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The Wooden O Symposium is a cross-disciplinary conference that explores Medieval and Renaissance studies through the text and performance of Shakespeare's plays. The symposium is conducted the first week of August in Cedar City, Utah, and coincides with the Utah Shakespearean Festival's summer season. Three plays from Shakespeare's canon are performed each summer in the Adams Memorial Shakespearean Theatre, a unique performance space modeled after the Globe Theatre, Shakespeare's own "Wooden O."

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Investing in Matrimony: Loss and Gain in *The Merchant of Venice*

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After learning of Antonio's bond forfeiture and his role in Bassanio's successful courtship, Portia declares to her newly espoused husband that he "shall have gold / To pay the petty debt twenty times over" (3.2.305-306) to ease his "unquiet soul" (3.2.305) over one whose risk-taking has enabled their soon-to-be realized union.[1] While Portia's generosity may be read as concern for her husband, gratitude for a friend's selfless sacrifice, or an act of Christian mercy, it likewise constitutes a personal investment in her matrimonial future. That she will travel to Venice disguised as the learnèd young doctor Balthasar to protect that which is her own reveals much about not only the riskiness of her investment, but perhaps more importantly, her determination to protect herself from emotional as well as economic loss.

My paper examines the function of early modern investing in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, a play crowded with investment schemes: from the merchant Antonio's sea-based ventures, to his underwriting of Bassanio's uncertain matrimonial enterprise, to Shylock's perverse plot for revenge against Christians. Investing, which assumed its current economic nuance at the beginning of the seventeenth century with the formation of the East India Company and the expansion of global trade, necessitates loss before profit may be realized. While Portia's gains are less economic than emotional, I would argue that the two intersect in Antonio and Bassanio's complicated and compromising relationship. I conclude that Portia is forced to invest in her risky venture to secure an unencumbered matrimonial future.

Investing as an economic concept may be traced to the increase of English global trade at the early part of the seventeenth century. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *invest*, meaning "to employ (money) in the purchase of anything from which interest or profit is expected," was probably derived from the Italian *investire*, meaning to "laie out or emploie ones money vpon anie bargaine for aduantage," recorded, interestingly enough, in *A Worlde of Wordes*, an Italian/English dictionary compiled by John Florio in 1598.[2] As the *OED* further notes, the earliest English usage of *invest* as an economic term was most likely by trade companies such as the East India, which was established by charter in 1600.

The term *invest* had also been associated with clothing, meaning "to clothe, robe, or envelop (a person) *in* or *with* a garment or article of clothing." It is perhaps no coincidence that early modern England's primary trade involved clothing. As K. N. Chaudhuri has noted, "In the sixteenth and indeed in much of the seventeenth century as well, the commodity structure of English exports was dominated by one single item, the woollen manufactures. These were changed in return for other European finished goods, mainly linen, the products of the Mediterranean countries, wine, oil, fruits, and in times of scarcity, corn and the naval stores from the Baltic countries."[3] Companies such as the East India traded England's primary export for more desirable commodities, which were then re-traded for profit. It is here that we see the connection between the two meanings of *invest*. In her fascinating study on global economics and the early modern stage, Valerie Forman notes what she calls the "transformative" nature of investing. As she argues, "The explicit etymological connection between clothing and the outlay of money in the expectation of profit lies in their shared transformative possibilities: to 'invest' is to give capital another form."[4] Trading woollens for wines or linens transforms a less lucrative national product into imported commodities which can then be resold for a profit. As Gerrard de Malynes, an early modern English trade merchant notes, "The benefit or profit of exchange is never known directly, but by the rechange thereof."[5] Both early modern usages of *invest*, I argue, manifest themselves in *The Merchant of Venice*.

Investment, as those involved in the stock market know, necessarily involves risk. Whatever money is laid down in the hopes of securing a profit is likewise more than susceptible to loss. Indeed, as Forman notes of early modern trading, "The very means for conducting long distance overseas trade—that is, the necessary expenditures—were themselves understood as losses."[6] Every coin that left the realm not only carried loss potential in overseas trading in the form of shipwreck, piracy, or poor exchange, but in and of itself also constituted loss. This was because coinage, in addition to woollen exports, was required to complete overseas transactions. Chaudhuri observes, in fact, that "the process of building up the whole network of trade had involved dispatching annually large fleets to the Indies with equally large stock of capital."[7] This meant that vast quantities of England's very limited coinage were being routinely carried from the country with no guarantee of return, let alone profit. Judith Anderson notes that "in the Jacobean economy a drain of silver could be catastrophic, whether or not it coincided with a net drain of bullion, because it meant that 'the effective quantity of money' was significantly reduced. For most daily purposes, silver simply '*was* money.'"[8] And as Craig Muldrew has shown, clipping, hoarding and counterfeiting, all a result of the coin shortage, further exacerbated early modern economic woes, making it increasingly difficult to transact within the domestic marketplace.[9] Simply, global trade investment, which necessarily depleted precious, limited economic resources in the hope of future profit, constituted significant economic loss. Early modern investment schemes thus involved rewriting present loss as future gain.

Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* is crowded with investment schemes. This is perhaps unremarkable, given the play's location in what was once considered a center of global trade. Nevertheless, I think it instructive to examine briefly how economic investment informs the interrelated social interactions that trouble this play. Perhaps the most obvious place to begin is with the merchant Antonio, whose many ships, as Salerio rather idyllically states,

> like signors and rich burghers on the flood—
> Or as it were the pageants of the sea—
> Do overpeer the petty traffickers
> That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
> As they fly by them with their woven wings. (1.1.10-14)

In other words, virtually all of Antonio's cash flow is invested in his "argosies" (1.1.9), the result being that when Bassanio, his friend and kinsman, requests the loan of three thousand ducats to pursue his own investment scheme, this wealthy merchant has literally nothing to spare. As Antonio reminds Bassanio, "Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea, / Neither have I money nor commodity / To raise a present sum" (1.1.177-79). While his potential returns are great, the risk of shipwreck on "dangerous rocks" (1.1.31), as well as his currently depleted coffers, illustrates well the loss inherent to investment.

Antonio's loss proves Bassanio's as well, as this would-be suitor scrambles to locate the necessary coinage to fund his own investment scheme. "In Belmont is a lady richly left" (1.1.161), Bassanio tells Antonio, and were his benefactor to provide "the means" (1.1.173) by which he might "hold a rival place" (1.1.174) to the other suitors, this would-be lover "should questionless be fortunate" (1.1.176). The problem, of course, is that Bassanio has previously "disabled" (1.1.123) his fortune, the result being that he lacks the means to fund this potentially lucrative venture. Bassanio thus appeals to his creditor:

> . . . if you please
> To shoot another arrow that self way
> Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
> As I will watch the aim, or to find both
> Or bring your latter hazard back again,
> And thankfully rest debtor for the first. (1.1.147-52)

"To find both," to recoup this investment as well as previous losses, would ensure the profit conceivably necessary to secure an investor's commitment to an arguably risky venture. As Phyllis Rackin observes, "Bassanio's venture, like Antonio's, requires money to finance it and, like Antonio's, it holds the potential for fabulous profit."[10] Yet in many respects it matters little that Bassanio has squandered his own fortune and thus is forced to approach his benefactor for a loan. Even if he possessed the necessary means to travel to Belmont in search of this "golden fleece" (1.1.170), Bassanio would still be engaged in a risky investment scheme. Even to woo Portia is to risk substantial loss in the uncertain hope of future gain.

Profit may, of course, be realized in many ways. While Bassanio clearly seeks the riches Portia possesses, he undoubtedly also desires the love and affection of one to whom he is obviously attracted. Antonio's indebtedness is likewise motivated by more than the return of his investments in one of highly questionable risk. Indeed, his investment in such a one constitutes less an act of Christian charity than the desire to assist one, again and again, for whom he clearly feels deep and abiding affection. Bassanio observes, "To you, Antonio, / I owe the most in money and in *love*" (1.1.130-31; my emphasis). That love, I would argue, is very much returned.

Profit of another kind likewise motivates the Jew Shylock to invest, however indirectly, in Bassanio's matrimonial venture. When Antonio instructs Bassanio to "go presently enquire, and so will I, / Where money is" (1.1.183-84), it becomes readily apparent that there really is no other option than to approach one for whom he has long expressed open disdain. That Shylock, who returns the merchant's hatred, nevertheless agrees to the loan *sans* his customary interest payment reveals much about the nature of profit, as well as the means by which it may be obtained within the world of the play. Reflecting upon the abuses he has received from the Christian Antonio, Shylock declares, "If I can catch him once upon the hip / I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him" (1.3.41-42). Profit, it would appear, comes in many forms. In return for the loan of three thousand ducats, a doubly risky venture based on the risks of sea-trading as well as Bassanio's uncertain matrimonial enterprise, Shylock stipulates no interest. Default, however, promises rich reward, as the Jew hopes to capitalize through revenge on one he hates with a deep and abiding passion. Anderson has suggested speculative investment of the kind proposed by Shylock functions as a "not-so-veiled form of usury."[11] The pound of flesh would, in fact, more than compensate for the risks incurred with this investment. The irony, of course, is that even the usurious Shylock has to borrow from the Jewish community to secure the funds needed for his ultimately too-risky investment.

Last, and for the purposes of this paper, perhaps most important, there is Portia. Our first introduction to the "lady richly left" is as a tradable commodity in a global market. She is the "golden fleece" for whom "many Jasons" (1.1.172) take to the sea in hopes of rich reward. Peter Holland argues that "venture capitalism in a context of mercantilist culture was the risky but often remarkably successful route to wealth."[12] The risks are indeed severe. Failure to select the correct casket results not only in lost venture capital, but perhaps even worse, in the inability ever again "to woo a maid in way of marriage" (2.9.43). If marriage constitutes the means by which wealth is obtained, as proves the case in the *Merchant of Venice*, then the losses suffered by Portia's unsuccessful suitors prove irrecoverable. Witness the devastation both of Morocco and Aragon when each in turn fails to choose correctly. Portia proves too costly a commodity for those who fail in this trade venture. She remains, nevertheless, a virtual siren, promising infinite wealth to the one who prevails in this enterprise. As Holland further comments, "Unlike Antonio, who spreads the risk by having a whole series of different ships out at sea, a fleet of ventures, Bassanio will sink all his money [or at least that of his creditor] in one last-ditch effort to extricate himself from debt."[13] At the same time, however, Portia proves a motivated investor in her own right. If Bassanio's objective is to secure through marriage lucrative returns on his and Antonio's risky investments, Portia's is to ensure that he who successfully claims the prize proves worthy of so costly an endeavor.

Even before she travels to Venice to ensure Antonio's release, Portia invests in her matrimonial future. Indeed, her attempts to manipulate her father's lottery may be read as acts of investment. Corinne Abate has argued that "given her stalwart refusal to break the rules of the test. . . [Portia] would not resort to . . . outright cheating."[14] Neither, however, would she be above placing "a deep / glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket" (1.2.80-81) as the drunken German stumbles toward it, or sounding suggestive music "while [Bassanio] doth make his choice" (3.2.43). While it may well be argued that these represent tactics of the kind described by Michel de Certeau—subtle subversions practiced by the weak—Portia's actions, actual, proposed, or fantasized, likewise constitute attempts to ensure a favorable matrimonial outcome.[15] One may argue that the late Lord of Belmont's casket test is itself a venture, with all the attendant risks, to ensure that his daughter is not carted off as prize commodity without the appropriate valuation, i.e., love. The problem is that despite Nerissa's assurances that she "will never be chosen by any rightly but one who you [Portia] shall rightly love" (1.2.27-28), the lottery is a literal crap shoot. Portia could very well be claimed by the likes of Morocco, Aragon, or any of a multitude of undesirable suitors who crowd her door. Rackin suggests that "Portia's marriage to Morocco (or to any of the foreigners, for that matter) would send her father's wealth in the wrong direction, creating, as it were, an unfavorable balance of trade."[16] To minimize potential losses and to ensure that she profits in the exchange, Portia invests in appropriate strategies to ensure an outcome favorable to her needs.

Such an outcome is, of course, not immediately forthcoming. Despite a fairy tale ending to the casket test, despite the fact that the one she favors chooses correctly, Portia's matrimonial enterprise remains very much in doubt at the conclusion of her late father's lottery. While, as Mark Netzloff notes, Portia's wealth is "not tied to the same forces of scarcity and devaluation as those of the characters situated in the economic realm of Venice," she nevertheless risks losing her investment.[17] Emotional commitments strain Bassanio's already considerable economic obligations to Antonio, threatening in turn Portia's increasingly costly venture. That she follows Bassanio to Venice after instructing her newly espoused husband to pay "double six thousand, and then treble" (3.2.299), that "never shall [Bassanio] lie by Portia's side / With an unquiet soul" (3.2.304-305), constitutes not only concern for the friend of her newly claimed love; it reveals, I would argue, a continuing uncertainty regarding the outcome of her investment.

That Portia dons the clothing of the "young and learnèd doctor" (4.1.143) Balthasar proves important in terms of her evolving investment strategies. As previously noted, one of the OED's first economic usages of the term "to invest" involved clothing. Forman links this to the early modern England trade in woollens, the idea being that trading companies first had to "transform" this less desirable export into something with greater profit potential.[18] While Portia may be the object of her many suitors' desire, her great wealth proves of little consequence to the Venetian court charged with hearing Shylock's case. Portia thus "transforms" from "the lady richly left," from "golden fleece" (itself an allusion to woollens) into the learnèd Balthasar, who alone possesses the sharply honed analytical and rhetorical skills necessary to win Antonio's and, ultimately, Bassanio's release. Anderson has noted the conflation of economics and dress, suggesting that "the idea of investment as the bestowal, possession, or acquisition of rights and powers . . . slides readily into the idea of dressing for advantage and thence into that of financial investment."[19] Dressing for success, indeed, would seem to take on a whole new meaning in *The Merchant of Venice*. In the end, Portia travels in disguise to Venice, less to amuse herself at the expense of "bragging Jacks" (3.4.77), as her light-hearted banter with Nerissa would seem to suggest, than to ensure that her too-new love returns to Belmont emotionally, as well as economically, unencumbered.

Portia's investments are not, of course, limited to her appearance at the Duke's court. Even before she learns of Bassanio's encumbrances, even before she offers restitution on Antonio's defaulted bond, indeed, even before she travels to Venice as the reedy-voiced Balthasar to secure the merchant's release, Portia invests quite calculatingly in her future. The ring she offers to Bassanio represents, in fact, as clear an act of investing as any in the text. If Shylock's bond becomes the material representation of Bassanio's costly investment, then the ring Portia offers up to her triumphant suitor represents the risk this heiress takes in yielding herself (not to mention her house and servants, indeed all that she owns) to one she ultimately knows not well. As she declares,

> I give them [the house, servants and herself] with this ring,
> Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
> Let it presage the ruin of your love,
> And be my vantage to exclaim on you. (3.2.171-74)

Clearly, Portia's risks are still considerable, despite her father's extraordinary attempt to insure otherwise. Both materially and emotionally, the ring constitutes an object of great worth. In and of itself, it is comprised of precious metal, which underscores Portia's considerable material investment. Despite Bassanio's dismissive comment to the contrary, that the ring "is a trifle" and thus not worth the giving, it nevertheless represents Portia's investment in a profitable future (4.2.426). As Holland observes, "The ring signifies a transfer of wealth, of status, of love, and, not least important of Portia herself."[20] It is perhaps no coincidence that Portia describes the ring's potential loss as "ruin." To "part from, lose, or give [the ring] away" becomes equivalent to Antonio losing one of his ships on "dangerous rocks" (1.1.31). It points, in other words, to the loss potential inherent to investing.

That Bassanio does, in fact, "part from" the ring proves significant in terms of the play's prevailing investment motif. If, as Forman argues, investing always involves loss, then the loss of the ring would seem necessary before Portia may realize gain. While she does not exactly initiate the ring's "loss," Portia deliberately tests Bassanio's devotion. Following Balthasar's triumph at the Venetian court, Bassanio attempts to reward the "young and learnèd" doctor for his service. After first refusing payment for service rendered, Portia as Balthasar finally demands the ring. Declaring, "You press me far, and therefore I will yield" (4.2.421), she tells Bassanio, "And for your love I'll take this ring from you. / Do not draw back your hand. I'll take no more. / And you in love shall not deny me this" (4.2.423-25). Perhaps Portia makes this demand given Bassanio's rather disturbing assertion earlier, that he would "sacrifice" his wife to secure the release of his friend (4.1.281). In any case, the demand seems motivated by her desire to test his suddenly questionable devotion. Forman suggests that "fundamental to capitalism and the concept of investment in particular is that the expenditure itself—what you invest—is what is productive of future profits."[21] That Portia purposely engineers Bassanio's failure to secure his future loyalty reveals an intent to render her risky investment profitable in the end.

Following his return to Belmont, the much anticipated confrontation between Portia and Bassanio takes place. Upon "learning" that her husband has given the ring to the "civil doctor" (5.1.209), Portia threatens Bassanio with cuckoldry:

> . . .Watch me like an Argus,
> If you do not, if I be left alone,
> Now by mine honour, which is yet mine own,
> I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow. (5.1.229-32)

Portia's ruse is clearly a clever one; she essentially threatens to sleep with herself. At the same time, what such a threat forces from Bassanio is explicit assurance that he "will never more break an oath with [her]" (5.1.247). Netzloff argues that "by enabling the play's closure through the resolution of the ring exchange, Portia attempts to extricate marriage and the familial household at Belmont from homosocial networks of exchange at Venice."[22] Indeed, Portia's profit from her risky investment ultimately comes not through increased wealth or even through a stop loss to her virtually infinite assets. Rather, this wealthy heiress, now wife to the yet squandering Bassanio, profits through assurances of her husband's future devotion.

It is perhaps no coincidence that *The Merchant of Venice* was first performed in 1600, the same year the East India Trading Company was chartered. Indeed, the text notably participates in the global trading phenomenon that ushered in the seventeenth century, which, while promising great profit, carried extraordinary risk. For as Forman and others have noted, future profit necessitated present loss. In his sermon entitled, *The Spiritual Navigator* (1615), Thomas Adams decries what he sees as the greed motivating global trade, declaring, "How many Ships have bene thus cast away! How many Merchants hopes thus split? They call their vessels by many prosperous names: as the Successe, the Good speed, the Triumph, the Safeguard; How vaine doth one Rocke prove all these titles!"[23] His sermon functions as a cautionary against the profit associated with trade in light of the inherent risks assumed by those who choose to participate within it.

While Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* supports the principle underlying investment, the text also represents it as a risky, however necessary, enterprise. Indeed, it becomes the means by which fortunes are made or lost: by which the virtuous may be rewarded and the unscrupulous punished. While Bassanio eventually claims the matrimonial prize, the ventures of Portia's other suitors are, so to speak, dashed upon the rocks. Antonio is redeemed; Shylock is justly condemned. It is, however, Portia who undertakes, perhaps, the riskiest venture of them all. Indeed, her investments in Antonio as well as her squandering husband ultimately become the means through which she at last may realize an unencumbered and thus profitable matrimonial future.

Notes

1. William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, in *The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al. (New York: W. W.

Norton and Company, 1997), 1090-1144. All in-text citations refer to this edition.

2. John Florio, *A Worlde of Wordes, or Most Copious and Exact Dictionarie in Italian and English* (London: Arnold Hatfield, for Edw Blount, 1598).

3. K. N. Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: The Study of An Early Joint-Stock Company 1600-1640* (London: Frank Cass, 1965), 5.

4. Valerie Forman, *Tragicomic Redemptions: Global Economics and the Early Modern English Stage* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 51.

5. Gerrard de Malynes, *Consuetudo, vel, Lex Mercatoria: or, The Law Merchant* (London, 1622), quoted in Judith H. Anderson, *Translating Investments: Metaphor and the Dynamic of Cultural Change in Tudor-Stuart England* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 167.

6. Forman, *Tragicomic Redemptions*, 3.

7. Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, 18.

8. Judith H. Anderson, *Translating Investments: Metaphor and the Dynamic of Cultural Change in Tudor-Stuart England* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 176.

9. Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 99-100.

10. Phyllis Rackin, "The Impact of Global Trade in *The Merchant of Venice*," Shakespeare-Jahrbuch 138, no.1 (2002): 73-88, 80.

11. Anderson, *Translating Investments*, 199.

12. Peter Holland, "*The Merchant of Venice* and the Value of Money," *Cahiers Élisabethains* 60, no. 1 (2001): 13-30, 19.

13. Ibid., 19-20.

14. Corinne S. Abate, "'Nerissa teaches me what to believe': Portia's Wifely Empowerment in *The Merchant of Venice*," in *The Merchant of Venice: New Critical Essays*, ed. John W. Mahon and Ellen Macleod Mahon (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 290.

15. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 29-42, 37.

16. Rackin, "The Impact of Global Trade," 85.

17. Mark Netzloff, "The Lead Casket: Capital, Mercantilism, and *The Merchant of Venice*," in *Money and the Age of Shakespeare: Essays in Economic Criticism*, ed. Linda Woodbridge (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 167.

18. Forman, *Tragicomic Redemptions*, 51.

19. Anderson, *Translating Investments*, 23.

20. Holland, "*The Merchant of Venice and the Value of Money*," 27.

21. Forman, *Tragicomic Redemptions*, 44.

22. Netzloff, "The Lead Casket," 168.

23. Thomas Adams, *The Blacke Devil or the Apostate, Together with the Wolfe Worrying the Lambes, ande the Spiritual Navigator, Bound for the Holy Land, In Three Sermons* (London: William Jaggard, 1615), 25.

"To Free-Town, Our Common Judgement Place": Commoners in *Romeo and Juliet*

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Although the bulk of Shakespeare's plays open with characters of the noble class on stage, five open with commoners. In each case, the commoner characters direct our gaze and focus our attention on the issue at hand. The device is used frequently throughout Shakespeare's canon: the commoner character is presented matter-of-factly and sympathetically, with little affect and sometimes with little development, and thus serves a similar role to that of the Chorus in a Sophocles play, leading a commoner audience member to recognize the nature of the conflict in the play at hand.

In *Coriolanus* we meet an angry crowd, Citizens who are starving and who blame Caius Martius, who will become Coriolanus, for their condition. Although some scholars argue for an ambivalent audience response to this protagonist, using evidence from points later in the play, a commoner audience member would be attuned to his flaw, his culpability, his propensity toward ego and selfishness because they identify with the commoners who describe him this way in this first interaction with these characters. *Timon of Athens* and *Julius Caesar* both begin with tradesmen: in *Timon*, a Poet, Painter, Jeweler, and Mercer comment on Fortune and on those whom Fortune favors, like Timon, already precursing his fall as Fortune's wheel turns; in *Julius Caesar*, a Carpenter and Cobbler celebrate Caesar, prepossessing the audience toward compassion for the leader besieged by other leaders envious of his power and popularity. *Antony and Cleopatra* is loaded with commoners, and the two who open the play, Demetrius and Philo, do not appear again (in fact, Demetrius does not speak even here). Philo delivers the famous assessment of Antony, "the triple pillar of the world transformed into a strumpet's fool" (1.1.12-13),[1] focusing our gaze on an Antony already overthrown by love.

Romeo and Juliet begins, of course, with a sonnet, the first four lines of which are, "Two households, both alike in dignity, / In fair Verona, where we lay our scene, / From ancient grudge break to new mutiny, / Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean." When we consider a commoner audience member's response, two words stand out in this first quatrain, *dignity* and *civil*. In Shakespeare's age, an age in which Shakespeare himself purchases his coat of arms and right to the title *gentleman*, *dignity* connotes estate, position, rank, as designated by the remaining vestiges of feudalism that still marked Elizabethan English society, as well as the worth and merit that English people were recognizing as the characteristics of dignity and that even Elizabeth I, and more so her successor James I, would use to promote a greater and greater number of commoners to the ranks of the gentle. *Civil* reminds Shakespeare's audience of the social civility necessary for citizens in community. "Civil blood" cannot but stain "civil hands": in *Richard II*, Richard decries the "civil and uncivil arms" that are rising up against him (3.3.102), the legitimate monarch, reinforcing the general sense of the need for overall civility implied in this play's prologue as well.

Peter Herman, in his article, "Tragedy and Crisis of Authority in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*," points to the *Mirror for Magistrates* and the tradition of Elizabethan tragedy that grows from it as upholding the aristocratic power structures and advocating an "unambiguously didactic" precept: "Avoid corruption, either moral or political," Herman paraphrases, "or you will face terrible consequences."[2] Herman, following Auden and other twentieth-century critics, represents *Romeo and Juliet*'s critique of the aristocracy as one intended for an aristocratic consumer. As numerous scholars, including Arthur F. Kinney in *Shakespeare by Stages*, point out, though, a substantial proportion of Shakespeare's audiences in the 1590s were commoners.[3] If we reconsider *Romeo and Juliet* from the perspective of a commoner theater-goer, we redirect our gaze from what Herman calls "an interrogation machine" that concentrates on "established authority" and "spares nobody"[4] toward a critique of what in Shakespeare's "more or less contemporary"[5] play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is called "ancient privilege" (1.1.42), not for, but by that commoner audience. Although the commoners in *Romeo and Juliet* are not unaffected by the failures of the aristocracy which they serve, they are not the subject of the play's critique; rather it is the commoners' judgment that Shakespeare courts through his representations of commoners within this play.

As the play proper begins, we meet Sampson and Gregory, two of the civility, the citizen commoners, these two in the employ of the Capulets. Sampson begins the play with, "Gregory, o'my word, we'll not carry coals" (1.1.1), an idiomatic expression that to the Elizabethan audience means, simply, "We are not going to do pointless work." (The expression comes from an allusive phrase, to "carry coal to Newcastle," Newcastle being a major coal-mining center in England as far back as the Middle Ages: it's pointless to take coal to a place full of coal.) This *in medias res* assertion suggests Sampson's frustration at his and Gregory's occupation and would undoubtedly pique the curiosity of Shakespeare's audience. Although some scholars argue that Gregory's response to Sampson, "No, for then we should be colliers" (1.1.2), is another allusive joke, based on a 1591 "cony-catching" treatise by humorist Robert Greene, it seems more probable that Gregory is simply being simple, taking Sampson's remark literally, and agreeing that becoming a "collier," a coal-carrier, is something he would refuse to do—something below his standing and station as a retainer in a noble household. Sampson tries to bring Gregory up to speed, explaining, "I mean, if we be in choler" (that is, if we have some reason to be angry), then "we'll draw" (1.1.3), then we'd be willing to draw our swords and fight)—but only then, not because of something pointless.

Gregory still doesn't seem to get it, mistaking *choler*, the common word for "anger," or too much fire or yellow bile in one's constitution, for *collar*, being collared, being grabbed by the authorities after committing a crime: "Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o'th'collar" (1.1.4). Sampson thinks he's got Gregory on track and remarks, "I strike quickly, being moved," and Gregory knows exactly where Sampson is now, "But thou art not quickly moved to strike" (1.1.5-6), reiterating Sampson's first remark of the scene, that he will not "carry coals," or participate in a pointless endeavor. Rather, he would only "strike," "being moved" to do so by something relevant to him.

It is in line 7 that Sampson first introduces the Montagues: "A dog of the house of Montague moves me." Sampson may be posturing in reference to the "quarrel" between the Capulets and Montagues, or he may be mocking it ironically, playing on dogs' low status in Elizabethan households. Gregory takes Sampson's "move" remark as a joke, "To move is to stir: and to be valiant is to stand: therefore, if thou art moved, thou runn'st away" (1.1.8-9), jesting on Sampson's ambivalence and propensity not to want to "carry coals." Sampson's remark suggests the extent of his commitment to the feud with the Montagues: "I will take the wall," or walk in the safe part of the street, by the wall and out of the gutter into which things like chamberpots and pointless feuds are emptied, "of," or away from "any man or maid of Montague's" (1.1.10-11). Gregory teases Sampson for acting womanly—a common gendered jest in Shakespeare—since a gentleman insists that a lady "take the wall" (1.1.12). This paves the way for Sampson's punch line, "True, and therefore women being the weaker vessels are ever thrust to the wall: therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall" (1.1.13-15), turning the ongoing conversation about fighting, "draw"-ing, away from violence and toward the topic of gratuitous sexual gratification. A few lines later, Sampson finishes the jest, saying that he will "show myself a tyrant" and "cut off" the "heads" of the "maids" (1.1.17-18), to Gregory's brief shock (further evidence that Gregory has no interest in violence), which is relieved by Sampson's "their maidenheads" (1.1.20), explaining his joke to the conventionally slow-on-the-uptake Gregory. Sampson is sure that the Montague "maids" will enjoy him because "'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh" (1.1.24-25). More often than not, Sampson punctuates this with the appropriate Shakespearean codpiece-grab.

Interjected into the middle of Sampson's self-appreciation of his sexual attractiveness and prowess is Gregory's summation of their situation: "The Quarrle is between our masters / And us their men" (1.1.16). Gregory may be implying that the "quarrel" is a class conflict between "masters" and "men," commoners, but I think it more likely that he means that the feud between the Capulets and Montagues is that of "our masters," and that Sampson and Gregory are merely "their men," forced by social inferiority and servitude to participate in a "quarrel" that is not their own. At this point, we understand Sampson's *in medias res* remark: these two men do not want to participate in the pointless posturings and activities that are a part of their job as Capulet servants. Sampson responds to Gregory's remark by saying "'Tis all one" (1.1.17). Although Herman paraphrases the remark as meaning that "there is no difference between" the "masters" and "men,"[6] it seems more likely that the idiom represents Sampson's ambivalence regarding the situation, the feud, as well as his social position, one that by its nature reinforces the difference between "masters" and "men." This response demonstrates that Sampson's posturing in that "quarrel" is performative rather than heartfelt. "'Tis all one" because these two men have no choice but to participate, and no investment in this "quarrel."

Here, the discourse shifts again, triggered by the entrance of Abraham and Balthasar, two commoners in the employ of the Montagues. Sampson articulates his ambivalence regarding the Montague/Capulet feud by saying to Gregory in an aside, "Let us take the law of our sides: let them begin" (1.1.31), the same kind of joke that Lysander, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, makes when he tells Demetrius, "You have her father's love, Demetrius: / Let me have Hermia's. Do you marry him" (1.1.95-96). Neither Gregory nor Sampson wants a confrontation, since this is the "quarrel" of "our masters," not of "their men." Sampson says to Abraham, "I serve as good a man as you," and Abraham responds, "No better?" (1.1.43-44), reflecting some surprise that Sampson is not in the usual performative Capulet/Montague "quarrel" posture. Sampson reinforces his ambivalence in his response, "Well . . . sir," (1.1.45), or "*Well*, sir," or "Well, sir." Sampson's "as good a man" shows that he has little or no investment in the feud, and his "Well, sir," demonstrates his unwillingness even to enter into this kind of an argument with a man he knows is his equal.

With the entrance of the Montague nobleman Benvolio, whom Gregory sees first, Gregory suddenly urges Sampson to change his discourse again, this time to the bellicose anti-Montague performative rhetoric that Abraham had expected just before. It is only because the nobleman is present that the commoners begin to fight. Sampson tells Gregory to "remember thy [s]washing blow" (1.1.49), alluding to a fencing—not fighting—stroke that is particularly grand: perform well for the nobleman, Sampson is saying to Gregory, since such performance is what is expected, even required, of them. Even Benvolio seems to think that this kind of fighting under the aegis of the Capulet/Montague "quarrel" is unmerited, if not pointless: "Part fools! Put up your swords, you know not what you do," he says (1.1.50). From our perspective, the perspective of the commoner audience, with a strong understanding of the purpose and use of dramatic irony, we recognize that at least the Montague servingmen, and probably the Capulet ones as well—although they are men of few words—do, in fact, "know" "what [they] do," and are doing it because it is expected of them—"swashing blows" for a good show.

The discourse changes abruptly again when Tybalt, the Capulet, enters. Tybalt addresses Benvolio, "What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?" (1.1.51), criticizing Benvolio for "draw"-ing—or just being—"among these heartless hinds." Whether Tybalt is calling the servants, the commoners—Montague and Capulet alike—compassionless ("heartless"), effeminate (female deer, or hinds), ungoverned ("hart-less hinds," female deer without a male deer ruler), or mere followers ("hinds," those be-"hind" the "heart"-y or "heart"-ed), he is separating Tybalt and Benvolio, the nobles, from the citizens, the commoners. Tybalt and Benvolio fight with each other, and more "citizens" enter with an "Officer" who in both the Second Quarto and the Folio is assigned the lines, "Strike! Beat them down! Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!" (Consistently editors credit these lines to the "citizens," as Herman does.[7] The lines are not included at all in the First Quarto.)

This opening sequence is intended to emphasize the division between the commoners and the nobility: the commoners in Montague and Capulet employ know that this "quarrel" is not theirs; the Citizens will "beat" "down" fighters on either side of the Capulet/Montague feud, whether noble or common. Sampson may be concerned about "the law," but the first representative of it, the "Officer," suggests that "the law" simply rejects feuding ("Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!"), nobility being no exception.

The general dismissal of bad behavior among the nobility is reinforced with the next entrance, this time of, first, "Old Capulet in his Gowne, and his Wife," and then "Old Montague and his

Wife." Stage directions are scant in Quarto and Folio Shakespeare, but the Folio includes the phrase "in his Gowne": When Shakespeare intends *gown* to refer to the attire of a male justice or a ruler, he uses a descriptive adjective, as in *Twelfth Night*'s Malvolio's imagined "branched velvet gown" that he wears (in his fantasies) as "Count Malvolio" (2.5.26-36); and when Shakespeare uses *gown* as a stand-alone, he is referring to a dressing gown or nightshirt (that is, when describing a man; when describing a woman, a gown is usually a gown). The Capulet and Montague wives mock their "impotent and bed-rid" (*Hamlet*, 1.2.29) husbands, making a mockery of the "loins" and "foes" and "rage" presented in the play's prologue sonnet (Prologue.5,10), in an example of the kinds of "contradictions" and "ironies" that Jill L. Levenson notes in her study of Shakespeare's adaptation of sources.[8] When Old Capulet calls for a "long sword," a weapon both anachronistic and inappropriate for the event at hand, especially when its potential wielder is in his nightclothes, Lady Capulet cries out, "A crutch, a crutch! Why call you for a sword" (1.1.60-61), suggesting her incredulousness that Old Capulet would even posture participating in a physical fight. Old Montague fares no better: Lady Montague simply stands before her husband and says, "Thou shalt not stir a foot to seek a foe" (1.1.65). So both noblemen are immobilized by the force, the power, of their wives.

When the Prince enters, he attempts to stop the fighting. He exclaims, "You men, you beasts!" (1.1.68), and we must decide to whom he addresses each noun. Since he proceeds to lay the blame for this skirmish on Old Capulet and Old Montague, it seems quite possible that the "men" remark is addressed to the "men" to whom Gregory refers, "us their men," thus making "you beasts" an address to the others, "our masters," the nobles Tybalt and Benvolio. The Prince's remark, "If ever you disturb our streets again, / Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace" (1.1.81-82), is not addressed to all of those who are brawling: servingmen's lives would not "pay the forfeit of the peace," a legal penalty, one that would have little meaning imposed upon a servingman like Samson or Gregory or Abraham or the very chatty Balthasar. Following this remark, the Prince tells "all the rest" to "depart away" (1.1.83), again reinforcing that the "forfeit" remark is addressed to the noblemen, that the Prince has separated them out from "all the rest." His next command is to Old Capulet and Old Montague, that they will "come . . . this afternoon, / To know our further pleasure in this case, / To old Freetown, our common judgment-place" (1.1.85-87). The Prince's final order, "Once more, on pain of death, all men depart" (1.1.88), is again not addressed to the crowd as a whole: the first two clauses, "once more" and "on pain of death" pick up the vein of the Prince's address to the nobles—"Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace"—suggesting that he is reiterating that threat to them, and to Tybalt and Benvolio; then "all men depart" reiterates "all the rest depart away," which is addressed to the servingmen.

Most scholars explain "old Free-town, our common judgement-place" simply by pointing out that a source that Shakespeare likely used, Arthur Brooke's 1562 poem *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet*, includes the phrase, which is a transliteration of "Villa Franca," as the name of the Capulet castle (line 1974).[9] Shakespeare, though, adds a description or definition to his "Free-towne": it is not a castle, but "*our* common judgement-place." The Prince is taking the noblemen to the "place" where "common judgement" is made, "judgement" that is "common" to all, whether prince or Capulet or Montague or commoner. The phrase suggests a reversal of the social order in which nobles establish laws that commoners obey. The Prince, we might say, is handing this feud over to the "common" and for good reason: the nobles in this play, maybe excepting the Prince who chooses "Free-towne" as the "judgement-place" of choice, are not the ones whose judgment we can respect. Herman points to the Prince's "[in]ability to contain the violence," claiming that he is "ignored by the warring parties."[10] The Prince's version of restoring order does subvert the convention of an aristocratic authority, but rather than being "entirely useless," as Herman calls it,[11] it at the very least suggests a redirection of that authority toward the "common" and away from an aristocracy who cannot earn our respect.

For example, when we first hear of Romeo, he is described as a walking Petrarchan conceit, in Petrarchan love with "the fair Rosaline," whom we will never meet. When he first speaks, he sounds like he fell out of Shakespeare's sonnets: "Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs, / Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes, / Being vexed, a sea nourished with loving tears. / What is else? A madness most discreet, / A choking gall and a preserving sweet" (1.1.179-83). After a series of Romeo's love prates, we shift scenes to the Capulets who are preparing for a party: Old Capulet orders a servingman to deliver a stack of invitations, and, to the audience in an aside, the Servingman mutters, "Find them out whose names are written . . . I am sent to find those persons whose names are here writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ" (1.2.40-42). The Servingman is illiterate, a condition that, even in the Verona of the story, would make this servingman ill-suited for his job. There is nothing funny in the Servingman's predicament, and Shakespeare's audience members would sympathize with the serving-class individual once again put into an untenable position by his noble superiors. When the Servingman happens upon Romeo and asks him if he can read, at first Romeo merely plays with the poor fellow: "Ay, if I know the letters and the language," he says, and the Servingman mistakes his jest as commiseration: "Ye say honestly, rest you merry!" (1.2.56-61). As the Servingman is turning to leave, Romeo relents: "Stay, fellow, I can read," he says (1.2.62), and helps the fellow—and himself—as he discovers that his "fair Rosaline" (1.2.78) will be at a Capulet party, which he will crash.

The American Shakespeare Center, in their touring and home production of *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by James Warren during their 2009-10 season, conflated a number of Servingman lines as well as those of the Nurse's servant, Peter. Jamie Nelson, the actor who played the role of Peter, described the conglomerate Peter's motivation as follows:

> Peter is a simple person; he leads a simple life. Anything more extravagant than the day to day is doubly exciting for him. A party is a big deal. Also, his job is to be there promptly when he is called upon, ready to do what is asked of him; that's what he knows how to do, to come when he's called, so "you've been called," and "you've been asked for" are big pieces of news in his mind. Of course, I've made even more specific inferences that add to Peter's unrest, a state that extends into the party scene itself.
>
> Capulet has asked me to invite the guests on the day of the party, rather short notice. Once I've had the invitations read to me, I still have to remember all the names and run

> to each of their houses to invite them. So the running alone is exhausting. Now, our acting company is small enough that there aren't any actors on stage except those with actual text, which means that the only guests I invited that actually showed up are Mercutio and Uncle Capulet, from which I infer that I not only ran all over town, but when I got to each house, most of the prospective guests were either not at home or not interested in dining with someone who was so recently reprimanded by the Prince. So because of me, Peter, it's going to be a smaller party than originally intended. Now, I'm hoping that Capulet will have enough to drink that he won't notice, but again, given the small acting company, I am the only one there to serve drinks, and therefore we only have four goblets of wine, scarcely enough for all the guests, hardly respectful at a proper dinner party!
>
> Plus, in our production, the main guitar player also plays Benvolio, which means the party-crashers play the dance music, which means that before they arrive and save my neck, I have ostensibly forgotten to hire a band! And amidst all of this, at some point it must occur to me that while I take no issue with the Montagues, many others do and it might not be the wisest or safest thing to have invited them to a Capulet party! So, in short, I've spent the whole day running around, most of the guests aren't coming, there's not enough booze, there's no band, and I've invited the household's mortal enemy! Naturally, all of this informs Peter's enormous stress and great state of emergency in 1.3. and 1.5.[12]

Lene Petersen, in her study of manuscript changes is *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*, two of Shakespeare's multi-text plays, points out that omissions and redactions in subsequent editions of a play follow the same patterns that are found in manuscript ballad tradition; thus Petersen argues against the tendency among Shakespeareans to credit the redactions that occur in Quarto and Folio editions of Shakespeare plays to the need for "reduced-cast performance on tour" and a perceived sense that "certain characters in certain scenes . . . have proven unimportant to the progression of the plot and thus have been excised through transmission."[13] So it is unlikely that Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, in the 1590s, presented the kind of economy of commoners that is represented in the American Shakespeare Center production—and likely most current stage productions. Jamie's description of his character, Peter, demonstrates well the intensity of emotion inherent in these commoner characters nonetheless. Peter, here, exhibits qualities that are juxtaposed to those of the aristocracy in this play: Peter is responsible, conscientious, hospitable, and concerned.

In the midst of these commoner-heavy scenes is one in which another commoner, Juliet's Nurse, describes the close relationship between herself and her husband and the young Juliet (1.3.17-34). Lady Capulet dismisses the tender, even a little bit raw, story with an "Enough of this" (1.3.35), in order to ply Juliet with a pile of clichés intended to represent the not-so-attractive Paris as a suitable suitor for the young and somewhat sassy Juliet (1.3.62-75), who responds to her mother with, "I'll look to like, if looking liking move: / But no more deep will I endart mine eye / Than your consent gives strength to make it fly" (1.3.78-80). In other words, if Juliet likes what she sees, she will be interested, but if she doesn't, her mother's "consent" won't help. Juliet's love cannot be charged up simply by parental consent. Once again we find a parallel to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Juliet is in a similar position to that play's Hermia, who chooses her love despite her father's—or more ambivalently the Duke's—will. Capulet's Servingman announces that "the guests are come" and "everything in extremity" (1.3.81-82), pointing out to the audience that this is a fictional world of excesses. And as the party progresses and Mercutio "talk[s] of dreams" (1.4.50-107), the servingmen complain that they are being over-taxed with pointless orders: "We cannot be here and there too" (1.3.129).

The Balcony Scene that follows is far sillier than it has been played in most modern performances: Romeo, still unheard by Juliet, begins with more Petrarchan clichés, followed by some that only Romeo's mind could invent: "Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven, / Having some business, do entreat her eyes / To twinkle in their spheres till they return. / What if her eyes were there, and *they* in her *head*?" (2.1.60-63, emphasis mine). The scene ends with an old-fashioned version of "you hang up . . . no you hang up first . . . no you hang up" (2.1.206-end). The scene that follows introduces another commoner, Friar Laurence, to the plot: "Holy Saint Francis," he exclaims (2.2.66), in response to the "young waverer" (2.2.92) Romeo's rapid shift from one dote to another. Friar Laurence agrees to help Romeo, not out of concern for Romeo's romantic success, but rather as a means to promote an end to the Montague/Capulet feud (2.2.93-95). All of the commoners, including the mendicant friar, want the feud ended.

The deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt at first glance seem to definitively mark the end of what has, to this point, been a comedy. The tension between comedy and tragedy continues, though, and repeatedly we are led to think that all may still be well. The Friar and the Nurse try to redirect the plot to comedy, and Capulet helps them along with his bumbling over the days in his arrangement of the Paris/Juliet match. Act 4, scene 1's "past hope, past cure, past help" (line 46) is followed in short order by the comic "unless" (line 52). By act 4, scene 2, the plot is back to that of Hermia and Lysander in act 1 of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, running away to escape the "ancient privilege" of their incompetent elders; and act 4, scene 3 presents a Juliet on a wild fantasy trip to the set of a horror flick—again, comic, albeit darkly so—or maybe not so darkly.

The plot's final and irrevocable turn to tragedy involves another commoner character, this time an Apothecary who finds himself in an unwinnable conflict with a nobleman, the again-impulsive Romeo. Romeo notes that the Apothecary is "poor" and offers him "forty ducats" for the poison (5.1.61-62). The Apothecary refuses, and Romeo browbeats him: "Famine is in thy cheeks, / Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes, / Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back" (5.1.72-74). Romeo tells the Apothecary to "break" the "world's law" and take the money, and the Apothecary relents: "My poverty, but not my will, consents" (5.1.75-78). Herman points out that, in Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet*, "Thapothecary, high is hanged by the throte,"[14] but in this play he remains in his shop with his vocation and his poverty. Romeo says, "There's thy gold, worse poison to men's souls, / Doing more murder in this loathsome world, / Than these poor compounds" (5.1.83-85), reinforcing the wrong being done not by the Apothecary, but by the nobles: the nobles' "gold" makes commoners do bad things, and Romeo feels no compunction in turning gold to poison and poison to gold, even as he points it out. As early as act 4, scene 4, when Juliet is believed to be dead, the Friar tells Capulet that, in death, he's achieved his goal for Juliet: "The most you sought was her promotion, / For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced" (4.4.105-106), he says, at least subtly mocking Capulet for his greed.

Gold plays a prominent role in the denouement to this play as well. The Prince upbraids the mourning noble fathers whose "discords" have "lost" them all a "brace of kinsmen" (5.3.303-304), building on the "you beasts" remark from act 1, scene1: here the noble "kinsmen" are reduced to hunting dogs (and we know from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* how important those are—but only if they can bark in harmony; see 4.1.95-119). Montague says that he "will raise [Juliet's] statue in pure gold" (5.3.309), and Capulet keeps pace: "As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie" (5.3.313). The gold statues become a parody of sorts for the lives of these two vibrant youths: gold gives the nobles the privilege to act as they do, and gold buys the poison, and gold is what is left in the wake of the havoc that these noblemen have wreaked on the lives of nobles and commoners alike. In this way *Romeo and Juliet* presents a sharp critique of the excesses, the "extremity," of a nobility that has lost sight of its responsibility for the well-being of people like those who have come to see this play.

In the penultimate lines of the play, the Prince, who earlier had said, "All are punished" (5.3.304), here says, "Some shall be pardoned, and some punished" (5.3.318). In the resolution to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, youthful disobedience to "ancient privilege" is rewarded with a wedding celebration. Here in *Romeo and Juliet*, aristocratic insistence on "ancient privilege" is metamorphosed into death. In both cases the "ancient privilege" of the aristocracy is overturned. The commoners in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* bring Shakespeare's audience to laughter by their ignorance. Those in *Romeo and Juliet* bring commoner and noble alike to a "common judgement place," holding aristocratic "extremity" accountable for the damage it can do.

Notes

1. All references to Shakespeare's plays are taken from Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, eds., *William Shakespeare: Complete Works* (New York: Modern Library, 2007).

2. Peter C. Herman, "Tragedy and the Crisis of Authority in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet," Intertexts* 12, no. 1 (2008): 89-90.

3. Arthur F. Kinney, *Shakespeare by Stages: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 81-82.

4. Herman, 91.

5. David Bevington, *Shakespeare: The Seven Ages of Human Experience* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 73.

6. Herman, 96.

7. Ibid.

8. Jill L. Levenson, "Romeo and Juliet Before Shakespeare," *Studies in Philology* 81, no. 3 (1984), 345.

9. J. J. Munro, *Brooke's* Romeus and Juliet *Being the Original of Shakespeare's* Romeo and Juliet (London: Chatto & Windus, 1908), 73.

10. Herman, 97.

11. Ibid.

12. James Patrick Nelson, e-mail message to author, June 15, 2010.

13. Lene Petersen, "De-composition in Popular Playtexts: A Revalidation of the Multiple Versions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet," Oral Tradition* 23, no. 1 (2008): 134.

14. Herman, 98.

Mère Sotte and Balaam's Ass: Title Pages in Pierre Gringore's Propagandist Works

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As a celebrated poet and playwright in early sixteenth-century Paris, Pierre Gringore became one of the chief propagandists of the political and military policies of French King Louis XII. Between 1505 and 1515 Gringore wrote and performed in *soties* and *farces* with humorous political overtones, while at the same time becoming one of the earliest poets not only to have his works published, but also to be engaged actively in the publication process. Cynthia. J. Brown, a principal Gringore scholar, has argued convincingly that Gringore blurred the lines between his own identity and that of his well-known stock character Mère Sotte by portraying himself as Mère Sotte on the title page of his satirical *Les Folles Entreprises* (1507), *Coqueluche* (1510), and *Le Jeu du Prince des Sotz et Mere Sotte* (1512).[1]

For this conference focusing on politics and performance, I continue my study of illustration by considering one aspect of this author-portrait in Gringore's published works of the early sixteenth century (fig. 1). Brown has established Gringore's involvement in their design and determines that this self-promotion "reveals the author's struggle to redefine and publicize an increasingly independent status while continuing to utilize and depend on the patronage system."[2]

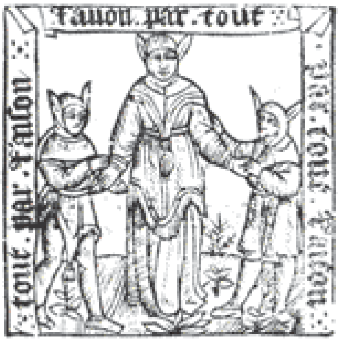

Figure 1

The primary argument of Brown's study has been that these title pages—the "first scenes," as it were—of Gringore's polemic works highlight his desire for self-promotion as poet, actor, and editor. She rightly claims that "Gringore's ubiquitous, personalized Mère Sotte woodcut served as his device, for it embodied not only an image, but a motto as well, one that can be understood as an invitation to explore the text behind his own and his book's exterior."[3] She does not emphasize, however, the very symbol helping to create the contradictory motif in this device.

I would like to explore further the contradictory formal elements of this image of Gringore/Mère Sotte and by extension its significance to the understanding of the text that it introduces. Namely, Mère Sotte, as a female, is recognizable by her dress; but were it not for her cap with donkey ears, she would appear, if not dignified, certainly serious and not comical. It is the donkey ears, from which derive the jester cap as standard apparel for players in the *sotie*, that visually represent the "*sotte*" and the "*folles*" of Gringore's title. At the same time, this comic figure, echoed by two younger fools who surround it, is framed by the lofty and rational motto, "*Tout par raison, Raison par tout, par tout Raison*" ("Everything with reason, Reason everywhere, Everywhere reason").[4]

Gringore's Mère Sotte most evidently follows in the tradition of "fools' literature," which was highly popular in European literature of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Sebastian Brant's *Narreschiff*, or *Ship of Fools*, was published in 1494. Like the descriptions found in Gringore's satires, the passengers on Brant's ship represent the gamut of human foibles and characters.[5] Interestingly, all of Brant's fools are associated with donkeys: each chapter is accompanied by a woodcut of the fool under discussion wearing prominent donkey ears (fig. 2). Brant, in his

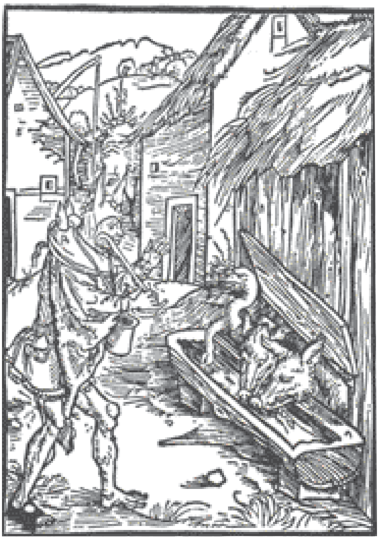
Figure 2

chapter "Of Insolence Toward God," asserts, "Heaven was meant nor then nor now / For geese, nor will a fool or cow / Or ape or grunting swine or ass / To heaven's timeless kingdom pass." Brant highlights the traditional association between asses and vices, particularly lechery and sloth.[6] In an article on the ass for the *Dictionary of Christian Lore and Legend*, J. C. J. Metford emphasizes that in late medieval continental Europe, "to be mounted backwards on an ass denoted degradation and thus convicted criminals were often led in this (way) to be punished."[7] An animal that today is almost exclusively associated with stubbornness and indeed, stupidity, the donkey corresponds well, by our lights, with the idea of a Mother Folly character or a jester.

It is important to recognize, however, that mystery plays and art of the earlier Middle Ages offered the donkey just as often, if not more, as a symbol of the positive attributes of docility and steadfastness. A beast of burden associated with the poor, in contrast with the rich, the donkey became a figure of humility in conventional Christian iconography. Widely known and represented Gospel passages underscore the merits of a donkey's lowly status. Mary, the Virgin, rides an ass on her way to Bethlehem and in her Flight into Egypt. An ass and an ox are included in Nativity scenes, where they symbolize that the humblest and least of the animal creation were present when Jesus was born and that they recognized Him as the Son of God. Their presence at the birth of Christ refers to the prophecy of Isaiah 1:3: "The ox knoweth its owner, and the ass his master's crib." Further, it is an ass that Jesus chose to ride into Jerusalem, just before the Passion. In his *Homilies on Matthew*, the early Church father St. John Chrysostom says that Christ's choice "graphically depicts him as Prince of Peace, not driving chariots, like the rest of the kings (on horses), not demanding tributes but displaying his great meekness even hereby." Chrysostom also sees the ass "as signifying the Church, a 'new people, which was once unclean, but which, after Jesus sat thereon, became clean."[8] Thus, the donkey became an image of a transformed figure, the unredeemed creature who by means of penitence is made docile. In turn, medieval hagiography emphasized the ass as an agent of conversion. A heretic of Toulouse refused to believe in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist unless his ass left its stable and knelt before the Sacrament—an impossibility, given an ass's expected unenlightened and ornery nature. Nonetheless, when Anthony of Padua, a thirteenth-century friend and disciple of St. Francis of Assisi, was leaving the church a few days later to carry the sacrament to a dying man, the ass met him at the steps and knelt before the Sacrament. Needless to say, the man was converted. Because of this legend St. Anthony is often portrayed with a kneeling ass.[9] Legends of the life of St. Jerome also describe a faithful donkey companion.

St. Francis was known for calling his own body "Brother Ass," and C.S. Lewis's commentary on the metaphor offers a succinct commentary on the ass's ambiguous nature: "Ass is exquisitely right because no one in his senses can either revere or hate a donkey. It is a useful, sturdy, lazy, obstinate, patient, lovable and infuriating beast; deserving now the stick and now a carrot; both pathetically and absurdly beautiful."[10]

The donkey as divine messenger derives from the Old Testament story of the diviner Balaam, and it is this source which is perhaps of most interest in a discussion of Mère Sotte. The passage from Numbers recounts how Balaam's ass refuses to carry him on his way to support Balak of Moab, who sought to discredit the Israelites. Despite being beaten, the ass, who can see God's angel barring the path, refuses to do Balaam's bidding. He then is given voice by God and says to Balaam,

> What have I done to thee? Why strikest thou me, lo, now this third time? Balaam answered: Because thou hast deserved it, and hast served me ill: I would I had a sword that I might kill thee. The ass said: Am not I thy beast, on which thou hast been always accustomed to ride until this present day? Tell me if I ever did the like thing to thee. But he said: Never. Forthwith the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel standing in the way with a drawn sword, and he worshipped him falling flat on the ground. And the angel said to him: Why beatest thou thy ass these three times? I am come to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse, and contrary to me: And unless the ass had turned out of the way, giving place to me who stood against thee, I had slain thee, and she should have lived.[11]

Here the ass, from Balaam's perspective, is a donkey *in extremis*: not doing its master's bidding and becoming more obstinate as it is beaten. And yet it is only doing its true Master's bidding and by God's grace revealing to Balaam his unjust behavior toward her and, by extension, toward the Israelites. God's angel favors the ass over Balaam, preferring to slay him rather than her. Evidence of the widespread popularity of this biblical tale appears in the thirteenth-century north stained-glass rose window of Notre Dame in Paris.

By the late Middle Ages, both standard and distorted versions of these motifs of the, at times humble and steadfast, at times blinkered and unthinking ass existed simultaneously. The popular Feast of the Ass originated from a celebration of the animal that the Virgin Mary rode, both to Bethlehem and in the Flight to Egypt. It developed, in turn, from the inclusion of Balaam's ass in the *Procession of the Prophet*, a dramatic representation included in the Christmas liturgy. However, by the thirteenth century, it had become the occasion for so much ribaldry that it was banned by the Church authorities. Spectacles often offered a donkey as an incarnation of deprivation and penitence. Anrique de Mota's spectacle *Lamentaçao da Mula*, from approximately 1500, concludes with the donkey telling of his day's pilgrimage: "I am very pleased to find you, my Lord, in this land and am compelled to tell you that I was given nothing to eat. If you want to hear, I will tell you of my inherent suffering, the great pain and grief which I endured."[12] Narrative II ii 4 of Erasmus's *Adages* offers a more comic version, at the expense of the donkey: "A doltish little ass carried a figure of Isis, having the revered mysteries upon its curved back. Everyone near the goddess reverently adored her, and on bended knees sent forth their holy prayers. But the ass believed such honour was being shown to him, and swelled up, filling entirely with his pride—until the driver, who restrained him with whips, said 'You are not a god, little ass; rather, you bear a god.'"[13]

Gringore's emblematic title page offers a composite of these conflicting notions of the donkey. Mère Sotte, by her very name and donkey ears, is a humble player who can only inspire guffaws. Yet these same donkey ears literally approach the word *reason*. Hence the motto which surrounds her suggests that, rather, or perhaps at the same time, she is a voice of Reason who imparts this Reason to those who listen.

Given France's war with Italy in the early sixteenth century, Gringore's publications of this period are chiefly works skewering authorities particularly associated with Italy, such as the Pope and the Venetians. Designed to encourage the French troops, the performances and published plays represented a bourgeois, rather than chivalric, outlook, and the vices and abuses described could be taken as universal to all those in authority.[14] In his opening lines of the *Folles Entreprises*, Gringore describes the world in which he writes as a topsy-turvy and, by extension, unjust one. Metal being worshipped as gods, children receiving prelatures, and just clerics being scorned are some of his examples of the world gone awry. The single description involving an animal is his next to last example, that of "asses generously reimbursed." His term for "reimbursed," *prébendés* is a term reserved for payments to the clergy.[15]

This instance of undeserved payment evokes the well-known adage of the day, "Horses run after earnings; donkeys catch them." The adage implies that, due to its very stubbornness, the donkey will prevail in its demands. So with his introduction, Gringore quickly establishes the resemblance between the donkey or ass and some clerical members of the Church.[16] He concludes his introduction by saying that given his own lack of smarts, he will leave interpretation to his more esteemed readers. The body of the work consists of decasyllabic rhymed verses describing foolish *enterprises*, or occupations and, by extension, character types such as the prideful, the envious, the greedy, and so forth. It is the Acteur, understood to be Mère Sotte, who pronounces most of these verities. At times Gringore personifies a vice: Papelardise or False Piety, also a woman, refers several times to asses—understood to be corrupt clerics. She takes credit for their receiving undeserved homage at the expense of honest clerics: "I have the asses exalted, and the good priests oppressed . . . If I see a united church . . . I arrange for the masses to be sung by asses."[17] All of Mère Sotte's examples of asses are those who, despite being privileged or rich, behave foolishly or selfishly. While these vices are universal, as seen in the *Narrenshiff*, Mère Sotte does not emphasize that beggars or the hard-working bourgeois may suffer from the same failings.

I believe that Gringore's audience and then readers, upon seeing the Mère Sotte costume, would have appreciated multiple and contradictory allusions which perhaps escape us today. The jester's cap of donkey ears underscores the ambiguity of his message: here is a character, nicknamed for her silliness, and yet declaring to approving bourgeois audiences truths about powerful figures of authority which more learned persons dare not broach. Like Balaam's ass, Mère Sotte is a lowly, yet prophetic, messenger. In the actual plays she serves as messenger principally to popular audiences. Once transformed as an opening textual emblem, she becomes a sign to the more erudite.

Gringore used this author-portrait exclusively in his publications for ten years. In later editions he embellished the basic design by adding stars to the background and providing more foliage to the ground on which the actors are standing. It would appear that by doing so, Gringore wanted to fill in as much white space as possible. It is important to note that he did not, however, change the overall design of Mère Sotte. In every version she stands front and center, towering over her two fellow sots, arms linked in unity, with the donkey ears of her jester's cap grazing the words, "Raison par tout."

Satirical *soties*, which so pleased King Louis XII, were far less popular with Francis I, who became king in 1515. Only a year after his ascension to the throne, Francis I had three Parisian sots, or actors, taken before him "at Amboise in chains . . . for having played farces in Paris concerning the nobility: among other things suggesting that Mère Sotte ruled the court and was taxing, robbing and pillaging everyone. The King and Queen-Regent were very angry about this."[18] That same year Gringore's work became more moralistic rather than satirical, and two years later he left Paris to join the Duke of Lorraine's court in Nancy. Notably, his subsequent publications offered an altered device: Mère Sotte and her jolly companions have been replaced with a hooded falcon holding a scroll, which states in Latin, "After darkness, I hope for light."[19] Below the falcon is printed "Raison par tout" (fig. 3). This sober, more erudite image with its elimination of Mère Sotte mutes Gringore's ironic and ambiguous use of the expression, "Reason everywhere."

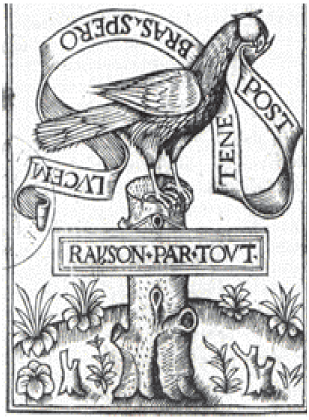

Figure 3

Thus, the disappearance of Mère Sotte, both from the printed page as well as the stage, marked the beginning of a more stable but less creative period in Gringore's career.

Gringore often is considered the last of the French medieval poets. I would argue that, rather, his emblematic design announces the early French Renaissance, a period whose literature highlighted ambiguity and paradox. As Barbara Bowen has put it so succinctly, the French Renaissance writers Rabelais (1494-1553) and Montaigne (1533-1592) are masters of bluff, her term for the "conscious effort to disconcert the reader." Because these writers' aesthetic outlook emphasizes complexity, enigma and antithesis, their texts present riddles while never bothering to give us the answers.[20] Gringore's emblem, if not his poetry, anticipates this trend.

Notes

1. Cynthia J. Brown, *Poets, Patrons, and Printers: Crisis of Authority in Late Medieval France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

2. Ibid., 151.

3. Ibid., 145.

4. All translations are the author's.

5. These works are non-ironic, unlike Erasmus's mock encomium, *The Praise of Folly*, which would appear in 1509.

6. Sebastian Brant, *The Ship of Fools*, ed. and trans. Edwin H. Zeydel (New York: Dover Publications, 1944), 92-93.

7. Metford, J.C.J, *Dictionary of Christian Lore and Legend* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983), 36.

8. St. John Chrisostom, "Homily 66.2 Matthew 20:29, 30," *The Homilies of St. John Chrisostom on the Gospel of St. Matthew: Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, trans. Rev. Sir George Prevost, vol. 10 (London: Oxford, 1851), p. 406. Quoted in entry "Ass" by David L Jeffrey and John V. Fleming in *A Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature,* ed. David Lyle Jeffrey (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 61.

9. George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 105.

10. C.S Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1960), 101. The author is most grateful to fellow presenter, Dr. James W. Harrison, for alerting me to this quotation.

11. Numbers 22: 28-33.

12. William Tydeman, *The Medieval European Stage 500-1500* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 587.

13. Desiderius Erasmus, *The Adages of Erasmus, ed. William Barker* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 161.

14. Pierre Gringore, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 1, Œuvres politiques, ed. Charles d'Héricault and Anatole de Montaiglon (Paris : Jannet, 1858), xxv.

15. Ibid., 1:13. "Que aucuns asnes éstoient haultes prebendez."

16. Ibid., "Ce sont les chevaux qui courent après les bénéfices, et las asnes qui les attrappent." Gringore does not maintain consistently this implicit analogy between clerics and donkeys later in his work. On his examination of pastors, he compares them, rather, with wolves.

17. Gringore, *Œuvres complètes*, 1:111.

> "Quant du cas ecclesiastique
> A le gouverner je m'aplique,
> Faisant les asnes exaulser ;
> Et qui veult scavoir la pratique,
> Comme c'est que l'Eglise on picque,
> Il se fault à moy adresser :
> Je fais les bons clercs oppresser,
> Et metz en bruyt ung tas de sotz ,
> Sans craindre de Dieu offenser;
> *C'est entreprise* des bigotz.
> Quant je voy une Eglise unie,
> Tant fais que union est bannye ;
> J'endure que asnes chantent messe."

18. Tydeman, *The Medieval European Stage*, 336.

19. Brown, *Poets, Patrons, and Printers*, 147.

20. Bowen, Barbara C., *The Age of Bluff: Paradox and Ambiguity in Rabelais and Montaigne* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972), 163.

Shakespeare's Reception in German, 1682-1800

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One of the things that make great poets great is their ability to look beyond the moment and connect with the prime radical of human nature. While Homer wrote for eighth-century B.C. Greece, he touched on concerns that still resonate with us today. Two thousand years after Caesar Augustus, Virgil's epic of the founding of Rome seems peculiarly modern. And who has not been personally drawn to these words: "In the middle of the journey of our life I came to myself within a dark wood where the straight way was lost. Ah, how hard a thing it is to tell of that wood, savage and harsh and dense, the thought of which renews my fear! So bitter is it that death is hardly more"?[1] I can only assume that Dante must have been the Language Department Chair at Southern Florence University. While the historical peculiarities of literature are enough to separate every great work from every other great work, the deeper human concerns remain remarkably constant, regardless of time and place. Time, nationality, and historical circumstance, while important, fade before the muse of great poets, and we find ourselves seduced by the beauty of works which are separated from us by time and place.

However, even allowing for these facts, it is still remarkable how completely German culture gave itself to Shakespeare. Roger Paulin in his book, The *Critical Reception of Shakespeare in German 1682-1914*, an excellent work upon which I have relied heavily in preparing this essay, states, "Shakespeare can without further ado be called a German classic, akin to Goethe or Schiller,"[2] and Georg Gottfried Gervinus writing in the 19th century observed that Shakespeare "has become a German poet almost more than any of our native writers."[3] In 1911, a mere three years before the beginning of World War I, when relations between Germany and England were rapidly deteriorating, Friedrich Gundolf, one of the last of the great German Jewish intellectuals of the *fin de siecle* wrote *Shakespeare und der deutsche Geist*, a work in which the author argues that the affinity uniting Shakespeare and German culture is at least as great as, if not greater than, that between him and his native country.[4]

Of course, Germany is not the only country to adopt Shakespeare into its pantheon of great poets. For those of you who are *Star Trek* fans, you will remember the scene in *Star Trek VI* when a Klingon officer who is on board the Enterprise for a state dinner says that it's impossible to really enjoy Shakespeare unless one hears it in the original Klingon. Something like this seems to have found its way into German culture, especially in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This devotion to Shakespeare was not immediate in Germany. It took over a hundred years after the poet's death for him to become part of Germany's poetic landscape. When it does occur, however, Germany devotes itself to the Bard wholeheartedly.

While there is no denying that Shakespeare touches the German soul in an unusually powerful way, there are other reasons why his reception in that culture occurs when it does and with such force. Shakespeare dies two years before the beginning of one of the most difficult periods in German history. From 1618 until 1648, several different wars were fought on German soil. Collectively, these have become known as the Thirty Years' War. But referring to these conflicts in the singular oversimplifies what happened. The conflict began in Prague. The Catholic Emperor Matthias designated his cousin, Ferdinand of Styria, as his heir and successor on the Bohemian throne, thus violating the elective principle which had always determined the Bohemian succession. Count Heinrich von Thurn, a Protestant prince, pleaded with the Protestant leaders to block the ascension, all to no avail. On May 23, 1618, Thurn and his supporters led a group of Protestants to the Hradschin Castle in Prague, climbed to the floor where two governors sat, and threw them and their secretary out of the window. They landed in a heap of manure with little injured except their pride, but the event was enough to trigger the first of the conflicts that would ravage Germany over the next three decades. Thurn then formed a revolutionary directory, which declared Ferdinand dethroned and expelled the Archbishop and the Jesuits. All of this led to the battle of White Hill the next year, where the imperial forces defeated the Protestants.

With the Catholic forces gaining strength in central and northern Germany, the protestant states of Denmark and Sweden became nervous. Christian IV of Denmark and his protestant forces invaded Germany in 1625. They were defeated by imperial troops and the Peace of Lübeck settled the issue in 1629.

Seeing his Scandinavian protestant allies defeated by the Catholic imperial forces, the Swedish king, Gustavus Adolphus, invaded Pomerania with the aid of the French. Louis XIII's minister, Cardinal Richelieu, had been waiting to exploit this religious war for his own purpose, which was to secure absolute power in Europe for his liege, the King of France. The fact that France, a Catholic country, had to make common cause with Sweden, a Protestant state, gave Richelieu no pause whatsoever. Initially the protestant forces led by Gustavus Adolphus pushed the imperial troops aside and got as far south as Munich, but in the battle of Lützen, near Leipzig, Gustavus Adolphus was killed. Although the Swedes won the battle, the death of their king proved to be a fatal injury to their cause. Gradually the war changed from a religiously motivated struggle to one in which Germans, regardless of their religion, fought for Germany against France.

The final stage of the war was fought between the Spanish Hapsburgs and the French. It was fought for the most part on German soil, and the misery it brought in its wake etched itself forever on the German psyche. By 1637 the emperor, Ferdinand, began the process of bringing the war to an end. However, wars being much easier to start than to stop, this process was not complete until 1648.

While accurate figures are not available, the best estimates are that the population of Germany and Austria, reckoned at twenty-one million before the war, fell to thirteen and one-half million. Of 35, 0000 villages existing in Bohemia in 1618, 29,000 were destroyed by war's end. Famine was widespread. Cannibalism was common in many areas, and everywhere men, women, and children competed with dogs and ravens for the rotten flesh of dead and diseased animals.[5]

The important part of all of this for the present topic is that Germany was defeated not only militarily, but culturally as well. The treaty of Westphalia, which concluded the war, partitioned Germany into over 300 separate sovereign states. Thus, the German countries' ability to conduct foreign policy or to influence European politics in any way was greatly reduced. Germany became a French protectorate.[6]

While the seventeenth century was a disaster for the Germans, it was for the French their great classical age. Racine, Corneille, Moliere, Lully, Descartes, and other cultural luminaries insured that what the French troops had won on the battlefield, French culture would promulgate in the universities and salons of Europe. This was the age of normative literary theory. Boileau's concern for cleansing French poetry of all that was vulgar, and doing for French verse what Pascal and Descartes had done for French prose predisposed him against Shakespeare. Eventually these highly prescriptive literary theories became more of a burden than a help in establishing guidelines for a national literature, but they served some purpose at the beginning for the French.

Since French culture became the standard to be emulated throughout Europe, those who did not inculcate it into their art were not taken seriously. Unfortunately for Germany, its recovery from the horrors of the Thirty Years' War left little room to embrace the French Enlightenment. Given France's role in Germany's sufferings, this is not difficult to understand. But there is more at work here than anger and a desire for revenge and vindication. Those familiar with German culture, especially from the Reformation onward, understand that the German spirit, if one may speak about something so abstract, is not at its core a classically oriented aesthetic. While the French always look to formal perfection, the German muse looks beyond to spiritual implications which cannot be analyzed or quantified. French aesthetic theory moves inexorably toward the classical, while the German is drawn to the romantic. This does not mean, of course, that there are not French romantics or German classicists. But there is a world of difference between Racine's *Phaedra* and Goethe's *Iphigenia*, or between Chateaubriand's *Atala* and Novalis's

Heinrich von Ofterdingen. The classicism of Goethe and Schiller tends to be more romantic than that of Racine and Corneille, just as the romanticism of Chateaubriand is more classical than that of Novalis.

It is this fact as much as any that explains Shakespeare's early reception into German culture. Boileau's three unities of time, place and action, which he borrowed from Aristotle's *Poetics*, were of little use in analyzing Shakespeare's plays. German dramatic theory in the early part of the eighteenth century was highly influenced by French criticism, not because it spoke to the German condition, but because for a nation to align itself with French culture was to announce its appearance on the stage of European culture. The very first mention of Shakespeare in German letters is found in Daniel Georg Morhof's *Unterricht von der Teutschen Sprache und Poesie* of 1682: "Und der John Dryden hat gar wohl gelehrt von der Dramatica Poesi geschrieben. Die Engelländer/ die er hierinnen anführt/ sind Shakespeare, Fletcher, Beaumont, von selchen ich nichts gesehen habe. Ben. Johnson hat gar viel geschrieben/ welcher/ meines Erachtens kein geringes Lob verdienet." [And John Dryden has written very learnedly of dramatic poetry. The English poets he lists there are Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, of whom I have read nothing. Ben Johnson has written much and I believe he deserves no little praise."[7] For the rest of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, Shakespeare's name, when it came up in Germany, was one of several English authors mentioned en mass. Those English authors who were singled out for individual praise were generally those whose works were more closely related to the Enlightenment: Pope and Addison especially.[8] This interest in English literature was more pronounced in those areas that had an English presence, such as Danzig, Hamburg, and Hannover. The Hanoverian King of England, George II, wished for the university in Göttingen to have a professor of English. Accordingly that university created the first chair of English studies anywhere (including England). While the first occupant of that chair, John Thompson, did not mention Shakespeare, he did create an intellectual climate that would help to assess the Bard and place him on the international stage of important writers.

Daniel Georg Morhof, 1639-1691, the author of this first reference to Shakespeare in German letters, is a polymath, one of the last great encyclopedists of this earliest age of Shakespeare reception in Germany. His goal is to show the place of the German language among the other languages in Europe. He is in the same general class as Martin Opitz, the great normative critic of the early Baroque who spends so much time trying to do for German what Boileau tries to do for French. Just as Opitz attempts to show the German language's "ability to use the poetic forms of both ancients and moderns, and to encourage purity and correctness in their employment,"[9] so too Morhof calls for the same care with the language but with one great difference. Morhof calls for "restraint in the practices established by Opitz, sensing that the full-use of invention may be leading away from the *aptum*, the proper norms and proprieties of expression."[10] Gottsched will sound the same note of caution in the early eighteenth century.

This period of Shakespeare reception, which lasts from 1682 to 1740, is a time when German scholars are taking stock of what their culture had to offer rather than producing any significant works of art. There is no one, for example, like Addison, Pope or Voltaire. It has few champions even today. Goethe referred to it as the "nulle Epoche," or the zero age.[11] Seen another way, this era was an attempt to cleanse the German palate from the excesses of the Baroque period. The resultant attacks on the literary canon of their own country mounted by German scholars form the backdrop for the reception of Shakespeare. Certainly one of the things that contribute to this aspect of Germany's reception of Shakespeare can be found in the fact that the German lands had no recent national tradition of literature to celebrate. The German Baroque, which lasted from approximately 1600 to 1720, constitutes one of the major epochs of that culture's literary output. However, as a literary movement, it was for the rest of Europe an anachronism. And even at its height, it did not have a geographical center such as London or Paris. The literary impulses in Germany are more varied and less focused than their counterparts in France and England.[12]

No sustained discussion of Shakespeare in Germany is possible until the Wieland translation of 1762. Until then, what Germans know of Shakespeare is snippets of scenes or monologues from the famous plays, especially *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Richard III*.

These, in turn, find their way into the German world of letters via French translations. The French, and to a lesser extent the Italians, provide the conduit for all things English into German culture through works such as the French translation of the *Spectator*, the *Guardian*, and the *Tattler*.[13] As has already been noted, the French were not sympathetic to Shakespeare's works. The best they could say about him was that he represents a rude beginning of English literature and that "under a shapeless and bizarre exterior there was a kernel of human truth."[14]

The three most important critics in Germany who espouse this view are, Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700-66) in Leipzig, Johann Jacob Bodmer, and Johann Jacob Breitinger, both of whom wrote in Zürich. Gottsched is impressed with Voltaire and Pope and "recommended their intellectual curiosity, critical argutia, their common sense, but also their neo-classical elegance and wit as models that the German republic of letters might . . . strive to attain."[15] He believes that the Baroque style could not "provide a model in any redefinition of German national literature."[16] The *Schwulst* (inflated rhetoric) of the Baroque style must be replaced with the economy and elegance of the Enlightenment. He is usually thought of as the self-appointed *praeceptor Germaniae*, who was a little too anxious to criticize all he saw and read. Yet he was the undisputed critic of German letters for a generation, more highly thought of in his hometown of Leipzig than the other great German artist in that city, Johann Sebastian Bach, his contemporary. It was Gottsched who sheltered Voltaire when he fled Frederick II's ire. Both Maria Theresa and Frederick II received him as one of the leading scholars of the day.[17] The Baroque style could not satisfy his need for the clarity and congruity of French neo-classical criticism.

Initially Gottsched can only see those elements in Shakespeare that remind him of the Baroque. His ideal of the theater, which he hoped to graft into German culture, is based on the French classical dramas of Racine, Corneille and Moliere. It is largely because of Gottsched and his wife, who is one of the first prominent female literary critics in Germany, that a growing awareness of the needs of a German theatre establishes itself. Eventually this would lead many to Shakespeare. If the Gottscheds were not advocates of the Bard, they did prepare the German reading public to engage him.

Gottsched felt that there was need for the Germans to "catch up."[18] In his *Beyträge zur Kritischen Historie der Deutschen Sprache, Poesie und Beredsamkeit*, one detects his belief that Germans were guilty of a "dearth of correctness and purity of language and expression."[19] This again leads back to his dislike of the Baroque *Schwulst* mentioned above. Gottsched is correct in his diagnosis of the unfortunate bombast of Baroque prose. His remedy is to clean up the language, and one of the methods he prescribes is translation from both the French and the English.

He is not the only one in Germany who is concerned about Germany conforming to the standards of the Enlightenment. The translations of the *Spectator* and *Tattler* had been warmly accepted by the German reading public and had given birth to German periodicals, such as *Der Vernünftler*. These periodicals print translations of some of the most important works of English literature, and among these are some scenes from Shakespeare. Initially they repeat the common wisdom of the French, and to a certain extent the English themselves, that "despite his imperfections and disregard for the rules, his fellow-countrymen referred to the Bard as the 'divine' Shakespeare." Eventually, however, one detects a growing awareness that "true characters and real moral seriousness" in drama, as one finds in Shakespeare, may "require an unbending of the rules."[20]

Gottsched's critical work gains luster from his wife's translations. Luise Gottsched established a very impressive record as a first-rate translator of *The Spectator* and the *Guardian*. This meant, of course, dealing with Addison and Steele, and with those two authors available in German, the reception of Shakespeare could begin in earnest.[21] She also tried her hand at Shakespeare and was the first to attempt a translation of Shakespeare into German iambic pentameter, a verse form with which the Germans were unfamiliar. Here is her translation of Theseus's short speech from act 4 of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in *Spectator* 116:

> Vor Sparter Zucht sind meine Hund erzeugt,
> Voll Schweiss und Staub; von ihren Köpfen hängt
> Das Ohr herab, und streicht den Thau hinweg.
> [My Hounds are bred out of the Spartan Kind,
> So flu'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung

With Ears that sweep away the Morning Dew.][22]

Bodmer's and Breitinger's position is very similar to Gottsched's. The difference was one of degree not substance.[23] Bodmer and Breitinger are figures of considerable importance in the German literature of the mid-eighteenth century. It is Bodmer who first tells the Germans that the *Nibelungenlied* is an epic on par with Homer. He is the mentor of Wieland, the first important Shakespeare translator, and his house in Zürich is a place of pilgrimage for the young Goethe. Both Bodmer and Breitinger become highly critical of Gottsched, even though the latter's *Critische Dichtkunst* remains to this day the basis of most German systematic poetics and aesthetics.[24] They share much with Gottsched: "their common concern for the reform of the theater, their disapproval of the opera, their rejection of the Baroque style, and their search for models inside and outside of their national tradition."[25] Their difference with Gottsched lies in the latter's inability to give his assent to what he saw as Shakespeare's "inconsistency in aesthetic, and ultimately in philosophical, terms."[26] Bodmer's and Breitinger's falling out with Gottsched has the primary result of moving the center of literary criticism in Germany from Leipzig to Zürich.

Although Luise Gottsched and others had tried their hand at translating passages from Shakespeare, the first translation of an entire Shakespeare play is not completed until 1781. In that year Caspar Wilhelm von Borck translates *Julius Caesar*. This would remain the only Shakspeare play translated in its entirety into German for the whole decade. By comparison, the French by 1749 would have ten Shakespeare plays, either complete or summarized, translated into their language.[27] This disparity could be due to any number of reasons. One might surmise that the French were more interested in Shakepeare than the Germans, but subsequent developments mitigate against that. One might also question the quality of Borck's translation and that it had a chilling effect on the tempo of other translations. This seems to have more merit. Gottsched was not happy with it.[28] Wieland's subsequent translation of Shakespeare is such an improvement that Borck's version was soon forgotten.

Even though the Germans lag behind in their translation of

Shakespeare, the critical interest in the Bard continues to increase. In 1749 Johann Elias Schlegel completes the "first sustained piece of German Shakespearean criticism," *Vergleichung Shakespears und Andreas Gryphs*."[29] Schlegel comes from a literary family. He is the uncle of August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel, two of the leading authors of the early German romantic period. In his essay, Johann Schlegel investigates two topics that others deal with over and over: Shakespeare and the rules of drama and Shakespeare's ability to create full-drawn characters. It is the latter that recommends Shakespeare as a major author in Schlegel's opinion. It is Shakespeare's *Schwulst* that suggests to this German critic's mind a comparison with him and Gryphius, one of the most important of the German Baroque poets. Schlegel charges Shakespeare with "crudity, barbarity, uncouthness, and obscurity."[30] He compares Shakespeare with Jonson, Corneille, and the Greeks. Since Schlegel is a disciple of Gottsched, one might suspect that he would follow his teacher's sentiments concerning Shakespeare. However, it turns out that he moves away from Gottsched. He believes pleasure, not instruction, to be the primary goal of literature. By writing a serious critical work about Shakespeare, Schlegel suggests that there "might be relative value in all kinds of literary products from places other than Aristotle's Athens or Corneille's Paris."[31]

Schlegel also has some good things to say about Shakespeare. First, he notes the absence of love intrigues, which are ubiquitous in French literature. He is also impressed with Shakespeare's approach to and use of history. Both Schlegel and Gottsched believe history to be a reputable source for drama. However, Schlegel points out that Shakespeare's plays are more than histories. Shakespeare takes the individual character from history and invests that character with universal human qualities. His characters are therefore his own creations. Sometimes, as in Julius Caesar, this urge to embellish historical facts is taken too far. To Schlegel's neo-classical mind this suggests over-indulged pathos and hyperbolic rhetoric. Nonetheless, he approves of Shakespeare's passion and allows for the circumstance that great genius cannot always be kept within the bounds of aesthetic propriety. And it is this insight that sets in motion a process that will reverse Gottsched's anti-Shakespearian prejudice.[32]

All of what has occurred to this point with the reception of

Shakespeare in Germany finds its final resolution in the work of Lessing. With his contributions to Shakespearean scholarship in Germany, the first part of Germany's reception of Shakespeare is complete. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing is one of the most important of the Enlightenment authors and at the same time one of the most important critics of the Enlightenment. He helps to move German literature beyond that movement toward the classical era of Goethe and Schiller. He is the first German poet of the eighteenth century whose works are still presented on the German stage and is also the founder of the *Bürgerliche Trauerspiel* (tragedy of the middle class), with *Miss Sara Sampson* and *Emilia Galotti*. His play *Nathan der Weise* is the best example of the tolerance of other religions espoused by the Enlightenment.

Concerning his stand on Shakespeare, one need look no further than the seventeenth letter in his *Briefe der neusten Literatur betreffend*. There he states unequivocally that Gottsched's critical praise of the French theater and his desire to construct the German theater along the same lines is absolutely wrong. Lessing begins his letter by quoting a critic who says, "No one will deny that the German stage owes much to Gottsched for its improvement." Lessing continues, "I am that no one; I deny it categorically."[33] He then continues in his best German polemical style to excoriate Gottsched. While he admits that the German theater at the time of Gottsched stood in need of reform, he says that it took no great mind to understand that and criticizes Gottsched for his remedy: transporting French dramas to Germany and expecting them to be accepted by the Germans as they were the French. He says that Gottsched threw together a play of his own, *Cato*, with scissors and paste. He wanted not to cleanse the old German theater, but to create his own theater. And what kind of theater would that be? A French theater. He did not bother to consider whether that would fit a German audience. Had he looked more carefully at what he rejected, he would have seen that the German audiences had more in common with English taste than with French audiences, and that Germans, when they viewed tragedies on stage, wanted to see and think more than the awful French plays allowed them to do. Germans are more interested in greatness, the terrible and the melancholy, rather than the showy, the delicate and the amorous. Too great a simplicity tires Germans more than too much complexity. Lessing accuses Gottsched of being too impressed with Addison and not impressed enough with Shakespeare, Johnson, Beaumont and Fletcher. Had Gottsched translated Shakespeare rather than Corneille and Racine, he would have come closer to the true taste of German audiences. He would also have awakened among German dramatists far more substantial talent. For, as Lessing says in one of his most often quoted phrases, a genius can only be awakened by a genius. Lessing believes that a genius is born, not made. Education and hard work may polish what is there, but unless the talent naturally inheres in a person, that person will never be a genius.

Further, Lessing maintains that Shakespeare's gifts far exceed Corneille or Racine. The latter, he says, although familiar with the Greek dramatists, never approach their abilities, while Shakespeare, who is almost totally ignorant of the Greeks, come far closer to the substance of their ability. Next to Sophocles' *Oedipus* only are Shakespeare's *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Hamlet*.

So much for Lessing's estimation of Shakespeare. Two things are important for this seventeenth letter. First, it shows a first rate and well-respected German critic stating in the most unequivocal terms that Shakespeare is the equal of the ancient Greeks and therefore a model worthy of admiration and replication; second, and perhaps more important for the history of German literature, it shows a complete break with the French Enlightenment tradition which Gottsched had lionized and which now Germany's literature was mature enough to throw off.

From this point on, Germany's reception of Shakespeare becomes more varied and rich. Goethe and the Romantics raise the reputation of the Bard to heights that are seldom found anywhere else, including England itself. The translations of August Wilhelm Schlegel and Dorothea Tieck, daughter of Ludwig Tieck, the great author and theoretician, not only secure Shakespeare's reputation in Germany, but also do much to establish new norms for translation for all countries. It is these translations that almost persuade the reader to wonder if they may not capture the original intent of Shakespeare better than the Bard's own English version—at least that's what many well-intended Germans who were seduced by Shakespeare would have us believe.

The connection between Goethe and Shakespeare requires several books by themselves. Suffice it to say here that Goethe's great novel, *Wilhelm Meister*, deals extensively with *Hamlet*. Wilhelm himself travels with a troop of actors during this work, and one of the plays they present is Hamlet. In incorporating the scenes that deal with *Hamlet* in his novel, Goethe is making a statement about his veneration of Shakespeare, just as he did when composing his famous *Sturm und Drang* drama *Götz von Berlichingen*, which, while not quoting Shakespeare, is written so completely in the Bard's style that all who saw the play knew immediately the source of Goethe's inspiration.

Shakespeare continues to be a major influence in German literature throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. Germans seem to react almost instinctively to Shakespeare's corpus of works. The affinity not only to their literature, but to their very nature is undeniable. Certainly it has been, is now and will continue to be one of the most felicitous melding of two cultures in the history of literature.

Notes

1. Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, vol. 1, *Inferno*, trans. John D. Sinclair (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), 23.

2. Roger Paulin, *The Critical Reception of Shakespeare in Germany* 1682-1914 (New York: Georg Oms Verlage, 2003), 1.

3. Georg Gottfried Gervinus, *Shakespeare Commentaries*, trans. F. B. Burnett, 2 vols. (London: Smith Elder, 1875), 1:xv.

4. Friedrich Gundolf, *Shakespeare under deutsche Geist* (Habilitationsschrift, 1911); quoted in Paulin, 1.

5. Will and Ariel Durant, *The Story of Civilization*, vol.7, *The Age of Reason Begins* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961), 568.

6. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 2 (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1959), 290. All translations from the German are mine.

7. Daniel Georg Morhof, *Unterricht von der Teutschen Sprache und Poesie*, ed. Henning Boetius (1682; Bad Homburg v.d.H.: Gehlen, 1969), as quoted in Paulin, *The Critical Reception*, 12.

8. Paulin, *The Critical Reception*, 15.

9. Ibid., 32.

10. Ibid.

11. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Werke*, Herausgegeben im Auftrage der Grossherzogin Sophie von Sachsen, 143 vols. (Weimar: Böhlau, 1887-1919), 27:88.

12. Paulin, *The Critical Reception*, 20.

13. Ibid., 22.

14. Ibid., 23.

15. Ibid., 33.

16. Ibid., 35.

17. Ibid., 35, 36.

18. Ibid., 43.

19. Johann Christoph Gottsched, *Beyträge zur Kritischen Historie der Deutschen Sprache, Poesie und Beredsamkeit* (Leipzig: Bey Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf, 1733); quoted in Paulin, *The Critical Reception*, 43.

20. Paulin, *The Critical Reception*, 42.

21. Ibid., 40.

22. K. A. Richter, *Shakespeare in Deutschland in den Jahren 1739-1770* (Oppeln: Muschner, 1912), 9-17, identifies and talks about this and other *Spectator* passages.

23. Paulin, The Critical Reception, 50.

24. Ibid., 37.

25. Ibid., 50.

26. Ibid., 52.

27. Ibid., 53.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., 55.

30. Ibid., 58.

31. Ibid., 59-61.

32. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Gesammelte Werke*, 2:52.

33. Ibid.

A Decade of Disorder? The Performance of Justice in Cheshire in the 1590s

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Historians of early modern England have long considered the 1590s, which included widespread crop failures, recurrences of plague, inflation, unemployment, and general economic depression, to be a decade of catastrophe in England.[1] However, much of the historiography that studies this phenomenon focuses predominantly on the area near London. The geographic emphasis of the present study is the county of Cheshire in the northwest of England. This paper evaluates whether local law enforcement officials, particularly justices of the peace, witnessed evidence of this economic crisis in their everyday work, record of which is exhibited in the Quarter Sessions files. These records include petitions to the JPs from members of the community concerned about criminal activity in their towns, as well as legal documents recorded by court clerks during the sessions pertaining to vagrancy, larceny, bastardy, assault, public drunkenness, and a variety of other offenses, all of which exhibit how officials performed justice in early modern England. Cheshire may not have seen exactly the same types of evidence for economic fracture and dislocation as other parts of the realm, but the Quarter Sessions from the aforementioned county suggest that the administrators of local law were forced to deal with the consequences of economic distress, particularly in the form of vagrancy, poor relief, and property offenses, such as theft, burglary, and the illegal taking of wildlife from others' property.

Historians have written extensively about other areas of the realm during the 1590s, examining both the struggles faced by those living during this decade and the attempts by national and local government to relieve the pressures of the multiple forces that combined to result in crisis. J.S. Morrill has studied the tribulations faced by Cheshire residents during Charles I's "personal rule" and the civil wars, but a comprehensive study of Cheshire JPs and their attempts to stabilize an unstable economy in the 1590s has yet to be produced.[2] Historian Ian Archer argues in his work The *Pursuit of Stability* that the economic crisis of the 1590s, which may not have been as devastating in England as on the continent or as demoralizing as the 1540s, was nonetheless destructive enough to cause a great disturbance in social relations in London. Of particular importance to Archer's research is his evidence of apprentice uprisings and other examples of social unrest, problems which are less apparent in the records examined for this study.[3] Peter Clark argues that factors such as war, plague, and dearth that have given the 1590s the label of a decade of crisis were not limited to one group of society but "pervaded all levels of the urban hierarchy."[4] E. P. Cheney discusses the scarcity of grain in his *History of England*, and notes that in 1596 the Home Counties surrounding London were forced to sell their grain to bakers in the capital while being restricted from selling to distant markets, suggesting that certain counties may have suffered more severely because provisioning London was deemed more important than sustaining resources in the rest of the realm.[5] Peter Clark suggests that the county of Kent felt the crisis of the 1590s, particularly the drain on the local economy to finance Elizabeth's wars, because of its close proximity to London.[6]

A comparison of the operations of this northwestern county in the reportedly disastrous decade to London and the counties close to the capital city in the same chronological frame allows for a study of the geographic magnitude of the crisis by examining the struggles faced by those residing near the governmental core of England with the experiences of those living further from the center of the realm. Although Cheshire did not closely neighbor London, the Quarter Sessions records suggest that this county witnessed the effects of the economic hardship that the capital faced, and that JPs were forced to actively attempt to regulate these negative consequences of this period of crisis.

One of the most telling results of economic distress in the early modern period was vagrancy, a crime qualified by a beggar illegally wandering from town to town, often in search of work or charity from community members. Vagrants left their places of residence predominantly because they were unable to support themselves or receive charity from others in their home towns or counties, a circumstance most likely caused by unemployment and, by extension, economic depression. The early modern English courts were diligent in their punishment of vagrants, because unknown rogues wandering about the community threatened the monarch's peace throughout the realm, particularly because they had not established reputations of being law-abiding citizens. Without jobs or homes vagrants were unable to take care of themselves and thought unlikely to be productive members of society. As a result, justices feared that vagrants would do physical and financial harm to the respectable members of the community through the receipt of charity or crimes such as theft, each of which would put a strain on the local economy. Thus, because vagrancy was so closely associated with the economic misfortune of local communities, it is not surprising that vagrancy appears regularly in the Quarter Sessions records from Cheshire in the 1590s. The standard punishment for vagrancy in early modern England, according to statute law, was for the offender to be whipped, branded or burnt through the ear, and sent back to their previous place of residence.[7] The punishment was an incredibly public demonstration, probably meant to show example to others while also attempting to ensure law-abiding citizens that law enforcement officials were doing all in their power to maintain peace and security in the realm.

The Quarter Sessions, however, did not punish the vagabonds themselves in the 1590s, as that task was left to national statute, enforced by town constables; the JPs instead focused predominantly on those who harbored the wanderers. At the Cheshire Quarter Sessions in November of 1590, Rondull Millner was presented "for lodgynge vacabondes," and John Walley was presented "for keepynge an Inmate of mawde walston."[8] On July 29, 1595, the JPs heard the case of Robert Maddock, who harbored vagabonds in his house.[9] At the Quarter Sessions held on May 4, 1596, Isabell Reader, a widow, was found to be a "comen recepter of Rogues & vacabond[es]."[10] Community members and justices viewed harborers of vagrants as accomplices to the criminals who were in want of work or relief, neither of which the county could provide when its own residents were already struggling and many in need of charity themselves.

One of the greatest threats of vagrancy was not in the crime of wandering itself, but in the other crimes which the early moderns associated with vagrants. Historian Paul Slack notes that in his study of vagrants in Warwick in the 1580s, the majority of those convicted of vagrancy were thought to have committed other offences in addition to the initial crime.[11] Further, Slack notes that vagabonds were frequently seen as the cause for all of society's quandaries and disasters.[12] Historian James Sharpe notes, "The vagrant emerged as the criminal stereotype in the late sixteenth century. His importance in the eyes of those bent on keeping English society orderly was demonstrated by a mass of legislation and a substantial body of popular literature, the former aimed at curbing his escapades, the second at horrifying the public with sensational accounts of them."[13] Vagrants were associated with other crimes in the Chester records as well, particularly those related to ill government and causing other disorders, which further threatened the stability of the county in a clearly unstable decade.

A case from 1591 identified a man who not only harbored vagrants, but was also accused of selling ale illegally, keeping whores, and committing a number of burglaries.[14] A case from October of 1596 identified Richard Barlowe as a receiver of aid and a "notorious malefactor" who was also accused of various felonies and lewd behavior.[15] In another case from 1596 a man was presented because he not only lodged vagabonds, but he also sold ale illegally.[16] On May 16, 1598 the JPs heard the case of John Blundel, who was presented for keeping vagrants as well as running a house of ill repute. In the same sessions Margerye Drane, a widow, was presented for harboring rogues and beggars, and for "for kepinge ill rule in her howse."[17] Each of these people not only brought unknown persons into the county but committed other crimes as well. The harborers provided space for the vagrants to cause even more trouble for a community already struggling to maintain order. Thus by punishing those who were visibly aiding in the undermining of the law, JPs put on a show of justice which may have helped to quell the fears people had about vagrants committing crimes in their communities.

In January of 1598, one of the greatest fears associated with vagrancy was realized when John Wright kept a vagrant woman in his house and the woman "there deliu[er]ed of a child."[18] This was a particularly egregious offense because the financial burden of caring for a bastard child would fall onto the local parish unless the father could be located, at which point he would be fined for the maintenance of the child.[19] Thus, the parish in which the child was born would face further strain on its poor relief funds. At the same Sessions, seven others were presented for also lodging vagrants, possibly because of fears of the economic strains associated with bastardy. This attention to harboring vagrants serves as evidence of the economic turmoil that justices were attempting to control.

The records indicate that JPs were also responsible for ensuring that the town constables followed statute law and punished vagrants. This suggests that the number of vagrants was high enough during the 1590s to warrant such oversight. In April of 1597, John Cappes, a constable at Calveley, was presented to the JPs for not punishing vagrants according to statute, "but suffered them after he had receyved them to goe at Large."[20] In October of 1597, John Pealle, another constable, was presented to the JPs at the Quarter Sessions "for not pvnishinge Roges & vacabonds accordinge to [th]e statute."[21] In July of 1599, Robert Barrett and William Mylles, both constables of the township of Millington, were presented for sending poor travelers away unpunished, which was again in violation of the national statute.[22] At the same sessions, Richard Hall and Thomas Fichett, constables, were presented "for suffering the poore weekly to begge and make abode within the said towne contrarie to the forme of the said statute."[23] Each of these cases, as well as a number of others, came from the later part of the decade, which suggests that vagrancy indictments had increased enough for this to be a problem with which the JPs needed to deal. That these presentments predated the Poor Law of 1598 rules out the possibility that this new-found authority concerning accountability was solely the result of a change in national policy. It further suggests that the JPs understood that the suffering economy required the firm hand of law for regulation and the good of the community, and the performance of justice was absolutely necessary amidst an unstable economy.

Caring for the so-called deserving poor, which included impotent persons, maimed soldiers, widows and orphans, and those who, for some reason beyond their control could not support themselves, produced an additional economic strain on the community.[24] People feared that, when left to survive by their own devices, these impoverished and helpless individuals would survive by criminal means.[25] For example, JP William Lambarde, who served in Kent during Elizabeth's reign, wrote that a soldier who returned to England from war would become "either an impudent beggar or an errant thief."[26] Thus it was essential for the safety and well-being of the community, as well as to the moral responsibility, to care for those who could not care for themselves. It is interesting to observe that poor relief, somewhat masked as a means of providing aid to those in need, in actuality resulted as much from fear of the possible criminal acts of the impoverished as from the moral obligations of the wealthy.

Historian R. B. Outhwaite cautions scholars against immediately accepting the term "crisis" as applicable for the 1590s in England, but he does acknowledge that there was a great strain on the finances of the English crown and people during this decade, most of which resulted from foreign wars in Ireland, the Low Countries, and on the continent.[27] Therefore, it is not particularly surprising that the Cheshire Quarter Sessions records of the 1590s indicate that wounded soldiers who returned from war were among those who most commonly requested poor relief from the JPs. In January of 1594-95, the justices received a petition on behalf of Arthur Buckley, who had served for several years in the Low Countries. Buckley was reported to be "so brused and hurte in [th]e body, as he is vtterly inhable any longer to serue" and was therefore granted relief according to statute.[28] At the same sessions came report of John Worral, another soldier from Cheshire, who fell ill during his service and "hath since bene lame, & impotent, not able to get his living."[29] He was not injured in battle and thus was not required to be relieved by statute, but the JPs entertained petition for his relief all the same, perhaps because of their aforementioned fear of the crimes of the impotent.

Internal poor relief not pertaining to maimed soldiers was also a responsibility of JPs on occasion, although it seems to have predominantly been the responsibility of churchwardens and town officials. In May of 1591, the parish of Goseworth petitioned the JPs for the "relief of a childe founde in that p[ar]ishe."[30] The absence of parents' names or a claim of bastardy in the record implies that this child was orphaned for some reason, possibly the death of its parents or their inability to care for the child. This serves as yet another example of the community being faced with relief of the poor in a decade in which poverty appears to have been all too common in Cheshire.

Justices were also responsible for ensuring that the local churchwardens distributed payments for poor relief. On several occasions churchwardens were indicted for not paying the said monies. In May of 1599, Rondell Maynwaringe was presented to the JPs because he would not pay for the relief of the poor or maimed soldiers.[31] Also in 1599, "the churchewardens and all other the inhabitants w[i]thin crete and Barthomley exceptinge three or ffoure" petitioned to the justices, claiming that they had already paid their dues for the maintenance of maimed soldiers and could not pay any more.[32] The community members' unwillingness or inability to pay for poor relief suggests that another force, such as their own suffering from dearth and other financial strain, was preventing them from paying for this charity.

JPs also dealt with other types of poor relief, including answering the Queen's call for relief of victims outside the county of Cheshire. For example, a fire in Devon in 1597 resulted in considerable loss of life and the destruction of "abowt 400 dwellinge howses w[i]th the good[es], wryting[es], plate, money & moveables in theym," and the cost of rebuilding was far more than the town, the county, or even the crown could afford.[33] The Queen's petition requested Cheshire and other counties to provide funds for "the releif of our afflicted state."[34] This type of natural disaster proved too much for an already burdened economy to handle, and demonstrates that Cheshire was not an isolated county, but instead had to face the effects of the crisis of the 1590s from both inside and out of its borders.

Bastardy cases required the JPs to consider multiple means of relief, because the law required that the father of a bastard child be held financially responsible for the child's maintenance, if he could be identified. In 1590 a man petitioned the JPs to secure James Pyckeford "for the getting of on Elizabeth Leghe," the man's daughter, "w[i]th child in fornicac[i]on."[35] The man made his plea because his daughter, "not having any thynge to releve her," was in need of aid either from the father of her child or, if he could not be located, the community.[36] The father of the child was actually a resident of Lancashire in the neighboring county, which could explain the JPs' involvement in the case. Thus, the JPs were again held responsible for seeing to the care of impoverished individuals.

Another apparent sign of poverty and economic depression contained in the Quarter Sessions records is theft. Cheshire had no shortage of larceny during the 1590s, suggesting that the JPs were responsible for attempting to control damage to and loss of personal property. In 1590 Thomas Morris was presented to the JPs for breaking into another man's house and stealing wood.[37] In 1593 James Chawnar stole a shirt band "and sold it to his Brother in Laww."[38] It is possible that, in the face of financial hardship, stolen goods may have been used or sold for money to make up for the rising costs of basic necessities.

Perhaps even more telling of the necessity of the poor to find alternative means of provisioning themselves and their households is the theft of foodstuffs. In his study of *Famine in Tudor and Stuart England*, historian Andrew Appleby notes that the four successive years of poor harvests from 1594 to 1597 left food prices high and people starving. His study focuses on Newcastle, but he notes that other places in the north, including Cheshire, would have suffered even more because they did not receive shipments of grain from outside their borders.[39] One example of this theft for the sake of survival is found in the confession of Ellen Backensell who, in 1592, admitted that she stole a goose "to eate."[40] In January of 1597, Agnes Stomor, identified as a "notorious beggar. . . was taken in the night tyme robbinge a garden," as well as for stealing various other items.[41] The fact that these women stole food items supports a conclusion that Cheshire faced food shortages in the crisis of the 1590s.

People were also presented to the JPs for fishing in waters that belonged to the monarch or to other members of the community who had not granted them permission. Again, although these actions were illegal and the offenders were aware of their crimes, they proceeded in the illegal acts most likely out of necessity. In 1595 Hugh Jackson was examined by the justices and claimed that William Nealar, Henry Jackson, and Richard Farminton came to him and asked him to go fishing with them at Cropton Pool. Jackson refused to join them, but Farminton admitted that he and the other men did go to the said pool, "and sayth that the said Nealer & Jackson did drawe the said poole w[i]th fishinge sheetes in the night... & sayth he did take ffower carpes."[42] Multiple other cases from the Cheshire Quarter Sessions records from the 1590s recount similar instances of men fishing illegally.[43] Like the previously discussed cases of theft, these records suggest economic distress that drove people to find means of survival beyond the bounds of legality.

Peter Clark notes that, although English towns faced pressure from multiple forces, urban government remained intact.[44] As the above records indicate, JPs certainly had a hand in maintaining this semblance of structure through their performance of justice. Vagrancy, poor relief, and theft can all be read as indicators of economic distress, and the Cheshire Quarter Sessions records suggest that the county experienced a substantial number of each of these crimes during the 1590s. Justices of the peace were on the front lines of the attempt at maintaining law and order during the decade that brought economic strain to England. Even though its location in the northwest put it beyond the immediate shadow of the capital, and even though Cheshire residents faced some different obstacles than those of Londoners, they were not free from the crisis that struck England during the decade of the 1590s.

Notes

1. E. P. Cheney, *A History of England from the Defeat of the Armada to the Death of Elizabeth, With an Account of English Institutions During the Later Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries*, 2 vol. (New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1926), 2:3-23.

2. J. S. Morrill, *Cheshire 1630-1660: County Government and Society During the English Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974). Other works include Joan Beck, *Tudor Cheshire* (Chester, UK: Cheshire Community Council, 1969); C. B. Phillips and J. H. Smith, *Lancashire and Cheshire from AD 1540* (New York: Longman, 1994); Tim Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State*, 1480-1560 (Rochester: Boydell and Brewer, Inc., 2000). While the focuses of Thornton's and Philips and Smith's works fall beyond the chronological frame of my study, they serve as reference points within which my research is situated for the purpose of showing development of state-local governmental relations throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Steve Hindle's work examines Cheshire in conjunction with a number of other counties,

as well as London, in a chronology encompassing the 1590s and focuses predominantly on the changing nature of the relationships between the central government and the local officials. Steve Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, c. 1550-1640* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

3. Ian W. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 14.

4. Peter Clark, "A Crisis Contained? The Conditions of English Towns in the 1590s," in *The European Crisis of the 1590s*, ed. Peter Clark (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1985), 45.

5. Cheney, *A History of England*, 2:11-12.

6. Peter Clark, *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution: Religion, Politics and Society in Kent, 1500 to 1640* (Hassocks, Sussex, UK: Harvester Press, Ltd., 1977), 222.

7. John Briggs, Christopher Harrison, Angus McInnes, and David Vincent, *Crime and Punishment in England: An Introductory History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 23.

8. Cheshire Record Office (hereafter CRO), Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 20/3/18.

9. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 25/2/33.

10. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 26/1/5.

11. Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*, Themes in British Social History (New York: Longman, Inc., 1988), 92.

12. Paul A. Slack "Vagrants and Vagrancy in England, 1598-1664" in *Migration and Society in Early Modern England*, ed. Peter Clark and David Souden (Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes and Noble Books, 1988), 49.

13. J.A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England 1550-1750*, Themes in British Social History, 2nd ed. (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999), 142. For more on the criminal act of vagrancy, see A. L. Beier and Paul Ocobock, eds., *Cast Out: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective,* vol. 8 of Ohio University Research in International Studies Global and Comparative Studies Series (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008); John Pound, *Poverty and Vagrancy in Tudor England* (London: Longman Group, 1971); J. A. Sharpe, *Judicial Punishment in England* (London: Faber and Faber, 1990), 24.

14. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 21/2/39.

15. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 26/3/31.

16. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 26/3/19.

17. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 28/1/18.

18. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 27/4/12. At the same Sessions, seven others were presented for also lodging vagrants.

19. J. A. Sharpe, *Crime in Seventeenth-Century England: A County Study* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 59.

20. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 27/1/25.

21. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 27/3/9.

22. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 29/2/10.

23. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 29/2/10.

24. Slack, *Poverty and Policy*, 62-67; Paul Slack, *The English Poor Law*, 1531-1782, New Studies in Economic and Social History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, The Economic History Society, 1990), 4.

25. A. L. Rowse, *The England of Elizabeth: The Structure of Society* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), 352.

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27. R. B. Outhwaite, "Dearth, the English Crown and the 'Crisis of the 1590s,'" in *The European Crisis of the 1590s*, ed. Peter Clark (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1985). For Elizabeth's wars, see Paul E. J. Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars: War, Government and Society in Tudor England, 1544-1604* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

28. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 24/4/33.

29. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 24/4/34.

30. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 21/1/23.

31. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 29/1/15.

32. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 29/3/21.

33. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 27/3/1.

34. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 27/3/1.

35. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 20/4/21.

36. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 20/4/21.

37. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 20/3/18.

38. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 23/1/31.

39. Andrew B. Appleby, *Famine in Tudor and Stuart England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978), 113.

40. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 22/3/9.

41. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 26/4/20.

42. CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 25/2/35.

43. For example, CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 24/2/64; CRO, Quarter Sessions Files, QJF 27/2/22.

44. Clark, "A Crisis Contained?" 62.

Sex in the Wooden O: Exploring a Hetero v. Queer Matrix in the USF Productions of *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Macbeth*

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The Shakespearean plays performed during the 2010 summer season at the Utah Shakespearean Festival—*Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Macbeth*—staged a sustained engagement with what Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner have called "public sex." All three productions relied on an implicit queer v. hetero logic by staging confrontations between the normative (hetero) and the deviant (queer) that expanded on and drove home themes already evident in the play-text. In the process, the queer was systematically associated with non-reproductive desire in the plays, and her censure by the hetero was accordingly a censure of queer desire qua non-reproductive and an affirmation of the heteronormativity of Shakespeare studies. Ironically, this seemingly focused celebration of heteronormativity in the 2010 season of the USF paradoxically participated in and undercut a tradition of heteronormative rhetoric in the west.

My understanding of the 2010 USF season as staging "public sex" is deeply indebted to Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner's articulation of "public sex" in their germinal essay, "Sex in Public."[1] In that essay, Berlant and Warner remind us that sex is not reducible to actions or identities; rather sex results from the convergence of numerous or paradoxical forces coming together in a matrix that normalizes heterosexual behavior.[2] While some such discourses are obvious, for example the conventions of romantic-comedy that inevitably lead to a happy heterosexual conclusion, others, as Berlant and Warner note, are more subtle: "Heteronormative forms of intimacy are supported . . . not only by overt referential discourse such as love plots and sentimentality, but materially, in marriage and family law, in the architecture of the domestic, in the zoning of work and politics."[3] Berlant and Warner use this observation to construct a critique of hegemonic sexual relations in late twentieth-century America that recognizes the discursive creation of (hetero)normative sex in the public sphere and the obfuscation of that production. I want to suggest that this critique provides a valuable tool for examining 2010 USF productions of *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Macbeth*, and perhaps even Shakespearean Studies at large.

Seen through the lens constructed by Berlant and Warner, the articulation of public sex in the USF productions of *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Macbeth* certainly relies at times on overt or "referential" discourses that are clearly aimed at establishing heteronormativity. It is hard not to see a heteronormative logic at work in the generic comedic endings of *Much Ado* and *Merchant*, and *Macbeth*'s clear championing of reproduction in its unabashed celebration of James I.[4] At the same time, these productions are equally reliant on more subtle "material" discourses as well.[5] Each of these productions uses the stage as a place to expand on the overt heteronormative content of the play by focusing our attention on a variety of material concerns (e.g., gestures, costume, etc.). The convergence of these referential and material discourses generates a normative public in the world of the play, and heterosexuality becomes both the endpoint and a default assumption along the way.

An unintended offshoot of the convergence of such explicit and implicit discourse and the formation of a heteronormative "public sex" is, as Berlant and Warner suggest, the simultaneous generation of the queer. Following Berlant, I want to suggest that the queer is outside of, and implicitly a threat to, the heteronormative matrix established by referential and material discourse. The consummation of queer desire in these productions is ostensibly obscene—this is, as I will show, especially the case in the USF production of *Macbeth*—and resists classification by dominant heteronormative discourses. The result is an understanding that the queer is outside of or beyond the hetero and that "queer culture, by contrast [to hetero] has almost no institutional matrix for its counterintimacies."[6] Berlant and Warner's suggestion here seems to be that queer desire does not itself result from the quiet convergence of referential and material discourses in quite the same ways as the hetero. Rather, the queer emerges in a discursive relationship with that hetero.

This is not to say that the queer is reactionary. Rather, it is to say that the queer is queer by virtue of her exclusion from, and resistance to, the *telos* of heteronormative discourses.[7] This is often cashed out in sexual terms as it is in these plays, as the queer ostensibly desires sexual gratification without respect to reproduction, and that desire is seemingly censured by the productions. This focus on the queer's lack of concern with reproduction in favor of more explicitly sexual concerns is central to the argument that follows. Accordingly, this formulation of the queer helps us to read what is going on with the principle antagonists: the Macbeths, Don John and Shylock, all of whom are staged in the 2010 USF productions as queers working against the heteronormative and reproductive matrix carefully constructed by referential and material discourses. The USF productions of *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Macbeth* lead us to a heteronormative public sex that assumes a reproductive *telos* and to a formulation of queer as fundamentally outside of and in opposition to that *telos*.

Things Scene and Things Obscene

The Shakespearean play-texts underwriting the performances in the USF 2010 Summer Season are all decidedly concerned with a confrontation between the hetero and the queer, and this subtext is driven home by particular production choices in the Adams Theater. Even a cursory glance at the texts of *Much Ado*, *Merchant*, and *Macbeth* reveals a sustained focus in each play on a hetero v. queer dichotomy. Referential discourses structure our most basic understanding of the principle protagonists of the plays, as we cannot help but see characters like Claudio in *Much Ado* and Bassanio in *Merchant* as players in an explicitly heteronormative context. These referential discourses are amplified by a number of material discourses manifested in the staging of the productions, for example, the construction of normative behavior cultivated by costume decisions in *Much Ado*. Both of these sets of discourses come together to embrace and help to cultivate heteronormative sex on the stage. The hetero characters in these productions have desires that will, of necessity, lead to heterosexual union and reproduction. Such characters stand in stark contrast to the Macbeths, Don John, and Shylock, who work to satiate desire that is fundamentally non-reproductive. The hetero v. queer dyad that is so clearly developed by referential discourses in the play-texts is thus amplified by the material nature of the USF productions. This, in turn, leads to the establishment of queer subjectivities which work in opposition to the heteronormativity of the plays, and recognizing that confrontation is key to understanding the USF productions.

As Shakespearean comedies, the central plots of *Much Ado about Nothing* and *The Merchant of Venice* move by default towards heteronormative resolutions at the end of the plays. This heteronormative logic is perhaps easiest to see in the "referential discourse"-laden *Much Ado About Nothing*. Here the genre of the play dictates that the action ultimately underwrites heterosexual marriage as the logical endpoint of the "much ado" in the play. Despite the trials and tribulations set into motion by Don John and Borachio, the play inevitably ends with the marriage of Claudio and Hero, and Beatrice and Benedick. The latter pair are perhaps the most obvious example of heteronormativity in the play as they perform with bravado for their respective companies time and time again in the early acts, only to have these performances break down when the two find themselves unlikely allies. What begins as mutual animosity for members of the opposite sex melts away to reveal hetero desires. The transformation is so complete that Benedick's penultimate act in the play is to suggest that marriage provides an answer to one's problems—"Prince, / thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife" (4.1.117)— which he follows with an ominous promise to censure the queer in the play by "devis[ing] . . . brave punishments for [Don John]" (4.1.122).[8]

Throughout the play, Don John works to undermine the marriage of Hero and Claudio. While he provides a rationale for this—he hates and desires to frustrate his brother, who has worked to secure this marriage—there seems to be another reason as well.

Don John is in many ways like Benedick at the start of the play. Both men prefer the company of their same-sex compatriots, and both delight in the torment of their adversaries. The difference is, of course, that Benedick's homosocial preferences are eventually revealed as juvenile and something that will be necessarily corrected by his entry into the heterosexual world. There is no indication that such an end is coming for Don John. Instead, Don John's focus moves from simply thwarting his brother, to thwarting heterosexual marriage *writ large*. To put it another way, Don John is doing his very best to realize queer desires that, of necessity, have the power to frustrate the generic aims of the play, including heteronormative reproduction. While this particular reading of Don John is already evident in the play-text, it is decidedly driven home by the USF production of the play.

Perhaps the most conspicuous example of a material discourse in the USF production of *Much Ado* amplifying the referential discourses of the text was the way costumes were designed and employed in the production. Throughout the play the vast majority of the cast was dressed in soft-hued and gender-specific costumes. The lightly colored, and oddly soft-looking, military uniforms of the men and the earth-toned rural dresses of the women clearly delineated gender, and did so in a way that was evocative of large scale stereotypes in the west. The men were located in a culture of military bravado, and the women were located in a culture of domesticity. Don John clearly did not fit into either world. Dressed in a long and conspicuously tight-fitting black leather jacket, Don John was attired as a kind of stage queer (see figure 1). In a play where costuming reaffirmed gender division and tacitly underwrote the seemingly necessary heteronormative discourse that grows out of it, this singular costume choice carried with it a host of counter-cultural association (e.g., bondage culture, etc.). While this association might seem a

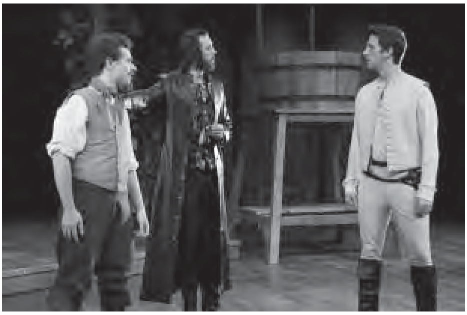

Figure 1: Don John, Borachio and Conrade

stretch at first, it was hard to ignore the difference between Don John and everyone else in the play. So, too, was it hard to ignore the leather-wrapped Don John consistently staged in such a way that his opposition to heterosexual marriage is fronted. Whenever he was on stage, Don John was either directly opposite to the heterosexual couples—an opposing force—or separating the two members of a given couple as a kind of obstacle. Taken together, Don John's costume and staging came together to provide a visual image of Don John as queer—as working to separate himself from the heterosexual logical of the play. Don John was, in the USF production, a character who eschewed the hetero and is accordingly painted as a villain for that reason.

The movement towards establishing heteronormativity that underwrites *Much Ado* is complicated in the USF production of *The Merchant of Venice*. In the text of *Merchant*, the movement towards a heteronormative matrix is evident from the opening scene in which Bassanio employs the help of Antonio to help him woo a "lady richly left" (1.1.161). This begins an unmistakable arc towards the final scene in which Antonio is again put in service of the couple, this time as the bearer of Portia's ring back to Bassanio.[9] The play seems to be obsessed with subjecting the homoerotic to the heteronormative. The latter scene in particular is a testament not only to the default hetero assumptions of the play, but also of the seemingly paradoxical subtlety and violence with which those ends are achieved. Antonio and his desires are steamrolled by the plot that leads inevitably towards the ostensibly happy marriage between Portia and Bassanio, with the ring providing a simple material exclamation point.

While it might seem banal or even derivative to explore deviant sexual desire in a play that is with increasing frequency the focus of a wide array of LGBT[10] attention, this particular issue remains central to contemporary stagings of *Merchant*. It is almost two decades since Bruce Smith identified Antonio as "the most pathetic of [Shakespeare's] several friends. . . who hazards everything for his friend—and loses him to a woman,"[11] and over a decade since Steve Patterson echoed Smith's focus on Antonio's homoeroticism, placing the play in what he calls "an early modern tradition of homoerotic friendship, or amity."[12] And, despite the speed with which academic trends seem to develop and change, this understanding of *Merchant* as intimately concerned with the violent powers of heteronormativity remains a central focus of contemporary scholarship.

This central confrontation between hetero and queer in *The Merchant of Venice* is highlighted again very near the start of the play-text, when Shylock suggests the "pound of flesh" as the penalty should Antonio forfeit the bond made to so handsomely outfit Bassanio. Following James Shapiro, I want to suggest that Shakespeare's audience would likely have heard a particular kind of threat in that suggestion. As Shapiro has pointed out, the fear that Jews would abduct and forcibly circumcise Christians was not uncommon in the early modern world.[13] At its core, that fear was not simply a fear of physical deformation or religious ritual. In the background was a far more compelling fear, that of queer desires. The subtext here is that Shylock is not concerned with financial gain, but rather with disrupting the heteronormative logic of early modern England. The lingering threat of circumcision, so often misread in the period as a kind of castration, removes the more obvious and stereotyped Jewish desire for financial gain, and replaces it with the fear of queer desire as necessarily frustrating heteronormativity that underwrites the anti-Semitic sentiment.

Given the above, it is perhaps unsurprising then, that the USF production made this a central focus as well. When Antonio, Bassanio and Shylock first negotiated the bond on stage at the USF, Shylock drove home his delivery of what I read as this threat of circumcision:

> . . .let the forfeit
> Be nominated for an equal pound
> Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
> In what part of your body pleaseth me. (1.3.149-52)

As he delivered these lines, Shylock leaned towards Antonio and made a snipping gesture in the direction of Antonio's genitals. This action highlighted what seemed to be a central concern of the play, as Shylock's snipping gesture threatened not only Antonio, but the heterosexual reproduction of the state and of the stage. This confrontation between heteronormative interests and queer desire was echoed at least twice near the end of the play: in the courtroom scene in act 4, scene1, and at the very end of the performance. As Shylock approached Antonio to remove

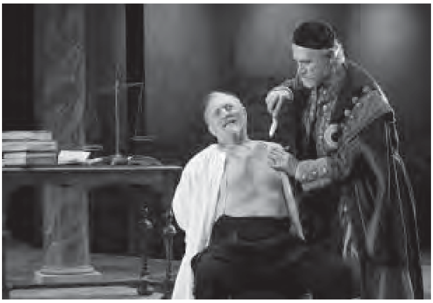

Figure 2: Shylock moves in for the pound of flesh

the pound of flesh in 4.1, and just before Portia, disguised as Balthazar, shouted out, Shylock took aim at Antonio's pound of flesh in a way that clearly recalled his suggestive gesture in 1.3 (see figure 2). This visual echo was compounded by the final scene of the production that gathered Portia, Bassanio, Nerissa, Gratiano, Lorenzo and Jessica on the stage in celebration. While most of the USF production eschewed apologist tendencies that riddle contemporary performances of *Merchant*, the final scene of this production seemingly moved in an apologist direction.[14] Seated downstage right, Jessica was set apart from the other characters on the stage as the performance ended, and a spotlight lingered on her as she wept uncontrollably for several moments after the rest of the lights on the stage had been cut. While this decision seemed to signal a kind of hindsight that revises Shakespeare's play so we, like Porita in 4.1, are not so sure "which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?" (4.1.169), I think there was something more complex happening here as well.

This is perhaps most clearly set in relief when we consider how *Merchant* leaves Antonio and Shylock at the end of the play. At the end of *Merchant*, Antonio's homoeroticism is recouped by the heteronormative *telos* of the state when he is made to serve as the ring-bearer for the newly sealed bond between Portia and Bassanio. Antonio is accordingly brought into the heteronormative matrix of the play in a move that ostensibly celebrates the value of heteronormativity. However, the same cannot be said of Shylock. While Shylock is forced to convert at the end of the trial in 4.1, such a conversion would likely have fallen on deaf ears in an England where Elizabeth I demanded only outward compliance. Bearing this in mind, it seems clear that this simple staging decision had less to do with a personal threat than it did with fears that Shylock's queer desire could sterilize the nation. It was the failure to effectively recoup Shylock that provides whatever power there may have been in the USF's singular staging of Jessica. The tragedy was not simply that both Jew and Christian have behaved badly, but also that the heteronormative power of the state failed to stem Shylock's power which seemed to continue to disrupt heteronormativity by preventing the happy consummation of the marriage of Christian and Jew. As with *Much Ado*, *Merchant's* referential and material discourses generate a hetero matrix, and, as we saw with Don John in *Much Ado*, Shylock's queerness in the USF production was in turn figured materially as an exclusion from and challenge to that matrix.

While part of a different dramatic genre entirely, *Macbeth* provides what is, in many ways, a variation on the heteronormative theme underwriting *Much Ado* and *Merchant*. While there is no happy ending replete with heterosexual marriage at the end of the play, the plot is nonetheless one that is in service to heteronormativity. This is so much so that the central crime in the play—Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's unnatural grasping for power—is repeatedly tied to queer desires that would flout a default heteronormative *telos*. The first indication of this is Lady Macbeth's curious reference to having "given suck" in act 1, scene 7. This passage has drawn a variety of responses from critics who have suggested that it perhaps stems from a loss of a child earlier in the pair's marriage, or even that it provides us the first glimpse into unstable characters.[15] Whatever the case, the violence of this moment suggests that all is not well here:

> I have given suck, and know
> How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
> I would, while it was smiling in my face,
> Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
> And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
> Have done to this. (1.7.54-59)[16]

Violence against children is often used as a shorthand for the fears elicited by queer desire in the western tradition. Or, as Lee Edelman puts it, "whatever refuses this mandate [to reproduce] by which our political institutions compel the collective reproduction of the Child must appear as a threat not only to the organization of a given social order but also, and far more ominously, to social order as such."[17] The queer's focus on satisfying her own desires whatever the cost to others and to the state is very often, as it is here, expressed as a desire to willfully harm children in pursuit of queer ends. This theme is further explored later in the play when Lady Macbeth and Macbeth's designs on the crown lead them to kill Banquo's son as well as Macduff's family.

The murder of Macduff's family was perhaps the clearest staging of the hetero v. queer dichotomy that I suggest is structuring the 2010 USF productions. Once again, the materiality of the USF productions helped to generate a heteronormative matrix, and the exclusion of the queer from that matrix was visually signified on the stage. While the play-text for Macbeth calls for the murder of Macduff's wife and son—a move that was designed to shore up Macbeth's hold on the throne by continuing to eliminate the most immediate successors—the USF production adds two other small children and one child *in utero* to the family (see figure 3). Enlarging Macduff's family served to amplify the crime being committed by Macbeth and his allies at this point. This was no longer merely a political crime with immediate implications; rather this was a crime against the heteronormative family and thus against nature.

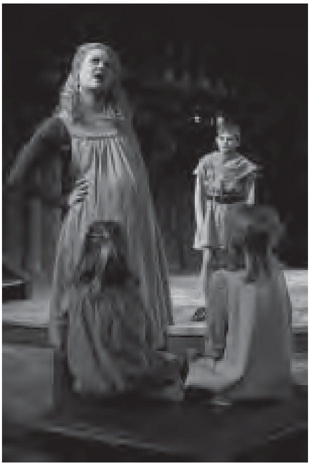

Figure 3: Macduff's wife and extra children.

The impact of this crime was registered in the decision to remove the actual act of murdering Lady Macbeth and her unborn child from the stage. In the USF staging, Lady Macduff was surrounded by a group of figures in dark robes. The robed figures encircled Lady Macduff and her children, and then slowly contracted the diameter of that circle until they were right on top of Lady Macduff. Then the lights cut, and a chilling scream filled the theater. Rather than show the crime itself, the staging suggested that what is about to happen was simply too horrible to be shown. This movement of the action off the stage suggested that what was occurring was truly obscene. As Madhavi Menon and LindaWilliams have both pointed out, *obscene* literally means "off-stage," and those things that we think of as obscene are accordingly those things that we feel the need to hide from view.[18] This was certainly the case here. And, it is important to note that the obscenity here has just as much to do with the nature of Macbeth's desire as it did with the actual murder of the pregnant Lady Macduff. The movement off-stage was a tacit reminder that queer desire is satisfied by actions and events that were not fit for public consumption.

Following this murder, Macduff was the only possible hero remaining. This, too, was amplified by the staging decisions at the 2010 USF. Where Lady Macduff had been surrounded by a throng of figures in dark robes at the moment before her death, we found her husband in decidedly different circumstances when he is told of the crime. Macduff, standing where his wife had been when the murder scene went to black out, was dressed in a white robe surrounded by a ring of candles. The soft light that bathed the stage at this point coupled with the loose-fitting frock on Macduff provided a stark contrast. Where Lady Macduff's murder was cast as a kind of pagan ritual, Macduff's circumstances seem almost monastic. The queer perversion of the murder was thus replaced by a quiet and reflective solitude. Here again we find a commonplace shorthand for the obscenity of the queer and the centrality of the hetero, as these two scenes stage the difference between uncontrolled desire for satiation in the present and the measured, rational rhetoric of the hetero embodied in Macduff.

At the heart of the USF production of *Macbeth* was a dichotomy between what I want to suggest is the scene and obscene. The hetero impulses of the play were staged in confident and soft lighting, like the scene in which Macduff learned of his wife's fate. What we saw on the stage in such decidedly hetero moments was a focus on responsibility to family and to country. Following the murder of his wife and family, Macduff recognized his responsibility to his dead family and to his country to rise up against *Macbeth*. This leads to the end of the play, which, given the defeat of Macbeth and his allies, was a celebration of heterosexual reproduction. The resultant logic was one in which the state would continue, and would blossom in the state that underwrote the original production of *Macbeth* when Banquo's supposed progeny James I ruled in the seventeenth century.

I am not, of course, suggesting in the above that we should see Don John, Shylock or the Macbeths as anything but villains. My aim here is simply to demonstrate the extent to which the deviance of these characters relies on the heteronormative matrix constructed by the referential and material discourses of play and production. All of the above helps us to understand the extent to which the hetero v. queer dichotomy structures the USF productions of *Much Ado*, *Merchant*, and *Macbeth*. The central antagonists of these productions are queer figures. Each of them embraces a drive to satisfy explicitly non-reproductive ends in the immediate future. This focus on pleasure of procreation has been a key defining characteristic of queer desire in scholarship during the last twenty years. The queer nature of these antagonists' desires is no doubt authorized by the Shakespearean play-texts that underwrite the USF performances. But the USF productions also go beyond the explicit dictates of the play-text, and deploy queer desire in conflict with heteronormativity in a way that makes the motivations of the Macbeths, Don John and Shylock more explicitly legible.

A Heteronormative Juggernaut?

Near the end of his essay on the invention of the heterosexual in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Stephen Guy-Bray notes that at the end of the comedy, "The triumph of heterosexuality, a juggernaut destroying everything in its path, appears to be complete."[19] However, as Guy-Bray goes on to note, the ostensible triumph of heterosexuality in *Two Gentleman* has to be qualified, as what we really have is "a narrative in which same-sex and mixed-sex relationships can co-exist."[20] I want to suggest that Guy-Bray's textured understanding provides a useful context in which to read the hetero v. queer dyad I discuss above. While there is certainly a history of epistemological violence that underwrites notions of the hetero that I suggest are so central to *Much Ado*, *Merchant*, and *Macbeth*, we must be careful not to read this as a simple heteronormative program crushing everything in its path. Rather, the extent to which these plays and productions have to work to demonstrate heteronormativity is suggestive of a more complex and nuanced world.

There is to be sure a western obsession with queer—non-reproductive—desire that stretches back at least a millennium, and the rhetoric of the western tradition has, in large part, been the rhetoric of reproduction. As Mark D. Jordan has noted in his *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology*, this process is underway in earnest as early as the 10th century when accounts of St. Pelagius focus on the saint's supposed impenetrability in the face of the sodomitical desires of 'Abd al-Rahman III.[21] As Jordan notes, this celebration of Pelagius' chastity is in many ways a thinly veiled political commentary that seems to be concerned as much with domination and miscegenation as it is with Pelagius' own purity. Pelagius, says Jordan, was celebrated by medieval Christian authors because he refused to partake in the kind of non-reproductive sexual acts we have since come to associate with the queer. This loaded focus on Pelagius' supposed chastity was evident throughout the following centuries in writings by Peter Damian and Albert the Great. The sum of this process, says Jordan, is the gradual understanding of the sodomitical—non-reproductive and queer—desires of 'Abd al-Rahman III as constituting a threat to Christian interests. 'Abd al-Rahman III's desires thus become the subject of Christian derision and the story of Pelagius a way to stage a hetero response.

The focus on the ostensible perversity of sodomy that structures the accounts that Jordan examines is echoed by Cynthia Herrup's discussion of the Castlehaven scandal in early seventeenth-century England. As Herrup notes in her *A House in Gross Disorder*, the Castlehaven scandal of the early seventeenth century resulted in large part from a conflation of the Catholic and the sodomite.[22] The Second Earl of Castlehaven had been accused of sexual deviance, and the often trumped-up stories of his dalliances with his social and political inferiors were a major scandal during and after his trial. Herrup points out that whatever the actual nature of Castlehaven's crimes, there is little doubt that the Privy Council that heard the case linked the sexual crimes with which Castlehaven was charged to his well-known Catholic leanings. Castlehaven was officially censured because of his sexual acts, but the real crime, says Herrup, was his well-established adherence to Catholicism.

In both Jordan's and Herrup's accounts, the religious and the sexual are conflated in such a way that the real issue is non-reproductive desire. We need to note the extent to which this deviance is part of a larger cultural program that has at its core a confrontation between the Christian west and the Islamic east, and of Proto-Anglican England and Catholic England. ‘Abd al-Rahman’s sexual proclivities are thus tacitly linked to his status as a religious and geographical “other.” And, in much the same way, the Earl of Castlehaven finds his sexuality linked to his Catholicism. In both cases then, religious difference and sexual deviance are intimately intertwined. This is, I want to argue, because both are expressions of non-reproductive desire. As we see with the fear of Antonio’s circumcision at the hands of Shylock in *Merchant*, religious difference is converted in to the fear of non-reproductive, that is queer, desires. In both Jordan and Herrup’s work religion serves not as the locus of concern, although it may seem that way as first, but as a way of highlighting the non-reproductive nature common in queer religious and sexual acts.[23]

All of this helps us to understand the USF productions as, at least in part, a product of a very long discourse on queer desire in the west. And while the productions might seem to uphold the *status quo*, I want to suggest that something very different is going on. Recent criticism in queer studies has laid bare the constructed nature of heteronormative discourse, and it is now almost a banal statement to note that the heteronormative nature of contemporary western society is a kind of historical accident that could have been other. Every production of a play, and particularly one that so unabashedly sets up the hetero v. queer dyad so apparent in the USF productions, needs to be taken with a critical grain of salt. It would, no doubt, be easy to see the USF productions as a discursive contribution to shoring up the heteronormative default of western culture. After all, the very name of the academic conference associated with the USF, the conference for which I prepared an earlier version of this paper, affirms the USF’s tense relationship to what Madhavi Menon has recently called heterohistory.[24] The “Wooden O” names not only a theater but also an historical fantasy of Shakespearean production. It invokes the slang name for Shakespeare’s Globe—the theatre in which Shakespeare came into his power as a “mature” dramatist penning the propagandist Henry V and the tersely reproduction-obsessed *Hamlet*. And, this historical fantasy affirms the kinds of teleological assumptions that underwrite the western obsession that is at the heart of reproduction *qua* normative.

This particular logic of reading is tempting, but I think it misses the point. It is, of course, the case that any production of a play requires the director and cast to make a large number of interpretive decisions, and in this sense the 2010 USF productions of *Much Ado*, *Merchant*, and *Macbeth* are no exception. Like any plays, these productions are an amalgam of interpretations and decisions on the part of everyone involved with the production. What sets the decisions I highlight above the bevy of directorial decisions that are part of any play, is their applicability to contemporary, our contemporary and Shakespeare's contemporary, debates about sex in the public sphere. The USF playing up of hetero v. queer dyad is part of an ongoing debate about queer desire that has reached a head in twenty-first-century America. As such, the stress that the USF productions put on the hetero v. queer subtext of Shakespeare's plays is either unwittingly, and clumsily, part of a heteronormative world building in line with the invocation of Pelagius purity and the focus on Castlehaven's deviance, or it is indicative of productions that understand the power of the heteronormative *telos* of the western tradition and stage it as simultaneous and paradoxical affirmation and challenge.

My goal in the preceding has been threefold, as I worked (1) to suggest that there is a heteronormative subtext in *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Macbeth*; (2) to demonstrate how the USF productions of these plays worked through referential and material discourse to establish a heteronormative matrix in the productions, as well as a queer subjectivity that emerged in a discursive relationship to that; and (3) to suggest that this complex navigation of hetero v. queer dyad places these productions in dialogue with a western tradition that has a very complex relationship to what Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner have called "public sex." My hope is that such a discussion serves a stimulus for further thinking about the Gordian relationships between hetero and queer in Shakespeare's plays and in adaptations of those plays. Such thinking must be, I think, at the center of scholarship in Shakespeare Studies.

Recent trends in feminist and queer theory have continued to problematize popular, and often overly simply and expressly hetero, notions of the past. My hope is that this article builds on that trend by suggesting that sex is a public construct in

Shakespeare's plays and adaptations of those plays that emerge out of discursive relationships between polymorphous desires on the stage. While there is certainly a heteronormative matrix constructed by referential and material discourses in Shakespeare's plays, this simultaneously gives rise to a queer subjectivity that necessarily challenges the necessity of and stability of the heteronormative matrix. This is not to suggest, as is sometimes the case, that Shakespeare has offered a prescient insight on the need for sexual and social harmony. What I do want to suggest is that reading and watching Shakespeare as an author who is part of a rhetorical history of constructing normative sex should necessarily include a recognition that such sexual categorization is just that: a construction.

Notes

1. Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, "Sex in Public," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (Winter 1998): 547-66.

2. Berlant and Warner are careful to note that they "will be talking not about the sex people already have clarity about, nor identities and acts, nor a wildness in need of derepression; but rather about *sex* as it is mediated by publics" (547), and my use of sex in this paper follows their careful delineation of the term.

3. Ibid., 562.

4. It is commonplace to associate Shakespeare's writing of *Macbeth* with James I's claim to be descended from Banquo. This critical tradition goes back at least as far as Henry N. Paul's *The Royal Play of Macbeth* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1950), 1.

5. My use of "material" here differs slightly form Berlant and Warner's use in "Sex in Public," as my use of the term focuses particularly on the materiality of the stage. However, despite my focus on the stage, my analysis keeps the spirit of Berlant and Warner's distinction between referential and material discourse as a distinction between those overt discourses that obviously construct heterosexuality and more subtle discourses that are not normally connected with sex.

6. Berlant and Warner, "Sex in Public," 562

7. This particular understanding of *queer* is not only at the heart of Berlant and Warner's article, but has structured a great deal of queer theory in the past two decades. For a more complete articulation of the queer in terms of reproduction, see Michael Warner's introduction to his edited collection, *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), vii-xxxi; and Lee Edelman's introduction to his *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 1-32.

8. William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, in *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Taylor, Gary Wells, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). All in-text citations refer to this edition.

9. William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, in *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Taylor, Gary Wells, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). All in-text citations refer to this edition.

10. *LGBT* has designated since the 1990s what was formerly known as the "gay community," referring respectively to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender.

11. Bruce Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Renaissance England: A Cultural Poetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 67; see also 31-78.

12. Steven Patterson, "The Bankruptcy of Homoerotic Amity in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (Spring, 1999): 10.

13. James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), esp. 113-30.

14. For a discussion of the role of apologist tendencies in recent adaptations of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, see Monique L. Pittman's "Locating the Bard: Adaptation and Authority in Michael Radford's *The Merchant of Venice*," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 25, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 13-33.

15. A simple search of the W*orld Shakespeare Bibliograpy* for "Macbeth, Children" reveals more than a dozen monographs or articles from the last decade that deal with the problem presented by this scene in a variety of ways.

16. William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, in *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Taylor, Gary Wells, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). All in-text citations refer to this edition.

17. Edelman, *No Future*, 11.

18. See Madhavi Menon, *Unhistorical Shakespeare: Queer Theory in Shakespearean Literature and Film* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 43; and Linda Williams, *Porn Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 3-4.

19. Stephen Guy-Bray, "Shakespeare and the Invention of the Heterosexual," E*arly Modern Literary Studies* Special Issue 16 (October, 2007), 12-26. <URL:http://purl.oclc.org/emls/si-16/brayshks.htm>.

20. Ibid., 28.

21. Mark D. Jordan, *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), esp. 10-44.

22. See Cynthia B. Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder: Sex, Law, and the 2nd Earl of Castlehaven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

23. My discussion of Jordan and Herrup is not meant to be exhaustive, and I merely use the pair to indicate what seems to be a trend in the construction of heterosexuality in the western tradition.

24. See Menon, *Unhistorical Shakespeares*, esp. 1-36.

ACTING SHAKESPEARE: A Roundtable Discussion with Artists from the Utah Shakespearean Festival's 2010 Production of *Macbeth*

Michael Flachmann
Utah Shakespearean Festival Company Dramaturg

Featuring: Kymberly Mellen (Lady Macbeth), Grant Goodman (Macbeth), Don Burroughs (Banquo), Quinn Mattfeld (Malcolm), Lillian Castillo (First Witch), and Michael A. Harding (King Duncan)

Flachmann: Welcome to the culminating event in our Wooden O Symposium, the Actors' Roundtable Discussion on Macbeth. I'm going to take you right from the frying pan into the cauldron and remind the actors that in our November design meetings, our director, Joe Hanreddy, told us that our witches would not have any supernatural powers in this production. He described them as "psychic groupies, sweet-looking young girls, but not well-kempt." [laughter] We envisioned them as people who could suggest but not control events. I'd like to know from each of the actors how this initial design decision to deny supernatural powers to the witches affected your role specifically and the production in general.

Mellen: That was actually very helpful at the beginning. Joe Hanreddy suggested that I look at a book called *The Masks of Macbeth* by Marvin Rosenberg, which has huge, multiple chapters for Mr. M and then Lady M detailing all the different ways these characters have been presented throughout the years. So I read all the way through and said to myself, "Oh, if Joe goes this way, I can make these choices, and if he goes this way, I can make these choices." So when we came into the rehearsal room, I was very grateful to be given those parameters, because I think you find extended freedom within limitations. It helped especially with the "Come, you Spirits" speech, because I knew that was not going to be an incantation or spell. And it really helped make our production almost a domestic drama about a marriage gone bad. Without supernatural forces controlling each of our lives, the play became about choice and consequence, shame and guilt, self-loathing and paranoia, and how all these affect your immediate relationship with the people you love.

Flachmann: Thank you, Kym. We're off to a great start. Grant?

Goodman: I had worked with Joe before, so we had the advantage of being able to talk about the play four or five months ahead of time. When Joe came to me with that concept, I was very happy to hear it because, first of all, in Holinshed's source material, the Wayward Sisters are not described as "witches." They are exactly how Michael [Flachmann] introduced them: women on the fringe of society who have lost everything and have turned to this "religion" as an alternative. I think that if they don't have supernatural powers, the play focuses more precisely on the question of fate and free will. Often times in productions of Macbeth, they are puppet masters. For example, I've seen the witches holding the dagger. I've watched productions where they were always on stage. If that's the case, it's not a very good play because you don't really care what the guy does because it's all clearly orchestrated by someone else. That's why I'm so fascinated with the line, "If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me / Without my stir." At that moment, he believes it to be true. It's not until he returns to Inverness and finds out that his wife has been having these same thoughts that the reality of murder becomes a possibility. The witches' ability to suggest action is more important than any actual power they may have.

Flachmann: Thank you, Grant. Lillian?

Castillo: The other witches and I were unaware of the fact that we wouldn't have any specific powers until the day of the first rehearsal. We were so excited because we got to shift from a "magical" to a "religious" point of view. They believe in these spiritual powers like other people believe in Jesus or Buddha. We had the opportunity to explore what that religion meant to the three of us. Each one of us approached it differently, yet we still worked together as a unit. Joe really wanted us to make sure that we were still separate. He said, "This is your religion. The three of you practice it together, but you all feel it differently." This concept also allowed for the incantations to be more like prayers than spells. We were asking a greater power to make events happen for us. We don't have that power to make things happen, which I loved because the play became more of a psychological thriller. Once we planted this seed, once we gave Macbeth this information, we were curious what he would do with the knowledge. That's the way I approached the non-magical wayward sisters. [laughter]

Flachmann: So you see that directorial decision as making your characters more "human" in the play?

Castillo: Yes, absolutely. These young women have their own little congregation instead of their own little coven. [laughter]

Flachmann: Excellent. Thank you for clearing that up. Don?

Burroughs: I'm glad Grant brought up the topic of free will. Is evil something that is acted upon us, or is it something that we possess within ourselves? I like the idea that we are all capable of it because Banquo and Macbeth are both together in this; we both receive the same prophetic greeting. Banquo is suffering the same torn consciousness about what he wants to do concerning the revelation from the witches. Grant and I discussed this a lot, and we felt it was important for us to be equally capable of such an evil impulse. Banquo says, "Merciful powers / Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature / Gives way to in repose." When I'm resting, when my mind is allowed to wander, I wake up in this dream urging me to seize the throne. I personally find it more interesting that an external power isn't leading me down that path. There is always the hope of redemption in a Christian world, even right before your death. No matter what you have done, you can always find redemption. So we have to think that at any point, Macbeth might turn around and change his direction in life. This is especially true when I come back as the ghost. Grant and I discussed this, too. The ghost is saying, "stop." I'm not there to scare him; I'm there to save him. When you're on stage, you have to play specific actions, so I imagine I'm saying, "Look what happened to me. My sin was the thought of killing Duncan. That was my sin, and look at what I'm suffering in the afterlife." Nothing comes out but this horrific sound, and he doesn't see that I'm trying to save him.

Flachmann: Thank you so much, Don. Quinn?

Mattfeld: Are there witches in this play? [laughter] We have no interaction with them. In a sense, we are normal characters in a normal world. Any great play or work of art that has elements of horror will always include one or more characters who don't see that horror. Since I don't see the witches, I have no idea that they exist. This is not a "supernatural" play for Malcolm. I don't think the witches affect him one way or another.

Flachmann: So you are basically clueless? [laughter]

Mattfeld: Yes, and not only about this question. [laughter]

Flachmann: Thank you, Quinn. Michael?

Harding: One of Duncan's lines that intrigues me is "There's no art / To find the mind's construction in the face." As Grant was saying, this is really a play about personal choices and how we live our lives, and this is how I see Duncan. Every decision you make is a gamble, with its positive and negative consequences. This kingdom is falling apart, and what Joe and I focused on was the fact that the king had made a lot of bad decisions about whom he was going to trust. He's fallen into this political whirlpool, and everyone around him is being sucked in. I find it rather ironic that he names Macbeth "Cawdor" right after Cawdor has betrayed him. And then he visits Macbeth's castle for a while, which is a really bad decision. [laughter] All these personal choices make the play much more interesting, tangible, and relevant, as opposed to a situation where these people are dealing with a force they can't control.

Flachmann: Very good. Thank you, Michael. As you can tell, these exceptionally bright and highly committed actors are very much involved in helping to guide the direction of our productions. One topic we often discuss in our rehearsals is character "arcs," and I think most of us would agree that a character who doesn't change much from the beginning of the play to the end is not terribly interesting. I see wonderful "arcs" in all your characters in this production. In fact, I've had great talks with Quinn about the loss of humanity and the pursuit of power in the play and equally intriguing conversations with Grant about the downward psychological spiral that his character goes through. Would anybody like to talk about your arc in the show?

Mattfeld: Yes, I think Malcolm has a huge arc in the show. Joe Hanreddy described Malcolm as a strange mix somewhere between Henry V and Hamlet. When the play begins, he's certainly not ready to be next in line to the throne. He's stunned when Duncan announces him as the Prince of Cumberland. The way we're playing it in the show, no one is expecting that to happen, and it does. The very first monologue I have is to Duncan about Cawdor being executed, and Malcolm is entirely taken aback by Cawdor turning traitor. I realize then that there's absolutely no one you can trust. I realize I have to be capable of severe cruelty. By the end of the play, you've got somebody who is ready to be king and has probably learned as much from his father about trusting people as he has from the title character about what he must be capable of doing to maintain power. So I think Malcolm has a huge arc from the beginning to the end.

Flachmann: Lovely. Thank you.

Harding: What's tricky about an arc is that you can't know as a character where you're going before you get there. We all have to live in hope that we'll be successful in the end. Duncan can't know, for example, that he's going to die. Although we have an overall arc and we can see from point A to point Z, each beat in between is a miniature arc, even in the smallest moments. People who say there is no subtext in a play have not read this play. This experience was very different because Joe Hanreddy spent a lot of time around the table making certain we were all in the same world. That's what makes a great production: If all your arcs intersect, the story is told in a creative and dynamic way.

Flachmann: Thank you. Grant?

Goodman: I did a lot of reading and research, and everything I read depicted Macbeth as a murderous tyrant, a heinous villain. I didn't understand why we would want to watch that kind of character for five acts. If you don't like him, it's a very long play. The critic Harold Goddard made a comment that seemed perfectly sensible to me: Which of us hasn't been to the precipice after doing something horrible in our life. We either step away from that precipice or go ahead and commit the act for which we will be forever regretful. I think that is why we watch Macbeth: Because he is like us. Hopefully, we were trained not to make the bad decision he makes. If he becomes a brute and fights his way through fate, I don't think that's what the play is about. I also don't think the play is necessarily about ambition. He uses the word "ambition" once.

And when he does use it, it is "vaulting ambition" that he's talking about: ambition that is misplaced. However, he uses the word "fear" forty-eight times. That's why we decided to go with this wounded animal image. At the end of the play, I chain myself to the throne and go down with the ship essentially. I wanted to focus on his arc, which was being haunted by his remorse over what he has done: killing the king; killing his best friend, Banquo; killing the Macduffs. I think if he had ascended to the throne naturally, he would have been a good king, a good leader. He is a war hero; he has saved his country. And I have to believe he would have been a strong leader were it not for this seed the witches planted in his brain. So I wanted to focus on his downward psychological spiral. Kym and I also wanted them to be a very loving couple. Harold Bloom says they are the happiest couple in Shakespeare. Of course, it doesn't end well for them! [laughter] But he calls her "my dearest partner of greatness." I don't think there's a more loving line in all of Shakespeare.

Then you have to talk about the childlessness, which we approached early on with a series of violent e-mails back and forth. I'll let Kymberly talk about that in a moment. But we did have to make a decision about the enigmatic lament, "I have given suck, and know / How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me." Unfortunately, I have a friend from high school who lost a child at about age three, and I think that when a couple experiences the loss of a child, it either drives them apart or it brings them together with an amazing bond. We wanted to take the second route—that the loss of their child has really bonded them together. That's why I have her in my arms at the end in the "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" speech. We wanted to make sure in the audience's view that we would be together through eternity, that we were linked indissolubly. So that's the way Kym and I approached the relationship, which was a better place to operate from than the sexual jealousy or sexual politics with which I have often seen their relationship portrayed.

Flachmann: Excellent, Grant. Kym, do you want to talk about Lady Macbeth?

Mellen: Instead of a mutual blame game, it seems to me like a mutual guilt game. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth take the guilt for not only their actions, but also for the destruction they see in the person they love. Macbeth wouldn't have killed Duncan if it weren't for Lady Macbeth's encouragement. She thought that's what he wanted, and she urged him on because she thought he deserved the crown. He would have been an amazing king, but as she sees him unravel, she does, too. We talked about the Kennedys and other golden couples. We wanted to have a very precipitous fall from grace. The audience doesn't have to like us, but we wanted them to understand the choices the Macbeths make and to vicariously realize the consequences of those choices, some of which cannot be atoned for—that no matter what kind of apologies or personal restitution we try to make, there are certain things, like murder, that "cannot be undone."

In my own approach to acting, I try to bring 95% of myself to the character, with the only difference being the circumstances of time and place and upbringing. Personally, I have a very clear moral base and strong religious background. I worry about the hells that we create for each other, about how the devil connives to make us as miserable as he is. I wanted to depict the personal hell that people make through their own choices. If Lady Macbeth had been able to see at the beginning of the play the damage her actions would do to other people, specifically to the children, she would never have encouraged that first murder. The loss of her children is at the root of her sadness and psychosis. I don't think she would bring that kind of pain to another young parent. Ironically, what Lady Macbeth destroys is precisely what she yearns for: a family of multiple children with strong and loving parents. Of course, she doesn't have this realization, and her actions with their resultant guilt catch up with her.

Flachmann: Great. Thank you for sharing with us how you make these roles so personal, so much your own. We have a controversial, but I think very effective, moment at the end of our first half and the beginning of our second half when Grant, during the banquet scene, does not see the ghost of Banquo, and then we pick up the same scene again after intermission, where he does see the ghost. I wonder if Grant or Don could talk about that a little bit—the way we begin to see the play through the Scottish king's eyes and also how the third witches' scene becomes a kind of a dream sequence.

Goodman: I love what we do. We get a reprise of the banquet scene at the beginning of the second act, so I get to have my cake and eat it, too. [laughter] When Joe first told me about this idea and said there wouldn't be a ghost at the banquet scene, I was immediately fascinated. After the intermission, the audience is thrust into looking at events from my point of view, because nobody else on stage can see the ghost but them and me. For me, it becomes a very interesting acting challenge. Because it's my job, you have to believe that I see the ghost before the intermission. You see that I'm starting to unravel. But after intermission, you come back and get to see what I've been seeing, so you're with me now, inside my head, and you're seeing what I have just seen from my point of view. But as Don was saying earlier, it's a bit of a duet between the two of us, as he has come back to scare me into changing my ways, like Jacob Marley. From that point on, you are invited inside my mind so you can experience my downward psychological spiral. And we bleed immediately into the witches' scene right after that, where these visions are planted in my mind. I did a lot of research on sleeplessness, and I think Shakespeare pre-dated Freud. I read a book called *Insomnia*, which is about insomniacs. Everything that Macbeth experiences is a classic case study in insomnia. It gives you tunnel vision, which he clearly has. You lose a lot of short-term memory, but you gain a more vivid long-term memory so events that have happened in the past come into much sharper focus.

Flachmann: Don?

Burroughs: When Banquo is killed, he reappears within seconds, literally. I have less than a minute before I come back on stage, so there isn't really a lot of time to create any kind of stage effect that isn't just going to look cheap. In addition, most people are familiar with this play. It's taught in a lot of schools, and almost everyone has read it. Our production allows you the privilege of seeing this relationship in the afterlife; we understand what the character is going through after death, which I think is a brilliant choice by our director. And the ego in me loves the extra stage time! [laughter] All this facilitates the fascinating shift in perspective that Grant has described. So actually I'm a big fan of this choice, because I think it helps drive the story forward and makes you sit on the edge of your seat and engage in the second half of this wonderful play.

Flachmann: Thanks, Don. Lillian?

Castillo: I love it for many of the same reasons. When he meets the witches at the beginning of the show, he puts them inside his mind. He knows he can be as powerful as he makes himself. I adore the fact that he forecasts his own future and sees the witches as a dream that makes him feel powerful.

Goodman: I'm also intrigued with the bad dreams I'm having. The dagger is the air-drawn dagger that he gives to Duncan. Since these are psychological projections, we wanted to place the cauldron scene in the same realm as the dagger scene, which makes this a psychological thriller as opposed to a story about a tyrant who hacks and slashes his way out of some bad decisions.

Flachmann: I'm interested in how the actors were impacted by some of the other directorial decisions. For example, the apparitions don't actually appear, and we have a rather stylized forest. You talked a little bit, Grant, about being chained to the throne at the end, and we haven't mentioned yet the crown the witches give Macbeth.

Goodman: The crown of thorns is certainly Biblical. It's great to have something tangible that the witches give Macbeth to remind me as a character and you as an audience of that prophesy. It's wonderful to have that overt symbol there for you to see, especially at the end when I have it in my hands and realize that this whole quest for power signified "nothing." Joe made some great choices that rendered the ideas palpable, which is why I chained myself to the rickety, old, decayed throne at the end of the play. We wanted to focus firmly on a psychological study of the play. I'm also glad my head isn't cut off at the end. And no, I don't have black hair. People have asked why I don't have black hair. Nowhere in the text does it say that Macbeth needs to have black hair. That's for the record! [laughter]

Flachmann: Quinn?

Mattfeld: My personal opinion is that the great playwrights are the ones who present questions and dilemmas as opposed to answers. This play opens itself up to a lot of interpretations that do not bastardize the text at all. I think Joe did a wonderful job of making these very informed decisions, and he was extremely respectful about using the actors and our ideas, as well. There are several different directions you could go with these plays. That's why we are doing them 400 years later and doing them so differently each time.

Harding: I especially love the scene between Malcolm and Macduff in 4.3. I was profoundly moved when I saw how Joe had set it in a monastery. He made some very bold decisions that opened up the play. Haven't most of us at some point dealt with a quest for something bigger than ourselves, whether it be religion or mortality. And Joe tapped into that universal yearning by staying away from witchcraft, which opened the door for further exploration of the text while still being true to what Shakespeare wrote.

Flachmann: Excellent. That's a great segue into talking about the best Malcolm/Macduff scene I've ever witnessed.

Mattfeld: In our production, Malcolm's departure to England is a kind of religious retreat, which allows him to contemplate whether he's still interested in being King of Scotland. It's a fantastic choice. The transition of going from the murder of the Macduffs into that scene is supported by that beautiful choral music, which introduces this almost cinematic discussion between the two characters. When Malcolm is in the monastery, we realize that God, family, and Scotland are the most important things in his life. Setting that scene in a monastery fuels the action and gives us something tangible to hold on to—the crown. All of a sudden, it becomes a scene about this crown of thorns: This is just debris from a tree that they put together, and all of a sudden it has this mystic power. We hold on to these things in real life because we give them the power that Lillian was alluding to earlier.

Goodman: We are interpretive artists. I tell my students there are 206 bones are in the human body. This is an important analogy I use when teaching—We all have the same number of bones in our bodies, but the way they are fleshed out is always different. That's the reason we still do Shakespeare's plays. They're perfect skeletons, ideal in every way, but the way we flesh them out is up to us. That's why no production at the Utah Shakespearean Festival is ever going to look the same. How we interpret each show is always going to be different. And that is why, 400 years later, we are still doing these brilliant plays: They hold all the different types of flesh with which we dress them.

Flachmann: That's beautifully said. I'd like to move into history for a few minutes and ask whether Duncan was a weak king.

Harding: Before I became truly knowledgeable about my craft, I used to take my history from Shakespeare, which was a big mistake. As a dramatist, he necessarily compresses time, creates characters, and makes other changes for the sake of his art. Historically, Macbeth wasn't a bad king. Shakespeare had his political reasons for depicting Macbeth the way he did since he wrote the play for King James, who was a supposed descendant of Banquo. We didn't want to make him this incredible warrior king, which of course is not historically accurate. So we decided to highlight his emotional side and illustrate how the consequences of his choices actually weakened him as a king. He was almost too human, and we saw him getting caught up in his own mistakes and the bad choices of the retainers around him. Even though Shakespeare's Duncan isn't historically accurate, we decided to take some aspects of history and incorporate them into his characterization.

Flachmann: Let's talk a little more about the placement of Lady Macbeth in Macbeth's arms after her death, which has reminded many audience members of Michelangelo's Pieta.

Goodman: That was an image Joe had in his mind from the very beginning. If Macbeth is to have any redemptive qualities at the end of the play, they probably should come from the "yellow leaves" or the "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" speeches. Now I see the "tomorrow" speech as a descent into nihilism. The arc of the speech becomes greater because I have the cold reality of her death in my arms. There is no "tomorrow" for us. There is nothing left: This is what we all must come to. Then I hope the speech takes on a slightly different meaning, which veers into remorse, guilt, and sadness. All our "yesterdays," all our hopes and dreams and plans have come to nothing. I think it's a beautiful image.

Flachmann: When do you actually decide to kill Duncan?

Goodman: I'll let Kymberly answer this, but we decided that there's a missing scene. I come home to Inverness and say, "Duncan comes here tonight." She asks, "And when goes hence?" to which I reply, "Tomorrow, as he purposes," after which she says, ". . . never / Shall sun that morrow see," which means we are not going to let him leave there alive. But no final decision is made in that scene. When I come back on for my "If it were done when 'tis done" speech, a decision seems to have been made, because when she comes in she implies that I have already sworn to kill

Duncan. The bargain, the compact, is made off stage. There's no mention of witchcraft in that scene whatsoever. What she says is that the time is right. Nothing in that scene says I have to do this because the witches told me so. That's never expressed.

Mellen: Nor does Lady M ever use that as an argument, which I found very interesting. I say, "You promised me. You're the one who started this conversation. You said you wanted the throne. I've done everything but stab him." The best acting advice I've ever gotten is that consistency in characterization avails you nothing. Contradiction is everything. To make any character on the page multidimensional and human, all you have to do is play the contradictions from millisecond to millisecond. Wanting my husband to seize the throne is a very "human" emotion for me to have.

Flachmann: A final question, if I may: What is your biggest fear as actors?

Mellen: I don't really have any fears, but I do sometimes have regrets. Looking back, sometimes I can say I was tired at that moment, or my partner was giving 200%, and I only had 10% to give him. But rather than fear, let's talk hope. Hope is the opposite of fear. My hope is to be fully present in each moment, having done all the textual preparation so that memorization is not an issue. My job is to serve my partner. My job is not to act, but to react. The energy that my partner throws back to me will energize the scene. My personal goal is simply to be present and be open and be receptive to whatever the moment brings me every night. Consistency is not the goal at all. It's process, not product.

Flachmann: Any other terrible fears?

Burroughs: Forgetting your lines. It's a classic.

Castillo: One of my biggest fears, and I've actually seen it happen to someone else this summer, is having to edit Shakespeare on the spot. Monica Lopez has a change in The Merchant of Venice into her boy costume, and one night the change didn't happen on time, and she has all these lines about being dressed as a boy, which I had to ad lib for her till she came on stage. So that's really my biggest fear.

Mattfeld: When my lines go out of my head, they don't just go away and wait for a while and then come back. They get on a plane to Cincinnati and start a dry cleaning business. [laughter]

They are never coming back. This is such a feral art form; it's so fleeting, and it can go away at any moment. And every time our contract runs out, we have to sign up for unemployment, and we wonder if we're ever going to do another one of these plays again. [laughter] That's what the real fear is: That this beautiful, wonderful, glorious theatrical moment in my life is going to go away and never come back.

Flachmann: Thanks, Quinn. I think that's the first reference to dry cleaning we've ever had in one of our Actor Roundtable Discussions. [laughter] I would simply like to close by saying that as hard as these actors work and as brilliant as they are, we still need you as audience members to make this exceptional theatrical experience complete. We thank you so much for being here and for supporting this wonderful festival. [applause]

UNDERGRADUATE PAPER

Rebel Scum v. Rebel Saviors: Rebellion in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and *Richard II*

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In the deposition of a ruler, who has the authority in the decision to depose? Can conspiracy and rebellion be justified? Such questions arise in the reading of William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and *Richard II*. Both plays contain rebels who feel justified in their removal of the one in power. In the first case, it is a group of Roman senators who feel that their very democratic way of life is threatened by Caesar's growing power and possible monarchy; and in *Richard II*, the rebellion is formed by a group of nobles who feel that their king is no longer capable of ruling and so seek to instate a king who will better fit their needs. Both groups are formed by men of the higher, more "noble" class, and they use the power from their position to propel the rebellion. At the time Shakespeare was writing, rebellion was a serious concern, especially for the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I. By looking at works by authors contemporary to Shakespeare addressing the very real issue of rebellion, one can see that his characters of Brutus, Marc Antony, and Henry Bolingbroke reflect the anxiety of Shakespeare's time in regards to rebellion.

To begin with, the topic of rebellion will be addressed and its meaning defined in context with the plays by looking at works contemporary to Shakespeare. The first contemporary work is *An Homily Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion*, written in 1571, in which rebellion is addressed as "an abominable sin against GOD and man" and warns those who would consider rebelling of "how dreadfully the wrath of GOD is kindled and inflamed against all rebels"[1] (emphasis added). When the *Homily* was written, it was very likely that "every English person was familiar" with it,[2] including Shakespeare's audiences. This likelihood adds more importance and emphasis to the *Homily*'s definitions of rebellion and the consequences for creating it. The *Homily* warns of the nature of a rebel: "Thefts, robberies, and murders, which of all sins are most loathed of most men, are in no men so much nor perniciously and mischievously, as in rebels."[3] Rebels also desire rebellion in order to "come by other men's goods unlawfully and violently,"[4] and all of the plagues of war, pestilence and famine "do wholly altogether follow rebellion."[5]

In contrast to the *Homily*, selections from John Ponet's *A Short Treatise of Politic Power*, written in 1556, argue the point that a justified rebellion against a tyrant (or in Ponet's case, a Catholic prince[6]) might just be what is needed to restore order to a kingdom. Ponet writes that there is no "more miserable, nor greater plague of God than where one ruleth, that is evil, unjust, and ungodly"; an "evil governor subvert[s] the laws and orders . . . [and] spoileth the people of their goods, either by open violence . . . or promising and never paying."[7] Ponet further argues that "kings, princes, and governors have their authority of the people, as all laws, usages, and policies do declare and testify,"[8] thus giving the power to rid themselves of an evil ruler to the very people who bestowed him power in the first place.

Rebellion, as described by both the *Homily* and Ponet, becomes a key component in *Julius Caesar* and *Richard II*. In *Julius Caesar*, fear of a monarchy destroying democracy rises among many of Rome's senators when Caesar returns triumphant from war and is offered a crown by Antony and the crowds of Romans who have gathered to greet him. With Caesar being the one remaining member of the First Roman Triumvirate (Caesar, Pompey, and Marcus Crassus), the fear of a single ruler becomes the basis of the conspiracy on behalf of many of the senators who work with and know Caesar, something that Ponet says is one of "the reasons, arguments and law that serve for the deposing and displacing of an evil governor," that "will do as much for the proof, that it is lawful to kill a tyrant."[9] The initial driving force behind the conspiracy is Cassius, who, seemingly willing to rebel for the sake of Rome, says to Brutus, "Men at sometime were masters of their fates. / The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, / But in ourselves, that we are underlings" (1.2.140-43). By telling his concerns to Brutus, a senator with more power and influence, Cassius sees an opportunity of creating a rebellion with a more stable propellant of his views, and in a conversation with one of his fellow conspirators, he says of Brutus, "Him and his worth, and *our great need of him*, / You have right well conceited" (2.1.161-62, emphasis added). Without the power of Brutus in the conspiracy, the assassination of Caesar could have very well ended as merely an attempt to relieve him of power instead of taking his life. Brutus then, in a way, becomes the figurehead of the conspiracy and everything runs through him, both the power and the anger. The conspirators meet at Brutus'ss home in the dead of night, "when," according to Brutus, "evils are most free" (2.1.79), and where Brutus allows himself to become the leader of Cassius's conspiracy, and his role as figurehead of the rebellion is complete.

Brutus's intentions, however, do not appear to be an attempt to gain power; his main concern is for the well-being of his beloved Rome. His intentions are that of a well-meaning father whose "fatherly duty," according to King James I's *The True Law of Free Monarchies*, is "to care for the nourishing, education, and virtuous government of his children," just as a good king or ruler is "bound to care for all his subjects."[10] That is why after the assassination of Caesar, he answers the Roman peoples' demand of why he rose against his friend with "not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more" (3.2.21-22). His main ambition was to save the Rome he loved from the possible tyranny that power could have unleashed in Caesar, a concern Ponet addresses in his treatise: "And men ought to have more respect to their country, than to their prince: to the commonwealth, than to any one person,"[11] thus justifying, at least according to Ponet's view, Brutus's actions in rebellion.

In becoming the representative of the conspiracy, Brutus then becomes the one person responsible for the death of Caesar and is targeted for his leadership. Though he loved Caesar as a surrogate father, he felt it was his duty to relieve the people of Rome from a singular monarch who could turn into a tyrant, thus "spoiling" the good of the people, as Ponet suggested. This love is conveyed as a respect for Caesar, especially when he and the other conspirators are discussing the murder. Brutus says, "Let's be sacrificers, but not butchers" (2.1.166), to Cassius, who is prepared to kill more than just Caesar. This can also be taken as Brutus trying to keep Caesar from being completely hacked apart because of the love and respect he holds for him. After the assassination, Brutus is visited by the ghost of his former friend and leader, which is symbolic of Brutus's feeling of being haunted by the act he committed; the guilt he took upon himself as the figurehead of the conspiracy eventually undoes him. While essentially a good person, he felt the need to commit such a violent act of rebellion in order to preserve the land and people he cared for. In his mind, and in accordance with Ponet's work, the rebellion was justified.

Where Brutus becomes the leader of the rebels, Marc Antony, the beloved right-hand man of Caesar, becomes the leader of the people. Like Brutus, Antony is inherently a good person who seeks for the well-being of Rome. He is a very ambitious man who is also almost completely loyal to Caesar. It was Antony, for example, who offered Caesar a crown because of his love for Caesar and, perhaps, for his own ambition. For these reasons, he was not included in Brutus and Cassius's conspiracy, though if he were to have been swayed, his power and position close to Caesar would have put him in the running to have become the figurehead of rebellion instead of Brutus. But because he could not be swayed, Cassius views Antony as a threat, but one that falls on the deaf ears of Brutus, whose main objective is to save Rome only from a power-hungry Caesar, not a power-hungry Antony. Antony does, in fact, prove to be a viable threat to the conspiracy, and in the end he dissolves Brutus's argument of love for Rome as the reason that he murdered Caesar. With his speech at Caesar's funeral, Antony wins the people, the true source of power, to his side by saying such things as,

> O masters, if I were disposed to stir
> Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
> I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
> Who, you all know, are honorable men.
> I will not do them wrong. I rather choose
> To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,
> Than I will wrong such honorable men. (3.2.121-27)

With these lines, Antony sways the crowd and becomes the next possible leader of the Roman people. Once he has the crowd, Antony realizes the power that comes with them and sets off on a course that will eventually place him in the next Roman triumvirate.

As Antony attains more power from the people, he sets out to rid Rome of the conspirators, who could eventually rise up against him as they did Caesar. He creates a list of senators and other people responsible for the death of Caesar and sees to it that they are either killed or persuaded to join his cause in order to spare himself the worry of further conspiracy and rebellion. As he takes upon himself the mantle of leadership, he seems to strive to become the type of leader that he felt Caesar could have been or, perhaps, that he could always have become had he not always stood in Caesar's shadow. Throughout the play, leading up to Caesar's murder, Antony never really seems to shine. It is not until the power of the people is given to him at Caesar's funeral that his true potential is shown, and it is perhaps in that moment when Brutus realizes his folly in not killing Antony as well as Caesar. Such power that Caesar would have received is now in the hands of Antony, someone with even less experience in ruling. This power changes Antony, who then becomes one of the main people in the war against the conspirators.

Antony, though not a conspirator himself, becomes a part of the rebellion and leads a war against the conspirators, which brings death and destruction to much of Rome and her citizens. As previously mentioned, the *Homily* states "that not only pestilences, but also all other sicknesses, diseases, and maladies, do follow rebellion, which are much more horrible than plagues, pestilences, and diseases sent directly from GOD."[12] Because Antony takes up the responsibility of leadership after rebellion, he becomes entangled in a web of "maladies" for not only himself, but for the Roman nation as well.

As seen with Brutus and Antony, both the *Homily* and Ponet's definitions of rebellion are evident in *Richard II*, especially in the character of Henry Bolingbroke. King Richard, as Caesar, is the focus of a rebellion in his own nation. He is viewed by his nobles as being "basely led / By flatterers" (2.1.241-42) and being a "most degenerate king" (262). The nobles, however, supported Richard at one time as a strong ruler of an England that "appeared to be in a powerful, if not dominant, position in western Europe," and whose "domestic achievements were the more notable because they marked the restoration of royal power from its lowest point since the deposition of Edward II."[13] In an attempt to rid himself of an earlier conspiracy from the Appellant Lords, a group of lords and barons who seized power from Richard through the "Merciless Parliament" in 1387, before he was of age to rule, Richard orchestrated the events that take place in the beginning of the play: the deaths of three lords and the banishment of Mowbray and Henry Bolingbroke.[14] It was only when Richard seized the Lancastrian lands, something Ponet gives example of in favor of removing a tyrant,[15] that his favor with the nobles broke, leading to rebellion.

This rebellion is initiated by the Earl of Northumberland and, like the conspiracy in *Julius Caesar*, is in need of a figurehead to lead the faction. This figurehead comes in the form of Henry Bolingbroke, the exiled Duke of Lancaster. Northumberland, like Cassius, could very well have spearheaded the rebellion, and yet he sees the need for someone whom the people would entrust with their power. He works to assuage the horror of rebellion by playing up to Henry and saying such things as, "Yet your fair discourse hath been as sugar, / Making the hard way [of rebellion] sweet and delectable" (2.3.6-7). With the support of Northumberland and other nobles, Henry returns to his homeland with the express purpose of regaining his lands that were falsely seized by Richard. In this purpose, he mirrors both Brutus and Antony because his intentions are seemingly pure; he only wishes to regain his family's lands, which were taken by Richard. Just as Antony begins in the shadow of Caesar and becomes a ruler, Henry begins the play as "banished Hereford" (2.3.113), but returns as the Duke of Lancaster and, eventually, with the help of the rebels, becomes King of England. Also like Antony, Henry is loved by the crowds once he takes the throne, with even Richard's horse respecting him (5.5.78-83). Henry is lured in by the power of the monarchy, and when presented with that power, he abandons his initial design to regain his family's land and takes the crown from a seemingly all-too-willing Richard. Once he takes to the idea of this power, Henry sets out to rid the kingdom of those who could rise up against him, most notably those who are still loyal to Richard when most of the nobles have pledged loyalty to Henry. These actions of Henry's are very similar to those of Antony, making it evident that, as the *Homily* points out, the actions of rebellion lead only to more disease and maladies for those left.

Where Henry embodies many of the same characteristics of Antony and the *Homily*, he also shares many characteristics with Brutus and Ponet's work. He does indeed become the figurehead of rebellion as Brutus becomes the figurehead of conspiracy. His intentions are good in the fact that he feels he is doing England a favor by deposing Richard as king. Because of the flattery of the rebels, he feels that Richard is no longer capable of ruling, though he continues to respect him and his position as ruler. When he returns to England and once again meets Richard in the third act, he kneels to him and shows him respect, even though he is there to take Richard's crown. As Brutus loved Caesar, so did Henry show his love to Richard by kneeling before him and calling him "my gracious lord" (3.3.189). Richard, sensing his own demise as king, responds in a likewise respectful, even kingly, manner by saying, "Me rather had my heart might feel your love / Than my unpleased eye see your courtesy . . . Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all" (3.3.192-93, 197). This respect, however, does not stop Henry from taking the crown from Richard, the ruler he felt was no longer capable to rule.

To escape possible rebellion against himself later on, Henry has Richard imprisoned. It is during his imprisonment that Richard is killed at the "suggestion" of Henry. Henry reacts to the news by saying, "Though I did wish him dead, / I hate the murderer, love him murder'd" (5.6.39-40), signifying his disdain for what power has brought him: the usurpation of power and death of a monarch. Later in Henry IV, Part I, this disdain is brought more to the surface and, like Brutus, Henry is haunted by not only the ghost of the leader he deposed, but also by the way in which he came to power in the first place. Both psyches of Henry and Brutus then fall victim to the idea of the person they killed; Richard and Caesar "in death become the focal point of action, the site of conflict, and the means by which the present and future are made coherent."[16]

With this, we can see that Henry embodies both aspects of rebellion that the *Homily* and Ponet argue. He has the justification of rebellion against Richard that Ponet gives, in that he is seemingly rebelling for the betterment of his country; and yet he faces the problem of more rebellion in his own reign as warned by the *Homily*. The very real case of Richard's dethronement is one that is hard to define; even Ponet states, "Upon what just cause Richard the Second was thrust out and Henry the fourth put in his place, I refer it to their own judgement."[17] Even when rebellion is justified, it seems to create a cloud of mistrust amongst all involved, even centuries later.

Rebellion can be justified for either good or bad, as evidenced by the *Homily* and John Ponet's work. This can especially be seen in Shakespeare's characters of Brutus, Antony, and Henry. The results of rebellion vary, however, as seen with these three men. Brutus, while good intentioned according to Ponet, kills himself after losing a war rather than face trial for killing Caesar, though he felt justified in saving Rome from a possible tyrant. For Antony, the leader in him awoke, and he took power in the Roman Triumvirate, only to lose friendships and people close to him because of his newfound power, a fate the *Homily* references as a result of rebellion. Henry sets out to become a better king than Richard had been, but only faces more rebellion during his own rule, a fate found by both Ponet and the *Homily*. When one ruler is deposed or power is usurped, many more problems arise for not only the new ruler but also for the people who have entrusted their power to that ruler: "All other sicknesses, diseases, and maladies, do follow rebellion, which are much more horrible than plagues, pestilences, and diseases sent directly from GOD,"[18] diseases and maladies that follow Brutus, Antony, and Henry and served as examples for the audiences of Shakespeare's day.

Notes

1. *An Homily Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion*, excerpted in *The First Part of King Henry IV: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Barbara Hodgdon (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1997), 174-79; 174.

2. Barbara Hodgdon, "Civic Order and Rebellion," in *The First Part of King Henry IV: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Barbara Hodgdon (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1997), 169-94; 175.

3. *An Homily Against Disobedience*, 175.

4. Ibid, 176.

5. Ibid, 177.

6. Barbara Hodgdon, "Civic Order and Rebellion," 180.

7. John Ponet, *A Short Treatise of Politic Power*, excerpted in *The First Part of King Henry IV: Texts and Contexts*, edited by Barbara Hodgdon (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1997), 179-94; 189.

8. Ibid, 191.

9. Ibid, 191.

10. James I, *The True Law of Free Monarchies*, excerpted in *Measure for Measure: Texts and Context*, ed. Ivo Kamps and Karen Raber (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2004), 148-54; 150.

11. Ponet, *A Short Treatise of Politic Power*, 187.

12. *An Homily Against Disobedience*, 177.

13. John L. Leland, "1399: A Royal Revolution Reversed," *Essays in Medieval Studies* 21 (2004): 63-79, http://muse.jhu.edu (Project MUSE accessed Nov. 14, 2008).

14. Ibid., 66-67.

15. Ponet, *A Short Treatise of Politic Power*, 188.

16. Derek Cohen, "History and the Nation in *Richard II* and *Henry IV*," SEL 42.2 (2002): 293-315, http://muse.jhu.edu (*Project MUSE* accessed Nov. 10, 2008).

17. Ponet, *A Short Treatise of Politic Power*, 191.

18. *An Homily Against Disobedience*, 177.