the site where the historical change towards redemption is originated. As a consequence, this last visit to the mother must be seen as yet another enabling gesture: it implies a re-visitation of the major principle that has made both spiritual and moral progress possible, and which has set in motion the narrative of salvation that will now unfold, and which remains outside the reach of the poem. *Per exemplum*, we readers would also do well, in our subsequent re-readings of *Paradise Regain'd*, to return to the character of Mary with a full understanding of her complex function as a major, significant presence within it.

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## The re-birth of Shakespeare in India: celebrating and Indianizing the Bard in 1964<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

While the Tercentenary of Shakespeare's death (1916) was hardly celebrated in India and marked the beginning of a period in which Shakespeare was hidden, the Quartercentenary of his birth (1964) spawned a large number of collections, theatre performances and even exhibitions to pay homage to the Bard. Although a special issue of the journal *Indian Literature* published in 1964 contributed to the re-emergence of Shakespeare, the most revolutionary projects in the making of a vernacular Shakespeare occurred on the Indian stage via Utpal Dutt's Shakespearean productions in Bengali. Following Arjun Appadurai, this paper argues that Utpal Dutt's Bengali theatre productions in 1964 participate in a "decolonization" of Shakespeare, consisting in liberating Shakespeare "the text" and Shakespeare "the author" from the bonds of the empire, from restrictive colonial associations. Two out of his three theatre performances produced in 1964 – *Romeo and Juliet* and *Julius Caesar* – are symptomatic of the effects of "glocalizing" the Shakespearean texts since the original place names and names of the characters are combined with the Bengali language and some unavoidable localization. Thus, Shakespeare's Quartercentenary in India not only saw the re-emergence of the Bard, but also took its first steps in his indigenization.

KEYWORDS: Shakespeare, appropriation, theatre performances, Quartercentenary, India.

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The special number of the journal *Indian Literature* published in 1964 by the Sahitya Akademi to commemorate Shakespeare's birthday includes an advertisement which deploys both Shakespeare's iconic image as writer and his words to market aluminium. The advertisement (Illustration 1) features a prolific Shakespeare, quill in hand, accompanied by the well-known quotation from *Romeo and Juliet* "what's in a name?" The choice of play is not random, for it is the most celebrated in India. The advertisement rests on the assumption that Shakespeare is the icon of high culture *par excellence*. Given that the commercial is included in a special number devoted to Shakespeare, the implication is that those who read Shakespeare can afford aluminium instead of copper. While the cultural manifestations – ranging from cartoons to musical sketches or stamps – to commemorate the Quartercentenary in the Anglophone world entail a confrontation between high culture and low culture, in India, Shakespeare embodies a certain elitism. Yet, at the same time, the commercial effectively toys with the Shakespearean citation quoted at the outset, and (mis)interprets – or rather, reinterprets – transliterates or appropriates it for the aluminium brand it helps to market. If the "what's in a name" speech basically suggests the lack of importance of having a specific name (or surname), the advertisement contradicts such a statement. After the *Romeo and Juliet* quotation ("that which we call a rose, by some other name would smell as sweet"), the text reads ironically "perhaps, but not quite." The ending does not preserve western heritage literally, but changes the intended Shakespearean meaning completely since it emphasizes the weight of a name ("*A name is not just an identifying tag – a name carries with it a company's reputation*"). Like in this Aluminium Shakespeare commercial, a Budweiser Shakespeare ad published in 1936 contradicts the well-known *Romeo and Juliet* quotation, and highlights the importance of the name Budweiser to refer to the best ale. Although the image of Shakespeare dominates both illustrations, the advertising strategy used in both consists in the considerable distance from Shakespeare's authority even as the advertisements "draw upon the reader's passing familiarity with phrases from his (Shakespeare's) work" (Lanier 2012:508).<sup>2</sup> Even if

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<sup>2</sup> See Lanier (2012:499-515) for a thorough discussion of the role Shakespeare has played in the world of brands and advertising. He distinguishes three different periods in his paper (1875-1900; 1900-1960 and 1960 to the present).

the meaning is not unquestionably swallowed but appropriated in the commercial, the western author still has a high culture “aura.” At the same time, the advertisements equally seem to point out that Shakespearean works are deeply involved in discourses of western capitalism; so, the recirculation of Shakespearean texts after a period of absence may be far from innocent. However, as this paper will argue, Shakespeare’s name extended its meaning in India in 1964 beyond western capitalism, and was equally inserted in Indian popular culture.

overhead lines (1)

What's  
in a  
name?

...which we call a rose, by some  
other name would smell as sweet;  
—SHAKESPEARE  
...perhaps, but not quite! For instance,  
called by some other name, you wouldn't

...know that we don't now have to make the  
switch from copper to aluminium. From a  
metal which is on the way out to a metal  
which is on the way up!

All that the cable industry is currently  
being urged to do, we did years ago. As  
far back as 1960,

if to-day, we're sitting pretty, it's because  
yesterday we showed vision. About the  
shape of things to come to-morrow!

*A name is not just an identifying  
tag—a name carries with it  
a company's reputation!*

turn to **ALIND**

*a name with a tradition and a future!*

**THE ALUMINIUM INDUSTRIES LIMITED**  
India's largest manufacturer of aluminium conductors and accessories.  
Registered Office: Kundara (Kerala)  
Works at: Kundara • Hirasud • Hyderabad  
Managing Agents:  
SESHASAYEE BROS. (PRAV.) PRIVATE LIMITED

...nd range includes: ACSR;  
...uminium Conductors; Conduc-  
...sories and tools; Covered  
...d) aluminium cables for  
...wiring and outdoor weather-  
...applications, Etc. grade alumi-  
...made out of ingots and  
...sile galvanised steelwire.

Illustr. 1. Aluminium advertisement in which Shakespeare is the “star” to market it.  
Reproduced by permission of Sahitya Akademi.

The main purpose of this essay is to find out and explore how Indians commemorated Shakespeare’s Quartercentenary and suggest that this year marks the beginning of a new era for the

interpretation of Shakespeare's works in India. After a period in which Shakespeare was absent, the post-colonial Indian nation recuperates the plays – in spite of their previous colonial associations – possibly as a result of the world-wide drive to celebrate Shakespeare in 1964. The Indian “fidelity” to Shakespeare is revived this year via special journals and books as well as performances directed by Utpal Dutt, who was the perfect bridge between Shakespeare and the Indian layman in the street. Utpal Dutt was convinced that Shakespearean plays had the qualities to target both Bengali middle classes and the common man; he endeavored to familiarize the masses with the Shakespearean *oeuvre* and to negotiate the distance between the Bengali language and the Shakespearean script. Utpal Dutt deliberately revitalized Shakespearean plays in Bengali to confirm his rejection of the highbrow Shakespeare and his western capitalism connotations in a year – 1964 – which witnessed the split of the Communist Party of India into two sections, one of them (strongly supported by Utpal Dutt) with clearly Marxist allegiances. The re-interpretation of Shakespearean plays in Bengali was Dutt's first step to subtly favor the recently founded Communist Party of India (Marxist), characterized by its anti-capitalism. This paper argues that the celebrations of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth in India are symptomatic of the change concerning Shakespeare's reception in this period for, although some still consolidate the Bardic image as a western icon linked to high-brow culture and western capitalism, the majority of them assumed Shakespeare's reconstruction as an icon for the masses. In 1964, the vernacularization or indigenization of Shakespeare was on the move.

## 1. The Death of the Author

One of the most intriguing cases of the Indian encounters with Shakespeare is the “dark” stage or period of absence – from the 1910s to the 1950s – in which Shakespearean performances and productions declined considerably. China also witnessed a period of absence and disappearance of Shakespearean plays (Li 2003:24). For some time, Shakespeare appeared to have been obliterated. While the Japanese commemorated Shakespeare's 1916 Tercentenary with contributions in book form such as *Shakespeare: His Life and Works* (dedicated to John Lawrence, the architect that promoted the

Japanese familiarization with Shakespeare), there are no records of special collections or books in India to pay homage to the author (Anzai, Iwasaki and Milward 1999:17). Furthermore, famous performances of Shakespearean plays are not recalled either. The 1916 Tercentenary of Shakespeare's death went completely unnoticed in India, and this year witnessed an epistemic break with the Shakespearean industry.

The pre-existing framework in which Shakespeare was tied to the presence of British colonialism explains the process of "decolonization" undergone by Shakespeare and accounts for his absence in Indian culture in this period. According to Poonam Trivedi and Dennis Bartholomeusz (2006:17), S. K. Bhattacharya (1964:34) and Charles Sisson (1926:16), the strengthening of the nationalist movement paralyzed the ascendance of the Shakespearean productions. In order to rebuild the nation-state, the colonial shreds or patches were dramatically removed. India had to be reconstructed from within by reforming the nation's outlook, which included Shakespeare – regarded as a palpable threat to India's national sovereignty. The Indian intellectuals and intelligentsia were also affected, and could not continue boosting their fascination with Shakespeare. Sunita Paul (1989:20) equally agrees on the hostility to colonial rule as a direct cause of the oblivion of Shakespeare. While Sunita Paul lists a total of 434 translations from the nineteenth century onwards, only fifty adaptations belonging to 1920-1947 are mentioned (1989:20). Concerning performances, only a selection of scenes from *Othello* translated by Debendranath Basu and from *Macbeth* translated by Girish Chandra Ghose (performed on 22 September 1926 and 29 September 1926 respectively) are worth mentioning.

Interest in Shakespeare's plays strongly declined for several years. Scholars do not agree on the date of the start of the decline and subsequent revival of Shakespeare in India. Charles Sisson (1926:16) establishes the point of departure from Shakespeare after 1912 as a clear reaction against English literature and culture. For Harish Trivedi (1995:14), the debunking of Shakespeare began in the aftermath of World War I as a direct consequence of the spread of "Gandhian" nationalism. Similarly, for Jyotsna Singh (1996:141), the repertoire of Shakespearean plays began to be substituted by Bengali plays in 1920 as part of the nationalistic project. For Singh,

Shakespeare re-emerged in 1940 (1995:141), whereas for Trivedi and Bartholomeusz (2006:17) the real turning point was 1947, the year in which India got its independence.

Although Shakespeare's revival started in the post-colonial period, it was still considered a western import of artistic exotica, and the link with colonialism was reinforced. Norman Marshall toured India in 1948 with a company of actors staging Shakespeare's plays. He hinted at an imperial past in which Shakespearean plays were subordinated to the colonial power, for the plays were performed by English actors for an Indian audience. The spectre of British imperialism also haunted the performances by Geoffrey and Laura Kendal. Their connection with Shakespeare comes under scrutiny in their second (1947-1948) and third (1953-1956) trips to India when they toured the country with their "Shakespeareana" company with a total of 879 performances of Shakespeare's plays and other English classics. This company of Anglo-Indians did not extend its boundaries beyond western culture, for the performances were in English for the educated Indians. Even on screen, the Shakespearean industry operated on the assumptions of western superiority. Kishore Sahu's *Hamlet* (1954) was visualized shot-by-shot as Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet* (1948), and the imagery, setting and ambiance imitated, or rather mimicked the western production. Although the re-emergence of Shakespeare in India already started just after their independence from the British, the re-birth of a vernacular Indian Shakespeare was in fact materialized in 1964 through the tradition of the Parsi theatre, as will be discussed below.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Shakespeare in Print in 1964

While in China the commemorations for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's birth were cancelled since the "sky darkened and the political weather changed considerably" (Levith 2004:40) and Shakespeare was synonymous with western capitalism – as the

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<sup>3</sup> Parsi theatre can be considered the first modern commercial theatre, highly influential between the 1850s and 1930s. Parsi theatre was an in-between, hybrid project, for it was subsidized by the Parsis – the Zoroastrian community – but added European techniques to its performances. See for instance Lal (2009:102-108).

Alind and Budweiser advertisements proved – in India, an interesting discourse on and about Shakespeare emerged.<sup>4</sup> Several publications that came to light in 1964 are all fraught with ambivalence regarding the role of Shakespeare. Some volumes follow the path of colonial publications flattering and praising Shakespeare in English. Other publications are interestingly concerned with the appropriation of the plays in Indian languages.

C. D. Narasimhaiah, a well-known member of the Indian Academy, compiled a volume of essays which had the purpose of extolling Shakespeare's role within the Indian subcontinent. The lasting association between Shakespeare and colonialism makes its star appearance at the very outset of the collection: "for the England of trade, commerce, imperialism and the penal code has not endured but the imperishable Empire of Shakespeare will always be with us. And that is something to be grateful for" (Narasimhaiah 1964:v). Including articles with provoking titles such as "Has Shakespeare fallen on evil tongues?" or "Why Shakespeare for us?" the collection adopts a very old-fashioned approach, since it highlights that the Indians cannot do without their Shakespeare in English, and criticizes the translation into Indian languages. With a constantly disturbing and condescending tone, the volume asserts that "even the average Indian student is responsive to poetry" (Narasimhaiah 1964:5). The intellectuals' admiration for Shakespeare is linked with their apparent acquisition of a status symbol. Sixteen years after independence, elite Indians still believed that the loss of Britain would be compensated by the ongoing presence of Shakespeare. This book is not affected by political crises, and still sails in comfortable colonial waters.

The special issue of the journal *Indian Literature* devoted to Shakespeare's 1964 Quartercentenary moved significantly away from the previous approach. The editors' main aim and purpose was to explore the experience of doing Shakespeare on the Indian stage for English readers. They wanted to promote the possibility of a

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<sup>4</sup> Chen Jia was actually one of the few who dared to perform Shakespeare. He and his Nanjing University students acted several scenes from *King Lear*, *The Merchant of Venice*, or *Hamlet* in English. The main consequence of such a bold act was public humiliation. See Levith (2004:40) or Li (2003:50).

proper encounter between India and Shakespeare.<sup>5</sup> For instance, S. K. Bhattacharya explained the intricacies of Shakespeare and Bengali Theatre and Chandravadan C. Mehta explored the reception of Shakespeare on the Gujarati stage. Given that “language became the deciding factor in the decline of the English plays and the development of a vigorous Bengali theatre” (Bhattacharya in Singh 1996:453), Shakespearean plays had to be adapted first to be subsequently staged on the Bengali stage. Throughout his chapter, S. K. Bhattacharya confirms that Shakespeare was the most crucial influence in the development of Bengali theatre. The reception of Shakespeare’s works follows a similar trajectory in Gujarati theatre, in which extremely free adaptations were the rule. Apart from the presence of Shakespeare in some Indian theatres, the special collection equally includes Shakespeare’s presence in other Indian languages (Assamese, Hindi, Karnataka, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu). This special issue is remarkable for its scale and variety – including a significant range of Shakespearean manifestations in Indian theatres and in Indian languages – and also for being unique in its purpose. There was a sustained interest in transforming Shakespeare into a hybrid identity. This special issue of *Indian Literature* takes a step forward regarding the hitherto forgotten possibilities of Shakespeare in new Indian sites and languages. These two very different publications – C. D. Narasimhaiah’s book and the *Indian Literature* journal – are symptomatic of the ambivalence towards Shakespeare in literary manifestations that appeared in India in 1964. Although the journal is only a pioneering attempt in print to vernacularize Shakespeare, “the grip of the colonial ‘civilizing mission’” is “loosened” on the Indian stage (Singh 1996:136). The creation of the horizon of expectations re-emerges with Utpal Dutt.

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<sup>5</sup> There were other publications in 1964. *Oxygen News* dedicated a special number to Shakespeare (Kolkata, 1964). There was also an exhibition catalogue entitled *Shakespeare in India* at the National Library, Kolkata. See the bibliography “Shakespeare in India” at the website *Internet Shakespeare editions*: url: <http://internetsakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/Criticism/shakespearein/india7.html>. (Last accessed 07/08/2011).

### 3. The Making of an Icon on the Indian Stage

In the scenario of post-colonial India, the year 1964 saw the beginning of the “vernacularization” of Shakespeare on the Indian stage, signalling the onset of the decolonization of Shakespeare. Decolonization in India affected “every domain of public life, from language and the arts to ideas about political representation and economic justice” (Appadurai 1996:89). Arjun Appadurai for instance concentrates on the decolonization of cricket in India. The “indigenization” of cricket has a wide range of dimensions, such as the publicity, management and patronization of the sport, the capacity of Indians to imitate and mimic Victorian elite values, as well as the necessity to deprive cricket of the corrosive bonds of England – amongst many others. As cricket ought to be liberated from its Englishness, the English terminology had to be substituted by the corresponding jargon in Marathi, Tamil, Hindi or Bengali for instance. The main difference between the “vernacularization” of cricket and that of Shakespeare is that while the former has been completely deprived of its English *habitus* and has become a national sport, the latter’s decolonization is still an ongoing process. Yet, superimposing the “vernacularization” of cricket to that of Shakespeare many similarities emerge. Although both entered the Indian subcontinent via the English language, they were translated into the diverse Indian languages. Both have always carried a certain elitist flavour. Yet, cricket “dictated an openness to talent and vocation in those of humble origin,” (Appadurai 1996:92) just as Shakespearean performances attracted audiences from poor backgrounds. Interestingly, this approach to Indian audiences was possible in both cases thanks to the Parsis, who acted as a liaison between English and Indian cultural tastes. In the specific case of Parsi Shakespearean adaptations, crucial attempts at crossing cultural borders were made in order to address Indian audiences. Amongst other significant changes in the Parsi Shakespearean adaptations with regard to the source texts, the plots were reduced, additions were provided, songs and dances were included – lengthening the theatre productions considerably.<sup>6</sup> These Parsi adaptations were then the first theatrical experiments to contain a very different dimension of Shakespeare. Parsis mimicked and

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<sup>6</sup> For a complete and detailed study of Parsi theatre, see Gupta (2005).

imitated the western canon provided by the English colonizers but, at the same time, contributed to a new and challenging way of understanding Shakespeare. Parsi theatre did not do Shakespeare in English, but in a vernacular Indian language. These adaptations were “almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha 1994:122). They certainly implied a double articulation or ambivalence of conflicting ideologies. Yet, after the dark period of absence of Shakespeare in India and the independence of the country, the “resurrection” and re-emergence of Shakespeare and his real decolonization or indigenization is immediately connected with Utpal Dutt and Shakespeare’s Quartercentenary. Besides, the making of Shakespeare as an Indian icon by Dutt also aims to subtly favor the political ideology of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The decolonization of Shakespeare in India started by Utpal Dutt aimed to change his appearance as well as the meanings of his plays by taking considerable distance from the typical connotations of western capitalism.

Utpal Dutt began his theatrical career with amateur productions of Shakespeare’s plays at St. Xavier’s College, such as *Hamlet* (1943). Drama at St Xavier’s College in Calcutta was extremely influential, and contributed significantly to the performance of Shakespeare in India. At St. Xavier’s, Dutt was discovered by Geoffrey and Jennifer Kendal and joined them in their Shakespeareana Company touring India and Pakistan in 1947-1948 and 1953-1954 on a professional basis.<sup>7</sup> The temporal gap between the first and second tours was related to the Kendals’ departure to England. Utpal Dutt performed the roles of Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*, Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, Ross in *Macbeth* and Decius Brutus in *Julius Caesar*.<sup>8</sup> While the lure of the British Empire looms large in these productions, Tapati Gupta suggests that their

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<sup>7</sup> Geoffrey and Laura Kendal (née Laura Liddell) were the leaders and managers of a theatre company called “Shakespeareana,” which toured all over India mostly during WWII. Their audience was extremely significant and diverse, for they could perform in front of royalty or in front of schoolchildren. Their trajectory can be seen in *Shakespeare Wallah* (dir. James Ivory and Ismael Merchant, 1965), and was also accounted by Geoffrey Kendal himself in *The Shakespeare Wallah: The Autobiography of Geoffrey Kendal* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1986).

<sup>8</sup> For a comprehensive list of Utpal Dutt’s performances and roles in different languages (English, Bengali) or in other theatrical traditions (jatra, for instance), see Paul (2006).

construction is actually based on mimicry (Gupta 2010:159). The verisimilitudes of the productions with the English performances were apparent, but they still had a quality to them and displayed theatrical sensibilities which differed considerably from the Shakespearean adaptations performed in the Anglophone world. Utpal Dutt later founded the troupe Amateur Shakespeareans, which was renamed Little Theatre Group, in which they produced many Shakespearean plays in English, such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard III*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* or *Macbeth*. In all these theatrical representations, Dutt always performed the leading roles: he played Richard in *Richard III*, Othello in *Othello* or Brutus in *Julius Caesar*. Inspired by the IPTA (the People's Theatre Association), The Little Theatre Group was committed to left-wing ideological positions, which put into jeopardy their strong commitment to Shakespearean plays. For instance, when the Communist Party of India was forbidden, they penned a political article protesting against this action which was accompanied by a fragment of *Romeo and Juliet*. Miriam Stark, the leading actress, asked the following question: "If we really believe what we've written, then why are we staging the classics and for whom really?" The main dissatisfaction inherent in the group was related to their target audience, the westernized intellectuals of Calcutta instead of addressing the Indian proletariat. If they wished to stage plays for working-class audiences, the enactment of the plays ought to be in Bengali since they realised the impossibility of defending their left-wing political ideas and occasionally radical views if they only did productions for a minority audience.<sup>9</sup> Mass audiences were unable to follow what was happening on the stage due to the language used. Obsessively concerned with the masses, Utpal Dutt detached from a theatre full of nuances of characterization, and projected a theatre with action to the full, and with an emphasis on expressions, entrances and exits. The beginning of his experiment was simply at the early stages.

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<sup>9</sup> Obviously, the non-Bengali members of the group abandoned the company, and were replaced by other Bengali members. Many of the non-Bengali members came from Westernized Jewish families. Their background and education was British, whereas their status was Indian. Due to their loyalty to the English language, their departure was compulsory. Some of them went to Australia, while some others went to Israel.

For Shakespeare's Quartercentenary, Utpal Dutt directed *Julius Caesar* (April 1964, Minerva Theatre),<sup>10</sup> *Romeo and Juliet* (24 April 1964, Minerva Theatre) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (24 April 1964, Minerva Theatre) in Bengali.<sup>11</sup> "Doing Shakespeare in Bengali is an experiment in itself. One should not venture anything beyond that. To do it the way Shakespeare wrote it, plain and simple, that was the safest" (Dutt in Paul 2006:15), claimed the theatre director when asked about experimenting with Shakespeare. The re-playing of Shakespeare in Bengali for the common man was categorized by Tapati Gupta (2010:158) as the phase of translation and localization. In spite of the fact that Dutt's predecessors believed strongly in "tradaptations," i.e. extremely free translations with a considerable number of alterations, Dutt made an effort not to make many changes. Nevertheless, some localization was necessary. The constant paradox and irony of Utpal Dutt's Bengali productions were that the characters spoke an Indian language, while they still retained the original Shakespearean names and wore Western costumes. In the words of Tapati Gupta: "Dutt's Bengali Shakespeares' might be seen as contextualizing the global in the local and reversing the process of subjugating the local to the global" (Gupta 2010:161). Therefore, instead of locality being eclipsed by globalization, these Bengali Shakespeares emerge solely as an instance of "glocalization."

Utpal Dutt's Bengali *Romeo and Juliet* (1964) was interestingly based on his own translation of the Shakespearean play.<sup>12</sup> As in the rest of Dutt's Bengali Shakespeares, this production preserved the

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<sup>10</sup> The Minerva Theatre was built in Calcutta in 1893. The opening play was *Macbeth*. In fact, the history of the theatre has always been closely associated with Shakespeare's plays, for a large number of them were staged there. After being burnt down in a fire in 1922, the theatre acquired a reputation as a jinxed and unlucky theatre. The Minerva Theatre was renovated again in 1925, and could still be the venue of a large number of theatre performances.

<sup>11</sup> There is no available information regarding Dutt's Bengali *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The reason for this may be that the performance was not a failure, but did not succeed either. It is also worth noticing that Utpal Dutt's 'Bengali Shakespeares' have not received as many positive reviews as his English adaptations.

<sup>12</sup> Apart from Utpal Dutt's 1964 theatre productions, there were other adaptations to commemorate Shakespeare's birth such a Hindi *King Lear* directed by Ebrahim Alkazi, a celebrated director of Delhi's National School of Drama (NSD). See the bibliography "Shakespeare in India" at the website *Internet Shakespeare editions*.

original place names as well as the names of the *dramatis personae*. Furthermore, the costumes were period and the scenery was conventional. Utpal Dutt's main aim was to recreate the Elizabethan playhouse within the proscenium. In his *Romeo and Juliet*, there was a large set and an "apron" in front of the curtain on which the Mantua scenes were acted accelerating the speed of the action. One of the notable changes in Dutt's production concerns Friar Laurence. The Friar's commonness – he escapes, he does not confess – rather than his good purposes is highlighted. "He is a failed pastor unable to protect his protégés from an insensitive Establishment. Dutt made the character fit into his ideological framework but took his cue from Shakespeare" (Gupta 2005:3). Other consistent differences include the considerable reduction of slang – basically in the nurse's speeches – the transposition of Verona and Mantua to a small Bengali town with a middle-class system, and the abuse of everyday language in practically all the speeches. Characteristic of Utpal Dutt's *Romeo and Juliet* – as perhaps the clearest Western influence – is the music used in the performance. Throughout the production, Tchaikovsky's music is constantly heard and overheard to make up for the loss of rhyming couplets and sonnet sequences in the translated version. Utpal Dutt is still reluctant to deprive the Shakespearean work of one of its best known cultural manifestations; Western music is impressed on this revolutionary project.<sup>13</sup> The music provided an "occidental" or Western flavour rather than a Mediterranean taste. But Tchaikovsky's music is interestingly mixed with Dutt's troupe's own compositions – which were heard in the interludes. The thrust of Utpal Dutt's argument was to make clear "to the audience that a foreign dramatist was being domiciled" (Gupta 2010:163). Moving from the global to the local, from the unknown to the known world, from West to East, Utpal Dutt with his Bengali *Romeo and Juliet* started to conceive his plan of the decolonization of the Bard.

Even if Utpal Dutt placed great emphasis on the fact that when Shakespearean plays were translated into Bengali, no other changes

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<sup>13</sup> The influence of Tchaikovsky's orchestral work on an "Eastern" *Romeo and Juliet's* afterlife can be seen in *Qing ren jie* (aka *A Time to Love*, dir. Jiangi Huo, 2005). In this adaptation, the leading couple is modeled on the famous Shakespearean characters. Curiously enough, the production toys with other Western cultural manifestations based on *Romeo and Juliet*, such as Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* (1968).

should be made (Dutt in Rajinder 2006:15), a newer dimension was suggested in his production of *Julius Caesar*, staged in modern costume in a Bengali translation by Jyotirindranath Tagore in 1964 with a fascist Italy backdrop.<sup>14</sup> The picture of politics contained in the work might easily appear as allusions to the convoluted political life India was going through. 1964 was marked by Nehru's death – the first Prime Minister of the postcolonial era – the power vacuum left in India after his death and by the split within the Communist Party. In this production, Utpal Dutt amalgamated the past and present. He and his company “interpreted Julius Caesar somewhat predictably as a study of fascism, with Caesar appearing as a timeless dictator, Antony a Fascist orator, and Cassius an extremist revolutionary” (Bharucha 1983:57). Thus, like Utpal Dutt's English theatrical productions of *Julius Caesar*, this Bengali adaptation described Caesar and Anthony as Fascists, Marcus Brutus as a Socialist and Cassius and the others as Communists. For Gupta (2005:3), the personality of Dutt's Caesar was curiously merged with “Hitler's, in the garb of Chaplin's Dictator.” Immediately revealed by Utpal Dutt was the intention to disturb the audience by exposing them to Shakespeare in Bengali and to a cast wearing modern dress and military uniforms instead of Roman togas. In spite of its resemblance to Orson Welles' well-known 1937 production (*Death of a Dictator*), which “would influence performances of the play on both sides of the Atlantic for a long time” (Calvo 2010:505), this representation of *Julius Caesar* was an independent choice. In an interview with Samik Bandyopadhyay, Utpal Dutt denied any influence from this production, arguing his lack of knowledge of Orson Welles at the time (Bandyopadhyay in Paul 2006:10). Although Utpal Dutt's Bengali *Julius Caesar* was a faithful literal translation, some changes were made. For instance, the comparison of Caesar to Colossus did not appear. “Glocalization” or “transculturation” would be explicitly present via modes of address. In Act II scene IV, “the way Lucius addresses Calpurnia would remind the Indian audience of a Bengali landed aristocrat's wife being addressed by a vassal” (Gupta 2005:3). Consequently, as in *Romeo and Juliet's* production, Utpal Dutt's *Julius Caesar* underwent a

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<sup>14</sup> Utpal Dutt also produced theatre adaptations of *Julius Caesar* in English in modern dress. All his productions of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* were played before urban audiences.

process of “glocalization” by bringing together the Bengali language with a western *ambiance*. At this stage in Utpal Dutt’s professional career, his 1964 *Romeo and Juliet* and *Julius Caesar* are in-between, hybrid projects which would become extremely more radical over the years. Yet, taking into account the considerable degradation and decline of performances in Shakespeare’s *étage terrible* in India, Utpal Dutt’s productions of Shakespeare’s plays are a significant contribution to the re-emergence of Shakespeare on the Indian stage as well as to his indigenization.

#### 4. Conclusion

This paper has argued that there is an interesting twist in the reception of Shakespeare in India in 1964. First of all, after a period of absence, there is a considerable rebirth of interest in Shakespeare with publications and stage productions. Unlike the 1916 Tercentenary, the 1964 Quartercentenary was widely celebrated and commemorated in India. Besides the special issue of *Indian Literature* devoted to Shakespeare, which records in great detail the performances of Shakespeare’s plays in the different Indian theatres, Utpal Dutt’s Bengali Shakespearean productions signal the “Indianization” of Shakespeare. Following Arjun Appadurai’s theoretical framework of the “decolonization of cricket,” this paper has demonstrated that it was necessary to remove the English language to transform a typical colonizer’s text into an amended and localized version. The rise of an Indian Shakespeare in vernacular language in 1964 took place around the same time that India saw the end of the leadership of Prime Minister Nehru, associated with the independence movement, and when the split inside the Communist Party announced a radicalization of Indian politics and a move towards a stronger rejection of Western capitalism. If the “vernacularization” of Shakespeare on the Indian stage started in 1964, it reached its apogee in 1970 thanks to Utpal Dutt again, with his *Macbeth* in the jatra folk tradition – a popular form of Bengali theatre – that constitutes an attack on Indira Gandhi’s *regime*.<sup>15</sup> In

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<sup>15</sup> In *Re-playing Shakespeare in Asia*, Tapati Gupta explores in depth Utpal Dutt’s *Romeo and Juliet* in the jatra tradition. In this chapter, the author compares three very different *Romeo and Juliet* performances by Utpal Dutt (in English, in Bengali and in

addressing the way the four-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth was celebrated in India, this article contributes significantly to the history of Shakespeare reception and commemoration. The year 1964 in India then witnessed an important step in the decolonization of Shakespeare and the construction of Shakespeare as an Indian cultural icon, one that satisfied local exigencies and whose world could be successfully rebuilt in the villages of Bengal.

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## Women in Breeches and Modes of Masculinity in Restoration Comedy

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### ABSTRACT

The dramatic tradition that featured female characters dressed in men's costume was revived after the theatres reopened in the Restoration, with the difference that this time these roles were played by actresses. It has been argued that the contemplation of the female body reinforced the erotization of the actresses for the sake of predominantly male audiences. Their performances in "breeches roles" have also been interpreted as evidence of a progressive acknowledgement of the social possibilities of female agency. My own contention is that these roles did not only raise female agency to a level equal – if not superior, occasionally – to male agency, they also served to disrupt certain fashionable notions on the nature of masculinity, and therefore illustrate a trend that promoted new gender modes. To argue this thesis, I will focus on three comedies that represent as many stages in the development of this trend: the anonymous *The Woman Turned Bully* (1675), Thomas Shadwell's *The Woman Captain* (1680), and Thomas Southerne's *Sir Anthony Love* (1691), all of them featuring women wearing breeches and upsetting male order, with both comic and serious consequences.

KEYWORDS: Restoration comedy, gender identity, masculinity, breeches roles.

The motif of the woman in breeches has a long tradition in English dramatic history. It has important illustrations, in terms of both quality and quantity, in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. According to Victor Freeburg, the motif appears in more than 80 plays written in England before 1660 (1915:91). In the Restoration, with the presence of female actors on the stage, it had a very lively revival,

and, according to Elizabeth Howe, “one or more roles for actresses in male clothes” were featured in 89 plays – in other words, in one out of every six plays produced in this period (1992:57; see also Wilson 1958:73).

The adoption of male disguise by women during the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries has not only been duly noticed; it has also become the object of considerable, and often polemical, debate. Critics like Jean Howard (1988) and Juliet Dusinberre (2003) argue that theatrical cross-dressing illustrated the possibilities of female agency and autonomy, whereas others, such as Lisa Jardine (1983) and Douglas Canfield (1997), believe that most Tudor and Stuart drama was meant ultimately to reassert the validity of male supremacy and promote female subordination to male authority. I would like to contend that what cross-dressing (alongside other theatrical practices) conveyed with its iteration was the visual and textual evidence of fractures in the cultural foundations of the differences between male and female. That these fractures were the potential source of social and ideological disruption can indeed be demonstrated by the effort invested in forms of closure that were based on palatable forms of patriarchal authority. The drama produced in the second half of the seventeenth century reveals both the resilience of these fractures and the effects that their permanence provoked. This is the thesis I would like to defend, with evidence drawn from three comedies written in the Restoration period, in which female characters put on man’s clothes and in doing so offer a considerable challenge to male authority.

## I

One of the most significant changes introduced when the theatres reopened in 1660 was the inclusion of women actors. Once again, however, there is no consensus on how to assess the significance of this. It has been argued that the presence of women onstage, particularly when they appeared in male costume – which made all the more visible the shape of their body – foregrounded perceptions of them as objects of erotic consumption by male spectators (see Maus 1979). The erotic thrill of the contemplation of the female body does deserve consideration; yet, in order fully to ascertain its effects it would also be necessary to dissociate the body of the actress from

the body of the character that she plays onstage.<sup>1</sup> One could be offered for pleasurable contemplation; the other probably had a wider-reaching impact, as it touched on, and continued to question, certain ideological preconceptions regarding gender roles. This questioning was enhanced by the appearance of real women on the stage; and it was further underlined by the recurrence of breeches roles, in which female characters proved as capable of action as their male counterparts. The regular presence of actresses on the stage can thus be construed as evidence of the occupation by women of at least one niche in the public sphere; and the nature of the characters they acted, often assertive and independent, attests to the fact that female agency had gained public recognition and acceptance, as Margaret MacDonald noted in her classic *The Independent Woman in the Restoration Comedy of Manners* (1976).

I would also like to contend that, in most Restoration drama, female agency was no longer questioned. A general survey of the plays produced in this period clearly shows that the number of submissive women is far lower than the number of resourceful ones; and the most outstanding and remarkable female characters, hence the more attractive ones, correspond to the latter type, at least until the 1690s. General concerns centred, rather, on the other sex – or the other gender – and on the features that could define male identity, once women had proved capable of taking over some of the roles hitherto exclusively reserved for men.

Mark Breitenberg (1996) has argued that masculinity was in a permanent state of anxiety in the early modern period. One might have the impression that, if there was a moment in which this anxiety was least perceptible, it must have been during the Restoration period, when, according to Andrew Williams, the libertine or rake “established himself as a principal [even hegemonic] figure of male identity” (1999:95). However, Williams himself acknowledges that the prevalence of the libertine was constructed at the cost of undermining other versions of masculinity (1999:106-107). Restoration drama provides a wide gallery of types that were branded “effeminate”: witwounds and fops, country bumpkins and citizens, and humorous and lusty old men are the most recurrent,

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<sup>1</sup> On the possible effects of this contraposition or “conflict between subjectivity in the drama and visual objectification in the theater,” see Rosenthal (1996).

though not the only ones. Anxiety can be recognized in the eagerness with which these other types were subjected to public derision by the libertine and his supporters, and therefore in the manner in which masculinity was forced to depend on the exclusion of weaker or softer models of representation. However, even if the figure of the libertine was indeed popular, it was by no means hegemonic, or unquestioned. As Robert Hume contends, “that the libertine ideas are present in the comedies [of the Restoration] we must agree, but no one has shown that the values of the plays are predominantly libertine, nor does such a demonstration seem possible” (1977:29).<sup>2</sup> In the established picture of Restoration drama there is an excessive emphasis on characters such as Horner in Wycherley’s *The Country Wife* or Dorimant in Etherege’s *The Man of Mode*; but a rough estimate of the gallants appearing in Restoration comedy would suggest that the libertine comprises only one-quarter. So, if we see the libertine as a hegemonic model of masculinity we simply distort the full and very complex panorama of male representation. With regard to *The Country Wife*, Hume remarks that “I do not agree with the critics who see [Harcourt and Alithea] as a moral norm for the play. But are [they] somehow shown up or derided? Let the critic prove it who can” (1977:29). Yet in the play Harcourt is indeed an alternative to Horner, and a more positive and profitable model; and Restoration drama has many more Harcourts than Horners.

The popularity of the libertine has generally been attributed to a reaction against the restraints imposed during the Interregnum; I would like to suggest that it was also a response to the challenges posed by the vibrant and increasing presence of women in the public arena. In this process, the libertine became a hyper-masculinized version of man, not unlike the hyper-muscular, macho-men played by Arnold Schwarzenegger or Sylvester Stallone in another critical period in the history of masculinity. The libertine is not treated derisively, like the fops and cuckolded citizens; but its ideological fractures are frequently exposed. Moreover, these fractures are not perceptible only in the libertines; they can be found in the Harcourts, too. They reveal to what extent masculine values were being scrutinised and questioned, and they justify the full extent of male anxiety in this period.

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<sup>2</sup> For further discussion of this topic, see Weber (1986).

These fractures are most perceptible in the plays in which male characters must face the challenge posed by women who are dressed like, and behave like, men. In some of these plays, the tension focuses not so much on whether these women will succeed in their plots (it is a foregone conclusion that they will) but on whether – or how – the men will successfully confront them. The challenge is particularly stinging, because both parties fight with the same weapons, yet the male competitor is the one with most at risk, being the one who in theory is better endowed with the ability to use these weapons. The obvious implication is that only those who come off unscathed would stand as suitable representations of masculinity. What makes these plays interesting is that even the gallants who succeed in challenging the cross-dressed women cannot avoid coming through without obvious scratches in their masculine pride.

This is what happens in the plays I have selected for analysis. They are the anonymous *The Woman Turned Bully*, Thomas Shadwell's *The Woman Captain*, and Thomas Southerne's *Sir Anthony Love*. They represent a small but significant number of plays featuring women in breeches. They also belong to different periods, and therefore show that the issues under question endured throughout the Restoration, even under different ideopolitical conditions.

## II

*The Woman Turned Bully* was premiered and printed in 1675 –the same year in which Wycherley's *The Country Wife* was produced. The title role was very likely acted by Mary Lee, a young actress who had already played at least one breeches role and would continue to do so for at least three more years.<sup>3</sup> She had quickly risen to lead parts, and specialised in strong and resourceful women. These are

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<sup>3</sup> She acted the blackamoor Nigrello/Clothilda in Settle's *Love and Revenge* (1675), warrior princess Amavanga in *The Conquest of China* (1676), and shepherd Astatius in the anonymous pastoral *The Constant Nymph* (1677); she also played an occasional breeches role in Durfey's *Madam Fickle* (1677) and Leander's *The Counterfeits* (1678). According to Howe, "in the character of Madam Fickle Durfey seems to have deliberately recalled Mrs Lee's part two years before as Nigrello in Elkanah Settle's tragedy *Love and Revenge*" (1992:77); but some of the features of the character seem to be inspired also by Betty in *The Woman Turned Bully* (see Mora & al., eds. 2007:56-58; and Mora 2008).

the features, too, of the character she plays in *The Woman Turned Bully*. Betty Goodfield is a young country woman who, when she finds that her mother intends to marry her to a country bumpkin, escapes to London in order to find a more suitable match. To protect herself from the hardships of travel, she and her maid resolve to wear man's costume. Once in London, she realizes that, in order to achieve her plans, she must not only look like a man, she must also act like one. She discusses the matter with her maid, and decides that she must imitate the manners of the only London men she knows about, the gallants that populate the plays she has read at home. This proves to be a two-edged weapon. On the one hand, her notion of the London gallant is based on the extravagant rakes of contemporary comedy, who pepper their speech with fashionable oaths and nonsensical phrases and seek to imitate the bullies of the London underground. As her maid observes, Betty "must learn to swear more like a gentleman" and spend the day "drinking, gaming and wenching" (1.2.32-33, 79), or she'll never pass for a gallant.<sup>4</sup> And Betty, who knows her plays well, immerses herself in her character with outstanding vitality and success. On the other hand, however, it is quite obvious in *The Woman Turned Bully* that the dramatic rake is an artificial construction, and is perceived as such by the two young gallants, Truman and Betty's own brother Ned. Neither suspects that she really is not a man, but nor can they fathom the reasons that make such a young blade act so extravagantly; thus her behaviour is a continuous source of puzzlement. These effects are most perceptible in the man Betty chooses as her future husband, the aptly-named Truman. He calls her "a witty wild frolicking rascal" (5.2.29) but also confesses that he rather likes his/her "humour" (2.1.201), and feels strangely attracted to him/her. This attraction has only the lightest suggestion of homoeroticism; what makes it especially poignant is that he – supposedly a "true man" – is thrilled by someone who is so obviously a bully, and not even a "true" one.

Precisely because she is an artificial bully, Betty Goodfield becomes the satirical instrument for the exposure of several male types. The most obvious is the fop, who believes that by adopting fashionable oaths and abusive expressions he will find accommodation among the true wits. The second and most

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<sup>4</sup> All references to this play are from Mora & al. (2007); they indicate act, scene and line number.

significant target is the source of the fop's imitation, the "brisk" gallant who, instead of wooing his mistress with courteous words, chooses to do so by "railing." This character type appears in plays such as James Howard's *The English Monsieur* (1663), Etherege's *The Comical Revenge* (1664), and William Cavendish's *The Humorous Lovers* (1667). In none of them is his behaviour wholeheartedly criticized.<sup>5</sup> However, Betty has them in mind when she comments ironically: "[they] have wisely considered love has been made so common, trite, and out of fashion that [...] the damned name [of love] is hateful; and both sexes have agreed [...] to disown the scandal of love and call it gallantry, mirth, and raillery" (2.1.190-195). This criticism is cautious and yet quite serious, because the brisk lover is a variant of the Restoration rake, and a type that appears as a role model in much of the drama of the period. Its appeal is made evident in that Truman himself adopts this role. He does so only briefly, and to good purpose – to prevent the marriage of Betty's mother with an old miser – and, to be fair, he is not quite successful:

MADAM GOODFIELD: [...] – But, sir, pray put none of your London tricks on me. I fear you do but exercise your wit upon me; for you town gallants love to flout poor country gentlewomen to make you sport.

TRUMAN: If thou delayst one minute longer, widow, I'll vow to blast thy reputation, kill all that dare pretend to you, and at last, in spite of thyself, enjoy thee and then jilt thee.

MADAM GOODFIELD: Goodness! What pretty words you gentlemen have. Jilt me? Well, that must be some fine thing, it sounds so well. Jilt – I might have lived in Derbyshire to Methusalem's age, and not have heard such fine things.

TRUMAN: Uds precious, widow, what mean you? Swear instantly to be mine or, I vow, I will prosecute what I told you. (5.1.87-97)

Truman only *feigns to be* a rakish gallant; but the threats are obvious, and to spectators of the Restoration theatres they must have had clear echoes from earlier plays, and from real life. To people like

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<sup>5</sup> In Howard's play, the rake is Wellbred, "A wild gentleman" who is a relentless gamester and only proposes to the heroine when he has run out of money. In Etherege's, it is Sir Frederick Frolick. And in Cavendish's, it is Boldman, of whom Canfield says: "Lady Pleasant strips Boldman of his cocksurenness and causes him to be publicly and mercilessly mocked" (1997:47); but in the end he retaliates against her and has the upper hand in his relationship with her.

Truman, the brisk and rakish lovers of Restoration comedy must have stood as particularly controversial examples in the definition of men's most desirable roles: a kind of behaviour based on verbal and physical abuse, combined with a neglect of the moral principles that would make him refrain from such abuse, suggests that the supremacy of the male and the "necessary" submission of the female can only be effected by force. For this reason alone it deserves to be criticized and discarded.

*The Woman Turned Bully* also suggests that the survival of the bully may prove to be socially disruptive in a wider sense. In her encounters with the gallants, Betty Goodfield not only forces them to agree to risk their lives in a duel – that is, to an act that can symbolically be construed as a challenge to the physical integrity and survival of worthier gender models – she also – and more importantly – manages to destabilize their psychological or emotional integrity, with the result that Truman loses control, and almost becomes another bully, on several occasions. Remarkably, Betty culminates her own bullying practice when she is no longer in breeches (though she is once again in disguise), as if the "infection" of her male costume still affected her behaviour and had indeed turned her into "a petticoat Hector" (5.2.58).

Whether in breeches or in petticoats, Betty Goodfield acts according to her "wild" humour. But this is precisely what Truman likes about her. As he declares, he prefers a woman "full of air and gaiety to the utmost extent," rather than a demure one (1.1.160-161). She is certainly chaste, but is neither silent nor obedient, nor will she be content with assuming a passive role in her life; and, incidentally, she also has proved that she is not at all inferior to any man. The final challenge for Truman lies in accepting this. It is not an easy task: when Betty reveals her true identity, his first response takes the shape of an open, even if mild, threat:

TRUMAN: Well, madam, by this fair hand –

*Takes her hand and kisses it.*

I vow I can never forgive the injury you have done yourself and truth in such a character; and I am resolved, ere long, to be revenged on ye for it, to some purpose.

BETTY GOODFIELD: No threatenings, I beseech you, sir. Your great threateners are ever the last performers.

NED GOODFIELD: Are you not much surprised, Jack, at this discovery?

TRUMAN: Extremely; but more pleased.

And Ned Goodfield's comments evince a sexualized form of male dominance, as he removes their coming duels from the field to their private apartments:

BETTY GOODFIELD: Aye, aye, let's return. Now my duels are over, I have no more occasion for the open field.

NED GOODFIELD: True, sister; a private apartment is much more proper for what's like to follow.

But Betty's conditions state her preferences quite plainly:

TRUMAN: But as we walk, madam, how are you pleased I shall treat ye in this disguise? As a mistress, or a friend?

BETTY GOODFIELD: As a friend, sir, for life. If you appear too servile while I am in breeches, you will encourage me to wear 'em always. (3.1.250-278)

Once Truman agrees to these conditions, the play slides smoothly to its happy end, with the promise of a marriage based on an equitable partnership, wherein she will by no means be a submissive wife and he will not be an abusive or repressive husband. For Truman, the latter condition will be the easier part of their contract, because he has offered sufficient evidence that he is a courteous and mild-mannered man; the former may seem to be harder, because, by granting freedom to Betty, Truman must also renounce some of the authority that was traditionally assigned to men and must therefore risk being perceived as less than a man.

### III

Four years after the premiere of *The Woman Turned Bully*, Thomas Shadwell provided the Duke's Company with the script of *The Woman Captain*. This time the title role was assigned to Elizabeth Barry, at the time a young promising actress who had already showed a natural inclination for high-spirited comic characters. Her time for tragedy had not yet come: it would start in 1680 with Otway's *The Orphan*, then it would continue with a steadily rising career that would make her one of the greatest actresses of her time.

She would also become the first actress to hold shares in her company, thus breaking the barrier that made all women hirelings, with no more rights than any young male actor. In the 1670s she had already acted Hellena in Behn's *The Rover* and Olivia in Durfey's *The Virtuous Wife*, in both of which she briefly donned man's clothes; Mrs Gripe, the Woman Captain, was her third leading breeches role.

The play shows the extent of Shadwell's commitment to Whig moral reform. One of the plot lines centres on Sir Humphrey Scattergood, a young libertine who has just come of age and finally been granted access to his dead father's wealth and now resolves to devote his time to extravagant debauchery. To a great extent, this story can be read as a morality play, as his prodigality leads him to bankruptcy and eventually to a recognition of his faults and repentance. This plot line alternates with and only marginally touches on the story of Mrs Gripe, a young wife to an old jealous miser who keeps her locked in her room. She patiently suffers her husband's abuse; but, when Sir Humphrey and his band of debauchees invade Gripe's house with the intent to kidnap her, she slips away and plots a revenge that is initially intended only for her husband but eventually includes a whole troop of men. With the assistance of her brother's sergeant, she puts on her brother's clothes (he is away, fighting in Flanders) and assumes his identity. This is achieved both due to their close resemblance and to her capacity to accomplish the manners of an army officer:

MRS. GRIPE. Am I compleatly set out like a young Officer? Do my Brother's Accoutrements fit well upon me?

SERJ[EANT]. They become you admirably; you are as brisk, as fierce an Officer as the best of 'em; and so like your Brother, 'tis amazing; had I not been privy to your Design and his, I should have sworn you were my Captain. (3.1.452-458)<sup>6</sup>

In this costume, she goes to old Gripe to demand a settlement for separation. When he refuses, she has him and his servant beaten and enrolled in the army, and both are taught to march and follow the sergeant's orders, and threatened with being sent to the war in Flanders, where they will surely die. Sir Christopher Swash and his two bully companions then join the company. They spend their

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<sup>6</sup> All references to this play are from Thomas Shadwell, *The Woman Captain: A Critical Old-Spelling Edition* (1993).

nights drinking, swearing, breaking windows and beating citizens and constables,<sup>7</sup> and she offers to help them evade the law by giving them soldier's clothes; but then they find that they have unwittingly become members of Mrs Gripe's troop, and they are beaten into accepting her orders. The effects of her behaviour extend also to the world of rakish Sir Humphrey and his dissolute companions, when she steals "the affection of the[ir] three prostitutes" and thus manages to "discredit their pride in manhood and rank" (Hughes 1996:222).

Robert Hume labels this play a light-hearted farce, intended merely for entertainment (1976:333).<sup>8</sup> But he seems to ignore the fact that farce, like comedy, can also prove to be a comment on reality by way of its sublimation of certain social fantasies. Such is the case with *The Woman Captain*, in its enactment of the fantasy of a woman emasculating husbands and other disreputable males for the pleasurable consumption of male spectators who of course do not recognise themselves portrayed in neither type on stage. In the context of Restoration comedy, which is merciless with regards to these character types, the punishment suffered by them is deserved, and is the more stinging and humiliating because undertaken by a woman. But the play has a moral purpose, too, which is explicitly remarked in the play's closing lines:

MRS GRIPE. Now all ye Husbands, let me Warn ye!  
If you'd preserve your Honours, or your Lives;  
Ne'er dare be Tyrants o're your Lawful Wives. (5.1.679-681)

Furthermore, the occurrence of the word "tyrant" suggests that the moral has political and ideological overtones. Shadwell's ideological agenda is recognizable also in the kind of resolution he provides for Mrs Gripe. As there is no possibility of divorce, she obtains a legal separation that grants her a wealthy independent life. This is all the more remarkable inasmuch as the play offers no prospect of her

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<sup>7</sup> This type of foppish rake had been the target of Shadwell's criticism since very early in his career. Already in his Preface to *The Royal Shepherdess* (1669), he complained on how "it pleases most [spectators] to see Vice encouraged by bringing the characters of debauch'd people upon the Stage, and making them pass for fine Gentlemen who openly profess swearing, Drinking, Whoring, breaking Window, beating Constables, &c." He would continue his campaign against them in *The Squire of Alsatia* (1688) and *The Scowlers* (1691).

<sup>8</sup> This opinion is shared also by Rothstein and Kavenik (1988:233).

finding – or wishing to find – a new male partner. Shadwell’s play is quite exceptional too in that it ends with no acceptable marriage; and yet this is a logical consequence of what has gone before, if we consider that the play features no suitable male exemplar. Or rather, there is one, but he is Mrs Gripe’s brother, a soldier fighting for his country, and whom she represents vicariously. In the immediate context of the political unrest provoked by Titus Oates’s revelations and the impending Exclusion Crisis, it is also tempting to read Shadwell’s gallery of male types as representative of the collapse of the gender values that had prevailed at Court, and as suggestive of a need to give way to a new value system, by the force of arms if necessary. Mrs Gripe’s final couplet thus acquires subtler – and more significant – nuances, and goes beyond a mere declaration in favour of marital or domestic rights.<sup>9</sup>

#### IV

The third play in my list, *Sir Anthony Love*, was premiered in 1690, ten years after *The Woman Captain*. The title role was this time assigned to Susanna Mountfort. Her fellow actor Colley Cibber remarked of her that “while her Shape permitted, she was a more adroit pretty Fellow, than is usually seen upon the Stage” and that “People were so fond of seeing her [as] a Man, that when the part of Bays in the Rehearsal, had, for some time, lain dormant, she was desired to take it up, which I have seen her act with all the true, coxcomby Spirit, and Humour, that the Sufficiency of the Character required” (1740:99). This comment suggests that – at least to some extent – the presence of women in breeches was losing some of the sexualized overtones that it allegedly had at the beginning of this period. But it can also help understand Mountfort’s success in her role as Sir Anthony Love.

Mountfort had started her career in 1681 and had already played some leading characters, but Lucia/Sir Anthony Love was

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<sup>9</sup> Staves sees *The Woman Captain* only as “a play about liberty cast in domestic terms” (1979:170), and seems to ignore its more immediate political implications. Rothstein and Kavenik do, somewhat more timidly, when they comment that “no doubt the void of authority and its ersatz expression through distorted social institutions [...] represented to Shadwell the state of England in 1679” (1988:232), but they argue that this was motivated by personal resentment.

the role that brought her fame. It was undoubtedly a great challenge. She needed to make it credible that a woman could pass for a young rake and gain admittance to the close circles of other rakish gallants without raising suspicions about her true identity. But then at the same time, and most importantly, she needed to play it so that at times her character would be *seen*, not as a woman playing a man, but as a man acting like a man – or as a conflation of both genders, or even as a deconstruction of gender differences. This was essential in order for the audience to understand the scenes where she has fully become a rake, and therefore thinks and acts like a rake.

Two episodes can better illustrate this point. At the very opening of the play, she appears already dressed in man's costume, commenting to Waitwell (her Governor or instructor) on how proficiently she has attained one of her goals. To Waitwell's remark that she can "so perfectly act a Cavalier" that she "wou'd carry all the Women before [her]," she adds with great confidence that she can also "drive all the Men before [her]" as "I am for Universal Empire and [...] wou'd be fear'd, as well as lov'd: As famous for my Action with the Men, as for my Passion for the Women" (1.1.8-14).<sup>10</sup> Here spectators are prompted to see a woman in breeches, just like in *The Woman Turned Bully* or *The Woman Captain*. The very extravagance of her behaviour foregrounds her femaleness and evinces that she is a woman in disguise.

Soon after, however, Lucia's behaviour and words become less and less distinguishable from those of her male companions, and her female identity is subsumed beneath her adopted male identity, to the extent that what the spectators are invited to perceive is not a female *character* (Lucia) acting a male (Sir Anthony), but a female *actress* (Mountfort) acting in all respects like a male actor playing a male character (Sir Anthony). This, in my opinion, is quite perceptible in some conversational exchanges between her and Valentine, in which there is no textual evidence of "femaleness" in her contributions, nor any suggestion of sexualization of either contents or attitude, as, for example, in the following passage, where Sir Anthony, Ilford and Valentine comment on a Pilgrim who has just come onstage:

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<sup>10</sup> All references to this play are from Southerne's *Works* (1988).

VAL[ENTINE]. Whom have we here?

SIR ANT[HONY]. A Brokeing brother of Bethlehem, with all his Frippery about him!

VAL. One of that traveling Tribe, without their Circumcision.

SIR ANT. Of Christian Appellation, a Pilgrim.

VAL. 'Tis a senseless Constitution of Men!

SIR ANT. Who make themselves Mad, to make the rest of the World Fools, by finding a Faith for all their Fopperies.

VAL. How can they pass upon the World?

SIR ANT. As other Constitutions, and Orders of Men as senseless, pass; that are founded too in as much Cozenage and Roguery as this can be.

ILF[ORD]. You are an Enemy of Forms, Sir Antony.

SIR ANT. Oh, Sir, the Virtue of the Habit often covers the Vices of the Man: There's Field enough in England to find this in, without the Abby-lands, Gentlemen.

ILF. Weeds are the general growth of every Soil.

VAL. How many Fools in the State, and Atheists in the Church, carry themselves currant thro' their Congregations and Clients, to great Employments; and, being arm'd only with the Authority and Countenance of their Cloathing, secure themselves from the discovery and censure of the Court and Town?

SIR ANT. There are disguises, I grant you, worth a sensible-man's putting on; but a Pilgrim's Habit is as ridiculous as his Pretence; and I wou'd no more wear a Fools Coat, to be thought devout; than be devout for the sake of the Livery.

ILF. Fools are the Gutts of all Churches, and make the bulk of every Opinion. (1.1.149-176)

Their conversation plays on the notion of concealed identity, but it bears only marginally on Sir Anthony's own disguise. Nothing in it suggests that her own identity as a woman is played upon, textually or visually; and her participation is quite undistinguishable from that of her companions. To all appearances, this reads like any other conversation by gallants in any other Restoration comedy: and Sir Anthony is just one of them.

There are, of course, other episodes in which sexual innuendo plays a significant role, especially when there is an evident contrast between the characters' expectations and the spectators' awareness of Sir Anthony's natural limitations. Such is the case, for example, with Ilford's fears that Sir Anthony may ruin his plans to marry Volante – or worse, may seduce her; and, in a remarkable turn of wit, with the Abbe's disappointment when he finds that Sir Anthony, the object of his lust, is a woman in disguise. But the main significance of the play resides in Lucia's full appropriation of the features that define a typical rakish gallant, and in the process by which the character is perceived by the audience as a man, or as a conflation of both man and woman.

But Sir Anthony is not just a man; he is a rake. The full extent of this qualification is perceived in her contributions to the comic closure to Ilford's love conflict and to her own relationship with Valentine. After plaguing Ilford with Sir Anthony's rivalry for Volante's love throughout most of the play, she finally helps him via the very questionable method of faking her marriage and then letting Ilford take her place in Volante's nuptial bed. Being an honest gallant, Ilford does not play along to the full and denounces Sir Anthony to Volante, who in appreciation of his courtesy shifts her affection from Sir Anthony to him; and thus this part of the story ends happily, and with no blemish to Volante's honour and reputation. But Lucia's/Sir Anthony's plan had no such moral qualms.

With regards to Valentine, Lucia has an even more radical and more successful plan. As Lucia, she is a new iteration of the typical runaway girl in pursuit of the man she loves, like Betty Goodfield in *The Woman Turned Bully*. Unlike Betty, who wishes to avoid the prospect of an unwanted marriage, Lucia has escaped the bonds to "the worst of Fools; a Singular, Opinionated, Obstinate, Crooked-temper'd, Jealous-pated Fool" (1.1.29-30) to whom she was sold when she was still a girl. She has obtained some means for independence, as she has run away to France with 500 pounds stolen from him; but she has no viable prospect of life with Valentine, an impoverished immigrant. She therefore devises a plot to have Valentine marry Floriante, and Valentine in turn helps her to a sizeable separate maintenance from her former keeper, in their

common understanding that Lucia is better off as Valentine's lover than as his wife.

That she should prefer a life as a mistress rather than as a wife may be a source of distress for those critics who expect a morally orthodox resolution – more particularly so, as Helga Drougge notes, because her sexuality is not presented as disgusting or demonic (1993:548). It is, however, a suitable option inasmuch as it guarantees a life of independence. Through her lack of concern for the moral implications of her actions the play shows the depth of her assimilation of libertine ideas, and hence of masculine values. Drougge also comments that “Lucia is unique on the patriarchal Restoration stage: a female rake who is successful in all her schemes, loves liberty above all things, and does mean lewd liberty” (1993:549). In her male costume, she can further enjoy “the energy and aggressiveness of the male sex role,” and in the process she evinces that maleness is “not intrinsic but constructed” (1993:550). However, despite all appearances, the play does not fully condone libertinism. Its author does juggle with the response that the figure of the rake had elicited in Restoration audiences as a resourceful, witty and unorthodox hero, and sublimates its qualities through the figure of a female rake; but he also provides an alternative, albeit less exciting, counterpoint in the character of Ilford. He is continually mortified by the threat posed by a seemingly irresistible rival, and – like Truman in *The Woman Turned Bully* – at times he even loses his composure; but he remains an honest and constant gallant, and is presented as a better suitor to women like Volante who can be tempted by the dangerous allure of the rakish gallant.

## V

A common distinction between tragedy and comedy states that, while the former plays on reality and is bound by the constraints posed by that reality, the latter plays on fantasies of wish fulfilment. If we accept this premise, then these three comedies can be seen as representations of fantasies of female empowerment, expressed through women who decide to adopt men's customs and successfully engage with them to fulfil their plans. This is a perspective that many people may adopt nowadays. As regards Restoration audiences, however, this requires assuming that female

spectators were a substantial part of those audiences, or that the number of male and female spectators who shared these fantasies was sufficient to make them the intended audience. Neither assumption, however, can be confirmed by the scant evidence available.<sup>11</sup> Rather, it seems more sensible to assume that male spectators were both the majority and the preferred target in Restoration performances; particularly so when the authors of these plays were men, too. To them, the fantasy could be realized through the figure of the woman who is willing to give up all for the man she loves – as in *The Woman Turned Bully* and *Sir Anthony Love*, and as in many other plays in which women take the lead; but this, I believe, would not be gratifying enough.

To explain my thesis, let me turn over my own definition of comedy and posit that comedy can also foreground common anxieties or fears. The way in which these anxieties are resolved can elicit a pleasurable relief, when it is an agreeable one; or it can evince the existence of permanent ideological fractures or fissures, if the resolution proves to be unsatisfactory. From this point of view, all three plays discussed here show that masculinity was a common source of anxiety, focalized on men who must confront the prospect of women talking over and depriving them of the qualities that were hitherto regarded as exclusively male. Yet they also show that patriarchal or male supremacy was not being called into question, ultimately. In my opinion, these two closely related concepts, patriarchy and masculinity, must be separated – even if only for analytical purposes. If patriarchy is based on the notion that men must wield power hegemonically, and if the hegemonic definition of manhood is “a man in power, a man with power, and a man of power,” as Michael Kimmel famously asserts (1997:28), then patriarchy and manhood are indeed endorsed in these plays: it is the men who hold the power; women can too, but only as long as they assume male identities. Moreover, their adoption of that identity is always temporary (they must eventually relapse or retreat into their “natural” role), and in the process they demonstrate the full extent of their assimilation of male superiority. And last but not least, in none of these plays is there an explicit vindication of the right of women to wield some power as women.

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<sup>11</sup> This is still so, despite Lowenthal’s too general assertion that “the late Restoration playhouse was filled with women” (2003:111).

The source of anxiety lies, not in whether men should maintain their supremacy, but in the grounds on which it could be maintained, and in the type of man that could best represent it. The basis for the first question is well illustrated in these plays featuring women who can act like men – even better than some men – for as long as they wish, undiscovered by the men they meet. Biologically, man and woman remained different; in some fields of action, however, women proved as capable as men. The success of the woman in breeches is the last step in a growing recognition of women's agency in Restoration drama, and illustrates what to Hitchcock and Cohen was "a gradual breakdown of older forms of gender identity and behaviour" (22). If women could encroach on and eventually replace men in these fields of action, it was necessary to assume that such fields were not intrinsically and uniquely masculine.

As Breitenberg asserts, quoting Judith Butler, cross-dressing was one among several other subversive resources that "expose the contingent acts that create the appearance of a naturalistic necessity" (1990:33). But even if masculinity was based on contingent rather than natural or biological values, it was necessary to ascertain some grounds for its distinctiveness and to identify a suitable model (or a suitable set of models) of masculinity.<sup>12</sup> The plays I have analysed show that the search for the "new man" was still in progress throughout the Restoration. Certain models were quickly disposed of: old misers, citizens, fops and witwouds were branded as effeminate and unfit for marriage with young ladies of quality, virtuous, witty and wealthy. Naturally, women in breeches never endorsed any such male types by deigning to impersonate them. That their goal was to pass for a young gallant shows quite clearly that this was also their most desirable male model. But even in this there is no evident consensus. The libertine was indeed very popular at the time; and the following passage from *Sir Anthony Love* shows how the equation between libertinism and manliness was still applicable on the Restoration stage in the early 1690s:

SIR ANT. Then you are not one of those fine Gentlemen, who because they are in love with one Woman, can lie with nobody else?

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<sup>12</sup> On the resilience of the biological distinctiveness of man and woman in the hierarchical organization of gender differences, see Kimmel (2000:21-46).

VAL. Not I, Faith Knight; I may be a Lover, but I must be a Man.  
(3.5.41-43)

However, both this play and *The Woman Turned Bully*, and to a lesser extent *The Woman Captain*, feature the rake's natural aggressiveness as potentially disruptive. This was evident even before the emergence of the repentant or penitent rake in the sentimental comedy of the 1690s and early eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

All three plays coincide also in offering a more acceptable, albeit less thrilling, alternative in the figure of the honest and constant gallant. Truman (in *The Woman Turned Bully*), Mrs Gripe's brother (in *The Woman Captain*), and Ilford (in *Sir Anthony Love*) are further reproductions of the type represented by Wycherley's Harcourt, so often ignored in critical assessments of *The Country Wife* because of the attractiveness of the rakish Horner. Only Truman, however, stands out as a desirable partner since the beginning: Mrs Gripe's brother is defined by his absence, and Ilford's relevance is overshadowed by Valentine's and only becomes an option for Volante after she is forced to accept that Sir Anthony is no longer available.

Truman and Valentine coincide, nonetheless, in admitting a type of gender relationship based on companionship rather than on the imposition of male superiority. Marriage is undesirable for Lucia/Sir Anthony – as it is for so many other characters in Restoration drama – because it is based on the submission of the wife to the husband. As Valentine's lover, she can guarantee that her relationship will not be based on old conditions; what she, like Mrs Gripe, wants is sensibly to secure some independence by means of a separate maintenance. But even in the event of marriage it is to be expected that new conditions will be negotiated. In this respect, Restoration comedy was advancing the type of marriage contract that Mary Astell would advocate at the turn of the century (see Hitchcock and Cohen 1999:13; Stone 1979:181-191), and at the same time confirmed the principles of mutuality that had emerged earlier on, according to Marianne Novy (1984), in Shakespeare's drama.

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<sup>13</sup> On the "penitent rake" as a character type in Restoration drama, see Berkeley (1952). He did not include *The Woman Captain* among the 23 plays featuring the type, but Sir Humphrey Scattergood fully represents it. See also Williams (1999:94-114) for an enlightening contrast with the "unrepentant libertine."

## VI

The plays I have analysed show that the new and most desirable modes of masculinity must entail the recognition of female agency and the need to redefine gender relations. They show no evidence of Breitenberg's bleak picture of "men whose responses to women's social and economic gains and to the changes in gender roles take the form of retrenchment in traditional values, misogynistic scapegoating of women for the supposed failure of the nuclear family, aggression and violence toward women that masks their own insecurity and vulnerability" (1996:33). What can be perceived is a more open-minded response, and a widespread one at that, which led to the end of a model of gender hierarchy based on the assumption that woman was naturally inferior to man. In Tudor England, gender, states Anthony Fletcher, "was still a cosmological principle. It shaped sex [...] Woman was seen as a creature distinct from and inferior to man, distinguished by her lesser heat" (1995:xvi). Politically, women's inferiority was confirmed by the analogy between state and family, with the father or husband acting as absolute rulers. In late Stuart England, however, there is growing evidence that woman's agency and capability was proving this wrong.

Michael McKeon (1995) has argued that the old patriarchy entered a stage of crisis in the second half of the seventeenth century, in line with the crisis and eventual dismissal of absolutism. Patriarchy did not collapse, however; the old, vertical model was replaced by a new, non-hierarchical horizontal one that acknowledged for women a position alongside men yet separated their activities within – using Habermas' terminology – specialised spheres: the public sphere was reserved for men, while the private or domestic sphere was the woman's domain.<sup>14</sup> Breitenberg, rather pessimistically, contends that "masculine anxiety [...] operates on at least two significant levels: it reveals the fissures and contradictions of patriarchal systems and, at the same time, it paradoxically enables and drives patriarchy's reproduction and continuation of itself" (1996:2). And we may have to agree with him. In the horizontal patriarchal system, the redefinition of roles would confirm the superiority of man over woman once again, and would constrain

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<sup>14</sup> For further analysis based on this perspective, see also Kimmel (2005).

women to seclusion and submission. But Restoration drama shows that, for a while, other options were possible.

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## Poetic invention and translation in sixteenth-century England

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### ABSTRACT

This article investigates the connection between the all-important concept of invention within the literary terminology of sixteenth-century England and the perception of translation during this period. Invention is discussed as a concept in transition during the sixteenth century, as it was then still associated with the rhetorical notion of “finding” within a topical system, while new shades of meaning closer to imagination, fantasy, fancy and wit started to become dominant even in rhetorical contexts. Invention was deemed in the sixteenth century a necessary ingredient for outstanding poetry, and yet it was assumed to be absent from the work of the translator, whose role was solely to copy the invention of the source text. This article claims that the lack of invention in translations (or rather, the mere following of the invention of the translated text) was the main reason why translations were invariably regarded as minor achievements as compared to their source texts.

KEY WORDS: Invention, Renaissance English and French poetics, Renaissance translation, imitation.

### Poetic invention and translation in sixteenth-century England

The term *invention* had a wide range of meanings in the sixteenth century: it referred to a mental faculty, the application of mental power, its products (such as poems or plays, or other objects unrelated to art), and to the idea behind an artifact or work of art that occurred in the deviser’s mind to guide the generative process.

Furthermore, all arts and sciences (poetry included) were considered to have been invented and therefore were inventions themselves, and certainly invention was a praiseworthy aspect in good literary compositions. Ultimately, invention pointed at man's capacity to create in the wider sense of the verb. *Inventio*, the Latin version of the Greek εὑρεσις (meaning "a finding, discovery," or "invention, conception"), was itself related to the verb εὕρισκω (meaning "to find out, discover" or "devise, invent"). Invention is the first of the five parts of classical rhetoric (*inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria*, and *pronuntiatio* or *actio*), and encompasses the three modes of proof (*pisteis*) or modes of persuasion: *ethos*, or persuasion through the character of the orator; *pathos*, persuasion through raising the passions of the audience; and *logos*, the proofs on which discourse itself depends. Furthermore, "invention" and these topics all belong to the field of dialectic or logic.

In the Renaissance, invention was a necessary requirement for the good orator and the outstanding poet. If through his invention the orator had to discover arguments and proofs, the poet exercised his own invention partly through imitation. The centrality of the concept of poetic invention in the sixteenth century is apparent: invention was a *sine qua non* for celebrated poetry (i.e., poetry that was elevated to the category of a model), and an indispensable term for poets when reflecting on what made a poetic composition notable. It was also at the core of the dismissive attitudes that translation had to face at the time by a good number of authors and scholars, as this article argues. Of course, the dividing line between inventive writing and translation often becomes extremely fine in the sixteenth century, and as the critic Robert J. Clements concludes in his discussion of the French poetic context, "there might be actually little difference between a creative work and an imitation" (Clements 1942:262). Clements indeed asserts that, in France, "[w]hile the poems presented as original works had a large element of translation in them [...] pieces presented as translations often had a large share of free creation in them" (Clements 1942:262), and that "[s]ometimes the distinction became so fine that the Pléiade poet must have been uncertain whether to call the work a translation or not" – as Clements claims happens with some mid-century translations from Petrarch, which "could be considered either original or plagiarized works, as you wish" (Clements 1942:262). More recently, Lawrence Venuti has claimed that in Early Modern England the hard work of

the translator became blurred (when not invisible) and insignificant due to the fact that translations strategies were essentially based on the need for fluency above all. Such strategies would ultimately produce an illusion of transparency and agentlessness in translations that contributed to unanimously privilege the status of authors over translators by concealing the efforts and struggles of the latter (Venuti 1994:43).

It needs be admitted that with some of these texts it is sometimes hard for the critic to label a work a translation or a novel invention by an author inspired or influenced by another's writings in a different tongue. On other occasions, the problem arises when comparing an alleged translation with its source text, only to discover the great liberties taken by the translator when rendering the work into a different language which almost make the translation independent from its model. Nevertheless, if in the practice a differentiation between a translation, a version, or an invented composition may be blurry, when focusing on the terminological distinctions present in sixteenth-century meta-literary commentaries, we discover that, at least at a theoretical level, differences do exist between the concepts of translation, imitation, and invented work. Effectively, even if the efforts of the translator or the imitator are acknowledged when their work is of outstanding quality, the highest praise is always awarded to the works produced by the writer's "own invention."

When in the sixteenth century Du Bellay affirmed that translations were not enough to elevate the status of the French tongue and to put it on a par with the classical languages, but that France needed instead works that sprang from the invention of poets to achieve that feat, he was anticipating the overwhelming relevance of the future concept of "originality." Certainly, even if the much praised sixteenth-century notion of invention is different from the Romantic concept of originality, it still points at what is novel, non-imitative, and non-translated. The fact that in the sixteenth century invention was a requirement for a poet to be crowned with glory and fame explains that imitators of the time tried to make their works pass as inventions, and used their prefaces to highlight their inventiveness. Likewise, it is quite unsurprising that translations frequently advertised themselves as imitations, as in this scheme of thought imitations were less removed from true inventiveness than

were translations. Invention was hailed as the necessary natural gift for the composition of poetry endowed to a few chosen poets who could of course then be trained in it to improve their poetic skills.

The present article investigates the relationship between the concept of invention and translation in sixteenth-century England. To fully grasp the complex meaning of the notion of invention, in what follows books on rhetoric, poetics, defences of poetry, prefaces to translations, entries to sixteenth-century dictionaries, and literary pieces will be examined. These sources suggest that, at the time, invention was still associated with the rhetorical notion of “finding” within a topical system, while new shades of meaning closer to imagination, fantasy, fancy and wit started to become dominant even in rhetorical contexts. Common to these different kinds of understanding is the centrality of invention in the process of poetry writing, in assessing its literary worth – a trend found in Italian and French as well as English criticism, – and in differentiating an original work from a translation.

The pages that follow will focus on four clearly distinguished ideas regarding the connection between poetic invention and translation. Firstly, for poets and theorists alike, invention was paramount in the process of writing poetry (*i.e.*, fiction). Secondly, invention appears linked to concepts such as imagination, which implies that the human mind was regarded as an active mechanism able to produce images rather freely. Thirdly, the notion that invention and imitation were seen as opposites: while imitation implied repetition of something for which another author was accountable, invention was understood as the production of novelty. Finally, and for the same reason, invention was opposed to translation as well, since the translator was thought to take or borrow the invention of the poet that devised the text to be translated.

## **1. Invention in sixteenth-century English dictionaries and books on rhetoric**

During the sixteenth century, a number of monolingual English and other language dictionaries that translated foreign terms into English began to be printed in England. Some of them provide brief definitions of the term “invention,” thus going beyond the usual

one-word translation and offering a fantastic synthesis of the complexity and variation in its meaning over the course of the sixteenth century. The reason why many sixteenth-century dictionaries included it is because of the importance of both logic and rhetoric to the educational system. Indeed, had it not been for the fact that invention was the first of the five-fold traditional division of rhetoric, as well as a fundamental part of logic, fewer sixteenth-century dictionaries would have bothered to include the term. As might be expected, many of these definitions rely on the traditional understanding as the finding of arguments for discussion within the theory of the *loci*, topics or places. In Thomas Thomas's *Dictionarium Linguae Latinae et Anglicanae* (1587), for example, *Tōpicē* is defined as "[i]nvention or finding out of arguments: the arte of Inuention: a part of Logicke noting the places of inuention" (Thomas 1587:Nnn viii<sup>v</sup>), and *Inuentio* as "[a]n inventing, a finding" (Thomas 1587:Hhvii<sup>v</sup>). Similarly, John Florio in *A World of Words* (1598) includes within the definition of *tōpica* that "invention" can mean the "finding out of arguments" (Florio 1598:Nn3<sup>v</sup>). The view that rhetorical invention is purely a mental process of finding arguments appears, for instance, in Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique*, where the term is defined as "a searchyng out of thynges true, or thynges likely, the whiche maie reasonably sette furth a matter, and make it appere probable" (Wilson 1982:31).<sup>1</sup> At the same time, dictionaries also show how it gradually came to mean not only finding, but also devising something new. For instance, John Baret in his *An Alveary or Triple Dictionary, in English, Latin, and French* (1574) explains that "[a]n inuention" is "a deuision [...] He that inuenteth or deuiseeth some new thing" (Baret 1574:Lli<sup>i</sup>). Even Florio's *A World of Words*, offers a hybrid understanding of it by defining *Inuēnia* as "a device, an inuention, a newe found out thing" (Florio 1598:Q6<sup>v</sup>); *Inuentione* as "an inuention, a deuise, a forgerie, a surmise, a finding" (Florio 1598:Q6<sup>v</sup>); and *Parto* as "the fruite of any mans inuention, whatsoeuer any man or woman brings forth" (Florio 1598:Y5<sup>v</sup>).

A similar understanding of invention appears in some works on rhetoric which seem to stress a more active side of the psyche in the inventing process, viewing imagination, fantasy, fancy and wit as key mental activities in the development of argumentation. Furthermore, these works understand invention in opposition to

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<sup>1</sup> Italics throughout are mine.

imitation, and it is often accompanied by the expression “of one’s own” to stress the writer’s originality. Even though the word “originality” itself is unsurprisingly absent, the emphasis on invention as the antithesis of imitation suggests that innovation underlies the concept of invention.

Invention was indeed regarded in sixteenth-century dictionaries as closely related to the creative and potentially disturbing mental faculty of the imagination. John Baret treats invention and imagination almost as synonyms, explaining imagination in terms of invention, and vice versa. Thus, he elaborates lists of synonyms by comparing “[t]o devise” to “[t]o imagine: to inuent craftily: to go about deceitfully” (Baret 1574:Tiir), and “[t]o inuent” to “to imagine: to devise: to feyne” (Baret 1574:Lli’). Similarly, Thomas Thomas defines *Invenio* as to “finde that one seeketh for, to devise, invent, or imagine” (Thomas 1587:Hhvii<sup>v</sup>), thus including both the rhetorical-logical idea of finding and a more imagination-oriented understanding of invention. Likewise, Richard Perceval in his *A Dictionarie in Spanish and English* (1599) defines *invención* as “an inuention, a devise, a plot imagined” (Perceval 1599:O1r).

Analysing the modifying the term “invention” is also another way to gain an insight into its full meaning. Ralph Lever’s *The arte of reason rightly termed witcraft* (1573) illustrates the implications of the verb “to invent” in the following extract dealing with the creation of new words in English:

For as time doth *inuent* a *newe forme of building*, a *straunge fashion of apparell*, and a *newe kinde of artillerie*, and munitions: so doe men by consent of speache, frame and *deuise new names*, fit to make knownen their *strange deuises*. (Lever 1573:\*v<sup>v</sup>)

[...] they that will haue no *newe woordes deuised* where there is want, seme not well to consider howe speache groweth, or wherefore it was *deuised by man*: for *names are not giuen unto things afore the things themselues be inuented*. (Lever 1573:\*vii<sup>v</sup>)

Lever shows that inventing implies man’s devising of something that did not exist before, something “newe” and “straunge” – a building, a weapon, or words. In *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), George Puttenham employs “to devise” in a similar context, when he contrasts writing and translating poetry: “in *Chaucer* and *Lidgate* th’one writing the loues of *Troylus* and *Cresseida*, th’other of the fall

of Princes: both by them translated not deuised" (Puttenham 1970:65).

Invention is moreover not only opposed to imitation but praised more highly. In *Ortho-epia Gallica: Eliots fruits for the French* (1593), for instance, John Eliot praises Homer by saying that "his wit was admirable, his *inventions inimitable*" (Eliot 1593:G1<sup>r</sup>). Homer is thus extolled on the grounds that his invention was unique, unrepeatabe, non-reproducible, and impossible to emulate and hence surpass.

The connection between invention and poetry is of course not obviated by sixteenth-century lexicographers, who also confirm that invention was regarded as a defining feature of good poetry and an essential characteristic of the poets themselves. For instance, Thomas Thomas defines *Pōēma* as "[a] *poets invention*, or worke: a poeme: a worke made in verse or rime: verses" (Thomas 1587:Yy5<sup>r</sup>), and Florio explains *Poēma* as "a poeme, a composition or Poets worke or *inuention*, a worke in verse or rime" (Florio 1598:Aa4<sup>v</sup>). In addition to this, invention is frequently juxtaposed to terms such as "wit," "fancy," and "imagination." For example, Thomas defines *Ingēnium* as "wit, wisdom, will, or propertie, *fansie*, *inuention*, cunning" (Thomas 1587:Gg2<sup>r</sup>); Florio explains *ingegnoso* as "*wittie*, *wilie*, *ingenious*, *subtile*, *wise*, *cunning*, *craftie*, *full of inuention*" (Florio 1598:Q1<sup>r</sup>); and Randle Cotgrave in *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (1611) similarly translates *Ingeniosité* as "[i]ngeniositie, ingeniousnesse, *quicknesse of inuention*, *dexteritie of wit*" (Cotgrave 1611:Zz6<sup>r</sup>). Caught between invention as an essential part of poetry-writing and as a fabricator of lies and deception, sixteenth-century definitions of other terms signal a capacity of an inventive man to compose fables and fictions. In this respect, Thomas Cooper and Thomas Thomas define, respectively, *Fabulósitas* and *Fābūlōsitas* as "[t]he *inuention of fables and lies*" (Cooper 1578:Bbb6<sup>v</sup>; Thomas 1587:Z1<sup>r</sup>); and Florio and Cotgrave explain, respectively, *Fabulosità* and *Fabulosité* as "*fabulousnes, inuention of sables and lies*" (Florio 1598:L2r), and as "[f]abulousnesse; *th'inuention of lyes, tales, fables, or fained reports*" (Cotgrave 1611:Nn2v). Similarly, Florio defines *Fittione* as "a fiction, a dissembling, *faining or inuention*" (Florio 1598:M1<sup>r</sup>), and Cotgrave as "[a] fiction, *inuention*, lie, fib, cog; a thing imagined, fained" (Cotgrave 1611:Oo6v).

## 2. The praise of invention in literary works and poetics

When taking a close look at the works of literature produced in the sixteenth century, one discovers that the term “invention” very frequently appears in poems, plays, and literary prefaces. In most cases, invention is seen as a necessary requirement for the poet to write something of interest, an ingredient that adds quality and taste to his writings and makes them worth reading. For instance, it appears in George Chapman’s *The proper difficulty of poetry* (1595) as an essential element for a poet, for, to his mind, “absolute Poems” need “not the perspicuous delivery of a lowe inuention; but *high, and hartly inuention* exprest in most significant, and unaffected phrase” (Chapman 1595:A2<sup>r</sup>). Similarly John Davies locates the faculty of invention at the root not only of poetry but as all-encompassing: “maruellous *Inuentions,*” he declares, “doe produce all *Artes and Sciences*” (Davies 1602:B1<sup>v</sup>). In Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*, “to invent” becomes synonymous with “writing a book,” as when Ralph asks, “[w]hy *Robin* what booke is that?” to which Robin answers “why the most intollerable booke for conjuring that ere was *invented* by any brimstone diuel” (Marlowe 1990:941). Marlowe’s choice of term significantly loads the exchange with connotations of feigning and deceit, which may even prevail over the mere idea of encoding information in the written form. John Lyly, in the prologue to *Mydas* (1632), also makes invention the defining element of plays: “Gentlemen, so nice is the World, that for apparell there is no fashion, for Musique no Instrument, for Diet no Delicate, for Playes no *Inuention* but breedeth satietie before no one, and contempt before night” (Lyly 1632:T1<sup>r</sup>). Indeed, these correlations suggest that invention can be regarded as instrumental for poetry, which fits well with Lyly’s “rhetorical” idea of fiction, drama and poetry.<sup>2</sup> Invention is so central that John Davies addresses his “busie inuention” in his epigram 26 (“Of wise fooles, or foolish wise men”) requesting it to get to work so that he can write a witty epigram that moves readers to laughter (“invention” is effectively in this case closely related to “wit”):

O! for an Epigram to make the wise  
(Like Fooles) laugh at it, till their hearts do breake,

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<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, King (1955).

VVhy then haue at it; *O Inuention rise,*  
 And tickle wisest Heart-strings till they ake. (Davies 1611:B6')

In the same way that rhetorical invention was the first of the parts of rhetoric, invention in a poetical context seems to be what triggers the process of poetic composition. No invention (rather, no good invention) means no chance of coming up with anything worth writing about, hence the poets' often desperate cries for help to the gods or Muses to quicken, illuminate, or brighten up their inventiveness.

When considering works on poetics and defences of poetry we discover that, already in 1538, Thomas Elyot in his *The Dictionary of Syr Thomas Eliot Knyght* states that Homer's *Illiad* and *Odysey* "are worthy to be radde, for the meruailous inuention, and profytable sentences in them contained" (Elyot 1538:K2v). In other words, the fact that a book has good invention makes it advisable and worthy to be read, which means that already in the first half of the sixteenth century invention was hailed as an independent criterion for assessing literary value. Indeed, Elyot has a rather utilitarian notion of poetry: the allusion to "profytable sentences" directly points at the moral good resulting from reading an author's "meruailous inuention." During the second half of the century, books on poetics continued to stress the importance of invention for a successful literary work. George Gascoigne recognizes it is the starting point of any worthwhile literary work, for without a "fine and good" invention, he doubts that anything praiseworthy will ever result. However, as Gascoigne recognises, it is difficult to explain how to achieve it: "the rule of Invention, which of all other rules is most to be marked, and [yet is] hardest to be prescribed in certayne and infallible rules" (Gascoigne 1575:T3<sup>v</sup>). In *The poesies of George Gascoigne Esquire* (1575) Gascoigne stresses the importance of invention on several occasions, for example:

The first and most necessarie poynt that ever I founde meete to be considered in making of a delectable poems is this, to grounde it upon some fine invention. For it is not inough to roll in pleasant woordes, nor yet to thunder in Rym, Ram, Ruff, by letter (quoth my master Chaucer) nor yet to abounde in apt vocables, or epythetes, unlesse the Invention have in it also aliquid salis. By this aliquid salis, I meane some good and fine devise, the wing the quicke capacitie of a writer: (Gascoigne 1575:T2')

Gascoigne seems to understand “fine and good” invention as synonymous with the avoidance of clichés and predictable topics, advocating that writers should approach each topic in a new and witty fashion.<sup>3</sup> Gascoigne ranks good invention above elocution and rhyme, for invention “beyng founde, pleasant woordes will follow well inough and fast inough” (Gascoigne 1575:T3<sup>v</sup>). Hence, elocution and rhyme are but complements that should not divert the attention of the writer from what ought to be his major concern: invention.

Typically adjectives that accompany “invention” tend to express rareness or oddity, and usually with positive connotations. For example, in the correspondence between Edmund Spenser and Gabriel Harvey published as *Three Proper, and Wittie, Familiar letters* (1580), when Spenser discusses his intention to write a volume on the route of the River Thames, he highlights that the book “wil be *very profitable for the knowledge, and rare for the Invention, and manner of handling*” (Spenser 1580:A4<sup>r</sup>). Likewise, George Puttenham recommends authors that “haue written any thing well or of rare inuention” to publish their works “vnder their names, for reason serues it, and modestie doth not repugne” (Puttenham 1970:22-23). In other words, a work merits publication either if it is well-written or if it possesses “rare invention”, that is, if it deals with something different from what other works have previously discussed, from what is trite (hence the adjective “rare”), or if it approaches a familiar theme in an unexpected way.

The relevance of invention also lays at the heart of the Gabriel Harvey-Thomas Nashe quarrel, which lasted for years and has been

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<sup>3</sup> Certainly, the notion of “wit” appears closely linked to invention in the sixteenth century. In Old English “wit” referred to the mind, and in the plural alluded to the five senses or mental faculties in general. In the sixteenth century, translators rendered into English the Latin voice *ingenium* as “wit,” “especially where the context dealt with rhetoric and the expression of thought” (Crane 1937:9). Indeed, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, “wit was particularly associated with rhetorical devices, such as proverbs, maxims, similes, examples, apophthegms, definitions, and set descriptions,” which school rhetoricians used for the amplification and embellishment of topics (Crane 1937:8). Invention for instance appears in Gabriel Harvey’s definition of wit as “an affluent spirit, yeelding inuention to praise or dispraise, or anie wayes to discourse (with iudgement) of euerie subiecte” (Harvey 1597:D2<sup>r</sup>). Angel Day’s *The English Secretorie* (1592) relates the concepts of wit and invention too: “[o]f this then the parte especiall and intendment most principall, consisteth, (as by experience is found) in the use and exercise of the Pen, the wit and Invention together” (Day 1592:139).

considered “the first English discussion in which accusations and denials of literary theft assumed importance” (White 1973:84). The disagreement began with Nashe’s epistle “To the gentlemen students of both Universities” prefixed to Robert Greene’s *Menaphon* (1589). It criticized those who “feed on nought but the crummes that fal from the translators trencher” (Greene 1589:\*\*2<sup>v</sup>), and those who

must borow inuention of *Ariosto*, and his Countreymen, take vp choyce of words by exchange in *Tullies Tusculane*, and the Latine Historiographers store-houses; similitudes, nay whole sheetes and tractacts *verbatim*, from the plentie of *Plutarch* and *Plinie*; and to conclude, their whole methode of writing, from the libertie of Comical fictions [...]. (Greene 1589:\*\*2<sup>v</sup>-\*\*2<sup>r</sup>)

A few years later, in *Pierce Penniless His Supplication to the Deuil* (1592), Nashe wrote against people’s appropriating others’ literary property, this time in the context of “stolen” sermons. Indeed, he accuses “some dull headed \* Diuines” of having “no eloquence but Tantologies” and “no inuention” (Nash 1592:F1<sup>r</sup>). Nashe’s attacks finally received a reply in Harvey’s *Pierce’s Supererogation* (1593). As Harold Ogden White remarks, in this work Harvey sarcastically praises Nashe’s “fresh invention,” “new Indies of Invention,” “bottomlesse pitt of Invention,” “nimble and climbinge reach of Invention,” and “socket-worne invention” (White 1973:88), while accusing Nashe of imitating and borrowing from Greene, Lyly, Tarlton, Gascoigne, and Marlowe. The truth is that Harvey was sceptical of Nash’s denial and suspected he was actually making use of servile imitation. Nashe, on the other hand, accused Harvey of appropriating material from him and from others.<sup>4</sup>

This emphasis on invention found in English poetics constitutes a feature common to sixteenth-century French and Italian criticism as well. In France, Pléiade poetics appeared before any of the sixteenth-century English examples discussed above, and consolidated many of the views that English authors would later defend in their works, among them, the centrality of invention. For instance, in *Art poétique français* (1548), Sébillet states that “la sève et le bois [...] sont l’invention et l’éloquence des Poètes” (Sébillet 1990:56). Joachim du Bellay, in his *Déffence* (1549), regarded

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<sup>4</sup> For a full account of the Gabriel Harvey-Thomas Nashe quarrel see White (1973:84-96).

invention as “premiere, et principale Piece du Harnoy de l’Orateur,” and by extension, of the poet too (Du Bellay 2001:86). Jacques Peletier’s *Art Poétique* (1555) affirms that invention “est répandue par tout le Poème, comme le sang par le corps de l’animal: de sorte qu’elle se peut appeler la vie ou l’âme du Poème” (Peletier 1990:252). Thus, establishing an equation in Aristotelian terms, invention is to poetry what mythos is to drama: its very soul. Finally, in *Abrégé de l’Art poétique français* (1565) Pierre de Ronsard regards invention as an essential element in poetry that springs both from nature and from serious training and awareness of the work of previous writers: “le principal point est l’invention, laquelle vient tant de la bonne nature, que par la leçon des bons et anciens auteurs” (Ronsard 1990:468). Just like Peletier, Ronsard portrays poetry as a living organism, using images drawn from nature and the workings of living bodies: “ainsi la poésie ne peut être plaisante ni parfaite sans belles inventions, descriptions, comparaisons, qui sont les nerfs et la vie du livre qui veut forcer les siècles pour demeurer de toute mémoire victorieux et maître du temps” (Ronsard 1990:471).

In Italian criticism, Ludovico Castelvetro, author of *Poetica d’Aristotele* (1570), is particularly concerned with the importance of invention for writing poetry.<sup>5</sup> Castelvetro rejects theories of divine poetical inspiration, locates the origin of invention in the mind of the poet, and opposes any form of imitation at the level of invention. According to him, the poet “*invents not only the whole plot, i.e., its general design and the disposition of its parts, but also some of the particulars which give it body, not borrowing all of them from others*” (Castelvetro 1984:275). Moreover, he believes that “a poet cannot legitimately fashion a plot that merely reproduces that of another poet, and if he does the resulting work would be not a poem but a history or a piece of stolen property” (Castelvetro 1984:42). Indeed, Castelvetro is so against those who consciously appropriate the subject matter and language of others that he calls them thieves, claiming that they do not deserve the appellation of poets as they have no invention of their own:

the person who merely puts a known story into verse shirks the labor of invention; yet *invention is the most difficult part of the poet’s art*, and it seems it was with an eye to *the poet as inventor* that the

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<sup>5</sup> As for the situation in Italy on this matter, Ullrich Langer considers the importance of invention in sixteenth-century Italian literary criticism (see Langer 2000:137-138).

Greeks gave him a name that signifies “maker.” (Castelvetro 1984:50)

In this way, Castelvetro supports the “real poets,” those who “take no notice of other poets, but invent their own matter and their own modes of figurative speech,” and dismisses those that “cannot turn their backs on matter previously invented by others or on the figures of speech already used by them” (Castelvetro 1984:41). Thus he conceives of invention and imitation in mutually exclusive terms: if there is no invention in poetry, then there is only imitation, and so, cheeky and dishonest literary fraud.

In the English context, invention was certainly understood as well as contrasting to imitation, for invention is what is followed and imitated by others, as John Lyly suggests in *Euphues* (1578): “I my selfe haue thought that in diuinitie there coulde bee *no eloquence, which I myght imitate, no pleasaunt inuention whiche I might followe*” (Lyly 1578:O2<sup>v</sup>). Edward Blount, editor of Lyly’s *Six Court Comedies*, praises Lyly’s works, calling them “six ingots of *refined inuention*” (Lyly 1632:A4<sup>r</sup>); “The Lyre he [Lyly] played on, *had no borrowed strings*” (Lyly 1632:A4<sup>v</sup>). Similarly, in “To the Gentlemen Students of both Uniuersities,” Robert Greene differentiates between those who pass “Ouids and Plutarchs plumes as their owne” from the talented men who need not “borow inuention of Ariosto, and his Countrey men” (Greene 1589:\*\*2<sup>v</sup>-\*\*2<sup>r</sup>). More subtly, George Peele repeats this same idea in his story “[h]ow George read a play booke to a Gentleman,” included in the posthumously published *Merrie Conceited Iests* (1627). One of the characters of the tale is a gentleman with “*a Poeticall inuention of his owne*” (Peele 1627:D3<sup>v</sup>): in other words, he does not need to borrow other men’s inventions.

### 3. Invention and translation in the sixteenth-century

Since Classical Antiquity, the disciplines of grammar and rhetoric had made use of translation exercises for teaching purposes: in grammar, translation was a special aspect of textual commentary or a form of commentary in its own right, and in rhetoric it was an exercise and an art form, a special kind of imitation. Imitation through translation is certainly an active rhetorical faculty of a heuristic nature, for once a text is translated it acquires a kind of primary status, and so can become a rhetorical model in itself. In a

way, then, it appears that translation can lead to invention: through acute understanding the translator aspires to enter the language of the original, which in its turn is expected to shape the target tongue.<sup>6</sup> In the Renaissance, the rediscovery of Greek and Latin texts led to engagement with the study of philology and the production of numerous commentaries interpreting the texts. Also, as a result of the emphasis on philology of the earlier humanists, translators of the sixteenth century were deeply concerned with the accuracy of their work and were highly conscious of the special features of every language and of those traits that made every author unique (Sweeting 1964:47; Worth-Stylianou 2000:132). Translation, moreover, became an instrument of mediation between the masterpieces of the past and those to come.

In Renaissance England, translation was also part of the education system in various ways, from the teaching of rhetoric to that of the Classical languages – as Roger Ascham’s *The Schoolemaster* (1570) demonstrates. Additionally, translation was seen in the sixteenth century as an act of patriotism, as a way to make the whole country have access to knowledge ciphered in a different tongue. Thus, for instance, Sir Thomas Wilson, in the preface to *The three orations of Demosthenes* (1570) explains that he translated Demosthenes because he could not “suffer so noble an Orator and so necessarie a writer for all those that love their Countries libertie, and welfare, to lye hid and unknowne” (Wilson 1570:2<sup>1</sup>). Translation moreover benefitted the entire nation by enlarging the national language’s lexicon at a time when vernacular languages aspired to be vehicles of culture and knowledge in same way that Classical tongues were. From this perspective, writing works in English or translating them into English became a means of enriching the language, as the translator was often the one that first noticed the gaps in it and was challenged with the question of how to fill them. The image of England as a nation was therefore tied to the country’s

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<sup>6</sup> Rita Copeland discusses this phenomenon within the Roman context, in which she affirms that “translation is figured as an aggressive hermeneutics: it reinvents Greek *eloquentia*, it generates new models, it displaces its Greek sources, and in general is described in the active terms of a rhetorical project” (Copeland 1995:34).

tongue itself, and a strong language would influence perceptions of England as a strong country both from within and abroad.<sup>7</sup>

Despite all the obvious benefits derived from translation, however, translators and poets alike continued to stress the differences between translating and *inventing*, to the detriment of course of the art of translation. At the heart of the different perception of translation and inventive writing lies the high esteem in which the concept of invention was generally held. The unconditional praise of invention is precisely what elevated literary writings over translations, as translators were thought to follow somebody else's invention in a different tongue. Hence, the basic reasoning was that since translators do not invent but copy the invention of other writers, the work of a translator necessarily remains inferior to that of the author. For this precise reason, James I admits in *The essayes of a prentise, in the diuine art of poesie* (1584) that his job as a translator cannot be compared to the one carried out by the author he is translating:

Bot sen Inuention, is ane of the cheif vertewis in a Poete, it is best that ze inuent zour awin subiect, zour self, and not to compose of sene subiectis. Especially, translating any thing out of vther language, quhilk doing, ze not onely essay not zour awin ingyne of Inuentioun, bot be the same meanes, ze are bound, as to astaik, to follow that buikis phrasis, quhilk ze translate. (James I 1584:M3<sup>v</sup>)

For James I not everybody can become a poet because not everyone has been naturally endowed with the gift of invention: "ze can not haue the *Inuentioun* except it come of Nature" (James I 1584:M3<sup>v</sup>). This agrees with the common saying that orators were made whereas poets were born; as Thomas Lodge briefly puts it in *A defence of poetry, music and stage plays* (1579): "*Poeta nascitur, Orator fit*; as who should say, Poetrye commeth from aboue, from a heauenly seate of a glorious God, unto an excellent creature man: an Orator is but made by exercise" (Lodge 1853:10). From this perspective, then,

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<sup>7</sup> As Ian Lancashire explains, "the most powerful patron of early modern English was Henry VIII" (Lancashire 2005:30-33), and for over two centuries there existed an informal policy supervised by the Crown "to expand the vocabulary of English by importing words from European languages," through measures such as "awarding patronage to printers of dictionaries and grammars, usually expressed as copyright protection and public approval" (Lancashire 2005:33).

nature becomes the source of poetic talent. In France, Ronsard also believed that “l’invention dépend d’une gentille nature d’esprit” (Ronsard 1990:473), and du Bellay is one of the great champions of poetic invention over translation, as he states that true poets belong to a superior class of men, due to their inventive abilities:

Poètes, genre d’auteurs certes, auquel si je sçavoy’, ou vouloy’ traduyre, je m’adroisseroy’ aussi peu à cause de ceste Divinité d’Invention, qu’ilz ont plus que les autres, de ceste grandeur de style, magnificence de motz, gravité de sentences, audace, et variété de figures, et mil’ autres lumieres de Poësie. (Du Bellay 2001:90)

Similarly, George Gascoigne highlights the distinction in the subtitle of his *A Hundreth sundrie Flowres bounde vp in one small Poesie* (1573): “Gathered partely (by translation) in the fyne outlandish Gardins of Euripides, Ouid, Petrarke, Ariosto, and others: and partly by inuention, out of our owne fruitefull Orchardes in Englande.” Gascoigne constructs an entire discourse upon the discrepancy between what we would nowadays call creative writing and translating by making the concept of invention a focal point. In “The letter of G. T. to his very friend H. W. concerning this worke” we find numerous occurrences of the term “invention” used in opposition to translation and imitation, and invariably employed with more positive connotations. Thus, when talking about two different works, “[t]he one called, the *Sundry lots of loue*”, “[t]he other of his owne inuencion entituled. *The clyming of an Eagles nest*,” he says that “especially the later [...] doth seeme by the name to be a work worthy the reading” (Gascoigne 1573:A3<sup>v</sup>). Tellingly, he speculates whether the author of a sonnet beginning “Loue, hope, and death, do stirre in me such strife” “borrowed th’inuention of an Italian.” Despite affirming that “were it a translation or inuention [...] it is both prety and pithy” (Gascoigne 1573:C2<sup>v</sup>), the speaker finally claims to be “sure that he wrote it, for he is no borrower of inuentios” (Gascoigne 1573:F3<sup>r</sup>). When the time comes to judge another sonnet (which begins “The stately Dames of Rome, their Pearles did weare”) the speaker is compelled to recognize that, in this case it is indeed “but a translation:” “I am assured that it is but a translation, for I my selfe haue seene the inuention of an Italian” (Gascoigne 1573:F4<sup>v</sup>).

John Harington in *Orlando furioso in English heroical verse* (1591) admits that he can claim no praise for the invention of the subject matter of his translation, “having but borrowed it” (Harington

1591:¶8<sup>r</sup>). In his *Arte of English Poesie* (1589) George Puttenham's inventory of some of the best well-known English writers begins with the assertion that of the books written by "many of our countrymen" "some appeare to be but *bare translatiōs*, other some *matters of their owne inuention and very commendable*" (Puttenham 1970:59). Nevertheless, this does not imply that Puttenham discourages translations. In fact he believes that good translations need to be recognized: "as I would with euery inuētour which is the very Poet to receaue the prayses of his inuention, so would I not haue a trāslatour be ashamed to be acknowen of this translation" (Puttenham 1970:253). Jacques Peletier in his *Art Poétique* goes even further by affirming that "une bonne Traduction vaut trop mieux qu'une mauvaise invention" (Peletier 1990:263). Peletier was among those authors who recognized translation as a form of imitation, partly because it appropriates someone else's invention:

La plus vraie espèce d'Imitation, c'est de traduire: Car imiter n'est autre chose que vouloir faire ce que fait un Autre: Ains que fait *le Traducteur qui s'asseroit non seulement à l'Invention d'autrui*, mais aussi à la Disposition: et encoré à l'Élocution tant qu'il peut, et tant que lui permet le naturel de la Langue translative. (Peletier 1990:262)

The French poet Agrippa d'Aubigné (1552-1630) proclaimed in his Ode XIII the moral obligation to publicly acknowledge that a text is a translation, rather than original:

C'est beaucoup de bien traduire,  
Mais c'est larcin de n'escire  
Au dessus: traduction,  
Et puis on ne fait pas croire  
Qu'aux femmes et au vulgaire  
Que ce soit invention. (D'Aubigné 1952:103; lines 181-186)

Finally, Alexander Neville's preface to his *The lamentable tragedie of Oedipus the sonne of Laius Kyng of Thebes* (1563) bids the reader not to blame "the grosenes of the Style: neither yet account the Inuentours dylygence disgraced by the Translators negligence" (Neville 1563:A5<sup>r</sup>): again, the capacity to invent is what first and foremost differentiates a translator from an author. Yet, ironically, the work Neville translates is actually Seneca's version of the Oedipus tragedy, originally of course by Sophocles, who is surprisingly not mentioned at all in Neville's "The Epistle" or the address "To the Reader". In other words, Neville does not allude to the fact that

Seneca, who is presented as the only and indisputable author (i.e., inventor), had himself borrowed another's invention to write "his" play. Once again, the line separating translation from copying seems an extremely fine one, particularly when, as if in an attempt to gain extra recognition, Neville confesses that he occasionally deviated from the model by employing his "own simple invention:"

I suffered this my base trāslated Tragedie to be published: from his Author in worde and Verse far transformed, though in Sense lytell altdred: and yet oftentymes rudely encreased with *myne owne symple Invētion more rashly I cōfes than wysely*, wyshynge to please all: to offende none. (Neville 1563:A8<sup>v</sup>)

In this manner Neville claims that his own invention is also put to work when translating, quite a bold assertion considering that, as we have seen, in the sixteenth century translation was regarded as not requiring invention at all. With Neville, invention is mostly the product of rhetorical amplification, a strategy that in England was popularized and encouraged by, among other works, Erasmus's *De copia* and Thomas Wilson's successful Ciceronian and Erasmian volume *Arte of Rhetorique*.

#### 4. Conclusion

In the sixteenth century the concept of invention was at the root of the concept of the "proper" or "authentic" literary text. If an author lacked invention, he was doomed to copy, to imitate previous models producing anything novel. Translation by itself was taken as a form of imitation of a model in a different tongue, as, by definition, translation meant the preservation and following of an author's personal invention. Translators were not meant to invent, but were expected to reproduce a work, albeit using a different linguistic code. From this it follows that the work of a translator could by no means match in difficulty or worth the work of an inventive author precisely because it was assumed that translators did not have to use their inventive faculties. As George Puttenham's work on poetics *Arte of English Poesie* (1589) declares at the outset,

the very Poet makes and contriues out of his owne braine both the verse and matter of his poeme, and not by any foreine copie or example, as doth the translator, who therefore may well be sayd a versifier, but not a Poet. (Puttenham 1970:3)

For Puttenham the fact that the true poet “makes and contrives out of his owne braine,” that is, “invents,” implies a mental effort that is lacking in the act of translation. The translator – for Puttenham as well as for his contemporaries – does not carry out a literary activity that involves creation or tests his imaginative and inventive capacities, but merely limits himself to copying and following. Thus, the translator of literary texts, according to Puttenham, is a simple versifier whose main concern is to accommodate information provided into a predetermined verse structure employing a different tongue. From this point of view, the work of this “versifier” appears more appropriate for a mathematician than for an artist, and far closer to an automatic task not requiring much reflection than to an activity which unquestionably needs the application of the creative faculties of the translator. The appreciation of the demanding work of the translator would only be achieved when translation is acknowledged as an activity that requires the active faculties of the mind in no less measure than inventive writing does. This eventual recognition that translators effectively applied their invention, imagination and creative skills when translating would only occur in the mid-seventeenth century, when the influential neoclassical poets and translators John Denham and Abraham Cowley articulated the goals of the so-called libertine school of translation after a long struggle against the established idea of translation outlined here.

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# ***Translata Proficit: Revisiting John Florio's translation of Michel de Montaigne's Les Essais***

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## ABSTRACT

This paper considers John Florio's famous translation of Montaigne's *Essays* as a source of invaluable insight into the Elizabethan practice and theory of translation. In the letter addressed to the reader, Florio strongly advocates the use of translation as a means of advancing knowledge and developing the language and culture of a nation. Echoing the Elizabethan debate between the defenders and detractors of translation, his preface provides precious information on the various Elizabethan understandings of the role of translation. Casting himself in the role of a "foster-father", Florio foregrounds the idea of translation as rewriting of the original text into a new creation. While most scholars have emphasised solely Florio's augmentation of Montaigne's text and his fondness for addition, paraphrase and alliteration, the present paper intends to demonstrate that this dimension of his translation is frequently complemented by Florio's tendency to render the text closely, even word for word at times.

KEYWORDS: John Florio, Montaigne's *Les Essais*, Elizabethan practice and theory of translation, rewriting, fondness for words, literal translation.

## **1. Introduction**

1603 is the year that saw the publication of one of the most popular and influential Elizabethan translations – John Florio's rendering of Michel de Montaigne's *Les Essais* – which proved to be an instant success in Elizabethan England. The translation continued to raise interest and circulate extensively for the next half century being republished in 1613 and 1632.

The immense influence of Florio's translation in sixteenth-century England, particularly its connections to Shakespeare's drama, turned it into an important point of interest for most scholars concerned with the theory and practice of early modern English translation. In *Translation: An Elizabethan Art* (1931), the first scholarly study on sixteenth-century English translations, F. O. Matthiessen included Florio's translation, next to Sir Thomas Hoby's *Courtier* (1561), Thomas North's *Plutarch's Lives* (1579) and Philemon Holland's published translations from Livy (1600) and from Suetonius (1606), in a group of five that comprised what he deemed to be the most important Elizabethan translations in prose. To Matthiessen – for whom “a study of Elizabethan translations is a study of the means by which the Renaissance came to England” (1931:3) – Florio's greatest gift was the ability to make Montaigne's *Essays* come to life for the Elizabethan imagination (1931:130).

A close analysis of Florio's translation has been recently undertaken by Massimiliano Morini in *Tudor Translation in Theory and Practice* (2006), the first attempt since Matthiessen's *Translation* to assess a wider range of sixteenth-century English translations. Claiming that the body of scholarly work on medieval and post-Tudor translation is more coherently organized and documented than that on the Tudor period, Morini attempts to “bridge” this gap and provide a theory of sixteenth-century translation based on an inductive method. He argues that the lack of coherence which characterises Tudor translation theory is mainly due to the period's transition from “medieval” to “modern” theories of translation (Morini 2006:13). While Florio's translation bears the marks of the new humanist Italian-influenced theories and their emphasis on an exact and clear rendering of the original texts (Morini 2006:17), it also foregrounds the main features of the Elizabethan style and taste: “Montaigne's *inventio* and *dispositio* are kept and replicated in English, but his *elocution* (style) is transformed and adapted as happens so often in the Renaissance, to Florio's taste and the habits of his audience” (Morini 2006:84).

The audience of Florio's translation, its impact on the household education of young noblemen and noblewomen and the importance of humane learning within this pedagogical process constituted the topic of a series of insightful articles written by Warren Boutcher, to

whom our own discussion of these issues is heavily indebted (2002, 2004).

Following this line of research on early modern translations and applying the recent developments in translation studies (Lefevere 1992; Lefevere and Bassnett 1998; Venuti 1995), the present paper attempts to provide some new insights into the critical exploration of Florio's translation of Montaigne. In the letter addressed to the courteous reader, Florio champions translation as the most useful route for advancing knowledge and developing the language and culture of a nation. Echoing the Elizabethan debate between the defenders and detractors of translation, his preface provides invaluable information on the various Elizabethan understandings of the role of translation. Casting himself in the role of a "foster-father," Florio highlights the idea of translation as rewriting of the original text into a new creation. While scholars such as F.O. Matthiessen, Massimiliano Morini and Philippe Desan have emphasised in their studies solely Florio's augmentation of Montaigne's text, his fondness for addition, doubling, paraphrase and alliteration, the present paper sets out to demonstrate that this dimension of his translation is frequently complemented by Florio's tendency to render the text closely, even word for word at times.

## 2. The influence of Montaigne's *Essays* in Elizabethan England

After Montaigne's death in 1592, the definitive edition of his *Essays* was published in Paris in 1595 by Marie le Jars de Gournay, Montaigne's literary executor. That same year the Englishman, Edward Aggas, is mentioned in the Stationers' Register as owning a copy of *The Essays of Michaell Lord Mountene* (Matthiessen 1931:103). If this was an early translation, as the title suggests, there are no traces left of it. However, John Florio himself mentions in the epistle preceding his translation of *Les Essais* that "Seven or eight of great wit and worth" (A5) had unsuccessfully attempted to English Montaigne's *Essays* before him. Similarly, in the *Preface* to his own book of *Essayes* (1600), William Cornwallis, an enthusiastic follower and admirer of Montaigne, refers to various translations from Montaigne that were circulating from hand to hand in manuscript.

It was, however, John Florio's published translation that was responsible for Montaigne's success and for the growing popularity of the essay form in Elizabethan England. Francis Bacon, who published his *Essays* in 1597, borrowed the title from Montaigne and was the first to use the term "essay" as the designation of a genre, although he did not acknowledge his debt to the French author (Friedrich 1991:345). Bacon was swiftly followed by William Cornwallis who published two volumes of *Essayes* and characterized the genre in ways that would be reiterated through its history: "the essay as tentative practice work," "like a Scrivenor trying his pen," the result being prose that at best is "undigested motions" (Hesse 2006:222).

Moreover, Cornwallis is the first to assert his discipleship to Montaigne openly, frequently citing his master and recommending him for "profitable Recreation [...] most excellent [...] In a word he hath made Morall Philosophy speake courageously, and in steede of her gowne, given her an Armour; he hath put Pedanticall Schollerisme out of countenance, and made manifest, that learning mingled with Nobilitie shines most clearly" (cit. in Matthiessen 1931:107).

Cornwallis did not read Montaigne in French but, as he declared, perused it "translated into a stile, admitting as few idle words as our language will endure:"

It is well fitted in his new garment, and Montaigne speaks now good English [...] It is done by a fellow less beholding to nature for his fortune then witte, yet lesser for his face then fortune; the truth is, he looks more like a good-fellow than a wise man, and yet he is wise beyond either his fortune or education. (cit. in Matthiessen 1931:107)

Although Cornwallis does not directly indicate Florio as the translator of the copy, his language recalls that of Florio's *Preface*, particularly his statement that he had put Montaigne in "English clothes" and rendered his *Essays* in "true English" (A2).

The influence of the *Essays* in early modern England was not limited to the introduction and development of the essay genre, but was extended to the private household education of gentle and noble families. As Warren Boutcher has convincingly demonstrated in a series of essays on Montaigne, humanist learning, household education and the cultural transmission of continental books,

Montaigne's *Essays* became in late sixteenth-century England "a printed template for élite individualism" (Boutcher 2002:251). The second half of the sixteenth century brought with it a new understanding of the élite individual:

This was the persona whose compellingly *informal*, free-ranging, occasion-specific mode of appropriation of classical wisdom aimed to define itself *against* and *above* the systems, types and routines of institutionalized arts pedagogy. This was, of course, attractive even to the aspiring mercantile family or to the élite scholar who *was* in practice dependent on a profession or on selling or bartering his skills. If you were an élite parent, you would attempt to buy and control this process of self-definition for your offspring by acquiring the right experts and the right extra-curricular books. (Boutcher 2002:251)

As a means of social differentiation the élite young would supplement their school or university education with a private household education, guided by tutors who were supposed to provide a custom-made extra-curricular programme which would include a wider use of continental books. In this context, the English translations of European works were marketed "*both* for inclusion in libraries dominated by continental books but including a significant proportion in vernacular languages (including English), and for purchase by those of less learned capacity who were collecting a European library *in English*" (Boutcher 2002:246).

This kind of education was even more relevant for gentlewomen and noblewomen who were educated only within the private space of the household. English translations were also significant for the majority of gentlewomen who could read only in their mother-tongue. The fact that Florio chose to dedicate his translation to a group of six noblewomen, three of them his former pupils, testifies not only to the importance of the patronage of aristocratic women in the period but also to the significance of noblewomen as readers of translations. Boutcher cites the relevant case of Lady Anne Clifford, a noblewoman of the period, who mentioned in her diary that her tutors would constantly read to her from Montaigne's *Essays* (2004:22). The role of the *Essays* in her education is memorialised in a triptych which depicts a copy of the English *Essays* as part of her household education (Boutcher 2004:22-23). In his three dedications, Florio himself makes several

references to the fact that he has been reading Montaigne's *Essays* with his noble patronesses in private tutorials.

### 3. "Translata Proficit": Florio's Defence of the Practice of Translation

"Shall I apologize translation?" this is the question that opens Florio's epistle "To the courteous reader," an epistle that takes the form of a most persuasive and vehement defence of the practice of translation. Quoting Giordano Bruno, his "olde fellow Nolano," "who taught publikely that from translation all science had its offspring," Florio rests his case all in favour of translation (A5). Drawing a kind of linguistic genealogical tree, he maintains that it was by means of translation that the names of the most popular Renaissance subjects were borrowed from the Greeks, who in their turn inherited them from the Egyptians who drew their own water from "the well-springs of the Hebrews or Chaldees" (A5). Thus, he challenges those who oppose translation into English to explain why these "well-springs" be so "sweete and deepe" for others and "sower and smell" for us (A5). Echoing the Protestant arguments offered for the benefits of translation into the vernacular, Florio argues that it is the duty of the learned, who are the only "worthy translators," to "unwrap learning" from its "learned mantle" and make it available to the English people (A5). The learned should willingly undertake this action unless they wish ignorance to be the basis of devotion and keep God far from the common people, the main consequences of praying and preaching in an unknown language:

Why, but it is not wel Divinite should be a childes or old wives, a coblers, or clothiers tale or table-talke. There is use, and abuse: use none too much: abuse none too little. Why but let Learning be wrapt in a learned mantle. Yea but to be unwrapt by a leaned nurse: yea, to be lapt up againe. Yea, and unlapt againe. Else, hold we ignorance the mother of devotion; praying and preaching in an unknowne tongue: as sory a mother, as a seely daughter: a good minde perhaps, but surely an ill manner. If the best be meete for us, why should the best be barrd? (Florio:A5)

Abbreviating the Latin proverb *Translata proficit arbos* (a tree makes progress when transplanted) and "wittingly" mistaking it, as he himself states, Florio preserves only its beginning and proudly states

that *translata proficit* i.e. what is translated increases/augments /advances.<sup>1</sup>

Florio's argumentation shares the common Renaissance view of translation as a means of advancing, of developing, of increasing the language and culture of a nation. Starting with the second half of the sixteenth century, the educational role of translation began to be gradually supplemented by another one which seemed equally significant: the function of translation in the formation of the national language and identity.

If at the beginning of the sixteenth century, translators would still lament the inferiority of English to French, Italian and the other vernaculars, gradually, a new-found confidence in the powers of the English language emerged, especially as a result of the new expansionist policy initiated by Henry VIII and continued by Elizabeth I (Cronin 2007:256).

A sort of "cultural nationalism" (Burke 2007:19), the endeavour to equal and outdo the accomplishments of translators from neighbouring countries, out of local pride, urged mid- and late sixteenth century English translators to compete with prestigious vernacular languages such as French, Italian and Spanish. Thus, on the one hand, Thomas Hoby complains about the fact that English is lagging behind the other vernacular languages and, on the other, emphasises the superiority of his own translation over those of translators from other countries who, unlike him, did not preserve the integrity of the text. The English translators' awareness of the need to enrich their language and culture is also proven by the high number of imports from Italian, French and Spanish as opposed to the exports which were extremely low before the 1660s. The few translations from English into other vernaculars were often made by Englishmen, since most continental Europeans did not know English (Burke 2007:23). It is within this larger context that we have to understand Florio's defence and promotion of translation as well as his belief that every language has its Genius and inseparable form, which cannot be rendered exactly into another language without being altered (A5).

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<sup>1</sup> My translation.

Florio further develops and expands the outline of his defence by inserting a set of arguments meant to support and protect honest translators against accusations of plagiarism and theft:

If nothing can be now sayd, but hath beene saide before (as hee sayde well) if there be no new thing under the Sunne. What is that that hath beene? That that shall be: (as he sayde that was wisest) What doe the best then, but gleane after others harvest? borrow their colors, inherite their possessions? What doe they but translate? perhaps, usurpe? at least, collect? if with acknowledgement, it is well; if by stealth, it is too bad: in this, our conscience is our accuser; posteritie our judge: in that our studie is our advocate, and you Readers our jurie. (A5)

Due to the early modern literal resonances of translation as transporting, carrying, or conveying, and the subsequent association of the verbs *to translate* and *to convey* with the meaning of the word *theft*, the distinction between imitation and theft became rather blurred in the sixteenth century when a new awareness about authorship and the status of the author emerged:

Accusations of translation as pilfering were indeed frequent in the sixteenth century; and they increased along with the articulation of notions of authorship, authority and intellectual property, in a century that witnessed the shift from early humanist doctrines of faithful copying or *imitatio* to the development of the more modern sense of plagiarism (Parker 1996:137).

The verb *to translate* preserves in early modern English the double sense it has in Latin: that of linguistic transfer and physical transport, of carrying an object from one place to another (Parker 1996:137). Both senses are carefully rendered in Florio's 1598 Italian-English dictionary; under the entry of *tradurre* we find the following explanations:

to bring, to turne, to convert, to convey from one place to another, to bring over. Also to translate out of one tongue into another. Also to bring, convert, or transport from one to another, to leade over, to displace and remove from one place to another, to transpose. (Florio 1598:426)

This polysemous understanding of the verb *to translate* is one of the reasons why translation in the period could be so easily associated with the stealing of lines or plots (Parker 1996:137). Ben Jonson is one of the dramatists who frequently refer to translation as theft. In *Poetaster*, this idea is highlighted in the lines in which Demetrius

accuses Horace of stealth: "I could tell you he were a translator | I know the authors from whence he has stole" (V.3.304-306).

It is in this context that we have to understand Florio's emphasis on the idea of an honest translator. Although translation involves borrowing, collecting or even usurping the original text, the work is, in his opinion, legitimate as long as translators acknowledge their sources. In the dedication to the countess of Bedford, Florio criticises Montaigne, "his maister," for not having identified the quotations he used in his essays (A3). At the same time he expresses his endless gratitude to Dr. Matthew Gwinne, "his onelie dearest and in love-sympathising friend," who helped him translate and trace to their sources all the quotations from "ancient or modern" authors that abound in Montaigne's work (A3).

As long as the sense is preserved and the translator is not a thief, the fact that, for instance, Florio himself "made of good French no good English" is not utterly reprehensible. Therefore, Florio is more concerned with rendering the sense of the original text rather than its form, showing to his reader Montaigne's horse without "its trappings," "the meat without the sauce" (A5). Accordingly, he confesses that he did not amend the text of his translation and claims that if there are errors in the text, they are either the author's "if of matter" or the printer's "if of omission" (A5). Reinforcing the translator's responsibility for the meaning of the text, Florio states that he can be blamed for those errors which have to do with grammar or orthography; most importantly "if any be capitall in sense mistaking, be I admonished, and they shall be recanted" (A5). At the end of his letter Florio tries to forestall any possible criticism by challenging those who would find fault with his translation to surpass him.

#### 4. The Translator as the Foster-Father of Translation

Florio manifested his interest in matters of language, translation and cultural transpositions well before his translation of the *Essays*. His first published book, *Florio's First Fruits* (1578), a language-learning dialogue book, opens with a substantial amount of introductory material on Italian and English, followed by dialogues arranged in forty-two chapters of varying lengths, a brief vocabulary, prayers, rules for Italians to follow in pronouncing English, and an Italian

grammar. It was followed in 1591 by *Florio's Second Fruites* and by *Giardino di ricreatione*, a collection of Italian proverbs. However, his most important linguistic and cultural enterprise was the publication of his Italian-English dictionary, *A Worlde of Wordes* (1598), whose expanded version was published in 1611 and dedicated to Queen Anne herself.<sup>2</sup>

In the dedication that prefaces the first book of the *Essays*, Florio develops the way in which he understands the role and status of the translator and his relationship to the original author. Various translation scholars have noticed and interpreted the rich, international storehouse of metaphors, images and analogies that were used in the early modern prefaces and dedicatory epistles to describe the act of translation. In his essay on the practice of translation in the Renaissance, Yehudi Lindeman suggests that “theoretical principles are buried inside the metaphors” and that a scholar interested in the Renaissance theory of translation should “be able to get to them, independent of the number of texts examined” (1981:206). Theo Hermans similarly acknowledges that “the images appear to be highly functional and that they form an integral and essential part of the Renaissance theory of translation” (1997:105) and claims that “[t]hey bear on the very possibility of translation as well as on the relation between the translation and its original and between the translator and his audience” (1997:105). Massimiliano Morini devotes an entire chapter of his book on Tudor translations to the use of figurative language in the discourse about translation, arguing that those few sixteenth-century definitions of translations should be searched for and excavated “out of the figures which are used by translators in order to describe the process of translation, some of its stages, or the difficulties encountered in translating one particular text” (2006:35).

Consequently, Florio’s extensive use of metaphors and similes in his exposition and description of the practice of translation is highly typical of the Renaissance practice. In the dedication that precedes the first book of the *Essays*, Florio compares the process of translation to that of giving birth to a baby, a birth which is, unsurprisingly, masculine “as are all men’s conceits that are their

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<sup>2</sup> For more details on Florio’s life and work see Matthiessen (1931), Yates (1934) and Wyatt (2005).

own, though but by their collecting" (A2). The act of translation and its delivery are described in mythological terms. Florio compares himself to Vulcan, the god of beneficial and hindering fire and god of artisans, who had delivered Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, in a most unusual manner. Suffering from a painful headache, Jupiter asked Vulcan to use his axe to split open his head to relieve the pressure; when he did that, out sprang goddess Minerva, fully grown, wearing armour and ready for battle (A2).

Just like Vulcan, Florio had to hatchet his translation from that "Jupiters bigge braine" (A2), in his case Montaigne's, the original author. By comparing himself to Vulcan, Florio suggests that his actions in translating were as "simple and straightforward as Vulcan's in breaking open his lustful father's head. The desired object – Montaigne's *Essays* – pre-existed; the process of translation was only a matter of removing it from the vessel which contained it" (Pascoe 2001:162).

According to Theo Hermans, the metaphor that described translation as pouring something from one vessel into another was frequently employed by Renaissance translators as it pointed not only to the transfer of meaning but also to the idea of "decanting" which inevitably involved "spilling or loss of quality to the content" (1997:121).

Nevertheless, the idea of easy liberation is further on countered by Florio's account of the pains and difficulties he had to go through until he managed to finish his translation, pains that recall the labours of a real child-birth: "I sweat, I wept, and I went-on, til now I stand at bay" (A2). Consequently, Florio casts himself in the role of a "fondling foster-father;" his appropriation of the paternity of the text emphasises the act of translation not as a simple transfer, but, on the contrary, as the rewriting of the text into a new creation.

In order to describe the process that involved the appropriation of the text, its "domestication," Florio resorts to another typical, early modern metaphor related to the field of clothing and to the idea of translation as an act of re-dressing the original text. According to Morini, the implication of this metaphor is "that meaning and words can be separated in the original text as well as in the translation: words being but the vestment of thought, they are seen as the least

essential part of writing, the one that can be disregarded without great loss in the activity of translation" (2006:36).

Translation becomes a new-born baby whom Florio, the loving foster-father, has "transported" from France to England, has put "in English clothes" and taught to "talke our tongue:"

So to this defective edition (since all translations are reputed femalls, delivered at second hand; and I in this serve but as *Vulcan*, to hatchet this *Minerva* from that *Iupiters* bigge braine) I yet at least a fondling foster-father, having transported it from *France* to *England*; put it in English clothes; taught it to talke our tongue (though many-times with a jerke of the French *Iargon*) would set it forth to the best service I might. (A2)

At first glance, Florio's description seems to be a definition of "domestication" (Venuti 1995:1) *avant la letter*, aiming to move the author towards the reader rather than vice versa. However, Florio also mentions that he frequently gave his translation "a jerke of the French jargon" (A2). Thus, we may assume that what he endeavours to attain is similar to the "middle way" between domestication and foreignization that Goethe described as being the ideal type of translation two centuries and a half later.<sup>3</sup>

## 5. In Between ...

In rendering Montaigne's text Florio seems to be torn between his attempt to follow the original text closely, to render its meaning faithfully and his endeavour to make it comply with the Elizabethan dominant poetics which was characterised by a fondness for *copia* and equated fine writing with ornamentation, poetic complexity and the development of rhetoric. Most scholars have noticed his insatiable delight in words and consequently have focused on identifying the numerous instances in which Florio expands, augments and amplifies Montaigne's text by means of doubling,

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<sup>3</sup> "[T]here are two maxims in translation: one requires that the author of a foreign nation be brought across to us in such a way that we can look on him as ours; the other requires that we should go across to what is foreign and adapt ourselves to its conditions, its use of language, its peculiarities. The advantages of both are sufficiently known to educated people through perfect examples. Our friend, who looked for the middle way in this, too, tried to reconcile both, but as a man of feeling and taste he preferred the first maxim when in doubt" (Goethe 1992:78).

paraphrasing and other euphuistic devices (Matthiessen 1931:127; Morini 2006:84). While his typical Elizabethan passion for words and extravagant speech cannot be denied, it should however be noticed that there are also plentiful examples of Florio's verbatim translation of Montaigne's text. As Morini observes, Florio is generally regardful of the overall integrity of the source text. He translates all the essays, he respects their order and keeps to the main lines of Montaigne's thought without cutting or amending any important passages. "While he keeps Montaigne's *inventio* and *dispositio* intact, his *elocutio* is transformed and adapted to match Florio's taste and the habits of his audience" (Morini 2006:84).

In order to give emphasis, to qualify, to concretize an image or simply to establish an emotional tone not found in Montaigne, Florio adds words, clauses and even sentences to achieve the desired effect. In the essay *De la cruauté*, Montaigne comments on the different temperaments and traits of character that distinguish the Italian soldiers from the Spanish, German and Swiss ones. Being coarser and heavier than the Italians or the Spanish soldiers, the Germans and the Swiss don't have the quick sense to reassess and reconsider a situation, not even when they are overwhelmed under the blows:

Mais que les Allemans et les Souysses, plus grossiers et plus lourds, n'avoyent le sens de se raviser, à peine lors mesmes qu'ils estoient accablez soubz les coups. (1965:426)

Florio chooses to render Montaigne's rather neutral image "accablez soubz les coups" by the more concrete, visual and dramatic "overwhelmed with miserie, and the axe readie to fall on their heads" (246).

In the same paragraph, Florio translates Montaigne's "les apprentis" with the long and complicated explanation "new trained souldiers, and such as are but novices in the trade" (246). Similarly, Montaigne's consideration that novices in the business of war "se jettent bien souvent aux hazards, d'autre inconsideration qu'ils ne font apres y avoir esté eschauldez" (1965:426) is rendered in English by the amplified phrase "[novices] doe often headlong and hand over head cast themselves into dangers, with more inconsideration than afterward when they have seene and endured the first shocks, and are better trained in the schoole of perils" (246).

In the essay, *L'Heure des parlemens dangereuse*, Montaigne argues that it has always been hazardous to trust the license of a victorious army and allow its soldiers free entry into the town:

Et a tousjours esté conseil hazardeux, de fier à la licence d'une armee victorieuse l'observation de la foy, qu'on a donnee à une ville, qui vient de se rendre par douce et favorable composition, et d'en laisser sur la chaude, l'entree libre aux soldats. (1965:28)

This time Florio inserts no fewer than three adjectives to characterize the unleashed soldiers, an image that strongly evokes Shakespeare's Henry V's speech to the citizens of Harfleur:

And it was ever a dangerous counsell to trust the performance of word or oath given unto a Citie, that yeelds unto gentle and favourable composition, and in that furie to give the *needie, bloudthirstie, and prey-greed* Souldier free entrance into it, unto the free choise and licence of a victorious armie. (20)

Many readers have identified the influence of Lyly's euphuism in Florio's fondness for addition, paraphrase, symmetry, alliteration and parallelism; Frances Yates also points to the possible influence of the Arcadian style, with its extravagantly meandering phrases and liking for repetition and alliteration (1934:226). F.O. Matthiessen explains this overflow of compound words by pointing to the flourishing popularity in Elizabethan England of the style of the Huguenot poet Du Bartas, especially his fondness for creating compound words and ornate constructions (1931:123).

When Florio translates, for instance, Montaigne's "ny plus ennemy des remuëments et nouvelletez de son temps" (1965:194) as "nor a sharper enemy of the changes, innovations, newfangles, and hurly-burlies of his time" (96), he does not add any new meaning to Montaigne's, his only purpose being to ornate his style.

Nevertheless, doubling also performs a didactic function. In the *Epistle to the Reader*, Florio warns his English audience that he introduced in the translation some "uncouth terms," borrowed from French, with the acknowledged purpose of enriching and enlarging the English vocabulary (A5). Since some of these words could be unfamiliar to certain members of his audience, Florio uses doubling and sometimes tripling to link them to a more common English word. The examples are manifold: "sorceries and witchcrafts" (42) for the French *sorcellerie*, "bastion or skonce" (12) (Fr. *un bastion*),

“extinguish and suppress” (96) (Fr. *esteindre*), “the acquisition and purchase” (618) (Fr. *l’acquisition*).

Florio’s tendency to employ these “uncouth terms” instead of more common English synonyms sets him in opposition to those Elizabethan scholars and translators who strongly opposed the borrowing of new words from other foreign languages.

Thomas Hoby’s translation of Castiglione, for instance, bears not only the marks of the new humanist emphasis on an exact and clear rendering of the original texts “without idle words,” “without dark sense” (Morini 2006:17), but also the powerful influence of the purist Sir John Cheke who, along with other intellectuals like George Puttenham, Thomas Wilson and Roger Ascham, advocated the use of Old English words against the use of Latin neologisms and other “inkhorn terms.” This group of scholars fought for good education, for classical scholarship, for the purity of written English and first and foremost “for the strength and worth of the native English character which they felt was menaced by the reckless practice of assimilation which seized young England face to face with the allurements which reached it from abroad” (Mair 1909: xxvii).

In the letter attached to Hoby’s translation of *Il Cortegiano*, John Cheke takes Hoby’s translation as a point of departure for a detailed defence of his linguistic policy:

I am of this opinion that our own tung should be written cleane and pure, unmixt and unmangeled with borowing of other tungen; wherein if we take not heed by tijn, ever borowing and never paying, she shall be fain to keep her house as bankrupt. For then doth our tung naturallie and praisable utter her meaning when she boroweth no counterfeitnes of other tungen to attire herself withall, but useth plainlie her own, with such shift as nature, craft, experiens and following of other excellent [writers] doth lead her unto. (1561:810)

Supposing that the translator does not manage to coin a new word by using the “mould of our own tongue” or by finding an equivalent in the old English language, only then is he allowed to borrow “with bashfulness” from another language. In order to consolidate and subtly endorse Cheke’s position and arguments as well as his own attitude towards these issues,<sup>4</sup> Hoby placed Cheke’s letter precisely

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<sup>4</sup> Hoby had been Cheke’s disciple.

before the *Epistle of the Author* in which Castiglione, himself a bold champion of the vernacular, ardently argued against the practice of forging and borrowing new words from other languages. To justify his own choice of words when writing *The Courtier*, Castiglione claimed that because of the borrowing practice the Tuscan language included numerous French, Spanish and provincial words which were no longer understood by the Tuscans themselves. Unlike people in Tuscany, who used “many words cleane corrupte from the Latin,” those in other Italian regions, such as Lombardy and other parts of Italy, preserved the words “wholl and without any change at all.” Therefore, he did not consider himself in error for having eschewed all newfangled words in his writing and preferred to take “the whole and pure word of mine own Countey, than the corrupt and mangled of another” (1561:811).

Several other English intellectuals and writers, such as Thomas Wilson and George Puttenham, shared John Cheke’s views on the nature of language and the appropriate means of enriching it. In the first book of *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1560), a treatise based on the theories of Quintillian and Cicero, Thomas Wilson claims that a skilful orator should teach, delight and persuade. Accordingly, the lessons of plainness, order, and directness have to be duly enforced, if one wishes to delight or win over (Wilson 1560: Book 1). The debate about the use and abuse of “inkhorn” terms – neologisms and far-fetched words borrowed mainly from Latin but also from French and Italian– was revived in any discussion about language, rhetoric or translation.<sup>5</sup> In a classic passage on *Plainesse, what it is*, Wilson makes a rough attack on inkhorn terms and illustrates the fault by quoting a burlesque letter overloaded with such words (Wilson 1560: Book 3).

In *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), George Puttenham similarly attacks the reckless use of “inkhorne” terms and advises poets to avoid strange terms borrowed from other languages:

Albeit peradventure some small admonition be not impertinent, for we finde in our English writers many wordes and speaches amendable, and ye shall see in some many inkhorne termes so ill affected brought in by men of learning as preachers and

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<sup>5</sup> For a more extensive discussion on the debate between the Latinists and the purists see Hughes (2000:ch. 4).

schoolemasters: and many straunge termes of other languages by Secretaries and Marchaunts and traualours, and many darke wordes and not usuall nor well sounding, though they be dayly spoken in Court. Wherefore great heed must be taken by our maker in this point that his choise be good. (1589:121)

Translators themselves held different opinions on the use and utility of “inkhorn terms.” Thus, Arthur Golding argues against borrowing words from other languages and makes a case in favour of forming new words from Anglo-Saxon sources. In *The Dedicatory Preface*, speaking of his own choice of words in his translation of Philip of Mornay, Golding maintains that he used accessible terms so that he should not obscure any further the meaning of the text which was already difficult to grasp in some cases (Golding 1587:\*3v).

On the other side of the barricade, translators like George Pettie, one of the boldest advocates of the use of inkhorn terms as a means of enlarging the English vocabulary, claim that there is no justified reason in refraining from using them since “it is indeed the ready way to enrich our tongue and make it copious” (Pettie 1586: n.p.). As already mentioned, in his address “to the courteous reader” Florio himself admits that he introduced a number of French terms in his translation in order to render them familiar to the English audience:

or are they in some uncouth termes; as entraine, conscientious, endeare, tarnish, comporte, efface, facilitate, amusing, debauching, regret, effort, emotion, and such like; if you like them not, take others more commonly set to make such likely French words familiar with our English, which well may beare them.  
(A5)

Borrowing went hand in hand with the use of an abundance of compound words – another feature that Florio shares with his Elizabethan contemporaries. Whenever possible, he uses and even invents compounds. Thus, for the French “lourds” (1965:426) he uses “leaden-headed” (246); Montaigne’s “des ames si monstrueuses” (1965:432) becomes “so marble-hearted and savage-minded men” (237); “une mort plus aspre et insupportable” (1965:432) becomes “a more sharply-cruell and intolerable death” (238); “pandans et glissans” (1965:644) is rendered as “downe-hanging and slippery” (374), “trop bonne opinion” (1965:631) becomes “over good conceit and selfe-weening opinion” (368); “affamé” (1965:199) is translated as “hunger-starven” (98); “veüe nette et bien purgée,” (1965:1037) is rendered as “a cleere, farre-seeing and true-discerning sight” (618), etc.

Nevertheless, Florio's fondness for doubling and compound words is complemented by numerous passages in which he keeps very close to the French original, frequently rendering the text almost word for word. When analysing the translation, we focused particularly on those essays in which Montaigne reworks and discusses topics and ideas that could be linked to Machiavelli's discourse on the figure of the prince (1513). All the examined passages were faithfully rendered with no interpolations on the part of the translator. Thus, when perusing the bi-text of the essay, *De l'utile et de l'honeste*, we have noticed that Florio makes very few unnecessary additions and renders the text verbatim:

De mesme, en toute police: il y a des offices necessaires, non seulement abjects, mais encores vicieux: Les vices y trouvent leur rang, et s'employent à la cousture de nostre liaison: comme les venins à la conservation de nostre santé. S'ils deviennent excusables, d'autant qu'ils nous font besoing, et que la necessité commune efface leur vraye qualité: il faut laisser jouer cette partie, aux citoyens plus vigoureux, et moins craintifs, qui sacrifient leur honneur et leur conscience, comme ces autres anciens sacrifient leur vie, pour le salut de leur pays: Nous autres plus foibles prenons des rolles et plus aysez et moins hazardeux: Le bien public requiert qu'on trahisse, et qu'on mente, et qu'on massacre: resignons cette commission à gens plus obeissans et plus souples. (1965:790)

In matter of policy likewise some necessary functions are not onely base, but faulty: vices finde therein a seate and employ themselves in the stitching up of our frame; as poysons in the preservations of our health. If they become excusable because wee have neede of them, and that common necessity effaceth their true property; let us resigne the acting of this part to hardy Citizens, who sticke not to sacrifice their honours and consciences, as those of old, their lives, for their Countries availe and safety. We that are more weake had best assume taskes of more ease and lesse hazard. The Common-wealth requireth some to betray, some to lie, and some to massacre: leave we that commission to people more obedient and more pliable. (476)

The above quoted passage faithfully renders Montaigne's profoundly Machiavellian understanding of the necessities of political life which presuppose sacrificing one's honour and conscience and possessing the ability to "betray," "lie" and "massaker." Another passage that markedly echoes Machiavelli's

Realpolitick understanding of instrumental reason is likewise rendered literally, Florio following closely not only the sense but even the words of Montaigne's text (*De la Vanité*):

La vertu assignée aux affaires du monde, est une vertu à plusieurs plis, encoigneures, et couddes, pour s'appliquer et joindre à l'humaine foiblesse: meslee et artificielle; non droite, nette, constante, ny purement innocente. Les annales reprochent jusques à ceste heure à quelqu'un de nos Roys, de s'estre trop simplement laissé aller aux consciencieuses persuasions de son confesseur. Les affaires d'estat ont des preceptes plus hardis. [...] Celuy qui va en la presse, il faut qu'il gauchisse, qu'il serre ses couddes, qu'il recule, ou qu'il avance, voire qu'il quitte le droit chemin, selon ce qu'il rencontre. (1965:991)

The vertue assigned to the worlds affaires, it is a vertue with sundry byases, turnings, bendings and elbowes, to apply and joyne it selfe to humane imbecilities mixed and artificiall; neither right, pure or constant, nor meerely innocent. Our Annales even to this day blame some one of our Kings to have over-simply suffered himself to be led or misled by the conscientious perswasions of his Confessor. Matters of state have more bold precepts.[...] He that goeth in a presse or throng of people must sometimes step aside, hold in his elbowes, crosse the way, advance himselfe, start backe, and forsake the right way according as it falls out. (593)

In the end, we would like to add one last example which, at first glance, could seem to be an instance of Florio's amplifying technique:

Although our spirituall and corporall Physitians: as by covenant agreed upon betweene them, finde no way of recoverie, nor remedies for diseases of body and minde, *but by torment, griefe and paine, watching, fasting, haire-shirts, farre and solitarie exile, perpetuall prison, roddes and other afflictions*, have therefore beene invented: But so, that they be truly afflictions, and that there be some stinging sharpnesse in them. (99)

However, when compared to Montaigne's original, we discover that Florio is actually following the source text word for word:

Quoy que noz medecins spirituels et corporels, comme par complot fait entre eux, ne trouvent aucune voye à la guerison, ny remede aux maladies du corps et de l'ame, que par le tourment, la douleur et la peine. Les veilles, les jeusnes, les haïres, les exils lointains et solitaires, les prisons perpetuelles, les verges et autres

afflictions, ont esté introduites pour cela: Mais en telle condition, que ce soyent veritablement afflictions, et qu'il y ait de l'aigreur poignante. (1965:200)

Examples of Florio's literal translation can be multiplied just like those which testify to his fondness for words. Our aim in this paper was to emphasise that one should not regard Florio's translation as an incoherent text overflowing with additions and interpolations, but as a translation which attempts to find a middle way between adapting Montaigne's *Essays* to the taste of the Elizabethan audience, making it comply with the dominant poetics of the time, and respecting the integrity of Montaigne's text. It is safe to assume that Florio's responsibility in rendering Montaigne's text as faithfully as possible must have been enhanced by the fact that, as he himself states in the dedication prefaced to the first book, his patrons and patronesses were fairly well acquainted with the French original.

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Notes



## Sites of transgression: The suburbs and the city in Thomas Dekker's *Shoemaker's Holiday*

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### ABSTRACT

The early modern binary of the virtuous City of London versus the sinful suburbs clashes with an older binary pitting the countryside against the city. At the same time, the forces of urbanization along with early capitalism were undermining both binaries. This article traces how this is reflected in Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. The play not only represents the City of London under Simon Eyre's rule as, potentially, possessing all the virtues of the pastoral, but also suggests that the surrounding countryside, in particular the village of Old Ford, was being corrupted by city values. Dekker's play, therefore, deconstructs simple dichotomies between country and city, showing how the two inevitably influence each other.

KEYWORDS: Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, City Comedy, Countryside.

Jean Howard's fascinating study of City Comedy, or as she prefers to call it, London Comedy, is structured around a variety of real places within London, some specific (such as the Royal Exchange and the various Counters or debtors' prisons), others generic (such as bawdy houses and dancing academies). Howard associates these places within London with various discourses of gender, national identity, class, and the new money values. She regards these discourses as not primarily reflections of what really happened at these sites, but at least as much as constituting ways of thinking about such places, turning them into meaningful social spaces (2007:3, 32). Howard shows how the explosive growth of London into a world city undermined old certainties, often cast in the form of simple binaries,

between male/female, domestic/ foreign, aristocratic/common. For instance, foreign businessmen and French dancing masters could be construed as a threat to national identity, yet in a globalising world they also had attractive services to offer which one ignored at one's peril – indeed, which perhaps needed to be emulated by Londoners. Also, the received idea that the City itself was clean and virtuous, as were its women, and that prostitution had been banished to the City's outskirts, the liberties or suburbs, was undermined by the spread of prostitution to unmarked houses, often masquerading as respectable citizens' dwellings (2007:121f). Even the distinction between respectable women and others was not so clear anymore in a proto-capitalist society where everything was for sale (or so the discourse ran): where whores became respectable by marriage, whereas respectable women were sometimes exploited, sometimes themselves exploited their own charms, to sell consumer goods in the Exchange. The fluid lines between whore and matron, gentleman born and self-fashioned man (or woman) about town, between hopeless debtors and beaux who show their creditworthiness by overspending: all these suggest a deep-rooted anxiety about social changes in a world that was becoming increasingly complicated. We see then that, in city comedies, the binaries of London's self-representation are deconstructed under pressure from rapid changes in society.

But how about that older binary, the contrast between the city and the surrounding countryside? Raymond Williams (1973) has traced this opposition, and its associations of simplicity versus sophistication, innocence versus vice, to its roots in classical Greek pastoral writers. One could even argue that it underlies biblical representations of cities like Babel and the Great Whore, Babylon. In the context of London and its rural environment, however, this simple dichotomy was complicated by the existence of London's suburbs, the liminal places outside the walled city, where theatres, bear-baiting arenas, places of execution, and bawdy houses were tolerated as a necessary evil.<sup>1</sup> The City of London, so to speak, tried to export its vice and undesirable activities to just beyond its doorstep, putting out the garbage to keep its house clean. Insofar as London within the walls looked upon itself as a relatively orderly

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Mullaney (1982:52-75 and *passim*); Twyning (1998:54-91 *passim*); Hayes (2000:58); and Howard (2007:121).

place, an “integral and coherent whole,” surrounded and occasionally threatened by a zone of licence and licentiousness in the Liberties outside the city walls (Mullaney 1982:54), this meant a partial inversion of the older City/Country stereotype: from a City point of view, some of the vices traditionally associated with cities were now typically located in a ring around its walls.

But where precisely does this suburb stop, and this innocence of the countryside begin? The village of Brentford or Brainford is a case in point: some 8 miles from London, it was a rural village, beyond the suburbs. Yet, as Charles Nicholl has argued, it was associated with vice. It was the place where, reputedly, Londoners went for a “dirty weekend” (2007:233). It may be for that reason that the three “Ho” plays all involve expeditions by citizens, including citizen’s wives, away from the City centre, towards Brainford in the West, Cuckold’s Haven in the East, and North to Ware, respectively, to give in to their lustful appetites there, away from the City where they are generally known. This is, in a sense, the reverse of our modern idea of the city as an anonymous place where one can be lost and unobserved in a crowd, so that social restrictions on behaviour are weakened: in Brainford, “you are out of eyes, out of ears: private rooms,” as Linstock describes it when recommending it to his friends when choosing a venue to take their illicit lovers for a tryst.<sup>2</sup> In her discussion of the three “Ho” plays, Howard seems to regard Brainford, and even Ware, some 22 miles north of London, as simply part of the suburbs (2007:123). Thus, at the intersection between London’s self-image as a city surrounded by a ring of vice on the one hand, and the time-honoured contrast between countryside and city on the other, simple dichotomies fade away into indeterminacy; and the traditional pastoral idyll<sup>3</sup> is tainted by contact with the city.

In this article, I propose to investigate the cultural signification of city and countryside in an early city comedy, Thomas Dekker’s *Shoemaker’s Holiday* (1599). This play is largely set in the City, where one of its plots traces the rise of humble shoemaker Simon Eyre to

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<sup>2</sup> *Westward Ho* 2.2.327-328, quoted by Nicholl (2007:234). David Scott Kastan does see modern urban alienation in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, however, where “Jane can actually be lost in the burgeoning urban density of London” (1987:329).

<sup>3</sup> By pastoral idyll I mean, in the words of Sukanta Chaudhuri, a “world of the imagination, invested with urban longing for an ideally simple life in nature” (1989:1).

the position of Lord Mayor – which he promptly celebrates by a feast for all of London’s apprentices. Another City plot tells the story of one of Eyre’s journeymen shoemakers, Ralph, who is impressed for the wars in France. When he returns, he has lost one of his legs, and his young wife has disappeared; but Eyre generously gives him his old job back, and Ralph then manages to trace his wife, Jane, just in time to prevent her remarriage to a rich City gentleman, Hammon. Both these City plots celebrate the solidarity of all shoemakers, which makes London into a better place. The third plot, however, is partly set in the countryside: it is a love story, involving a young aristocrat, Lacy, and Rose, the daughter of the current Lord Mayor – Simon Eyre’s predecessor – Sir Roger Oatley. Sir Roger does not want his daughter to marry Lacy, nor does Lacy’s uncle desire the match; but true love will find ways, so Lacy, who is due to leave for the French wars as a commander, stays behind in disguise as a Dutch shoemaker, Hans, to avoid being separated from Rose. Again, Eyre hires the pretended immigrant Hans, not knowing he is really Lacy in disguise, and is rewarded by Lacy presenting him with an opportunity to get rich. Eyre then stands up for the young couple when they elope, and obtains their pardon from the king. Significantly, some of the scenes involving Rose are set not in the City but in her father, Sir Roger’s, house in the country, at a place called Old Ford.

It has long been recognised that Dekker’s London, under the charismatic mayoralty of Simon Eyre, represents the pastoral ideal transferred to the city;<sup>4</sup> but where does that leave the surrounding countryside, in particular the play’s other setting, the village of Old Ford? Old Ford has long since been swallowed up by London, but in Dekker’s time, it was a rural village some three-and-a half miles to the north east of London (Hayes 2000:59). It was not part of the disreputable London suburbs as such, but remained part of the countryside until it was swallowed up by the metropolis in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Maddocks 1933). Critics of the play, in so far as they comment on the representation of Old Ford, tend to regard it as a pastoral site.<sup>5</sup> I will argue, however, that it is represented as tainted

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<sup>4</sup> See e.g. Mortenson (1976:242-243).

<sup>5</sup> Hayes, e.g., argues that Dekker’s play merges a timeless pastoral discourse, embodied in Rose in her Old Ford setting, with a more satirical appraisal of contemporary London (2000:28). Although there is some overlap between my

by city values, city people: that Old Ford is an outpost of the City masquerading as the countryside. It is therefore the mirror image of Simon Eyre's feast, which establishes country values within the City; and in sum, this exchange of values ends up blurring the differences between country and city altogether.

Admittedly, the play's early scenes do briefly evoke the traditional contrast between city and countryside, but quickly proceed to deconstruct it, partly by inverting it, partly by levelling out the differences: Old Ford is not a place of pastoral idylls and innocent virgins, nor is it a site of true hospitality. Simon Eyre, by contrast, shows that the best of the old-fashioned country values – its generosity and sense of belonging to a body politic – can be revived in a city environment. Thus, as in Jean Howard's argument, Dekker undermines certainties and deconstructs binaries in a play where nothing is quite what it seems: where a foreign shoemaker is really an aristocrat in disguise, and a real shoemaker comes to be the Lord Mayor who entertains the king.

Dekker's first two scenes do seem to evoke a vivid contrast between the play's settings. The first, long scene predominantly appeals to stereotypical negative ideas about the City, showing it as ambitious, involved with money values, and associating it with war.<sup>6</sup> First, we are reminded of the cynicism and deviousness so often associated with the City. We see two older gentlemen, Sir Roger Oatley, the Lord Mayor, and Sir Hugh, the Earl of Lincoln, discussing the undesirable liaison between Oatley's daughter, Rose, and Sir Hugh's nephew, Lacy. Both have their own reasons for disapproving of this love affair. Sir Hugh objects to the girl's social standing, since Oatley, in spite of his title and position as Mayor of London, is really a *nouveau riche* – a former grocer, as we learn later (11.43).<sup>7</sup> As Paul Seaver has explained, grocers may rank considerably higher than shoemakers, but they are still only citizens (1995:92). Sir Roger Oatley, on the other hand, does not want Lacy

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argument and Hayes's, I disagree with her emphasis on the two main women characters, Rose and Margery, as the chief embodiments of the values of the idealised medieval city (consonant with pastoral values) and the sinful suburbs respectively. In my reading, the chief embodiments of conflicting values are Simon Eyre, the generous Lord Mayor, and his predecessor, the ambitious and miserly Sir Roger Oatley.

<sup>6</sup> On the latter association, see Williams (1973:17).

<sup>7</sup> Dekker (1990:56). All textual references are to this edition.

for his son-in-law as he sees him as a good-for-nothing aristocratic spendthrift. The latter impression is confirmed by Lacy's uncle, who speaks of him as having been a "bankrupt" during his foreign travels; but the Earl is, characteristically, even more indignant about the young man's remedy of taking up the trade of a shoemaker in Wittenberg: "A goodly science for a gentleman|Of such descent!" (1.30-31). Class divisions and prejudices are obvious in their dialogue. What is more, though the two gentlemen politely agree that a marriage between the young lovers is to be avoided, they are far from honest about their real mutual feelings, as becomes clear in asides: Oatley calls Sir Hugh a subtle "fox" for hiding his real objections to Rose in deprecating remarks about his own nephew as a husband (1.38), whereas Sir Hugh calls Oatley a "churl" behind his back (1.78). One way they attempt to resolve the situation is by offering Lacy money, in effect a bribe, to go to the wars in France and forsake his love. The rest of the scene shows the preparation for these wars: we witness the conscription of newly-married Ralph, a shoemaker, against his own will and that of his bride and fellow-shoemakers. This action is presided over by Lacy, who has secretly arranged for a friend to take his place as commander of the forces, yet hypocritically insists that Ralph cannot be let off.<sup>8</sup> The shoemakers, too, attempt bribery (offering Lacy seven years' worth of boots, 1.135), but in vain.

In light of so much duplicity, hypocrisy, money values, class tensions, and the threat of war, all in a London setting, the opening of the second scene strikes a vivid contrast: we see Rose in the peaceful rural environment of Old Ford, making a garland for her lover, Lacy, and apostrophising herself as follows:

Here sit thou down upon this flow'ry bank,  
And make a garland for thy Lacy's head.  
These pinks, these roses, and these violets,  
These blushing gilliflowers, these marigolds,  
The fair embroidery of his coronet,  
Carry not half such beauty in their cheeks  
As the sweet countenance of my Lacy doth. (2.1-7)

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<sup>8</sup> Parr notes the "ironic social comment [...] apparent [...] when Lacy bribes Askew to cover for his absence from the French wars, and then pulls rank to remind Jane and Ralph of their obligations" (Dekker 1990:xiii).

As Hayes suggests repeatedly, the imagery represents Rose as a shepherdess, framed in pastoral surroundings (2000:16, 30, 60f). Indeed, nymphs weaving garlands for their lovers are a pastoral cliché (Chaudhuri 1989:127, 129). However, unlike Hayes, I believe the pastoral idyll is severely qualified soon afterwards. First, we learn that the idyllic setting is not one of Rose's own choosing: in fact, Londoner Rose, the Lord Mayor's daughter, has been sent to her father's country dwelling in Old Ford to be out of harm's way, to keep her away from her lover, Lacy. She complains that, "robbed of [her] love," she is "imprisonèd" in these "walls" "as a thief" (2. 10-12). In one production, at the Rose theatre in November 2008, that image was taken literally, as her "imprisonment was figured behind the metal fence that cordons off the historic Rose remains from public access"<sup>9</sup> (Li 2009:147). Hayes suggests that Rose's being in an enclosed garden rather than an open field signifies her virginity (2000:30); but then again, this virginity is enforced by her father rather than being of Rose's own free choice. In most pastorals, nymphs can choose freely whether they will listen to their passionate shepherds – unless, of course, that shepherd or the nymph herself are really of noble blood, as is the case with *The Winter's Tale*. After all, the lower a person's rank, the freer they usually are to choose their own partner.<sup>10</sup> That, of course, is the point here as well. In spite of initial appearances, Rose is not a shepherdess, nor even a princess in disguise as a shepherdess, a scenario which might fit into a pastoral make-believe context; she is a prosaic city heiress, whose fortune is large enough to be in need of protection, which is why her father has locked her safely away in the countryside. What may seem like an idyllic field is, on second glance, a prison.

Nor does the house at Old Ford prove to be the bulwark of safety and innocence that Rose's father thinks it is, when he congratulates himself on having sent her there, out of harm's way (1. 41; 9. 104). Before long, her disguised lover Lacy sees her there, during her father's dinner party; the renewed acquaintance leads to their elopement and clandestine marriage in Savoy, one of the "sinful" suburbs (Hayes 2000:62-63), and therefore the nominal

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<sup>9</sup> It would be interesting to study the contrast between the London setting and Old Ford in stage practice, but this issue is rarely mentioned in reviews of productions.

<sup>10</sup> As Paul Seaver also notes (1995:98), albeit in reference to Hammon rather than to Rose.

antithesis of Old Ford – an antithesis that is therefore deconstructed.<sup>11</sup> Oatley's tyranny has undermined the natural relationship between parents and children that supposedly obtains in a pastoral environment, and turned his daughter into a rebellious devious liar – albeit one who has our sympathy.

The dangers of transgression inherent in this seemingly idyllic place of Old Ford are adumbrated in the curious linked scenes 5 and 6, again set at Old Ford. First, two hunting gentlemen, Hammon and Warner, pass over the stage, chasing a stag near Old Ford; but a boy tells them the animal has leapt into “my Lord Mayor's pale” (5.12). The next scene shows Rose and her maidservant Sybil: the deer has indeed entered their garden, been caught by Sybil and other servants using a “flail” and a “prong” to bring it down, and slaughtered in the most prosaic way imaginable. In Sybil's words: “down he fell, and they [the male servants] upon him, and I upon them. By my troth, we had such sport! And in the end we ended him, his throat we cut, flayed him, unhorned him [...]” (6.6-9). The contrast with pastoral pity for suffering deer could hardly be more vivid. Rose, told about this after the event, decides to cover for her servants, but worries lest there might be trouble: “Hark, Hark, the hunters come. You're best take heed. | They'll have a saying to you for this deed” (6.11-12). When the hunters arrive, Rose feigns surprise:

It is not like the wild forest deer  
Would come so near to places of resort.  
You are deceived; he fled some other way. (6.24-26)

The gentlemen, however, are not really interested in the stag: their game is the girls, with Hammon pursuing Rose, in a passage of repartee turning on puns like dear/deer, hart/heart, and the inevitable joking about the stag's horns. In part, the dialogue runs as follows:

ROSE           Why do you stay, and not pursue your game?  
[...]  
HAMMON       A deer more dear is found within this place.  
ROSE           But not the deer, sir, which you had in chase.  
HAMMON       I chased the deer; but this dear chaseth me. (6.29-33)

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<sup>11</sup> Smith agrees that the Savoy was a “spot well-known for clandestine marriages” (2005:344).

Meanwhile, Hammon's companion, Warner, tries to seduce the maid, Sybil. The scene ends inconclusively, with the women not won over. However, Rose's father, Sir Roger Oatley, arrives and approves of Hammon's interest in his daughter; as a rich but untitled gentleman, Hammon is his preferred choice over Lacy, the aristocratic spendthrift.

The scene has not been commented on very extensively by critics. Often, the nearness to nature of this outpost of London is noted, as a guarantor of the pastoral atmosphere;<sup>12</sup> and the repartee is analysed as an example of Hammon's tired use of Petrarchan clichés, which shows his unsuitability as Rose's lover (Mortenson 1976:250). However, the scene can also be read as demystifying the seeming pastoral idyll. Rose asks Sybil on account of the catching of the deer, "Why, Sybil, wilt thou prove a forester?", and Sybil answers scornfully: "Upon some, no! Forester, go by" (6.1-2). The implicit suggestion is that both are really city girls, playing at being country folk – just like Hammon and Warner are city gentlemen playing at being landed aristocrats by hunting.<sup>13</sup> What is more, when Rose denies the likelihood of deer coming so close to the built-up area, this is not so much a genuine description of an idyllic natural setting, rather, it is a lie covering up for her servants, who she knows have already cruelly dispatched the animal. As we have seen, Rose worries about the consequences of her servants' actions, possibly because thus stealing the gentlemen's booty might be construed as poaching, as deer hunting is an aristocratic prerogative. But just as the girls transgress the rules, so do the gentlemen hunters, whose breaking into the "pale" (5.12) of the Lord Mayor's household suggests their predatory attitude to wooing. The fact that the garden is metaphorically described as a "park" (6.35) again reminds one of poaching. This is definitely true of Warner, who woos Sybil in such a physical way that she needs to tell him to keep his "hands off, sir!" (6.47). Warner appears to be already married – since Hammon, himself unmarried, introduces him as his brother-in-law (6.50).

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<sup>12</sup> Seaver sees Old Ford as a "leisured world of pastoral romance," in contrast to the harsher world of London (1995:97). Hayes sees the presence of deer so near the houses as a sign that Old Ford "has as yet only been partially domesticated: outside the City walls we may still find wilderness" (2000:61).

<sup>13</sup> On the latter point, see Manheim (1970:318-319), Smallwood and Wells (Dekker 1979:36), and Straznicky (1996:363).

Hammon only has eyes for Rose. Although her father welcomes him as a prospective son-in-law, his chasing of Rose is a kind of poaching as well, as her heart belongs to Lacy.<sup>14</sup> There is a neat symmetry here, as Sybil has just caught the deer that Hammon was hunting, while Hammon is now chasing the “dear” (Rose) that is really Lacy’s quarry. Later, Hammon really turns out to be a poacher when he nearly succeeds in stealing Jane, a married woman, by pretending that her husband Ralph was killed in the French wars. Tellingly, in the scene where he attempts to win Jane over, he repeatedly speaks of wooing her in terms of buying her wares or her time (12.24-33); and later he offers Ralph twenty pounds for his wife (18.79). This deer hunter is not the pastoral figure he may appear at first, but a man of the city, who believes money can buy everything.<sup>15</sup>

The contemporary overtones of the deer hunt as transgressive can be demonstrated from the prime source of the puns and conceits introduced by Hammon and Rose: Petrarch’s “Una Candida Cerva,” famously translated by Sir Thomas Wyatt as “Whoso list to hunt,” and ending with the forbidding inscription on the deer’s collar, “touch me not, for Caesar’s I am.” For Petrarch, the vision of a deer had stood for Laura after her death, who, like Christ, belongs to the Kingdom of God and is therefore not to be touched; Wyatt apparently recast this as a bitter comment on Anne Boleyn, who belonged to the secular ruler, Henry VIII, and was therefore out of bounds to Wyatt.<sup>16</sup> In the royal forests, deer were the king’s exclusive property, and many minor aristocrats owned a park, where they alone had the right to hunt. More than other animals, deer were therefore associated with the aristocracy, and hunting them with transgression.<sup>17</sup> Dekker’s audience may also have remembered another play associating deer stealing with attempted adultery: one or two years before the *Shoemaker’s Holiday*, Falstaff

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<sup>14</sup> Mortenson describes Hammon’s pursuit of Rose as “poaching on Lacy’s love territory” (1976:250).

<sup>15</sup> On Hammon’s reliance on the power of money, cf. Mortenson (1976:250) and Straznicki (1996:363).

<sup>16</sup> See Greenblatt (1980:145-150) for a detailed discussion of the poem’s relation to Boleyn, which he sees as “plausible” though deliberately kept vague; and to Petrarch’s original.

<sup>17</sup> For the political implications of the deer hunt, see Wilson (1992) and McRae (1996:260-261).

had figured as the poacher, of deer as of married women, in Shakespeare's urban comedy, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.<sup>18</sup>

Dekker's play, then, uses a misleading setting for the earliest phases of its love plot: the semi-pastoral countryside around London, which ought to be a place of innocence, is in fact where some of the play's transgressions take place: not just deceit, but also poaching and illicit wooing, the former being a metaphor for the latter. Nor is it Hammon and Warner only who engage in such transgressive exploits: Hammon's complaint to Rose, "I chased the deer; but this dear chaseth me" (6.33) proves truer than he knows, for Rose is not the passive female who simply waits for her lovers to come for her. Her father's complaint that Rose "loves [Lacy] so well | That I mislike her boldness in the *chase*" (1.7-8; italics mine) turns out to be partly justified by the plot. In the next scene, she dispatches Sybil to London to learn whatever she can about her lover; when she first meets Lacy alone, she urges him not to waste time but make arrangements for their marriage instantly, and within minutes decides to elope with him that very moment – a transgression that, in the end, only the king's pardon will make up for (15.6-8; 15.50-51).<sup>19</sup> Fittingly, Lacy urges Rose to hurry to the church: "Come, my sweet Rose, *faster than deer we'll run*" (17. 35; italics mine).

If the countryside, then, is no place of innocence or of free choice in love, neither is it the place of traditional hospitality. Here the usual roles of countryside and city are reversed. Sir Roger Oatley does seem to realise what social obligations come with having a house in the countryside, for as the Earl of Lincoln remarks, "you have sundry times | Feasted myself and many courtiers more" (1.1-2). We are not told where these feasts took place, but Oatley invites Simon Eyre, upon the latter's appointment as Sheriff of London, "to dinner to Old Ford" (10.152). Eyre takes his journeymen shoemakers along with him, to provide music and morris dancing. The party, however, seems to lack true generosity: when Oatley apologizes for

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<sup>18</sup> Smallwood and Wells note a resemblance between Simon Eyre and Shakespeare's Host of the Garter (Dekker 1979:17), but admit that the dating of *Merry Wives*, and therefore the direction of the influence, is uncertain (Dekker 1979:66-67n).

<sup>19</sup> Smith also comments on Rose's eagerness and active role in the courtship (2005:343).

the “bad cheer,” Eyre politely denies this, but finds little to praise apart from the splendid surroundings: “Good cheer, my Lord Mayor, fine cheer; a fine house, fine walls, all fine and neat” (11.3-5). The common shoemakers, too, seem to have mixed feelings about their entertainment at Old Ford, though their language is somewhat cryptic to the modern ear, and not usually glossed satisfactorily.<sup>20</sup> As I read it, the dancing – which they themselves brought to the feast – was fun, but the food was disappointing:

HODGE: How sayest thou, Firk? Were we not merry at Old Ford?

FIRK: How, merry? Why, our buttocks went jiggy-joggy like a quagmire. Well, Sir Roger Oatmeal, if I thought all meal of that nature, I would eat nothing but bag-puddings.

RALPH: Of all good fortunes, my fellow Hans had the best.

FIRK: 'Tis true, because Mistress Rose drank to him. (13.29-34)

Hans, then, that is Lacy in disguise as a Dutch shoemaker, has had great fun, but only because Mistress Rose drank *to* him, rather than because of his own drinking. When Sybil, the maidservant at Old Ford, enters, Ralph politely thanks her: “Godamercy, Sybil, for our good cheer at Old Ford,” but she replies, “That [the thanks?] you shall have, Ralph” (13.45-46) – a cryptic phrase that might be taken to suggest that the shoemakers are to be thanked for their music and morris dancing, and that it was this that provided the good cheer rather than the food and drink.<sup>21</sup>

The counterpoint to this apparently disappointing feast in the countryside, of course, is the lavish meal for all apprentices that Simon Eyre organizes at the play’s end to celebrate his election as

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<sup>20</sup> Parr speaks of the “hollow rituals of Oatley’s regime” being “replac[ed] [...] with a genuine revels” – but does not really explain this (Dekker 1990:xxi). Smallwood and Wells comment on Oatley’s “meanness”, and remark that “the ‘bad cheer’ the Lord Mayor self-effacingly, and depressingly, offers is miraculously transformed by the operation of Eyre’s language: ‘Good cheer’ [...]” (Dekker 1979:37). They do, however, suggest that, in his apostrophe to “Sir Roger Oatmeal,” “Firk is reminiscing nostalgically about the high quality of the food (*meal*) and drink at Old Ford” (Dekker 1979:157n).

<sup>21</sup> Smallwood and Wells gloss: “Perhaps sarcastic; as a servant, she takes a jaundiced view of the entertainment the household would provide [...]” (Dekker 1979:158n). In their introduction, they remark that, in the feast at Old Ford, “The good cheer of the occasion [...] is all supplied by the guests, who bring the music, and the dancing [...]” (41).

Lord Mayor. Even the king himself comes to visit, and completes the picture of social harmony by agreeing to partake in the meal. This feast has rightly been seen as a pastoral element, bringing the traditional values of the countryside to the heart of the City; and compared, in this respect, to Ben Jonson's Jacobean poem, "To Penshurst," which celebrates the country estate of the Sidneys in terms of the social, moral, and spiritual values that emanate from it, rather than the empty show so characteristic of other country houses, which have been infected by city values. Chief among the traditional country values is the hospitality that extends to all social layers, from the country clown by way of the middle class speaker himself to the king and his son: the dining table thus becomes an emblem of an organic society, where there is a place for everyone, from high to low. This applies to Simon Eyre's feast, too, suggesting that he has, indeed, emulated the values traditionally associated with the countryside and brought them into the heart of the City. No less striking, of course, are the differences: Eyre, unlike Sidney, is a commoner, who is not expected to provide such a feast, let alone hobnob with the nobility and even royalty. But he does behave nobly: his repeated catch phrase, "Prince am I none, yet am I nobly/princely born," suggests a deserved pride in his trade.<sup>22</sup> Among the dishes served up at this feast for the commoners, we are told, are "venison pasties" (18.195), more usually associated with aristocratic entertainments.<sup>23</sup>

In these ways Dekker's *Shoemaker's Holiday* partly inverts, partly nuances, the clichéd expectations of certain spaces: Old Ford is not the pastoral idyll it may appear to be at first, but a place where a daughter is restrained against her will; but her father's expectations that isolating his daughter thus will keep her innocent are not fulfilled, as the enclosed garden turns out to be eminently permeable to deer, hunters, seducers, and lovers. From the father's perspective, the dangers associated with the City are no less present in the countryside, for his daughter is as rebellious and subtle at evading his control there as in London. Nor is Old Ford the site of

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Seaver: "And what is the audience to make of Eyre's repeated reference to 'the gentle craft,' the 'gentle trade,' and 'gentlemen shoemakers,' if not an assertion of a new gentility to be gained not by birth but by honest labour?" (1995:100).

<sup>23</sup> See Seaver (1995:97) for the nobility, by mouth of Lord Burleigh, taking offence at the consumption of venison at guild feasts – in a different context.

countryside cheer and hospitality; if anywhere, it is in the City under Simon Eyre's mayoralty that this is to be found.

As we saw earlier, Jean Howard has argued that City Comedies suggest that the values of the suburbs have long since infected the City proper, so that binaries have become meaningless. In an analogous manner, *The Shoemaker's Holiday* has a levelling effect, in showing that the initial contrast between the pastoral countryside setting at Old Ford and the City of ambition and subterfuge is less strict than one expects. What the play leaves open is whether this is true for all such binaries, or just for Old Ford in particular, as a village not far from London: all we see of the village is the household of Sir Roger, whose own background as a grocer suggests that he, too, like Simon Eyre, acquired his wealth and title through a City career. Like those nouveaux riches who, in Jonson's "To Penshurst," have lately built their proud ambitious mansions in the countryside, Sir Roger is not a real country gentleman but a City man who has brought his City values to Old Ford. In this respect I disagree with Hayes, who sees "the city not as threatening that rural ideology, but rather as participating in it" (2000:28). On the contrary, city and country influence each other, as people move from one to the other, bringing their old habits with them. In a different context, McRae speaks of "the power of the city [which] is seen to sprawl uncontrollably outward into the countryside" (1996:100). As Seaver has found, some months before the play was first staged some hundreds of apprentices from London had "gathered in the summer evenings 'under colour of going to a place called the Old Ford to bathe themselves,'" and rioted there and on the way (1995:91). Seaver concludes that Dekker "transforms this locus of youthful rioting to the scene of a romantic pastoral" (1995:91-92). In my view, however, Old Ford is represented less as a pastoral idyll than as a place in the countryside where Londoners have come to live and recreate themselves, taking their city values and habits with them:<sup>24</sup> the mirror image, therefore, of Simon Eyre bringing the pastoral concepts of generosity, social coherence and the dignity of work into

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<sup>24</sup> Hayes (2000) stresses the influence of country gentlemen who come up to London to be corrupted there. In Dekker's play, however, Oatley, Rose, Sybil, and Hammon are city dwellers who, for various reasons, have come to Old Ford. As the household of Sir Roger is all we see of Old Ford, we do not know what the "real" villagers are like.

the City. London and the surrounding countryside cannot help influencing each other, which exerts a levelling effect blurring all binaries, in real life as in Dekker's fiction.

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## Disaster and after: *Hamlet as metaphor in Fin-de-Siècle Spain*<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

The paper explores the philosophical debates raging in Spain following naval defeat by the US in 1898 and the subsequent loss of the country's last remaining colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Facing what the national press presented as a debilitating pessimism and paralysis – a result of humiliation by a vastly superior and technologically advanced power – a group of intellectuals known as the "Generation of '98" launched a strident campaign aimed at rebooting the nation's social, economic and cultural identity, in which the Spanish nation was imaginatively recast as a kind of Hamlet awaiting the arrival of Fortinbras. The various implications of the Spain-as-Hamlet trope are considered, especially in the light of the play's minimal impact on cultural production at the turn of the century. Not the least of the paradoxes surrounding the trope is the conflicting uses to which it was put: now a metaphor for the decadence of Spanish social and political life, now a source of inspiration for the call for regeneration; now a mode of emplotting the break-up of the nation-state, now a way of framing the question of national unity.

KEY WORDS: Shakespeare, Hamlet, Spain, Generation of '98, national press, metaphor, emplotment.

The issue of ideology points to the fact that there is no value-neutral mode of emplotment, explanation, or even description of any field of events, whether imaginary or real, and suggests that the very use of

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language itself implies or entails a specific posture before the world which is ethical, ideological, or more generally political: not only all interpretation, but also all language is politically contaminated. (White 1990:129)

“Let’s make it very clear: the sea is not to blame.” So, in incongruously waggish vein, began a self-styled “report” into the blowing up of the battleship USS Maine in Havana harbour on the evening of 15 February 1898 with the loss of over 260 American lives. After rehearsing some of the theories that were raised at the subsequent inquiry into the causes of the explosion, the report, published in the satirical Spanish review *Gedeón* on 12 May 1898, accepts “spontaneous combustion” as the most likely. But there is also a suggestion, to which the alleged recovery by Spanish divers of a woman’s hat from amongst the various items of clothing found on the wreck seemed to give credence, that “some other liquid element” may have been at fault. Though not openly accusing US tars of engaging in a drunken orgy which prevented them from tending to the ship’s dangerously overheating boilers, the author sows a seed of doubt: “*That ist the cuestión* [sic], as Hamlet says in his famous monologue or philosophical binge.”<sup>2</sup> Though the inquest into the destruction of the Maine seemed to clear Spain from any implication in the tragedy, it was, I suppose, inevitable that the subsequent insinuations by the American gutter press, the US blockade of what was, technically, still a Spanish colony and the declaration of war between the two countries in April, would encourage such aspersions. Spain’s defeat at the battle of Cavite (Philippines) on 1 May was still agonizingly fresh in readers’ minds, so that this rather unsubtle form of anti-Yankeeism had a topicality which journals like *Gedeón* were quick to exploit.

More striking is the invocation of *Hamlet* as a way of lending “philosophical” weight to the doubt-sowing. The mangling of the English may not have been intentional – there is, I think, no attempt to suggest that Hamlet was soliloquizing while under the influence, that drink was somehow slurring his speech, just as the inebriated sailors were distracted from their duties aboard the Maine. Rather, at

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<sup>2</sup> “Ante todo, el mar es inocente” [...] “combustión espontánea” [...] “algún otro líquido” [...] “*That ist the cuestión*, como dice Hamlet en su famoso monólogo ó curda filosófoca.” (All translations are my own).

this early propagandistic stage of the conflict, the mere fact of citing such a prestigious Anglo-Saxon author as Shakespeare, and of doing so from such a culturally authoritative text as *Hamlet*, was not simply a means of answering the stereotypical anti-Spanish jibes in the American press, but a (possibly unconscious) attempt to discursively outmanoeuvre the aggressor nation by quoting one of its own most charismatic language-founders back at it. Following the next and definitive naval debacle at Santiago de Cuba, where on 3 July a hopelessly antiquated Spanish fleet was (literally) blown out of the water by formidable, iron-clad US vessels, the colonial snipe was, by September, being turned inwards to address the sheer inadequacy of Spain's machinery of war: "Hamlet's famous phrase 'all is rotten in Denmark' [*sic*] can to no country be more graphically and meaningfully applied than to [Spain]" (30/09/1898).<sup>3</sup> The indignation voiced in this three-part critique of "our naval campaign" in the Catholic daily *El siglo futuro* – an indignation reflected in the generalization of Shakespeare's "something" to "all" aspects of Spain's cock-eyed war preparations – was echoed in a number of reports on "the Disaster" which sought to expose the chasm between American military efficiency and the typically complacent approach to naval architecture, strategy and officer-appointment which had dogged Spain since the sixteenth century.

Inevitably, what began life as a reflexion on Spain's deficient military capability among conservative sectors such as *El siglo futuro* soon grew into a full-blooded attack on the outmoded mechanisms of state. "Oldness," observed the writer "Azorín" (José Martínez Ruiz) in a retrospective account of 1913, "is that which has never had the consistency of the real, or that which, having once possessed it, has ceased to do so and become threadbare and worm-eaten." In the specific context of end-of-the century Spain, "oldness" was felt to be at the very heart of the country's ills:

the vicious practices of its politics, the corruption of the administration, the incompetence, the rackets, the nepotism, the electioneering, the verbal incontinence, the procrastination, the parliamentary fiddling, the rhetorical sallies, the "political conveniences" which lead well-meaning spirits astray; the rigging of elections, the placing of people of influence on the boards and

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<sup>3</sup> "La célebre frase del Hamlet, 'todo está podrido en Dinamarca', en ningún país del mundo tiene una aplicación más gráfica y significativa que en el nuestro."

management of major companies, the useless cogs of bureaucracy  
[...] (Azorín 1969:36)<sup>4</sup>

Little wonder that, after its traditional summer recess, Parliament should re-open in October 1899 to what the liberal newsheet *Heraldo de Madrid* described as a mood of “fateful lethargy” – a reluctance, or simply an inability, to carry through the wide-ranging reforms the Disaster had seemed to make so pressing. “There was a stench of something rotten in Denmark,” wrote the *Heraldo’s* parliamentary reporter on 31 October, reviving a by now much-used *Hamlet* trope;<sup>5</sup> “there was a stench of death in the Spanish parliament yesterday.”<sup>6</sup> Without quite reaching the apocalyptic proportions suggested by this report, the fateful lethargy, compounded by the endemic political and administrative ills which the system of pre-arranged power-sharing, or “*turno político*,” between the two main parties (liberal and conservative) did little to alleviate, was, as a result of the defeat, recognized as having permeated whole swathes of Spanish social life.<sup>7</sup> Whereas the unexpected defeat of General Cronje in the

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<sup>4</sup> “Lo Viejo es lo que no ha tenido nunca consistencia de realidad, o lo que habiéndola tenido un momento, ha dejado de tenerla para ajarse y carcomerse” [...] “las prácticas viciosas de nuestra política, las corruptelas administrativas, la incompetencia, el chanchullo, el nepotismo, el caciquismo, la verborrea, el “mañana”, la trapacería parlamentaria, el atraco en forma de discurso grandilocuente, las ‘conveniencias’ políticas que hacen desviarse de su marcha a los espíritus bien inclinados, las elecciones falseadas, los consejos y cargos de grandes Compañías puestos en manos de personajes influyentes, los engranajes burocráticos inútiles [...]”

<sup>5</sup> Not just in relation to Spain or to Spanish politics; there is an almost audible sense of relief in *El siglo futuro* (18/07/1899) for example, when it is able to apply the same image to a France still reeling from the Dreyfus case: “That phrase of Shakespeare’s, which has been repeated so often since he wrote it – *Something is rotten in the state of Denmark* – is as applicable to this case as it is to many other cases of social pathology” [“Aquella frase de Shakspeare (*sic*), tan repetida desde que él la escribió... *Something is rotten in the state of Denmark*... tiene aplicación á este como á otros muchos casos de patología social”].

<sup>6</sup> “Letargo funesto” [...] “A podrido olía en Dinamarca [...] A muerto olía ayer en el recinto de las Cámaras españolas”

<sup>7</sup> In the capital Madrid, for instance, the years 1888-1898 alone had seen the burial in the city’s recently inaugurated Cementerio del Este of no fewer than 200,000 bodies, evidence of what the *Heraldo de Madrid* (16/10/1898), again invoking *Hamlet*, would denounce as a “social crime” to which the authorities seemed unsettlingly indifferent: “To die... To sleep,” murmurs Hamlet, and the rogue from Madrid who, in ten years’ time will be amongst the 200,000 residents of the planned Necropolis, settles the matter in his cocky, street-wise way, by saying: “To die... To sleep... It’s the same thing” [“Morir... Dormir – murmura Hamlet – Y el golfo madrileño, que dentro de

Boer War was seen in 1901 as boosting English morale, changing “*Hamlet’s* black despair for the joyous ebullience of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*” (*El Imparcial*, 09/03/1901),<sup>8</sup> Spanish society remained under a heavy cloud. The rot which had set in, and which was nowhere more visible than in the very sectors which denounced it,<sup>9</sup> seemed so severe that even basic services had lost their age-old reliability. When in September 1901 a Madrid coachman was found and tried for sleeping on the job, there could, according to the liberal *El Globo* (04/09/1901), be only one conclusion: “The coachman [was] right: we are all asleep. *Dreams, dreams, dreams*, as Hamlet would say in one of his philosophical outpourings.”<sup>10</sup>

The adoption of *Hamlet* as a mode of explanation, and of its central character as mouthpiece of the gloomy and debilitating defeatism which followed the war with the United States, is all the more striking given what, by general European standards, was the play’s limited presence in Spanish culture. When Sarah Bernhardt brought her own production of the play to Madrid in November 1899, there was an almost unanimously rapturous response to the performance of a much-neglected work, together with widespread applause for Bernhardt’s finely nuanced and “idealist” interpretation of the role of Hamlet.<sup>11</sup> But the prevailing vision of the play and of its

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diez años será contado entre los doscientos mil habitantes de la proyectada Necrópolis, resuelve el problema diciendo con su desenvoltura de gorrión callejero: – Morir... Dormir... son la misma cosa”].

<sup>8</sup> “a la negra desesperación de *Hamlet* ha sucedido el rebullicio jocoso de las *Alegres comadres*”

<sup>9</sup> See, for instance, the trashing of the “pornographic” liberal press by *El siglo futuro* (27/03/1901) which, recalling and correcting its own use of the favoured Hamlet trope, would assert: “[W]e used to be modest and, like Hamlet, say there was something rotten in the state of Denmark. With their constant bickering, the liberal parties and press have clearly displayed that in Denmark everything is rotten now” [“nosotros éramos modestos, y solíamos decir, con Hamlet, que había algo podrido en Dinamarca. Los partidos y los periódicos liberales en sus continuas pelazas son los que nos han demostrado plenamente que en Dinamarca está ya todo podrido”].

<sup>10</sup> “Tiene razón el cochero: estamos dormidos. *Sueños, sueños, sueños*, que diría Hamlet en un retillo de filosofía.”

<sup>11</sup> For a typical instance, see the review in *El Globo* (6/11/1899) which is careful to distance Bernhardt’s *Hamlet* from any associations with the present moment: “The lonely spirits, the taciturn ones, those that nourish the chimera of an unfulfilled ideal, those that brood on the impossibility of happiness, those that protest alone and in silence at the barbarous chasm between what we aspire to and what life has to offer;

protagonist continued to be firmly linked to the tragedy then unfolding in post-war Spain. "These days the Spanish are like one big Hamlet," announced the Catalan poet Joan Maragall in the *Diario de Barcelona* in April that same year. Citing the prince's recognition of his own incapacity to carry out the revenge ("O cursed spite, | That ever I was born to set it right"), Maragall identifies a similar impotence in his countrymen:

They also have had tremendous iniquities revealed to them and, when faced with the duty of repairing them and of regenerating themselves, they have exclaimed: "That ever we were born!", because the moment of revelation has been accompanied by a sense of their own weakness. That is why, like Hamlet, they dither and hallucinate. They claim the need to discover the truth of their ignominy before radically undertaking the redress but, deep down, what they really want is to defer it, because they do not feel strong enough to carry it through. (Pujante & Campillo 2007:362-363)<sup>12</sup>

Conceived as prototype of the dubitative Spanish intellectual, Hamlet is both appalled by the revelation of the painful truth – in this case, Spain's failure to adapt to the times and manifest inferiority to a "New World" power like the States, at whose hands it has suffered a calamitous defeat – and yet too debilitated, too insecure to react positively to the crisis of values the debacle has brought to the surface. *Hamletismo* ("Hamletism") became a byword among disaffected intellectuals and an increasingly belligerent press for the empty rhetorical posturing and histrionics which

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these are the ones that will understand me, for at some stage it is they who have felt their souls to be in touch with the soul of Hamlet." ["Los espíritus solitarios, los taciturnos, los que llevan en el pensamiento la quimera de un ideal que no llega a prender en la realidad, los que se recogen a pensar en la imposibilidad de la dicha, los que protestan a solas y en silencio de la bárbara desproporción que separa nuestras aspiraciones de lo que nos ofrece la vida, esos me comprenderán, porque habrán sentido alguna vez su alma en contacto con el alma de Hamlet."]

<sup>12</sup> "Hoy el pueblo español es un gran Hamlet. También le han sido reveladas tremendas iniquidades y, al imponérsele el deber de repararlas y de regenerarse, ha podido exclamar: '¡Ojalá no hubiera nacido!', porque el sentimiento de su debilidad se le ha aparecido simultáneo con aquella revelación. Por esto, como Hamlet, desvaría y duda. Finge querer averiguar toda la verdad de su ignominia ante de emprender radicalmente la reparación, pero, en el fondo, lo que quiere es dilatarla, porque no se siente con fuerzas para acometerla."

accompanied defeat.<sup>13</sup> When, under the terms of the 1898 Treaty of Paris, Spain relinquished all claims to its former colonies in both Cuba and the Philippines and also Puerto Rico and Guam, *Hamlet* was once again invoked to register Spanish indignation at this “unkindest cut of all” (*El Día*, 27/01/1899) but also more tortuously, just five days after the signing of a treaty which also put an end to Spanish sovereignty in the West Indies, in an article called “Asking for the moon” [“Pedir la luna”], at the sheer untenability of the demand of the Liberal party, led by Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, for the immediate dissolution of parliament and the holding of fresh elections: “There are more things in heaven and earth than are written down in books [*sic*]” (*La Época*, 15/12/1898).<sup>14</sup>

The articulation of radical pessimism was, to be fair, not the only use to which *Hamlet* was put in the period immediately after the rout and subsequent loss of the colonies. In a hard-hitting article in the progressive *Revista contemporánea*, dated July 1898, the play is already cited as a rationale for the adoption of positive solutions to the crisis:

Either Spain is regenerated by means of peaceful evolution (as has been the case after defeat in countries like Russia, Austria and France in the last fifty years), through the unwavering cauterization of her wounds and the satiation of the desires for justice, rectitude and progress currently sweeping the nation, or she will continue to be governed by her impenitent politicians with the same violence and falsehoods they have used in recent

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<sup>13</sup> See Granjel (1973:78) and Gregor (2010:73-74). Compare the use of the term “Hamletism” from the 1840s on in Europe to denote an attitude to life which is “well-intentioned but ineffectual, full of talk but unable to achieve anything, addicted to melancholy and sickened by the world around [us]” (Foakes 1993:20; see also Han 2001:21). The most expansive use of the Hamlet-trope was without doubt in Germany, where poet Ferdinand Freiligrath’s identification “Deutschland *ist* Hamlet” inaugurated an aggressive series of calls to national self-assertion, not dissimilar to those made half a century later in Spain (see, amongst many other studies, Pfister 1986).

<sup>14</sup> “Hay en la tierra y en los cielos muchas cosas que no están escritas en los libros.” (See also the humorous account of the future negotiations in *Gedeón* [25/08/1898] where, in an unsuccessful pun on Hamlet’s famous soliloquy, the mercenary intentions of the Spanish delegation [Spain would eventually accept the US offer of 20 million dollars for the islands] are revealed as “*To by or not to by; that is the question*”).

years. Recalling the dilemma of Hamlet, which seems most timely at the present moment: *To be or not to be; that is the question.*<sup>15</sup>

"To be" was, in these terms, to cease to endorse the paralyzing system of two-party alternation, as well as the corruption and social and economic stagnation associated with it, and to face head-on the age-old problems which had reduced Spain from colonial potentate to second-rate geopolitical backwater, with neither the capacity nor the desire for change. It was largely to prick consciences and to goad into action both the ruling elite and intellectuals capable of engineering a solution that the leading figures of the so-called "Generation of '98", Ramiro de Maeztu, Azorín and the novelist Pío Baroja,<sup>16</sup> set out their "Manifiesto" of 1901. "Desirous as we are," they stated, "to cooperate, with our modest strength, in the generation of a new social state in Spain," the signatories claimed to be speaking in the name of a "nascent ideal" which they vowed to "translate into concrete facts." Indebted in many ways to the imported philosophy of intellectual progress known as *krausismo* and the project of a fully lay education embodied in the Institución Libre de Enseñanza (Free Institute of Education), while anxious to distance themselves from the "utopian" discourses of socialism and anarchism which were proliferating at the turn of the century, "the Three," as they were known, placed their faith in science and in a wider tradition of European thought which they traced from the French "Encyclopedists" to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, all of whom had sought to demonstrate the "relativity of absolute ideas." As to the tangible results (the "concrete facts") of the regeneration they proposed, they aspired to nothing less than

To lay bare the miseries of people in the country, the difficulties and sadness of the thousands of hungry, the horrors of prostitution and alcoholism; to show the necessity of compulsory education, the setting up of agricultural credit banks, the

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<sup>15</sup> "Ó España se regenera por la evolución pacífica – como ha sucedido durante el último siglo á Rusia, Austria y Francia, después de su vencimiento, – aplicando sin contemplaciones el cauterio á sus llagas y satisfaciendo los anhelos de justicia, rectitud y progreso extendidos por todos los ámbitos de la Península, ó continúa gobernada por sus impenitentes políticos con las mismas violencias y mentiras de los últimos años. Recordamos el dilema de Hamlet, muy oportuno en estos momentos: *To be or not to be, that is the question.*"

<sup>16</sup> Significantly, all three of the "98ers" were writers; none of them was a professional politician or had been actively involved in the conflict in the Philippines or in Cuba.

implementation of divorce, as a consequence of the law of civil matrimony. (Cited in Rull 1984:34-35)

Inevitably, such an ambitious project, which was redolent of the short-lived Spanish Constitution of 1812, was greeted with Hamletian scepticism by the popular press or simply went unheeded by the institutions capable of implementing these wide-ranging reforms. “Words, words, words,” scoffed the enigmatic columnist “Miss-Teriosa” in *El Día* (19/11/1898) apropos of what s/he referred to the “apostolic mission” of the regenerationists to scale the rock-face of “worn-out organisms and shame-faced complacency.”<sup>17</sup> In a scathing verse “Epistle” published in the satirical *Madrid cómico* (24/02/1900) Alberto Lozano used *Hamlet* to pour further scorn on the reformists and their proposal to mobilize women in the regeneration of Spanish institutional and social life:

Now Spain is a madhouse:  
Generals, politicians, bullfighters  
Friars, pimps, and decadent artists.

Such gentlemen are not to be feared.  
You [women] will feel very much at home  
And conquer the coveted ground

By fighting all over, so that  
Soon you will be assailing the Congress and the Senate  
The Courts and the Classrooms, everything,

Everything needs regenerating!  
What Hamlet said of his own state, alas  
We can now say of our own!<sup>18</sup>

Here, the all-too-familiar and consequently unstated “Something rotten” is used to denigrate not just the bodies which need reforming but, by implication, the possible agents of that very reform – the women whose empowerment will, it is suggested, merely add to the prevailing lunacy. But it is “Words, words, words” which would win

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<sup>17</sup> “misión apostólica” [...] “organismos caducos y vergonzosas condescencias.”

<sup>18</sup> “Ya España es un asilo de dementes: |generales, políticos, toreros, |frailes, chulos y artistas decadentes. | |No son temibles tales caballeros. |Lograréis encontrar buen acomodo |y conseguir los codiciados fueros | |luchando en todas partes, de tal modo |que asaltéis el Congreso y el Senado, |los Tribunales y las Aulas, todo, | |todo tiene que ser regenerado! | |Lo que del suyo Hamlet, por desgracia |podemos hoy decir de nuestro Estado!”

the day in terms of typifying the inefficacy of the reformist campaigns or, perhaps more accurately, the imperviousness of the state to any radical modification of its bases. So, in an open letter to Juan Navarro Reverter, José María Alonso de Beraza writing in *El Liberal* (27/02/1901) could concur with the judgement of the former finance minister that so much talk of Spain's position was detrimental to the economy, while adding that "from the point of view of the regeneration of the country and its exchequer, it is only partly right, since it is not only 'words' but the actual state of chaos which is aggravating the situation."<sup>19</sup> A year and a half later, in a leader titled simply "*Palabras*" ("Words"), the Barcelona daily *La Dinastía*, this time in relation to Prime Minister Sagasta's promise that parliamentarians would forego their vacations to tackle the crisis, was drawn to offer the following analysis:

*Words, words, words.*

And let it be said that, in the case of the Spanish Hamlet, it is not only we, but the public opinion we have consulted, indeed the country as a whole which has been sufficiently afflicted with unkept promises as to be on its guard yet again.<sup>20</sup>

One of the ironies of the use of Hamlet the character as a kind of negative behavioural model was, as should now be clear, the continued recourse to the text of *Hamlet* as metaphor for the political, economic and also social circumstances of *fin-de-siècle* Spain. If Hamletism – the gloomy soul-searching and histrionic rhetoricity which were an impediment to progress – was resented as a basis for both thought and action, there were no such qualms when it came to plumbing Shakespeare's play for authoritative analogues for the process of national reconstruction envisioned by both liberals and conservatives. "Cruel to be kind" was the verdict passed by the "independent" *El Día* (30/04/1901) on a tram-driver's go-slow which had been crippling the capital Madrid in spring that year: "As

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<sup>19</sup> "Bajo el punto de vista de la regeneración del país y de la Hacienda, es exacto, en cierto modo solamente, porque no son sólo palabras, sino manifestaciones de un desbarajuste que agrava cada vez más la situación."

<sup>20</sup> "*Palabras, palabras, palabras.* Y cuenten que en ese caso el Hamlet español no somos nosotros solos, es la opinión pública por nosotros interpretada, es el país, lo suficientemente escarmentado por anteriores promesas que siempre ha visto incumplidas, para que con razón sobrada se llame á engaño una vez más."

tyranny goes, that which comes from above is to be preferred.”<sup>21</sup> The turn to more authoritarian forms of government is, as Donald Shaw (1982:28) has argued, one of less documented aspects of turn-of-the-century debates and inflects even the thinking of writers associated with the so-called “Generation of ’98.” Maragall, whose identification of Spain as “one big Hamlet” I offered above as diagnosis of the contemporary Spanish tragedy, also went on to state:

This evolution and this law [what Maragall describes as the “natural” “transfusion” of energy from less to more “vital” forms of life] are beginning to be accomplished in Spain, at least in those regions which make more of a living from modern life, and are accomplished not, by any means, in the form of armed invasion, or the reduction to slavery, or the annihilation of national identities, but, on the contrary, through the attraction of labour, the solidarity between men of action, the pacific and amorous mixing of blood, assimilation. The renovation has commenced: let us accept it, encourage it, and soon Hamlet will begin to feel the effects of the transfusion of life from Fortinbras. (Pujante & Campillo 2007:364)<sup>22</sup>

Though Maragall himself can be identified with neither the more “authoritarian” stream of Catalanism nor the “strong-armed” sectors of Spanish nationalism, the imaginative turn to Fortinbras – to the “man of action” (literally, “strong in arm”), as opposed to the effete and passive Hamlet – is eerily consistent with the sympathies expressed by some regenerationists for the abolition of the self-perpetuating two-party “*turno político*” and its replacement by a more “virile” system of autocracy.

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<sup>21</sup> “Tiranía por tiranía, es preferible la que viene de lo alto.” (The article continues: “To put a stop to the other [kind of tyranny], we would have to acknowledge with Hamlet that ‘there are times in life when a man should appear cruel in order to be truly generous’” [“Para acabar con la otra, es preciso reconocer que, como dice Hamlet, ‘hay momentos de la vida en las que el hombre debe aparecer cruel para ser verdaderamente generoso’”]).

<sup>22</sup> “Esta evolución y esta ley empiezan a cumplirse en España, al menos en aquellas de sus regiones que viven más de la vida moderna, y se cumplen no ciertamente en forma de invasión armada, ni de reducción a esclavitud, ni de aniquilamiento de nacionalidades, sino al contrario, por la atracción del trabajo, por solidaridad de gentes activas, por mezcla pacífica y amorosa de sangres, por asimilación. La renovación está iniciada; aceptémosla, fomentándola, y pronto Hamlet empezará a sentir los efectos de la transfusión de vida de Fortimbrás.”

At stake here, ultimately, was the whole question of Spain as a nation. From a Catalanist perspective, "Spain," as centralized nation-state, could easily be written off as a decadent Elsinore awaiting the entry of a triumphal Fortinbras. At the same time, though for many of the regenerationists, Hamlet and "Hamletism" were deeply inimical to the Spanish character which could trace its descent from the idealist or extrovert archetypes embodied by Don Quixote, Don Juan or La Celestina (Maeztu 1968), the state of Spain as national entity was, in the aftermath of the war, regularly defined in terms which invoked the English tragedy. Thus, Spain's decision not to execute Juan Rius Rivera, the rebel leader who had fought the Spanish occupation in both Puerto Rico and Cuba and was imprisoned in Barcelona till the end of the war, was hailed in *La Dinastía* (10/07/1898) as an instance of her Catholic Christian magnanimity: in contradistinction to the image of Hamlet "horribly avenging his father," here was a nation which offered that of "Christ nailed to the cross, forgiving His executioners."<sup>23</sup> And though Sagasta would, in some quarters, be represented as a political equivalent of a Hamletian gravedigger, chatting comically with the prince while secretly disposed "to personally inter both men and ideas, institutions and whole chunks of the homeland" (*El Nuevo País*, 17/10/1898),<sup>24</sup> the bulk of the popular press used *Hamlet* as an image of actual national unity, rather than of fragmentation. Hence, the warm reception of the King and Queen on a visit to the Basque Country in August 1900 was interpreted by the *Heraldo de Madrid* (17/08/1900) as confirmation of the indivisibility of the kingdom versus the separatist aspirations of certain of its subjects: "Were the structure of unity less solid than it is," stated its leader in a somewhat convoluted image, "the noble, fearsome head of the Spanish lion would in the dainty fingers which, like Hamlet, the skull of York [*sic*] would seem to have, now lie broken."<sup>25</sup> Broken it was not, though this did not lessen the dangers of burgeoning nationalism in both the Basque Country and, in a more organized

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<sup>23</sup> "vengando horriblemente a su padre" [...] "Jesucristo clavado en la cruz y perdonando a sus verdugos."

<sup>24</sup> "a enterrar por su mano hombres e ideas, instituciones y pedazos de la patria."

<sup>25</sup> "A no ser tan firme la obra de la unidad, ya se hubiera roto entre los débiles dedos que parece tener, cual Hamlet, el cráneo de York, la noble y fiera cabeza del león español."

fashion, Catalonia; nor, consequently, did it dampen the calls for national unity and coherence which, in an article entitled “Saluting the flag,” “Miss-teriosa” describes as the mainstay of Spanish idealism: “Let us day-dream, if you like, but let us *dream* nonetheless; let us shake off this ‘mortal coil’ of which Hamlet speaks and let its pulse be heard” (*El Globo* 15/01/1901).<sup>26</sup>

It would take another two decades, and the establishment of the royally-sanctioned ultra-conservative military directorate of Miguel Primo de Rivera, who modelled himself on Mussolini, for a Spanish Fortinbras to finally emerge. But the “intellectual” groundwork for a change of regime is already visible in the immediate post-war period where critical discussions of *Hamlet*, many of them inspired by the Bernhardt production, can be seen serving more or less explicit ideological agendas. One such discussion, serialized in 1900, is Leopoldo Augusto de Cueto (the Marquis of Valmar)’s study “Los hijos vengadores: Orestes, El Cid, Hamlet” [The Avenging Sons: Orestes, El Cid, Hamlet], which presents the turbulent political, social and religious context of early modern England as providing the “natural” conditions for the creation of a character like Hamlet: “A troubled, gloomy spirit, lacking in illusions and enthusiasm, who talks, travails and meditates in abundance, but who is afraid to act and, when the time comes to do so, who vacillates and shies away.” Hamlet’s incapacity to avenge his father’s death on religious grounds – remember Claudius is at prayer at the time – is tartly dismissed as the sanctimonious soul-searching of the impotent: “Such an ingenious hindrance would never have occurred to someone of the mettle of an Orestes or an El Cid” (Pujante & Campillo 2007:367).<sup>27</sup> Without going so far as to explicitly link the play’s context or the prince’s peculiar infirmity to the condition of contemporary Spain, in his overall assessment of Hamlet’s character and the flawed dramatic postulates of Shakespeare’s tragedy Cueto sends an unequivocally ideological message to his readers:

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<sup>26</sup> “Soñemos despiertos: pero soñemos, al fin, y sacudamos ese ‘mortal coil’ de que nos habla Hamlet, procurando que se escuchen sus latidos.”

<sup>27</sup> “Alma desasosegada y tétrica, sin ilusiones, sin entusiasmo; habla, intenta, medita mucho, pero se asusta de la acción y, cuando llega la ocasión de realizarla, vacila y retrocede.... Jamás habría ocurrido tan ingeniosa rémora a hombres del temple de Orestes o del Cid.”

All is uncertainty and incompleteness in the character of the Danish prince. It is not the impiety of he who ignores and denies the consolation and power of Heaven; nor is it the faith of the believer who heeds and worships the mysteries of God. Rather, he is distrustful of everything, and doubt is his executioner and the source of his weakness. What truth, what force, what integrity can there be in his resolve as an avenging son, if at times he doubts the very nature of the crime he has to avenge, at others the appearance of the king, his father, who instilled such vivid horror in him at the beginning and who in his soul unleashed the hell-like passion for revenge? [...] Drama feeds off passion and action, and requires nothing of its characters so much as vigour, single-mindedness, clarity, determination of purpose and mind. This is precisely what is found wanting in Hamlet. (Pujante & Campillo 2007:368)<sup>28</sup>

The exclusion of *Hamlet* from theatrical repertoires in the years which followed the Disaster indubitably owes more to aesthetic-commercial factors than it does to the aesthetic-ideological objections of critics like Cueto.<sup>29</sup> Rather than as an anti-recipe for stage performance, the play was more regularly used as an antonym for the kind of hard-nosed naturalism which was favoured by many members of the so-called "Generation of '98."<sup>30</sup> Beyond the purely

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<sup>28</sup> "Todo es incierto e incompleto en el carácter del príncipe dinamarqués. No es el impío que desconoce y niega los consuelos y las potestades del cielo; no es tampoco el creyente que acata y venera los misterios divinos. Desconfía de todo, y la duda es su verdugo y la fuente de su flaqueza. ¿Qué verdad, qué ímpetu, qué entereza cabe en su resolución de filial vengador, si duda unas veces del crimen mismo que ha de vengar, y otras de la aparición del rey, su padre, que tan vivo terror le infundió al principio y que desencadenó en su ánimo la infernal pasión de la venganza? [...] El drama vive de pasión y de acción, y nada requiere tanto en los personajes como vigor, fijeza, claridad, determinación de impulsos y carácter. Esto es cabalmente lo que se echa de menos en Hamlet."

<sup>29</sup> For an in-depth study of the production of *Hamlet* and other canonical Shakespeare plays at the turn of the 19th century and first three decades of the 20th, see Cerdá (2010).

<sup>30</sup> See, for instance, Rafael Balsa de la Vega who, citing the work of French critic Arsène Alexandre on the demise of symbolism, proposes the following antidote to "symbolic mists" ["brumas simbólicas"] enshrouding Hamlet: "What's needed is an art which is a reflection of the truth, which is sincere, which meets the demands of modern intellectual culture, which addresses the faculty of thought, which doesn't get lost in the clouds [...]" ["Necesitamos un arte que sea reflejo de la verdad, que sea sincera, que responda a las exigencias de la cultura intelectual moderna, que hable al pensamiento, que no vaya por las nubes [...]" (*El Liberal*, 18/10/1898).

cultural sphere, however, the repeated recourse to *Hamlet*, which in the national press and increasingly among sectors pressing for independence in the affluent and cosmopolitan region of Catalonia, the welter of allusions to the play, however faulty or tendentious, is evidence of its perceived homology with wider social, political and economic processes.

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# Reviews



**Pilar Cuder-Domínguez. 2011**  
***Stuart Women Playwrights, 1613-1713***  
**Farnham: Ashgate**

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This sensitive and thoughtful volume looks at British women dramatists across the usual divide of the seventeenth century, following women's writing from the Caroline to Carolean period. This breaching of publishing boundaries bears fruit, allowing Cuder-Domínguez to chart the interconnections between writers actively engaged with the classical repertoire of their day, a repertoire that endured as a connective thread through the lived experience of the century, despite our desire to compartmentalise works on the basis of the macro political context.

Cuder-Domínguez offers a series of detailed and thought-provoking readings of women's tragedy and tragicomedy, picking up some of the shared concerns and linkages between their works. While eschewing the idea of an explicit construction of sisterly tradition, as Margaret Ezell so wisely warned us against, this strategy nevertheless allows the reader to trace themes, borrowings and overlaps emerging in women's tragedy.

Alongside the collating of key existing scholarship on the texts and women themselves, Cuder-Domínguez's thorough re-readings centre on the representation of gender relations and race within the political economy of leading tragedies. Her reading of Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* suggests that if we step beyond biographical, explanatory constructions of her text, Cary emerges as a writer closely involved in the representation of power and privilege in the transition between social orders, as Dympna Callaghan and Stephanie Hodgson-Wright have explored. Moving from the closet drama of the pre-Civil War and Interregnum era to the public stage,

and to closet dramas or unproduced dramas of the late seventeenth century, Cuder-Domínguez gently probes critics' desire for female heroines and heroism in the wide range of women's tragic writing from Frances Boothby through Aphra Behn to Mary Pix and beyond. She argues that there are no simple structures – such as competing pairs of female roles, one passive one active – and, that to limit interpretation to these tropes of femininity is to miss some of the complexity of the tragedies, particularly in their political applicability for readers and audiences of their day. This argument finds clearest expression in the chapter on Catherine Trotter, which takes three of Trotter's texts and examines the shifts in Trotter's Whig allegiance as expressed in the different resolutions to *Agnes de Castro*, *The Unhappy Penitent*, and *The Revolution in Sweden*. Trotter's articulation of women characters who “transcended the limits of women's conventional roles [... to] be a true leader and moral guidance for the whole country” (p. 119) offered a rational alternative to the more passionate investments in femininity with which tragedy of her time was littered. This lively reading of women's dramatic tragedies reminds us of the richness of these neglected works. Cuder-Domínguez's analysis reveals the rewards of paying close attention to the representation of gendered roles not only in terms of feminist recuperation, but also as politically resonant negotiations of power.

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Jesús López-Peláez, ed. 2011

*Strangers in Early Modern English Texts*

Anglo-American studies, 41. Frankfurt am Main: Peter  
Lang

Primavera Cuder  
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*Strangers in Early Modern English Texts* is the outcome of an international collaboration of scholars whose objective is to explore the way identity is (re)produced in the texts of early modern England, considering the impact that the presence of the Other had. Inspired by, among others, Leslie A. Fiedler's seminal work *The Stranger in Shakespeare* (1972), the objective of the book is to develop a detailed and interdisciplinary study on the representation of (interrelated) "strangers," such as women, Jews, Moors, Spaniards, and the inhabitants of the New World. To this end, each chapter explores one aspect regarding the treatment of alterity in early modern English literary and non-literary texts such as pamphlets, travel narratives, plays, dictionaries, emblems and frontispieces. As a work concerned with cultural encounter and ideological conflict, the collection offers a comprehensive exploration of the historical context surrounding these materials, establishing the spatial and temporal location under study as the likely setting of an emergent epistemological shift that (from an embryonic form) led to the current Western identity configuration. Such approaches are ultimately informed in the works of several contributors by the idea of the semiosphere (as developed by Juri Lotman), and by the critical practice of cultural materialism.

In his introduction Andrew Monnickendam advances the dichotomy on which the characters regarded as "Others" were built, and discusses how this approach affected the way these strangers

were eventually judged as wicked or upright, fearful or admirable. The Mediterranean settings (and especially its islands), which can be found in the majority of the works studied, are described as peripheral locations that, from the early modern English point of view, provide a crucial geographical area where the domain of the extra-European stranger collides with the European sphere. The resulting threat that this contact would involve for Christianity, Fiedler's earlier study proposed, reveals that from the Western perspective it is the stranger who is perceived as marking the division between a familiar space and what is perceived as the alien's dominion (1973:15).

In "The Term 'Moor' in the Primary Texts of Early Modern English Plays," Luciano García explores the terminology that groups those characters labelled "Moor," "Blackamoor," and "Tawny Moor." To this end, he establishes an initial approach to the definitions concerning these categories, which provides what is perhaps the most comprehensive survey to date of early modern English dramatic works from 1500 to 1660 featuring Moors. Drawing on Lotman's study, he initially suggests that this foreign Other could be considered, at the time, to belong to one or more of the categories "non-European," "non-White," but perhaps especially "non-Christian." The evidence collected ultimately reveals that the main attribute attached to the term "Moor" was actually that of physical difference, especially blackness, but interestingly such a perception was, in turn, defined in Christian terms of "damnation," or "heathenism." García eventually confirms that, according to his analysis, the figure is typically described negatively, while the positive descriptions are rather infrequent.

"Patterns of Otherness in George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*" (ca. 1589), by Jesús Nieto and Cinta Zunino, approaches the play by focusing on Peele's representation of the 1578 battle of Ksar el-Kebir. The chapter examines Peele's descriptions of multi-ethnic characters and finds that by inverting the representation of Moors and Portuguese, who were traditionally portrayed negatively, Peele depicts both with a hint of understanding. This was probably a reflection of England's political and economic interest in establishing an alliance with the two communities against their common rival, Catholic Spain. Indeed, while a distinction may be detected between this malicious community (represented by King Philip), and the

almost noble Portuguese Catholic (embodied by King Sebastian), the representation of the Moors combines an orthodox rejection of an alien culture with a positive view in the light of the anti-Spanish political alliance desired.

In his chapter, John Drakakis analyses the representation of "Strangers in Marlowe and Shakespeare," where the foreigner is rejected but simultaneously integrated into the European society. While the Orient is vividly present in the English imagination in concrete geographical and historical spaces, *Othello* (ca. 1604) and *The Jew of Malta* (written ca. 1590) create a frontier identity where the "enemy without" and "within" menace the individual both physically and spiritually. The plays stage the perspective of a stranger who is marginalised by the Venetians, placing this community at the centre of public judgement, while what seems to shape its identity is a reflection of European mutability or "Otherness within," conceived in the figure of the foreigner, eventually producing rejection of both the Other and the self. The conduct of strangers thus does not seem to be innate, but is caused by their imitation of the Venetians. The tragic result is exemplified by Othello's suicide, when his conflicting Muslim and Catholic identities collapse as they conveniently destroy each other.

In "Muslims and Moriscos in Shakespeare's *Othello* and Calderón's *Tuzaní*," (ca. 1604 and 1633?) Jesús López-Peláez compares the formation of analogous identities where "race" has a central role. Drawing on the Lotmanian taxonomy, he describes the development of two spaces in the English imagery that detached it from the Mediterranean sphere associated with Spanish Catholics and Moriscos, suggesting that the clash with the latter may be likewise influenced by the formation of national identities within Christianity by the problematizing the (Muslim) Other. Such a process seems to be employed by both authors by presenting Others torn between a European and a non-European self; and while Calderón insinuates the ambiguous identity of the Catholic Spaniard, indistinguishable from the Morisco, both describe a brutal Christianity, suggesting that the "enemy within" could be not only the "Other," but also the "self." López-Peláez concludes that staging a movement of segregation, integration and eventual rejection of the stranger, such instability and violence could be presented as inherently European.

In "Alterity in William Shakespeare's Plays *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*," Rüdiger Ahrens analyses female awareness, exploring the ways alterity and plurivocality are eventually silenced to restore social order. In a comparative study with two 1977 adaptations, *Variations on The Merchant of Venice*, by Charles Marowitz, and Arnold Wesker's *The Merchant*, Ahrens argues that in the original works the heroines are characterised by their self-fashioning and awareness, and, while Wesker describes emancipated female characters, Marowitz seems to focus on a more racial subject, where women are dominated by male characters. Conversely, the intensity of such metaphysical conflicts is epitomised in *Othello*, where the Machiavellian, hypocritical schemer Iago is paralleled by the protagonist's unbalanced self, moving from nobility to iniquity and unavoidably overpowered by evil. Ahrens concludes that in Shakespeare there are diverse forms of alterity and plurivocal voices, and while there is a struggle between good and evil, fostered, among other factors, by alterity, order is finally restored.

José Ruiz's essay, "The Image of the Great Turk after the Ottoman Conquest of Famagusta and Marc Antonio Bragadino's Martyrdom," draws our attention to what was one of the most disturbing episodes that influenced generations of continental and English writers, the Ottoman capture of Famagusta in 1571. He examines the works of the Venetians Paulo Paruta and Count Nestore Martinengo and the Genoese Uberto Foglietta, as well as their English translations/adaptations. It was events such as the fall of Cyprus that instigated the proliferation of European chronicles alleging the barbarous tortures of the invaders, a form of literary production that nurtured the Black Legend of the Turkish, Ottoman, and Muslim sphere which had been taking shape since the 16th century, but which marked so vividly the European imaginary that can it be found in Western textual representation up to the 20th century. As Ruiz suggests, the image created during this period stained the Muslim or Middle Eastern image in a way from which it has yet to recover.

This form of propaganda is taken up in "Spanish Genealogy as Portrayed by English Protestant Pamphleteers during the Spanish Match Negotiations (1617-1624)," Eroulla Demetriou's examination of how the "Black Legend" was evoked in another context. The Prince of Wales' marriage plans with the Infanta María instigated

ferocious attacks on Spain, as the English pamphleteers promoted the image of cruel and treacherous Spaniards, which was allegedly aggravated by their coexistence with the Moriscos and their prevalent position in the Catholic world. However, even if “purity” was considered menaced by both, the latter was perceived as even more threatening than the Muslim influence. In focusing on the genealogical tree and the genes of the Spaniards, Protestant pamphleteers such as Thomas Scott considered them accountable for their alleged evil nature, and consequently their blood had to be prevented from contaminating the English royal family. Demetriou suggests that references to their genes and “race” were likely intended to strain the image of this community, ultimately associating racial and religious aversion.

In “Blackness and Moorishness in English Iconography,” María Paz López-Peláez addresses this early modern representation of the Muslim and African communities, and its contribution in the consolidation of negative attitudes towards such Others in England. She argues that the works of Andrea Alciato, Geoffrey Whitney, Henry Peacham, Thomas Scott, and John Ogilby, among others, were particularly influential in the construction of an identity markedly affected by notions of “race” and difference. Drawing on the Lotmanian pattern, López-Peláez describes a situation where the English community separates what is “familiar” from what is “foreign” and “menacing,” and while attitudes towards the African moved from dread to rejection, the Muslim was associated with the fearful Turk. Such descriptions ultimately associate English interests and experiences with these individuals: while the black African is considered almost non-human, a mere commodity for the slave trade, the Muslim is a cruel enemy related to the conquering Ottoman. Both views eventually strained indelibly the perception of the stranger, enhancing stereotypes of inferiority, and immorality.

With her contribution, “Patterns of Female Exploration in Delarivier Manley’s *Oriental Plays*,” Yolanda Caballero focuses on the heroines Homais, in *The Royal Mischief* (1696), and Almyna, in *Almyna: or The Arabian Vow* (1707). In these plays Manley seems to defy the contemporary conviction ascribing to the English, male, white individual a position of centrality, locating alien (Muslim) societies at the margins of civilisation, and where the foreign woman was even more remote. The contribution is particularly appreciative

of Bernadette Andrea's conclusion that such a picture was intended to appease any seditious English woman by emphasizing her independence when compared with that of the subdued and "intellectually weak" Muslim woman (227, citing Andrea 2007:83). With Homais – who explores and eventually transgresses the fixed boundaries by "invading" the male domain – and of Almina – who challenges the commonplace of the soulless nature of women – the pioneer "frontier writer" conceives female utopic spaces, breaking the boundary that separates Eastern and Western women, who join in a struggle against male authority.

To conclude, with its wide-ranging approaches, the book not only provides an important source of information for any scholar or student interested in comparative cultural studies or literature, it offers a multidisciplinary approach to Otherness developing since the early modern period. The chapters explore the textual and semiotic impact and the historical and social influences that shaped the creation of national identities influenced by, but also further encouraging, different representations of what was considered "Other." With the evidence on show, such formations were specific to early modern England, but eventually their ramifications spread worldwide providing a revealing perspective on the extant Western ideology.

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

### Articles

Leticia Álvarez Recio, Pro-match literature and royal supremacy: The case of Michael Du Val's *The Spanish English Rose* (1622)

#### RESUMEN

En 1622-1623, en el clímax de las negociaciones sobre el matrimonio del heredero inglés con la infanta española, Jacobo I impuso una férrea censura sobre aquellas obras críticas con dicha alianza matrimonial; al mismo tiempo, favorecía la publicación de textos que defendieran su política exterior, aunque algunos fueran más allá de las intenciones propagandísticas del monarca. Éste es el caso de la obra de Michael Du Val, *The Spanish-English Rose* (1622), un tratado político elaborado en los círculos cortesanos para promover la alianza anglo-española. Este artículo analiza su papel en la producción de una alternativa al discurso religioso e imperial inglés heredado de la época isabelina. Considera, además, su relación con otras obras contemporáneas y su contribución a las redes discursivas de la fe anglicana y el absolutismo político. Por último, explora las razones por las que tuvo una influencia negativa en las cortes inglesa y española.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Matrimonio anglo-español; Literatura pro-matrimonio; Literatura en contra del matrimonio; Absolutismo político; Iglesia jacobea.

#### RESUMO

Entre 1622 e 1623, no ponto culminante das negociações sobre o casamento do herdeiro inglês com a infanta espanhola, Jaime I impôs uma censura férrea sobre aquelas obras que se mostrassem críticas face a essa aliança matrimonial; ao mesmo tempo, favorecia a publicação de textos que favorecessem a sua política externa, ainda que alguns se posicionassem muito para além das intenções propagandistas do monarca. É o caso da obra de Michael Du Val *The Spanish-English Rose* (1622), um tratado político elaborado nos círculos da corte para promover a aliança anglo-espanhola. Este artigo analisa o seu papel na produção de uma alternativa ao discurso religioso e imperial inglês herdado da época isabelina. Para além disso, considera a relação do texto de Du Val com outras obras do seu tempo, bem como o seu contributo para as redes discursivas da fé anglicana e do absolutismo político. Por fim, explora as razões para a influência negativa que exerceu nas cortes inglesa e espanhola.

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

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Casamento anglo-espanhol; Literatura pró-casamento; Literatura contra o casamento; Absolutismo político; Igreja jacobiana.



Joan Curbet Soler, Towards a Miltonic Mariology: The word and the body of Mary in *Paradise Regain'd* (1671)

#### RESUMEN

La idea de que *Paradise Regain'd* (1671), de John Milton, es un poema revisionista que reformula y redefine la tradición épica, se ha convertido en un tópico crítico recurrente; se ha puesto, en cambio, mucho menor énfasis en la función central que el personaje de María, madre de Cristo, tiene en ese proceso de revisión. Este artículo intentará demostrar que las apariciones de María en el poema son, aunque limitadas, esenciales para su contenido y su perspectiva sobre los temas de la revelación divina y la confrontación del individuo con las fuerzas históricas; ello tendrá lugar a través de una metodología que combina la discusión teológica con la perspectiva de género.

Algunos acercamientos a *Paradise Regain'd* han explorado varias de las implicaciones de género conllevadas por la modificación de la función heroica que tiene lugar en el poema: se ha hablado de una feminización del personaje de Cristo, o bien se ha intentado identificar en el texto la ambigua presencia de un discurso homoreótico. Mi intención aquí es otra: intentaré mostrar cómo la presencia y la voz de María en el poema ponen en funcionamiento una compleja red de implicaciones (éticas y teológicas). Esta focalización sobre la maternidad no se llevará a cabo a través de una perspectiva psicoanalítica, sino a través de la exploración de categorías literarias y teológicas recurrentes en la obra miltoniana; de este modo, nos debería ser posible empezar a trabajar hacia el reconocimiento de una mariología (aunque no una mariolatría) en el último poema épico de Milton.

En conjunto, ello nos llevará a una reconsideración de *Paradise Regain'd* que nos permita verlo como un texto esencialmente innovador, fuertemente heterodoxo en términos de teología y de género.

PALABRAS CLAVE: género, maternidad, identidad, épica.

#### RESUMO

A noção de que *Paradise Regain'd* (1671), de John Milton, é um poema revisionista que reformula e redefine a tradição épica converteu-se num tópico crítico recorrente; comparativamente, deu-se muito menos ênfase à função central desempenhada pela personagem de Maria, mãe de Cristo, nesse processo de revisão. Este artigo pretende demonstrar que as aparições de Maria no poema são, ainda que limitadas, essenciais para o seu conteúdo, bem como para a perspectiva sobre os temas da revelação divina e o

confronto do indivíduo com as forças da história. Para tal, aplicar-se-á uma metodologia que combina a discussão teológica e a perspectiva de género.

Algumas abordagens de *Paradise Regain'd* têm explorado certas implicações de género convocadas pela modificação da função heróica que tem lugar no poema: é assim que se tem falado de uma feminização da personagem de Cristo, ou tentado identificar no texto a presença ambígua de um discurso homoerótico. A minha intenção aqui é outra: tentarei mostrar como a presença e a voz de Maria no poema põem em funcionamento uma complexa rede de implicações (éticas e teológicas). Este enfoque na maternidade não será proposto através de uma perspectiva psicanalítica, mas antes pela exploração de categorias literárias e teológicas que pontuam a obra miltoniana; deste modo, deverá permitir que se comece a trabalhar pelo reconhecimento de uma mariologia (ainda que não uma mariolatria) no último poema épico de Milton.

Globalmente, isto permitir-nos-á uma reconsideração de *Paradise Regain'd* que implique vê-lo como um texto essencialmente inovador, fortemente heterodoxo em questões de teologia e de género.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: género, maternidade, identidade, escrita épica.



Rosa García-Periago, *The re-birth of Shakespeare in India: Celebrating and Indianizing The Bard in 1964*

#### RESUMEN

Mientras el tercer centenario de la muerte de Shakespeare (1916) apenas se celebró en la India y marcó el principio de una era en la que Shakespeare estaba siempre en la sombra, el cuarto centenario de su nacimiento (1964) fue testigo de la publicación de numerosas colecciones, de la representación de muchas adaptaciones teatrales de sus obras, así como de exhibiciones que tenían el objetivo de conmemorar el nacimiento del autor. Aunque ya el volumen especial de la revista *Indian Literature* publicado en 1964 para homenajear a Shakespeare participó de algún modo en su 'renacimiento,' los proyectos más revolucionarios en la construcción de un Shakespeare indio ocurrieron en el teatro gracias a las producciones de Utpal Dutt en bengalí. Con el modelo teórico de Arjun Appadurai como punto de partida, este artículo muestra cómo las producciones de Utpal Dutt de 1964 en bengalí participan claramente en la decolonización de Shakespeare. Esto consiste en liberar tanto al texto como al autor de las asociaciones coloniales. Dos de las tres representaciones producidas en 1964 – *Romeo and Juliet* y *Julius Caesar* – son características de un modelo de 'glocalización,' ya que los nombres de los lugares y personajes originales se combinan con el idioma bengalí y una localización totalmente inevitable. Por lo tanto, el cuarto centenario del

nacimiento de Shakespeare en la India supuso el renacer de William Shakespeare, así como dio los primeros pasos para su indianización.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Shakespeare, apropiación, representaciones teatrales, Cuarto centenario, India.

#### RESUMO

Enquanto o terceiro centenário da morte de Shakespeare (1916) quase não se comemorou na Índia, marcando o início de um período em que Shakespeare esteve sempre na sombra, já o quarto centenário do seu nascimento (1964) testemunhou um número volumoso de publicações, a representação de muitas adaptações teatrais das suas obras, bem como exposições celebrando o nascimento do autor. O número especial da revista *Indian Literature* publicado em 1964 para homenagear Shakespeare terá também, de algum modo, participado no seu “renascimento”. Contudo, os projectos mais revolucionários na construção de um Shakespeare indiano ocorreram no teatro, graças às produções de Utpal Dutt em bengali. Tomando como ponto de partida o modelo teórico de Arjun Appadurai, este artigo mostra como as produções Utpal Dutt de 1964 em bengali participam claramente na descolonização de Shakespeare, entendida como libertando quer o texto, quer o autor de associações coloniais. Duas das produções de 1964 – *Romeo and Juliet* e *Julius Caesar* – são características de um modelo de “glocalização”, já que os nomes dos lugares e das personagens originais se combinam com o idioma bengali e com aspectos incontornáveis de localização. Na Índia, deste modo, o quarto centenário do nascimento de Shakespeare implicou um renacer do autor, mas também os primeiros passos para a sua indianização.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Shakespeare, apropriação, representações teatrais, quarto centenario, Índia.



Juan A. Prieto Pablos, Women in breeches and modes of masculinity in Restoration comedy

#### RESUMEN

Tras la reapertura de los teatros en 1660, las compañías recuperaron también la tradición consistente en presentar personajes femeninos disfrazados de varón. Por primera vez, sin embargo, estos papeles eran desempeñados por mujeres. Algunos críticos ha argumentado que el disfraz facilitaba la contemplación del cuerpo femenino y por ello incrementaba la erotización de la actriz para beneficio de un público mayoritariamente masculino. Por otro lado, también se ha interpretado que el disfraz era evidencia de un gradual reconocimiento de la potencialidad de la mujer como agente social. En el presente ensayo, se argumenta que el disfraz no sólo contribuía a dotar al personaje femenino de una efectividad igual o incluso superior a la del varón, sino que además servía para cuestionar determinadas formas de

masculinidad. Para ilustrar esta tesis, se analizan tres comedias representativas de otros tantos periodos dentro de la Restauración: *The Woman Turned Bully* (1675), de autor anónimo; *The Woman Captain* (1680), de Thomas Shadwell; y *Sir Anthony Love* (1691), de Thomas Southerne. En todas ellas el personaje femenino disfrazado de varón genera situaciones que producen (y sugieren) significativas alteraciones un orden social hasta entonces dominado por el varón.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Comedia de la Restauración, identidad de género, masculinidad, disfraz.

#### RESUMO

Após a reabertura dos teatros em 1660, as companhias recuperaram também a tradição consistente de apresentar personagens femininas disfarçadas de homem. Pela primeira vez, porém, tais papéis eram desempenhados por mulheres. Alguns críticos têm defendido que o disfarce facilitava a contemplação do corpo feminino e, portanto, aumentava a erotização da atriz para benefício de um público maioritariamente masculino. Por outro lado, também se tem que o disfarce evidenciava um gradual reconhecimento da potencialidade da mulhere como agente social. No presente ensaio, argumenta-se que o disfarce não só contribuía para dotar a personagem feminina de uma efectividade igual ou mesmo superior à do homem, como também para questionar determinadas formas de masculinidade. Para ilustrar esta tese, analisam-se três comédias representativas de outros tantos períodos da Restauração: *The Woman Turned Bully* (1675), de autor anónimo; *The Woman Captain* (1680), de Thomas Shadwell; e *Sir Anthony Love* (1691), de Thomas Southerne. Em todas elas a personagem feminina disfarçada de homem gera situações que produzem (e sugerem) significativas alterações de uma ordem social até então dominada pelos homens.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Comédia da Restauração, identidade de género, masculinidade, disfarce.



Rocío G. Sumillera, Poetic invention and translation in sixteenth-century England

#### RESUMEN

El presente artículo explora la conexión entre el concepto central de invención dentro de la terminología literaria del siglo XVI en Inglaterra y la percepción de la traducción en dicho siglo. La invención se entiende como un concepto en transición durante el XVI al continuar siendo asociada con la noción de “hallazgo” propia de la invención retórica, al tiempo que va adquiriendo nuevas significaciones más cercanas a las ideas de imaginación, fantasía e ingenio que gradualmente se convierten en dominantes incluso en contextos retóricos.

A pesar de que la invención se considera en el XVI un ingrediente necesario para la escritura de poesía de calidad, paralelamente se piensa que las traducciones carecen de invención propia, y que el traductor se limita a copiar o trasladar la invención del autor del texto fuente a su texto traducido. Este artículo pretende demostrar que la creencia del XVI en la ausencia de invención en las traducciones constituye la razón principal por la que, en ese momento, las traducciones invariablemente se consideran logros de segunda en comparación con sus textos fuente.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Invención, poéticas inglesas y francesas del Renacimiento, traducción en el Renacimiento, imitación.

#### RESUMO

O presente artigo explora a ligação entre o conceito central de “invenção” na terminologia literária do século XVI em Inglaterra e a percepção da tradução no mesmo século. A “invenção” entende-se como um conceito em transição durante o século XVI: continua a ser associada à noção de “achado” própria da *inventio* retórica; mas, ao mesmo tempo, vai adquirindo novas significações mais próximas das ideias de imaginação, fantasia e engenho que gradualmente se tornam dominantes, mesmo em contextos retóricos.

Apesar de a invenção ser considerada no século XVI um ingrediente necessário à escrita de poesia de qualidade, pensa-se paralelamente que as traduções carecem de invenção própria, e que o tradutor se limita a copiar ou trasladar a invenção do autor do texto de partida para o seu texto traduzido. Este artigo pretende demonstrar que a crença do século XVI na ausência de invenção nas traduções é a razão principal para que, nesse período, as traduções sejam invariavelmente consideradas conseguidos de segunda, por comparação com os seus textos de partida.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Invenção, poéticas inglesas e francesas do Renascimento, tradução no Renascimento, imitação.



Oana-Alis Zaharia, *Translata Proficit*: Revisiting John Florio’s translation of Michel de Montaigne’s *Les Essais*

#### RESUMEN

Este artículo considera la famosa traducción de los *Ensayos* de Montaigne realizada por John Florio como una valiosa fuente para comprender en profundidad la teoría y la práctica de la traducción en época isabelina. En la carta al lector, Florio defiende con firmeza el uso de la traducción como medio de fomentar el conocimiento y desarrollar el lenguaje y la cultura de una nación. Haciéndose eco del debate isabelino entre los defensores y detractores de la traducción, su prefacio nos da información muy valiosa acerca de las diferentes interpretaciones que había en época isabelina sobre

el papel de la traducción. Florio, situándose en el papel de “padre adoptivo,” pone en primer plano la idea de la traducción como una reescritura del texto original que da lugar a una creación nueva. Mientras que la mayor parte de los críticos se han centrado solamente en la amplificación del texto de Montaigne que hace Florio y su afición por expandir, por la paráfrasis y la aliteración, el presente artículo intenta demostrar que esta dimensión de su traducción se ve complementada frecuentemente por su tendencia a reproducir el texto muy de cerca, a veces incluso palabra por palabra.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** John Florio, *Les Essais* de Montaigne, teoría y práctica de la traducción isabelina, reescritura, afición por las palabras, traducción literal.

#### RESUMO

Este artigo considera a famosa tradução dos *Ensaïos* de Montaigne por John Florio como uma fonte de grande valor para o entendimento da prática e teorização isabelina da tradução. Numa carta dirigida ao leitor, Florio defende enfaticamente o uso da tradução como modo de promover o conhecimento e desenvolver a língua e a cultura de uma nação. Fazendo-se eco do debate isabelino entre os defensores e os detractores da tradução, o seu prefácio oferece informação preciosa sobre os vários entendimentos isabelinos do papel da tradução. Atribuindo-se o papel de um “pai adoptivo”, Florio dá saliência à ideia da tradução como reescrita do texto original conducente a uma nova criação. Enquanto a maior parte dos estudiosos tem colocado a ênfase apenas na amplificação por Florio do texto de Montaigne e no seu gosto pelo acrescento, a paráfrase e a aliteração, o presente ensaio visa demonstrar que esta dimensão da sua tradução é frequentemente complementada pela tendência de Florio para verter o texto com grande literalidade, por vezes palavra a palavra.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** John Florio, *Ensaïos* de Montaigne, teoria e prática isabelina da tradução, reescrita, preferências lexicais, tradução literal.

#### Notes

Paul J.C.M. Franssen, *Sites of transgression: The suburbs and the city in Thomas Dekker's Shoemaker's Holiday*

#### RESUMEN

La oposición binaria, típica de la temprana edad moderna, entre la virtuosa Ciudad de Londres frente a los suburbios pecaminosos choca con otra binariedad aún más antigua, la que contrapone el campo a la ciudad. Al mismo tiempo, las fuerzas de urbanización junto con los comienzos del capitalismo socavaban ambas binariedades. Este artículo estudia cómo el reflejo de esta situación en la obra de Thomas Dekker *The Shoemaker's*

*Holiday*. La obra no solo representa la Ciudad de Londres bajo el mandato de Simon Eyre como potencial poseedora de todas las virtudes pastorales, sino que además sugiere que el campo que la rodea (en concreto, la villa de Old Ford) se veía corrompida por los valores urbanos. La obra de Dekker, por lo tanto, deconstruye las dicotomías simples entre el campo y la ciudad mostrando cómo ambas se influyen mutuamente de forma inevitablemente.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, comedia urbana, campo, ciudad.

#### RESUMO

A oposição binário, própria dos inícios da Idade Moderna, entre a virtuosa *City* londrina e os subúrbios pecaminosos colide com dualismo mais antigo, o que opunha o campo à cidade. Ao mesmo tempo, as forças da urbanização que acompanham o proto-capitalismo minavam qualquer dessas oposições. Este artigo estuda os reflexos deste processo em *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, de Thomas Dekker. A peça não só representa a Cidade de Londres sob o governo de Simon Eyre como potencialmente detentora de todas as virtudes pastoris como também sugere que o campo em seu redor, e em particular a aldeia de Old Ford, estava a deixar-se corromper por valores urbanos. A peça de Dekker, portanto, desconstrói dicotomias simples entre o campo e a cidade, mostrando a sua inevitável influência mútua.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, comédia de cidade, campo, cidade.



Keith Gregor, Disaster and after: *Hamlet* as metaphor in Fin-de-Siècle Spain

#### RESUMEN

Se estudian los encarnizados debates filosóficos que surgieron en España tras la derrota naval de 1898 ante Estados Unidos, con la consiguiente pérdida de las últimas colonias en el Caribe y el Pacífico. Oponiéndose a lo que la prensa nacional presentó como parálisis y pesimismo con efectos debilitadores, resultado de la humillación a manos de un poder tremendamente superior y más avanzado tecnológicamente, un grupo de intelectuales conocido como "la generación del 98" inició una ruidosa campaña, dirigida a relanzar la identidad cultural, económica y social del país, en la que se caracterizaba imaginariamente a la nación española como una especie de Hamlet esperando la llegada de Fortinbrás. Se analizan diversas implicaciones del tropo "España-Hamlet", sobre todo a la luz del muy escaso impacto teatral de la obra durante el cambio de siglo. Entre las paradojas que rodean a este tropo no es la menos considerable el que se usara con fines tan opuestos entre sí: como metáfora de la decadencia de la vida social y política española, como fuente de inspiración para invocar la

regeneración, como forma de narrativizar la disolución de la nación-estado, como forma de enmarcar la cuestión de la unidad nacional.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, España, Generación del 98, prensa nacional, metáfora, narrativización.

#### RESUMO

Este artigo explora os acesos debates filosóficos que tiveram lugar em Espanha na sequência da derrota pelos EUA em 1898 e da subsequente perda das últimas colónias que o país detinha nas Caraíbas e no Pacífico. Perante o que a imprensa nacional apresentou como um pessimismo e uma paralisia debilitantes – em consequência da humilhação sofrida às mãos de uma potência superior e tecnologicamente avançada – um grupo de intelectuais conhecido como a “Geração de 98” lançou uma campanha estridente que visava refundar a identidade social, económica e cultural da nação, sendo a nação espanhola imaginativamente proposta como uma espécie de Hamlet que aguardava a chegada de Fortinbras. O artigo considera as várias implicações do tropo de Espanha como Hamlet, em especial à luz do impacto mínimo que a peça encontrou na produção cultural da viragem do século. Reconhece-se particular importância a um dos paradoxos que rodeiam tal imagem – aquele que resulta do seu emprego contraditório: ora uma metáfora para a decadência da vida social e política de Espanha, ora uma fonte de inspiração para o apelo à sua regeneração; ora um modo de narrativizar o colapso do estado-nação, ora uma forma de enquadrar a questão da unidade nacional.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Espanha, Geração de 98, imprensa nacional, metáfora, narrativização.