

Shakespeare Seminar

William Shakespeare



Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft

Ausgabe 10 (2012)

Believing in Shakespeare:
Faith and Doubt
on the Elizabethan Stage

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PUBLICATIONS FREQUENCY

Shakespeare Seminar is a free annual online journal. It documents papers presented at the Shakespeare Seminar panel of the spring conferences of the Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft. It is intended as a publication platform especially for the younger generation of scholars. You can find the current Call for Papers on our website.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD SERIAL NUMBER

ISSN1612-8362

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INTRODUCTION

CHRISTINA WALD AND FELIX SPRANG

Believing in Shakespeare:

Faith and Doubt on the Elizabethan Stage

Shakespeare's plays were conceived and first performed in a climate of religious and political change, when private beliefs always had a public dimension and when religious allegiance had literally become a matter of life and death for many men and women. Our seminar aims at re-assessing the roles of faith and doubt in the public arena of the Shakespearean stage. We are not interested in once again examining the question of Shakespeare's own precise religious denomination, but rather would like to enquire into the configurations of belief on the Elizabethan stage: Do the plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries support religious devotion or do they invite distrust and scepticism? How can faith be established, how can it be perceived and proven, when does it have to be revised or even recalled? Do the plays themselves on a metatheatrical level require faith, as Paulina famously demands in *The Winter's Tale*, and how do we have to differentiate between religious belief and the suspension of disbelief in the playhouse? In which ways do the plays relate to topical religious debates? Which stance do they take towards more universal metaphysical questions? And how do they envision non-Christian religion, which stance do they for example take towards Jewish and Muslim beliefs?

The contributions to this volume cover religious debates ripe in Shakespeare's time as well as repercussions of a revival of faith as reflected, for example, in recent productions of Shakespeare that highlight religion. Lukas Lammer's article, "*King John* as Performed Palimpsest", investigates Shakespeare's appropriation of pre-Reformation kingship and its Roman-Catholic legacy. Jan Mosch looks at superstition and the loss of faith in *Macbeth* and argues that it is the protagonist's firm belief in his destiny that leads to his downfall. Ariane de Waal juxtaposes Shakespeare's Venice and Marlowe's Malta as sites of inclusion and exclusion along religious lines. In "*Twelfth Night* or Inshallah," Sean Aita brings to the fore the Oriental and Islamic setting of *Twelfth Night* and explores similarities between the Ottoman Empire and Elizabethan England. Imke Lichterfeld explores Henry IV's vows to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in Shakespeare's play and examines the conflation of political and religious motifs. Claudia Richter's contribution proposes to employ the work of C.G. Jung for the exploration of resonances of faith and doubt in Shakespeare's post-Reformation plays.

KING JOHN AS PERFORMED PALIMPSEST

LUKAS LAMMERS

Catholic Past and Protestant Present?

“Shakespeare lived in a Protestant country with a Catholic past,” Paul Dean writes in a 2008 review of two books on Shakespeare and religion (739). The remark, perhaps more a comment on the reviewed books than a reflection of Dean’s view, seems too simplistic and, at the same time, very useful. It seems useful because it highlights the question of how a society that has undergone a “public conversion” deals with the fact that it is in a significant way alienated from its own past. It is perhaps not surprising that the shift in religious orthodoxy triggered a massive re-writing of English history. John Foxe is surely the most prominent author who “wrote protestant history,” as Patrick Collinson puts it, “designed to replace the received, catholic history of the Christian Church” (“John Foxe as Historian”). To “replace” a whole tradition of historical writing was of course a gigantic task and one which could never have been wholly successful.

Shakespeare’s history plays participated in this re-writing but at the same time also betray a strong interest in recording this very process of change and in recovering something of the “older” perspective. The intersection between historiography and religion, which is at the centre of this unprecedented process of historical revision, comes into sharp focus in one of Shakespeare’s least popular history plays: *King John*. While we hardly know anything about the first performance and the popularity of the play, we do know that the historical figure it portrayed was of outstanding interest at the time. In fact, King John had emerged as a kind of shibboleth in historical writing: the views of Protestant and Catholic writers diverged greatly on this historical figure. The reason for the drastic reevaluation was that John, at one point of his reign, had opposed the Church of Rome. While Catholic writers condemned the act and casted John as a villainous king, reformists in their search for the historical roots of an English church lauded him as an early forerunner of their struggle.

I want to suggest that the concept of the palimpsest is instructive for thinking about the religious implications of this particular reign and the complex temporal relations the John figure embodied for an Elizabethan audience. Thus I will show how Shakespeare’s play makes use of the diametrically opposed views and their association with the two religiously connoted traditions of historical writing. Relying heavily on spectators’ knowledge about the reign, the play contrasts the two historiographical layers, or traditions, and engages the audience in a productive dialogue with the past.

“Consider the story of king John”

Clearly, Elizabethan England was not “a Protestant country” in a straightforward sense; but perhaps we can read Dean’s remark, quoted above, as a description of Elizabethan orthodoxy. While Catholicism, as much recent criticism has stressed, was by no means replaced, Elizabethans did live in a country in which Protestantism was the prescribed norm and in which Catholicism was culturally repressed. In this sense, the present was indeed Protestant, while Catholicism in England or rather Catholic England came to be associated with the past. Looked at from yet another angle, even this assertion posed a significant problem to Protestant reformers: a Protestant present, in an important sense, was incompatible with a Catholic past. For, as Felicity Heal points out, “[w]hen a controversialist could not return *ad fontem* he was vulnerable to attack” (119). In other words, to establish the “truth” of the “new” faith reformers somewhat paradoxically had to establish its *antiquity*. That is, it was necessary for Protestant writers to create or rather “uncover” a Protestant past to show that the “true” church had in fact already existed. The outstanding importance of this interrelation for reformers is perfectly captured in what was a stock Catholic taunt at the time: “Where was your church before Luther?” (cf. Collinson, “Literature and the Church” 386). In response to the question, reformers re-read and re-wrote history on an unprecedented scale. The reformation of faith required a reformation of history, that is a new Protestant historiography.

In this context, the story/history of the previously – and in fact subsequently – much-scorned thirteenth-century king John emerged as a milestone in the ecclesiastical history of Protestant England. William Tyndale was among the first to complain and warn his readers against the received view of King John as he found it in “the chronicles.”

Read the chronicles of England (out of which yet they [the Roman Catholics] have put a great part of their wickedness,) and thou shalt find them always both rebellious and disobedient to the kings, and also churlish and unthankful, so that when all the realm gave the king somewhat to maintain him in his right, they would not give a mite. Consider the story of king John, where I doubt not but they have put the best and fairest for themselves, and the worst of king John. For I suppose they make the chronicles themselves. (“The Obedience of a Christian Man” 374)

Tyndale, writing in 1528, clearly saw the need to encourage a sceptical reading of “the chronicles.” Although he does not mention any specific chronicle, the last sentence suggests that he is referring to the monastic tradition of chronicle writing (“For I suppose they make the chronicles themselves”).¹ Writing before the publication of the major Tudor chronicles, Tyndale on the one hand encourages the reading of history (“Read the chronicles”) to learn about the relation between church and state, but, on the other, stresses the need to approach the available material with a good amount of suspicion (“I doubt not but they have put the best and fairest for themselves”).

¹ The same argument can be found in John Bale’s *Kynge Johan*: “As yowre abuses reforme or reprehend. / Yow pristes are the cawse that Chronycales doth defame / So many prynces” (*Kynge Johan*, II.583-9 qtd. in Womersley 126).

King John's reign, according to Tyndale, is exemplary in so far as it testifies to the bias of earlier chroniclers who "put [...] the worst of king John." This image was questioned and indeed almost inverted by Protestant writers keen to make John a royal martyr. Reformers such as Tyndale and John Foxe interpreted John's defiance of the Pope as an early, heroic, if not wholly successful, attempt to break with the Church of Rome that anticipated Henry VIII's and Elizabeth's stance. John R. Elliot argues that "[t]he new image of John as an heroic king and Protestant martyr soon made him one of the most popular of English historical figures" (66). We can glimpse the prominence of the John story and its importance for Tudor religious policy in the *Homily Against Disobedience* where John's story is chosen as an important example from English history to illustrate the insults of the "Babylonical Beast of Rome" and how it abused England by "discharging [King John's] Subjects of their oath of fidelity unto their Sovereign Lord" (366). Considering the significance attributed to this historical episode, it is not so surprising that the reign of King John also provided the material for what is often referred to as the first English history play, John Bale's staunchly Protestant *Kynge Johan*.

By the time Shakespeare turned to the story, the older monastic tradition had been thoroughly overlaid – if not completely effaced – with a fairly consistent Protestant perspective. We can find the essence of this perspective in another play from the 1590s, *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, probably written by George Peele.² The printed version begins with an "address to the readers," which may well have been delivered as a prologue in the theatre. It spells out what an audience would have quickly gathered from the action of the play anyway. For, although the play is not as outspoken as Bale's, it provides clear direction for the readers or spectators by encouraging a nationalistic, Protestant view:

You that with friendly grace of smoothèd brow
 Have entertained the Scythian Tamburlaine,
 And given applause unto an infidel,
 Vouchsafe to welcome with like courtesy
 A warlike Christian and your countryman.
 For Christ's true faith endured he many a storm
 And set himself against the man of Rome
 Until base treason by a damnèd wight
 Did all his former triumphs put to flight.
 Accept of it, sweet gentles, in good sort,
 And think it was prepared for your disport. (*TR* "To the Gentlemen Readers" 1-11)

² Brian Vickers and, more recently, Charles R. Forker have convincingly established the authorship of this play. They assign it to George Peele, already identified as a likely candidate by earlier critics (cf. Forker; Vickers). In the following I will follow Vickers and Forker in referring to *The Troublesome Reign* as "Peele's play." A majority of scholars, among them A.R. Braunmuller, Charles R. Forker and Brian Vickers, convincingly argue that the *The Troublesome Reign of King John* preceded Shakespeare's play. For a recent discussion of the dating of the two plays see Forker's edition of *The Troublesome Reign*. My argument is based on the assumption that Shakespeare in various ways relies on the earlier play by Peele. References are to The Revels Plays edition (2011) of *The Troublesome Reign (TR)*, edited by Charles R. Forker.

Shakespeare's "Strange Beginning"

Shakespeare when he turned to the reign of King John seems to have been very well aware of the two traditions. And he seems to have felt that the perspective that the introductory verses of *The Troublesome Reign* ask their audience or readers to embrace had become the most common expectation for Elizabethan spectators. For he begins his own play (which heavily relies on *The Troublesome Reign*) with a rather different view on the protagonist of the play, at the same time clearly marking this perspective as a deviation. Spectators who expected "a warlike Christian [who] / For Christ's true faith endured [...] many a storm / And set himself against the man of Rome" would certainly have been surprised by the opening of Shakespeare's play.

Although there is no preface or prologue to direct the spectators, the beginning of Shakespeare's play itself betrays an awareness of the tradition it draws on. Instead of introducing John as a brave and devout king, Shakespeare is sowing doubt from the very first moment of the play. Instead of faith spectators face suspicion, for the play opens with a challenge to the legitimacy of John's rule. The challenge is delivered by a messenger from the French king, who addresses himself to "the majesty, / The borrowed majesty, of England here" (1.1.3-4).³ Interestingly enough, the Queen, John's mother, immediately interrupts the ambassador to comment that this is "a strange beginning" (1.1.5). Overtly referring to the "beginning" of the messenger's speech, the Queen's remark can also be read as a meta-theatrical comment on the beginning of the play itself and its divergence from other contemporary accounts.⁴

The contrast would have been particularly stark if spectators had recalled the beginning of *The Troublesome Reign*.⁵ Here the opening lines are spoken by Queen Eleanor herself and could hardly be more different. Greeting the barons, she commends her son John as a saviour worthy to succeed his famous brother Richard the Lionheart:

Barons of England, and my noble lords,
Though God and Fortune have bereft from us
Victorious Richard, scourge of infidels,
And clad this land in stole of dismal hue,
Yet give me leave to joy, and joy you all,
That from this womb hath sprung a second hope,

³ All references are to the Oxford edition, edited by A.R. Braunmuller.

⁴ Similarly, Elliot argues that "[i]n charging John with usurpation and in considering John's claim to the throne as the first of the 'issues' of his reign, Shakespeare is deliberately following the older, less popular tradition of Polydore Vergil and Stowe [...]." *King John* thus "diverges widely from *The Troublesome Reign*" (73).

⁵ It seems feasible to assume that some spectators could have seen both plays within a fairly short period of time. It is, however, notoriously difficult to estimate the time span between performances of the two plays. Braunmuller at the end of his discussion of the probable date of Shakespeare's play writes: "I believe *King John* was composed and performed in the mid-1590s, most probably 1595-1596" ("Introduction" 15). Forker notes that "[w]e know nothing of the stage history of [*The Troublesome Reign*] apart from the title-page information that it was "sundry times" acted in London by the Queens's Men before, and perhaps during, 1591. The appearance of later quartos suggests continuing popularity into the first quarter of the seventeenth century" (79).

A king that may in rule and virtue both
Succeed his brother in his empery. (TR, Part One, Scene 1, 1-8)

Whether spectators knew the earlier play or not, a majority is likely to have been familiar with the perspective championed by Protestant writers from one of various accounts circulating at the time. Shakespeare's play, as we have seen, in its opening lines clearly distances itself from this perspective.

This distancing from a widely accepted contemporary view, I want to suggest, is in fact a major characteristic of the play as a whole. The technique is so pervasive, it appears *King John* aims not so much at familiarising its audience with the past than, on the contrary, at de-familiarising the past ("the past" here obviously meaning a particularly popular version of the historical events dramatised in this play). The defamiliarising effect hinges on the religious element of the story. Strangely enough, it has been argued that if we compare Shakespeare's to Peele's or Bale's play, it seems as though "Shakespeare reduces precisely this [religious] element, hitherto pretty much the play's *raison d'être*, to an absolute minimum" (Burckhardt 140). However, I think the play does not "reduce" religious aspects, it rather handles them in quite a different way, a way that relies heavily on the audience's familiarity with the story and their awareness of fundamental historical and religious changes. It does not drop or avoid religious questions. What it avoids is a consistent, anachronistic Protestant polemic.

One could object that once the audience is drawn into the world of Shakespeare's play, knowledge of other accounts becomes less relevant. However, it is intriguing to observe how Shakespeare's play seems intent on developing, or recapturing, the older and, by that time, culturally repressed perspective on King John while, at the same time, again and again contrasting it with the dominant contemporary view.⁶ It is particularly striking that the play frequently alludes to but never fully develops the anti-Catholic potential of the material. This becomes apparent if we consider episodes of the John story that Protestant writers typically amplified to make their point: the (from this perspective justified) looting of the monasteries, the king of France's (despicable) breaking the league with England to reconcile himself with the Pope, and especially the alleged assassination of King John by a monk. Shakespeare's play does not neglect these episodes, but it does not present or report them in any detail either. In *King John*, allusions to these highly charged moments rather seem to be built into the play as perfectly calculated reminders, which invoke the upper layer (that is the orthodox Protestant view), only to shift focus again in the next moment. In this Shakespeare's play resembles a palimpsest, the two layers alternately fading in and out of focus: from time to time the superimposed text, an orthodox Tudor view of England as a Protestant nation, comes into focus and threatens to overwrite the older, but by no means completely lost version of the John story. The effect relies precisely on audience expectation, gradual development and repeated shifts of perspective. Even if it is therefore difficult to demonstrate its full scope, two longer examples from Act 1 and Act 3 may give an idea of how thoroughly any story about King John was

⁶ It is important to note that the "older" account still survived in more recent writings such as Holinshed's *Chronicles*. In Holinshed, however, it is framed and discredited by the author (cf. Braunmuller "King John and Historiography" 321).

entangled in religious questions and how Shakespeare's play makes use of this charged background to explore the specific historical moments it represents and addresses respectively.

To Know the Story

Having contradicted conventional audience expectations in the first few lines, Shakespeare's play soon brings the upper layer into focus again, now apparently confirming the widely established view of John as proto-Protestant. John has dismissed the French ambassador and is now determined to prepare for war against France. But he needs to raise money for his venture. In a brief remark he tells the audience "Our abbeys and our priories shall pay / This expeditious charge" (1.1.48-49). Considering the strong relation between King John and anti-monastic and anti-papist resentments established in contemporary discourses, these lines would have sufficed – especially if delivered as an aside – to conjure up a context that circles around fat friars, treacherous cardinals, and lecherous nuns.

Spectators, who had seen *The Troublesome Reign* would have had a particularly clear idea of what to expect. To illustrate this let me quote a slightly longer passage from Peele's play, which not only alludes to the monastic context, but actually takes spectators to "witness" the proverbially amoral life in the monasteries. Philip the Bastard is shown (at a later point in the play) to press friars for money to pay for John's wars. What Philip finds is the – quite obviously expected – hotbed of lust, hypocrisy and wealth.

FRIAR [ANTHONY]. [*Reveals the chest*] Come hither. This is the chest, though
simple to behold,

That wanteth not a thousand pound in silver and in gold.

[...]

PHILIP THE BASTARD. I take thy word. The overplus unto thy share shall come,
But if there want of full so much, thy neck shall pay the sum.
Break up the coffer, friar.

[FRIAR ANTHONY *opens the chest to reveal* NUN ALICE *inside*]

FRIAR [ANTHONY]. O, I am undone.
Fair Alice, the nun
Hath took up her rest
In the abbot's chest.
Sancte benedicite,
Pardon my simplicity.
Fie, Alice, confession
Will not salve this transgression.

[...]

PHILIP THE BASTARD. How goes this gear? The friar's chest filled with a fausen nun;
The nun again locks friar up to keep him from the sun.
Belike the press is purgatory, or penance passing grievous:
The friar's chest a hell for nuns. How do these dolts deceive us!

Is this the labour of their lives to feed and live at ease,
 To revel so lasciviously as often as they please?
 I'll mend the fault, or fault my aim, if I do miss amending.
 'Tis better burn the cloisters down than leave them for
 [offending.

(*TR, Part One*, Scene 11, 38-100)

What Peele's audience thus got was not only the comically self-defeating words of a friar ("*Sancte benedicite*, / pardon my simplicity. / Fie, Alice, confession / Will not salve this transgression"), but also the Bastard's didactic comments. When he asks "How do these dolts deceive us?", for example, the play clearly aims at uniting the audience in an unequivocally Protestant perspective. From this perspective there is only one possible conclusion, which the play is all too ready to spell out: "'Tis better burn the cloisters down than leave them for offending." It is this unified and unifying perspective, which marks the play as a blatantly polemical piece of writing, despite its, at some points, more ambiguous portrayal of the John figure.⁷ It provides an "answer" and thus a retrospective justification for Tudor policy. In other words, Peele's play only allows for the one, emphatically contemporaneous perspective and thus cancels out the contingency of the significantly different historical reality. Shakespeare's play, on the other hand, only briefly alludes to the religious context. John's brief reference to "Our abbeys and our priories" is abruptly followed by the Falconbridge episode, which shifts the focus away from religious issues altogether. The brief remark nevertheless has a crucial function: it keeps the superimposed layer on spectators' minds and distinguishes it from the older one.

While the beginning of Shakespeare's play thus makes effective use of the religious connotations of the different traditions of the John narrative to raise contradictory audience expectations – at first rejecting the orthodox Protestant view of King John, then ostensibly affirming it – religious issues seem to recede to the background in the following scenes. The rest of Act 1 and most of Act 2 are more concerned with family ties, patriotism and war tactics than with questions of religious faith. In Act 3, however, right in the middle of the play, religion literally takes centre stage again when Cardinal Pandulph, legate of the Pope, intervenes in the conflict between England and France.

To avoid war, Philip of France and King John have agreed to marry the Dauphin to John's niece Blanche, and the peace has just been concluded when the Roman legate arrives to threaten John with excommunication on the grounds that he refuses to appoint Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury. This struggle between Rome

⁷ David Womersley argues that "*The Troublesome Raigne* is an emphatic and at times coarse dramatization of anti-Catholic propaganda. At the end of the play, having been poisoned by a monk, John attributes all his misfortunes to one radical error, namely not having been sufficiently defiant to the Pope" (269). I agree with Cynthia Bowers that Peele's play is more ambiguous than is often allowed for (cf. Bowers). But if the play is not a piece of straightforward Tudor propaganda, it leaves absolutely no room for doubt concerning its religious message. It quite clearly adapts the more recent perspective on John as proto-Protestant martyr. In the following I will try to further illustrate this decidedly contemporaneous, unified and unifying perspective.

and England was legendary, and Shakespeare's play shows that spectators were expected to be familiar with it. For Pandulph without further exposition demands of King John

Why thou against the church, our holy mother,
So wilfully dost spurn and force perforce
Keep Stephen Langton, chosen Archbishop
Of Canterbury, from that holy see? (3.1.141-144)

The play quite clearly relies on the audience to “know the story.”⁸ The passage mentions a dispute about the historical Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, but it makes no attempt to contextualise the claim. Spectators, however, would almost certainly have recognised the conflict and filled in the details. The whole episode was of outstanding importance for the John story because it marked the beginning of his opposition to the Pope. The *Homily Against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion*, for example, expounds this episode at great length, explicitly making it an important part of the history of the English church.⁹

John's immediate reaction to the Cardinal is an outburst of anti-papist rhetoric.

Thou canst not, Cardinal, devise a name
So slight, unworthy, and ridiculous
To charge me to an answer, as the Pope.
Tell him this tale, and from the mouth of England
Add thus much more: that no Italian priest
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions. (3.1.149-154)

The rousing rhetoric is both strangely out of place and theatrically effective. The lines stand out against John's earlier speeches; the rhetoric seems somewhat strained, almost pasted into a rather different play. They are thus recognisable, I would argue, as a specific view on the historical figure: this is the John of Protestant polemics and Tudor propaganda. In this sense, the lines seem not only “out of place” but “out of time.” It is the second moment of proto-Anglicanism in the play and the first long passage that

⁸ E. A. J. Honigmann, for example, notes: “That the reign of John was an open book to Shakespeare's first audience there can be no doubt. [...] These issues were so dear to Shakespeare's contemporaries that non-specialist books often enter the fray at unexpected moments. Quasi-controversial works such as William Allen's *Admonition to the Nobility and People of England* (1588), Sir Thomas Smith's *Common-Welth of England* (1589) and innumerable others of equal fame, tacitly assume that the reader knows all about John [...]” (xxv-xxvi).

⁹ In the sermon, King John's reign is singled out to illustrate the presumptuousness of the Pope: “And to use one example of our own Country: The Bishop of *Rome* did pick a quarrel to King *John* of *England*, about the Election of *Stephen Langton* to the Bishoprick of *Canterbury*, wherein the King had ancient right, being used by his Progenitors, all Christian Kings of *England* before him; the Bishops of *Rome* having no right, but had begun then to usurp upon the Kings of *England*, and all other Christian Kings [...]” (366). It is noteworthy that the passage from the homily provides a number of details that Shakespeare's play could use as cues. The mention of the name of the Archbishop rejected by John (Stephen Langton), for example, makes the episode historically specific and, in turn, allows Shakespeare to exploit this reference as a cue for the audience to fill in a “gap.”

gives full force to the orthodox Tudor view that has so far only been alluded to in passing. John's reply to the Roman legate may well have raised cheers from fervent Protestants. Significantly, however, just as this propagandistic narrative gains force and threatens to efface the earlier interpretation, one of the most powerful speeches of the play (re-) introduces spectators to a decidedly "outmoded" view on the event.

A Common Faith

In a highly symbolic moment, Philip of France, as though to confirm the union between France and England in the face of Pandulph's threat of excommunication, takes John's hand.¹⁰ And the newlywed couple (Louis and Blanche) is present on stage as another visual reminder of the union, which, as Philip reminds Pandulph later, has been concluded "With all religious strength of sacred vows" (3.1.229). Both the joined hands and the married couple are clearly emblematic of a bond that should not be destroyed. The Roman legate, however, charges Philip of France to "Let go the hand of that arch-heretic [King John]" (3.1.192). Significantly, it is the response to this charge in which Shakespeare's play diverges most radically from Peele's play. In *The Troublesome Reign* the scene is a short, predictable, and mechanical exchange:

[KING] JOHN.	Brother of France, what say you to the Cardinal?
[KING] PHILIP.	I say I am sorry for your Majesty, requesting you to submit yourself to the Church of Rome.
[KING] JOHN.	And what say you to our league if I do not submit?
[KING] PHILIP.	What should I say? I must obey the Pope.
[KING] JOHN.	Obey the Pope, and break your oath to God?
[KING] PHILIP.	The legate hath absolved me of mine oath. Then yield to Rome, or I defy thee here.

(TR, Part One, Scene 5.111-118)

Consistent with the play's polemically Protestant perspective, Peele's King Philip does not hesitate to affirm the legate's authority and denounce his oath to John. John's objection that he breaks his oath to God is quickly brushed aside with the argument that the Pope has absolved him. In Shakespeare's play, on the other hand, France, and with him the audience, is made to think twice. The play literally dwells on this moment, staging it as a *potential* historical watershed. It effectively holds the moment of impending religious division in suspension in order to force the audience to entertain the thought that it could (have) be(en) different. Drawing on spectators' historical knowledge, the scene anticipates the ultimate break with Rome during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth but seriously considers the possibility of continued unity. John's anti-papist outbreak quoted above is here immediately contrasted with one of the strongest speeches in the whole play, King Philip's remarkable reply to

¹⁰ There are no stage directions to tell us when exactly the two kings join hands and when they release them. I discuss this question below.

Pandulph. After a long hesitating silence,¹¹ King Philip addresses the legate with an elaborate, surprisingly moving appeal. It is one of the most fascinating speeches of the play, a kind of utopian vision from the past:

Good reverend father, make my person yours,
 And tell me how you would bestow yourself.
 This royal hand and mine are newly knit,
 And the conjunction of our inward souls
 Married in league, coupled and linked together
 With all religious strength of sacred vows.
 [...]
 And shall these hands so lately purged of blood,
 So newly joined in love, so strong in both,
 Unyoke this seizure and this kind regret?
 Play fast and loose with faith? So jest with heaven,
 Make such unconstant children of ourselves,
 As now again to snatch our palm from palm,
 Unswear faith sworn, and on the marriage-bed
 Of smiling peace to march a bloody host,
 And make a riot on the gentle brow
 Of true sincerity? O holy sir,
 My reverend father, let it not be so.
 Out of your grace, devise, ordain, impose
 Some gentle order, and then we shall be blessed
 To do your pleasure and continue friends. (3.1.224-252)

King Philip, particularly at this point, is far from being portrayed as a stereotypical, laughable Frenchman (as for example the Dauphin and his troop in *Henry V*) or a vicious, hypocritical Catholic. Despite many other similarities, the play studiously avoids the clichéd phrase “the legate absolved me of mine oath,” which, in *The Troublesome Reign*, signals France’s blind obedience to the Pope. On the contrary, France defends his reluctance and reproaches the legate for demanding a decision that would “Make such unconstant children of ourselves.”

The most impressive line surely is France’s “Play fast and loose with faith? So jest with heaven.” Faith itself, he points out, is in danger of being degraded to a mere game (fast and loose). In this way, the speech foregrounds the significance of a common faith as the basis of stable government, peace, and “true sincerity.” The last lines are begging for a solution to the problem, which leaves the common basis intact. If one could only “devise, ordain, impose / Some gentle order, [...] then we shall be blessed / [...] and continue friends.” France and England are yet “linked together,” and John’s and Philip’s hands are very likely firmly joined throughout the speech.

Because Philip of France refuses to blindly follow the legate’s request, Pandulph presses him again to “be champion of our church” (3.1.255). But France is still not

¹¹ “Silence” refers to the interval (about 30 lines) between Pandulph’s command and the quoted reply from France, during which Philip of France stands “perplexed” (3.1.221) – obviously not to a complete silence on stage.

convinced: “I may disjoin my hand, but not my faith” (3.1.262), he insists.¹² France’s renewed refusal triggers Pandulph’s more sophisticated counterargument, which significantly tries to drive home a particular view on the relation between church and faith. When he accuses Philip “So mak’st thou faith an enemy to faith” (3.1.263), his lines would have had a peculiar ring for an Elizabethan audience. “Make faith an enemy to faith” in its ambivalence perfectly captures the dual temporality of the audience’s perspective. From within the play, there is only *one* faith. Hence France’s insistence that he “may disjoin [his] hand, but not [his] faith.” His faith crucially binds him to King John: they are “linked together / With all religious strength of sacred vows,” as he told the legate earlier. Pandulph, in his turn, maintains that there can be no doubt what it means to make a vow to heaven. He insists, however, that faith and the belief in “our church” are essentially the same: “let thy vow / First made to heaven, first be to heaven performed; / *That is*, to be the champion of our church” (3.1.265-267, my emphasis). This assertion is partly undermined by France’s hesitation. What both arguments have in common, then, is that the phrase “make faith an enemy to faith” must appear as a paradox emphasising the impossibility or unnaturalness of “disjoining” or dividing faith.¹³

For the audience, there emerges a second meaning in Pandulph’s reasoning, which contradicts the argument as it presents itself to the characters in the play: it is exactly by “disjoining” his hand – not by keeping it joined as Pandulph wants to make France believe – that the king would “make faith an enemy to faith,” namely the “old” against the “new” faith. This, however, is a perspective, which is denied the characters. The scene thus allows for a distinction between the conflict as it presented itself before the schism, and a retrospective view that takes into account the long-term consequences of the struggle between the English church and state and the Church of Rome. Instead of one layer effacing the other, the two are brought into a thought-provoking dialogue.

It is this dialogue that *The Troublesome Reign* denies. The difference in perspective between the two plays can be illustrated in condensed form by comparing the example above to three seemingly inconspicuous lines from *The Troublesome Reign*. In scene 13, which roughly parallels Act 4, scene 2 in *King John*, Peele’s John has just derided a number of Catholic practices when he tells his nobles that he “grieve[s] to think how kings in ages past, / Simply devoted to the See of Rome, / Have run into a thousand acts of shame” (Scene 13, 24-26). In striking contrast to the scene from *King John*, these lines imply that the Reformation has already happened. John seems to be a contemporary rather than a king “from ages past.” The difference and distance between the moment of performance and the historical moment that is performed is

¹² The line is ambivalent. One reading would be that France *can* “disjoin” his hand and therefore does it at this point, as the added stage direction in the Oxford edition suggests. However, Braunmuller submits that “[i]t is possible that Philip does not release John’s hand until he says, “England, I will fall from thee” (l. 320),” that is, considerably later (3.1.262.Ifñ). I am here following the latter reading. It seems more plausible that John and Philip continue to hold hands, as Philip is quite clearly not willing to “fall” from John yet.

¹³ Obviously, the claim to an indivisible faith in itself is central to most religions and not specific to the historical situation portrayed in *King John*. What makes it striking is France’s insistence, at this point, that he is bound to John by a common faith.

effectively levelled: the perspective is unambiguously Protestant leaving no room for doubt. Shakespeare's play, on the other hand, contrasts this orthodox, contemporary view, with one that had been rejected and gradually suppressed in Protestant accounts of England's past, turning the (hi)story of King John into a kind of performed palimpsest.

Conclusion

On the whole, I think, it is essential to note that, the major challenge – and opportunity – that Shakespeare confronted in *King John* was not so much the “old”, monastic tradition of the John story, but the existence of two diametrically opposed views which had been used to demonstrate the superiority of the “new” and the “old” faith respectively. The play is not so much an unmediated rewriting of a Catholic view on John, nor another version of the much-circulated Protestant account. Rather, it contrasts the two religiously connoted views and thus converts the polemical rhetoric of *The Troublesome Reign*, Foxe, the homilies, and other accounts into an emotionally complex and disturbing struggle. The play in fact seems to invite the audience to engage in nostalgia for a pre-Reformation world, in which Catholicism is the norm, in which the church is still unified, and in which France and England are “linked together / With all religious strength of sacred vows.” This vision is, however, contrasted with the superimposed text, an orthodox Tudor view of England as a Protestant nation. In this sense *King John* seems to take account of both the continuity and the rupture caused by the Reformation, suspending a moment of faith and doubt.

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Zusammenfassung

Im Zuge der Reformation kam es in England zu einer weitreichenden Umdeutung zentraler historischer Ereignisse. Die Reformation des Glaubens brachte eine Reformation der Geschichte mit sich. Das Bild des englischen Herrschers King John, dessen Geschichte eng mit dem Widerstand gegen Rom verknüpft wurde, verkehrte sich dabei praktisch ins Gegenteil. Die zwei diametral entgegengesetzten Deutungen waren untrennbar an die religiösen Kontexte gebunden, aus denen sie

entstanden. Es lassen sich somit zwei Versionen bzw. Traditionen unterscheiden, von denen die ältere, zumindest öffentlich, zunehmend als frevelhaft und illoyal zurückgewiesen wurde. Die konforme Deutung hingegen zirkulierte in Chroniken, Predigten und Theaterstücken und verdrängte zunehmend, die katholisch konnotierte, ältere Darstellung. Als Shakespeare den Stoff in seinem *King John* aufgreift, ist er sich dieser Traditionen offenbar sehr bewusst. Der Beitrag liest das Stück als eine Art inszeniertes Palimpsest, das zwischen den beiden Perspektiven changiert und diese durch kalkulierten Rückgriff auf Publikumserwartungen in einen Dialog bringt.

“WHY DO I YIELD TO THAT SUGGESTION”:

CRISIS OF AUTONOMY AND AUTONOMY AS CRISIS IN *MACBETH*

JAN MOSCH

Towards the close of *Macbeth*, when the protagonist has given up all hope, he famously concludes that life “is a tale / Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury / Signifying nothing” (5.5.25-27). The words testify to a profound lack of faith, both in a religious and in a secular sense. For if the idiot narrator is God, as Terry Eagleton has suggested,¹ neither the characters nor the audience can draw much comfort from the divine indifference to the witches’ machinations and the ensuing destruction. Actually, there lies a bitter irony in the thought that Macbeth’s nihilism should spring from his first-hand experience with the supernatural realm. As the only person who “can be entirely certain that transhuman powers exist,” he must also discover “that they target, hoodwink and victimize *him*. And him alone. It’s a remarkable knowledge to have – in some way, precisely what he wants, the proof of his exceptionalism” (Mallin 98). Of course, it is the struggle for distinction that has bereft Macbeth’s life of meaning in the first place. Therefore he might well be the idiot narrator himself, acknowledging how he has lost his sense of identity by trading off feudal values such as honour and fealty for the dawning paradigm of individuality.

Personal identity hinges on the ability to tell a coherent narrative about oneself. Even in a theoretical framework that tends to challenge the notions of autonomy and individual freedom, the dialectic relationship between the private narrative and the cultural environment is often regarded as a source of creativity: “every human infant can become the initiator of a unique life-story, of a meaningful tale – which certainly is only meaningful if we know the cultural codes under which it is constructed – but which we cannot predict even if we knew these cultural codes” (Benhabib 217-18).² However, at the time when Shakespeare was writing his plays, these very codes were in a state of flux, having momentarily lost their restraining and guiding function, as the proliferation of memorable anti-heroes and villains on the Elizabethan stage attests. Tamburlaine and Faustus, Iago and Cordelia’s sisters pursue egocentric goals, to be sure, but their specific ideas regarding the *summum bonum* of life are not necessarily invalidated by the respective plays.

¹ “In a BBC television production of the play some years ago, the actor playing Macbeth delivered these final lines [...] in a raging outburst of resentment, bawling them in fury at an overhead camera which was clearly meant to stand in for the Almighty. It was God who was the idiot narrator” (69).

² Benhabib is discussing *Gender Trouble*, in which Butler rejects the idea “that to be *constituted* by discourse is to be *determined* by discourse, where determination forecloses the possibility of agency” (195).

In *Macbeth*, the anxieties of early modern England are transposed to the murky setting of medieval Scotland. Presenting the audience with a protagonist who considers himself a valiant soldier and a loyal subject to his king but soon feels compelled to kill the monarch and take his place, the tragedy highlights how the changing cultural field is disrupting personal narratives. On the one hand, the play deconstructs the feudal model of identity, which clearly does not hold either sense or satisfaction for Macbeth and makes him seek individual power as an alternative. On the other hand, the play expresses doubts about the possibility of self-determined choices and thus about the more recent configurations of selfhood. Paradoxically, it is the search for freedom that leads Macbeth into dependency: for the better part of the dramatic action, he is governed by his wife, the witches and his insatiable obsession with securing his regime. By contrast, his eventual return to the battlefield, where he submits to the values of the nobility by engaging in a duel with Macduff, provides him with a sense of liberation (although that too might be said to be subverted by his imminent death).

The “Great Business”

His crimes notwithstanding, it is difficult to condemn Macbeth outright. Countless critics have jumped to the usurper’s defence, questioning Malcolm’s characterisation of the “dead butcher and his fiend-like queen” (5.11.35). “Our experience of Macbeth and his wife has been so complex,” Robert Hunter argues, “that this simplicity inevitably calls attention to itself” (181). Stephen Greenblatt concurs that the murderer “is fully aware of the wickedness of his deeds and is tormented by his awareness. Endowed with a clear-eyed grasp of the difference between good and evil, he chooses evil, even though the choice horrifies and sickens him” (2571). Evidently, Macbeth’s inconsistent decisions cannot be made sense of in strictly moral terms. Evoking sympathy, his inner turmoil exposes a wider issue: the uneasy adjustment to individuality and self-determination as the paradigmatic sources of “meaningful tales.”

In fact, Macbeth cannot quite articulate what should be so desirable about being king, but his cause is arguably linked to what we might nowadays call self-realisation. According to his wife, he wishes to “be great” (1.5.16) and therefore sets his eyes on Duncan’s “great office” (1.7.18) and, *nolens volens*, the “great quell” (1.7.12) that is the regicide. More than anything, Macbeth wants to be unique and “receive / Particular addition from the bill / That writes them all alike” (3.1.100-102). Although he uses these words to encourage Banquo’s murderers, they accurately reflect his own aspirations. The crown turns into the central object of Macbeth’s quest because it is the supreme signifier of power and freedom. His wife hints at these motives when she muses (reminiscing in a dream) how a monarch can even get away with murder: “What need we fear who knows it when none can call our power to account?” (5.1.32-33), she asks, clearly rhetorically.³ Again, the ends of life – reward and retribution – are described as worldly, whereas God does not seem to be in the picture.

On the theatrical level, the entire tragedy provides an answer of sorts to Lady Macbeth’s audacious question. But rather than understand *Macbeth* as a providential

³ Lady Macbeth, like her husband, takes autonomy literally: a state where she is ‘a law unto herself.’

play, in which the protagonist gets his just deserts, this essay will fall back on the double sense of faith – in God and in oneself – in order to pay closer attention to Macbeth’s “saucy doubts and fears” (3.4.24). His pervasive sense of insecurity appears to be embedded in the social and cultural transitions in early modern England, particularly the increase in social mobility and the re-evaluations of the position of man. Autonomy was emerging as a new model of personal identity, but in a discursive and psychological framework that was as yet ill equipped to support it. Ernst Cassirer has shown that the philosophy of the Renaissance oscillated between the notions of freedom and determinism as it struggled to reconcile a new sense of humanity – the self-confident rejection of fortune – with a new sense of nature – the principle of causality that even human beings cannot escape: “The intellectual and historical world cannot exist aside from the natural world as a ‘state within a state,’ but must be taken back to it and reduced to its basic laws. But the *sense of life* of the Renaissance constantly rebels against this reduction that seems so inevitable from the point of view of the Renaissance *concept of knowledge*” (109). At the time when Shakespeare’s plays were first performed, the changes in the social structure exacerbated the feeling of insecurity. As Hans-Dieter Gelfert has argued, the contemporary prevalence of the melancholy disposition testifies to the psychological pressure that was associated with the emergence of a meritocratic middle class.⁴

Against this background, Macbeth harbours fears about the possibility of autonomous action, even as it highlights the inadequacy of the feudal ethics: “Macbeth understands exactly what is at stake and what he must do: ‘We will,’ he tells his wife decisively, ‘proceed no further in this business’ (1.7.31). Why, then, does he change his mind and commit a crime he cannot even contemplate without horror?” (Greenblatt 2571). One reason for the protagonist’s changeability that will be outlined in the following paragraphs is the fact that his preoccupation with self-realisation takes the form of boundlessness, i.e. the absence of all restrictions – hence the attraction of the crown as a token of absolute power. This notion of freedom will be discussed as a misconception of autonomy that costs Macbeth his self-determination in the very pursuit of it and prepares the ground for the tragic catastrophe.

Individuality: Some Early Modern Perspectives

At a time when social transactions were inevitably permeated by religious beliefs, official doctrine warned against any aspirations of social mobility or individual goals: “God hath appointed every man his degree and his office,” the *Homilies* assured the faithful (qtd. in Thomas 17), and the eminent theologian Richard Hooker explained that once a man has found his way to God, “there can rest nothing further to be desired” for him (qtd. in *ibid.* 14). Clearly, this is easier said than done. Macbeth does desire more, and in doing so, he is not an excessively proud outcast, but a

⁴ Melancholie “ist ganz offensichtlich die psychische Reaktion auf die Freisetzung des Menschen aus alten Bindungen. Da diese in England durch den Aufstieg der Mittelschicht und des Unterhauses früher einsetzt als anderswo, kann es nicht verwundern, dass hier auch zuerst die seelischen Folgen zu beobachten sind. Freiheit ist Last und Chance zugleich” (Gelfert 18).

representative of many a man, and woman, in early modern England. The gentleman Aegremont Ratcliffe, for example, complained in 1578: “Who ever saw so many discontented persons: so many yrked with their owne degrees: so fewe contented with their owne calling: and such number desirous, & greedie of change, & novelties?” (qtd. in Steppat 29). The tone may be grudging, but the observation is precise. Despite the perils of biographical interpretations, it may also remind us of Shakespeare’s own experience as an ‘upstart crow,’ to quote Robert Green’s well-known taunt.

The reality of social change did not necessarily undermine religious belief, but relegated it to a separate field. Macbeth, for example, is acutely aware of the state of his soul; he knows that he has given his “eternal jewel / [...] to the common enemy of man” (3.1.69-70). Strangely enough, this insight does not cause him distress. Even before he commits the murder (at a point when he is still inclined to contemplate his intentions), Macbeth shows himself prepared to forfeit salvation as long as his secular hopes are fulfilled: “If th’assassination / Could trammel up the consequence, and catch / With his surcease success: [...] / We’d jump the life to come” (1.7.2-7). Thus while Macbeth does not exactly abandon his faith in the divine realm, he cannot make it part of his considerations either. As a moral force, religion is no longer strong enough to guide his actions here and now; palpable greatness in this life seems to trump the hypothetical notion of Heaven. This contained, distant potency of religion can be found throughout the play, where religious language often creates comic effects punctuated by horror, e.g. when the porter imagines himself as Hell’s gatekeeper and lists the different professions that lead onto “the primrose way to th’everlasting bonfire” (2.3.17-18). Similarly, the parodic scene in which Macbeth calls for his servant, Seyton, can hardly fail to amuse an audience that is familiar with Doctor Faustus and his diabolic pact.⁵

Even if *Macbeth* is not a religious play, Shakespeare’s trademark soliloquies may be indebted to the devout practice of introspection. The doctrine of *sola fide* – salvation by faith only – necessitated the constant assessment of one’s mind and soul as a spiritual exercise. “I glorify God by selfe Examination and Judging of myself,” the Puritan Jeremiah Wallington commented in his seventeenth-century *Notebooks* (334). Nevertheless, Wallington placed little faith in the idea of the autonomous self; after straying from the path of the righteous, he admonished himself: “I did not by faith suck strength from Christ but did trust to selfe [...]. And in mans own strength shall no man stand” (268). This is a lesson that Macbeth, who is everything but a Puritan believer, has to learn as well. Yet whereas Wallington needed to lose himself to find himself in God, it works the other way around for Macbeth, who pursues an egocentric and boundless form of freedom and therein finds himself determined by others. Only at the very end of the play, when he accepts that he must do battle with Macduff, does he seem to grasp the concept of “autonomous heteronomy”: the notion that persons need a guiding ideal outside their will so that their decisions do not become random.

⁵ See Mallin (92-101) for a provocative and more sustained discussion of *Macbeth* as “[t]he funniest Shakespeare play” (92). He argues that the function of the bizarre supernatural occurrences in this tragedy “is to cause chuckles, not terrors” (97), whereas its genuinely religious elements form part of a “conflicted discourse” about kingship and divine right ideology (ibid.).

As a war-experienced soldier, Macbeth values agency above all else. In the messenger's report that first acquaints the audience with his character, he is described as "disdaining Fortune" (1.2.17). Later in the play, when the witches tell him not to fear Macduff, he decides to "make assurance double sure, / And take a bond of fate" (4.1.83-84) – in other words, to kill Macduff so as to hold the course of history in his own hands. Considering this disposition, it cannot surprise that the royal crown is so attractive to Macbeth: it promises to him the freedom to do whatever he likes. Still, as the philosopher Harry G. Frankfurt points out, "[a] person who is free to do what he wants to do may yet not be in a position to have the will he wants" ("Freedom" 22). Clearly, there is an important difference between freedom of action and freedom of the will, since the latter characteristic informs a person's sense of identity and purpose. Macbeth, however, cannot precisely name the end of his desires, lacking as he does a sense of self-realisation and autonomy. Rather than aspire to self-determination and ask why kingship might (or might not) be a meaningful experience in this respect, he offers a causal explanation for his situation: "I have no spur / To prick the sides of my intent, but only / Vaulting ambition" (1.7.25-27). Since aristocratic identity materialised in the self-contained courtly body (Rebhorn 241), the image of man as a horse suggests Macbeth's inability to fashion and control his self. For example, Castiglione's ideal courtier carefully orchestrates his movements; he avoids to disfigure his body through violent gestures or wild dances (ibid. 249). Macbeth, by contrast, becomes "a beast in bodie," as the Elizabethan rhetorician Thomas Wilson might have put it (qtd. in ibid. 266). But it is not only his self-control or identity that is disintegrating. By likening himself to a horse that must do the horseman's bidding, Macbeth anticipates (although he cannot know this yet) how his quest for power will rob him of the very freedom he seeks. The image of man as an animal resurfaces in the final act of the play. Cornered by his enemies, Macbeth must acknowledge his loss of self-determination, despite the crown that is now on his head: "They have tied me to a stake. I cannot fly, / But bear-like I must fight the course" (5.7.1-2).

The complexity of the poetic image notwithstanding, Macbeth's original assessment of his situation is rather simplistic. He is unable to disengage himself from a particular strand of moral discourse that, in Shakespeare's society, tried to contain the social changes: "The great vice was 'ambition', a word which, before the seventeenth century, was used in an exclusively pejorative sense. Ambition was 'the unlawful and restless desire in men to be of higher state than God hath given or appointed unto them'" (Thomas 18). As a result, Macbeth cannot find a constructive way to deal with the new structure of feeling to which many of Shakespeare's more "modern," self-reliant characters draw attention. It is a discursive gap with grave consequences.

Autonomy Lost

The problem with Macbeth's inability to identify a purpose for himself will become apparent if we compare his misguided attempts at self-determination with a theoretical model of autonomy. Frankfurt's approach differentiates between first-order desires and second-order volitions. Whereas first-order desires comprise the ensemble of our sometimes contradictory impulses and affects, second-order volitions are deliberations

as to which of the first-order desires should guide our actions in any given situation. Only if, for any given action, a person's second-order volition agrees with the first-order desire that prompted it, is the person truly autonomous: free will consists in the gratifying knowledge that one is acting upon those desires that one wants to act upon. Therefore, autonomy is an end in itself: "The enjoyment of a free will means the satisfaction of certain [second-order volitions]" ("Freedom" 22). By contrast, a person who finds themselves acting against their intentions will feel "estranged from himself" or like "a helpless or passive bystander to the forces that move him" (*ibid.*). This is what happens to Macbeth, who is unable to appreciate autonomy in the ideal sense and instead makes power, which he equates with freedom, the *summum bonum* of his life.

Macbeth possesses two competing desires of the first order: he longs for the crown, but he also wants to be loyal to Duncan, who he receives in his castle "in double trust" (1.7.12), as a kinsman and a vassal. Furthermore, Macbeth has risen in rank: the king, as Macbeth well knows, "hath honoured me of late, and I have bought / Golden opinions from all sorts of people" (1.7.32-33). All things considered, Macbeth decides against the regicide and makes up his mind to "proceed no further in this business" (1.7.31), which we can interpret as an unequivocal second-order volition. Yet only a few moments later, he announces the opposite resolution: "I am settled, and bend up / Each corporal agent to this terrible feat" (1.7.79-80). While this might be construed as a mere revision of his initial volition, it is important to note that Macbeth has now given in to the hunger for power which he previously rejected as a motivation for his actions. He has in fact been manipulated by his wife, who has planned to move Macbeth to the murder all along, fearing that his "nature" is "too full o'th' milk of human kindness" (1.5.14,15): "Hie thee hither," she beckons the absent Macbeth in her remarkable soliloquy, "That I may pour my spirits in thine ear" (1.5.25,26).

Lady Macbeth's rhetoric involves a perversion of her husband's wish for greatness. At the outset, Macbeth acknowledges ontological limits: "I dare do all that may become a man; / Who dares do more is none" (1.7.46-47). Lady Macbeth convinces him, however, that he will achieve freedom by removing those boundaries, giving in to his desires. Ironically, then, she makes her husband give up his self-determination by tempting him with a vision of autonomy, albeit a distorted one. Not to kill Duncan, she claims, will cost Macbeth his sense of self: "Wouldst thou have that / Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life, / And live a coward in thine own esteem?" (1.7.41-43). Eventually, Macbeth loses his sense of self because he does not stick to his convictions.

From the very start, Macbeth's project is tainted by the fact that he sacrifices the self-confident direction of his competing desires in order to pursue power and an ill-conceived idea of freedom. As he does not wholeheartedly embrace the regicide, it is plausible to treat Macbeth's resolution to commit the "terrible feat" not as a new second-order volition (and the regicide as an act of autonomy), but rather as a failed attempt to determine his will. In his essay "Three Concepts of Free Action," Frankfurt discusses such a situation, in which an agent has "struggled unsuccessfully against a craving (effective first-order desire) to which he did not want to succumb (defeated second-order volition)" (48). According to Frankfurt, an agent in this situation is not even morally responsible for his actions, "in virtue of the discrepancy between the

desire that motivates his action and the desire by which he wants to be motivated” (ibid.). This philosophical observation helps explain why Macbeth continues to arouse sympathy among audiences. Of course, it is of no import to the protagonist himself, who eventually breaks under the burden of his responsibility. To his distress, he must find that while his warrior ethics have prepared him for deeds, not self-inspection, he is as accountable for his mental processes as he is for his actions. Discussing this dilemma, Karin Coddon has maintained that Macbeth is a deindividuated traitor, a mere effect of the disorder that precedes him: “Macbeth, becoming a traitor, ceases to be ‘a man,’ as he foresees (1.7.46-47). Treason effaces the subject: the traitor thus becomes aligned with that which is antagonistic to subjectivity – the monstrous, the demonic, the mad. So indeed Macbeth, the actor, not the agent, of treason, comes to view his scripted part as a kind of lunatic discourse” (490). However, as Ute Berns has pointed out, interiority in *Macbeth* depends upon the exchanges between culture and the self.⁶ Therefore, while his culture has handed Macbeth several scripts, not least the imperative to use violence as a means to an end, there is a theoretical chance for Macbeth to resist his urges.⁷ His failure to do so is the result of his attempt to part with his own interiority; as he must learn, it is not possible to find autonomy beyond the inner space that is constituted by the subjective appropriation of cultural scripts.⁸

The ease with which Lady Macbeth influences her husband’s will ties in with Macbeth’s inability to regard his desires as anything but sinful ambitions. Rather than manage his feelings, he identifies them as a sort of compulsion – and although the weird sisters’ prophecies are largely self-fulfilling, they help him construe a belief in the inevitability of the coming events. “Why do I yield to that suggestion,” Macbeth wonders, “Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair?” (1.3.133-134). The thought of murder, he immediately claims, is not his own, but “a supernatural soliciting” (1.3.129), as if he were invited or called upon to commit the deed that has actually long been on his mind. Frankfurt states that a “person’s denial that he has acted altogether willingly reflects his sense that in the conflict from which his action emerged he was defeated by a force with which, although it issued from inside of him, he did not identify himself” (“Three Concepts” 48). It makes sense, therefore, that Macbeth should try to dissociate himself from his murderous business: “The eye wink at the hand” (1.4.52), he decrees, as if not witnessing the murder would make it less of his concern. He applies the same strategy when he hires others to murder Banquo so that he can plead with the ghost: “Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake / Thy gory locks at me” (3.4.49-50). With a view to semantics, Macbeth has a point. He fails to recognise, however, that it is not only actions but also choices that define a person. Habitually, he identifies himself only with what he has done, and so laments after the regicide that “To know my deed ‘twere best not know myself” (2.2.71). Like his wife,

⁶ “Interiorität als der zu Beginn des Stücks inszenierte, intensive innere Austausch zwischen Selbst und Kultur” (163).

⁷ “Dieses ‘Niederkämpfen’ [des ‘horrid image’ bzw. des Ehrgeizes] könnte jedoch gerade darin bestehen, ein kulturell virulentes Skript der Gewaltanwendung zur Seite zu schieben, das sich ihm angesichts der ausgesprochenen Machtverheißung geradezu aufdrängen muss” (157).

⁸ “die historische Unmöglichkeit einer so verstandenen ‘Autonomie’ gegenüber der eigenen, kulturell vermittelten Interiorität” (163).

who mistakenly believes that “A little water clears us of this deed” (2.2.65), he is not prepared to regard the productive management of his affects and desires, the determination of his own will, as the essence and gratification of personhood. It adds up that this attitude – his unwillingness to “know [himself]” – leads Macbeth, once he has become king, even further away from self-determination, while his despair about his inability to find the freedom and peace he has been longing for is growing.

In a way, Macbeth is grappling with the ancient question of self-control and sin, and yet the play transcends this theological problem. The Bible points out how – due to original sin – the human will and our actual deeds must diverge: “for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do. Now if I do that I would not it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (*King James Version*, Romans 7.18-20). Remarkably, this passage seems to draw a line between the will – the genuine self, as it were – and the sin, which is like an alien presence lurking in the soul, acting on its own. Macbeth articulates a similar experience, and he is terrified by the thoughts that he cannot reconcile with his personality: “O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!” (3.2.37). Unlike Paul, who preaches that there is “no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8.1), Macbeth never turns to God for forgiveness. Despite his unwillingness to face and accept his desires, he is beginning to understand that they issue from the core of his being: “Stars, hide your fires, / Let not light see my black and deep desires” (1.4.50-51). Since they are a part of him, there is no moment in the play when he could shed the burden of his responsibility.

Convinced that he is somehow responsible for his choices, but unable to come to terms or productively engage with his desires, Macbeth takes a long time to regain his self-determination. His second encounter with the witches demonstrates once again his inability to form stable second-order volitions. When the first apparition warns him against Macduff, Macbeth finds his suspicions confirmed – “Thou hast harped my fear aright” (4.1.90) – and decides to kill his rival. He privileges, we might say, his desire to be secure over his desire not to cause further bloodshed. However, as soon as the second apparition implies that Macduff poses no danger, he reconsiders: “Then live, Macduff – what need I fear of thee?” (4.1.98). At the next moment, he changes his volition a third time: “thou shalt not live, / That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies, / And sleep in spite of thunder” (4.1.100-102). Being denied, or denying himself, the satisfaction of autonomy, Macbeth soon sees his life reduced to a “tale / Told by an idiot.”

Freedom of Action as Surrogate Autonomy

In an attempt to stabilise his sense of self, Macbeth makes action his prime imperative. But although the crown has indeed lifted all restrictions on what he can do, Macbeth no longer knows what he wants to do. His decisions are not based on any preferences; even rationality, the last restraint on his will, leaves him: “All causes shall give way: I am in blood / Stepped in so far that, should I wade no more, / Returning were as tedious as go o’er” (3.4.135-37). If two ways are equally dreary, which one do we choose? Frankfurt argues that it is necessity, rather than freedom, that constitutes the

individual configuration of our needs and desires and thus permits us to act autonomously:

Reducing the grip of necessity may not in fact enhance our enjoyment of freedom. For if the restrictions on the choices that a person is in a position to make are relaxed too far, he may become [...] disoriented with respect to where his interests and preferences lie. Instead of finding that the scope and vigor of his autonomy are augmented as the range of choices open to him broadens, he may become volitionally debilitated by an increasing uncertainty both concerning how to make decisions and concerning what to choose. (*Necessity* 109)

This is precisely what is happening to Macbeth. Despite his high hopes, the monarchical position has not provided him with meaning and identity because it has not augmented his autonomy, a concept that Macbeth cannot as yet fully appreciate. Rather than preserve his capacity to determine his will, Macbeth allows himself to be seduced by the empty promises of greatness and freedom. Ultimately, it is not so much his moral guilt, but the freedom of action that undermines his sense of self: with any person, Frankfurt remarks, the “[e]xtensive proliferation of his options may weaken his grasp of his own identity” (“Rationality” 177). Consequently, Macbeth’s language becomes ripe with metaphors of boundlessness, particularly towards the witches: they should, he says, make oceans leave their beds and “untie the winds and let them fight / Against the churches” (4.1.68-69). At that point, he has long since given up the idea of controlling his own urges, erroneously believing that action could reassert his identity: “Strange things I have in head that will to hand, / Which must be acted ere they may be scanned” (3.4.138-39). Autonomy, of course, would require the opposite approach.

Caring

Even though I have chosen to contrast Macbeth’s idea of freedom with a theoretical model of autonomy in order to highlight the fallacies that initiate his downfall, the interplay of freedom and necessity is not alien to Renaissance philosophy. Many scholars sought to prove the compatibility of man’s freedom with the inevitable laws of the physical world. Thus, for Ficino, freedom consisted in the choices that can be made on a field whose boundaries are fixed: “Through our mind we are subject to providence; through our imagination and sensibility, to fate; through our particular natures, to the general laws of the universe. And yet, by virtue of reason, we are the unfettered masters of ourselves (*nostris juris*), for we can submit now to the one, now to the other” (Cassirer 114). But if human beings were seen as “unfettered,” they still needed to rely on reason (one of the volitional necessities that Frankfurt posits as well), and they needed to define their identity. Pico della Mirandola, for example, imagined how God made the point to Adam: “In conformity with thy free judgment, in whose hands I have placed thee, thou art confined by no bounds; and thou wilt fix limits of thy nature for thyself” (5). In a similar vein, the Bible admonishes the faithful: “All things are lawfull vnto mee, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawfull for mee, but I will not bee brought vnder the power of any” (*King James*

Version, 1 Corinthians 6.12). What distinguishes Frankfurt from these optimistic accounts of human dignity is the scepticism about the original self-imposition of these limits: “With respect to a person whose will has no fixed determinate character, it seems that the notion of autonomy or self-direction cannot find a grip” (“Rationality” 178). This, I would suggest, happens with Macbeth. Unable to acknowledge any ideals, Macbeth becomes so obsessed with the notion of boundless freedom that it leaves him enslaved: “But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in / To saucy doubts and fears” (3.4.23-24). His misguided search for autonomy leaves him profoundly faithless, both with a view to God and his own self.

If Macbeth experiences “heteronomous autonomy,” a quest for self-realisation in which he finds himself determined by others and ravaged by his desires, what might a positive experience of freedom look like? According to Frankfurt, “the formation of a person’s will is most fundamentally a matter of his coming to care about certain things” (“Importance” 91). He therefore introduces the term “volitional necessity” to describe restraining forces such as love or rationality that help shape our will and identity. Even if these forces exist outside our selves, they do not impair our autonomy: a person whose freedom is kept in check by a volitional necessity “does not accede to the constraining force because he lacks sufficient strength of will to defeat it. He accedes to it because he is unwilling to oppose it and because, furthermore, his unwillingness is itself something which he is unwilling to alter” (ibid. 87).

If a person cares about something, and wants to want to care about something, their autonomy is intact because no conflict between the effective first-order desire and the second-order volition occurs. Caring even enables persons to formulate second-order volitions in the first place because it provides orientation as to which desires we want to privilege and turn into our will. Furthermore, caring requires a sustained emotional investment in another person or an idea: “Caring, insofar as it consists in guiding oneself along a distinctive course or in a particular manner, presupposes both agency and self-consciousness” (ibid. 83). Macbeth, however, does not experience this gratifying state of “autonomous heteronomy.” By submitting to his “black and deep desires,” which he does not want to regard as elements of his personality, he submits to a life of brutality and dehumanisation. Eventually, he cares about nothing at all – not even the enemy armies or the death of his wife: “I have supped full with horrors. / Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts, / Cannot once start me” (5.5.13-15).

According to Frankfurt, caring is the precondition of personhood – our ability to tell coherent narratives about ourselves. “Desires and beliefs,” by contrast, can also “occur in a life which consists merely of a succession of separate moments, none of which the subject recognizes – either when it occurs or in anticipation or in memory – as an element integrated with others in his own continuing history” (“Importance” 83). Since Macbeth acts upon impulses rather than guiding ideals, it is only logical that he comes to experience his life as a sequence of meaningless episodes. Under these circumstances, there is no reward and no retribution, neither in this world or the next: “Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow / Creeps in this petty pace from day to day / To the last syllable of recorded time” (5.5.18-20).

Macbeth’s tragedy is brought about by the fact that for him religion and fealty have ceased to function as volitional necessities while autonomy or self-determination has

not yet been fully established as a new ideal that one could care about. As a consequence, Macbeth is overwhelmed by the task to direct his desires and fails to find meaning in taking an ill-defined stab at “greatness.” In the penultimate scene of the play, there seems to be a glimmer of hope though: when Macduff threatens to put him on display like an animal, “as our rarer monsters are” (5.10.25), Macbeth regains his dignity and agency by rejecting the prophecies: “And thou opposed being of no woman born, / Yet I will try the last” (5.10.51-52). For a brief moment, the future seems to be open, and Macbeth is his old self again, “disdaining Fortune.” If we follow Frankfurt’s model of autonomy and necessity, Macbeth is now free – at the very moment he starts to accept the feudal values once more. Of course, this moment of liberation through voluntary submission lasts only so long: Macbeth’s death effaces his embrace of the feudal ethics as well as his individual attempt at greatness, and once again, the play raises fundamental doubts over what to care about. This blank, however, has long since been filled by audiences who have come to care for Macbeth. The modern appreciation of his potential for greatness is testimony to the transitional quality of this character: he is as much a victim as a perpetrator, struggling to define his identity while conflicting discourses undermine his faith in God, the aristocratic order, and his own freedom.

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Zusammenfassung

Shakespeares *Macbeth* nährt Zweifel an der göttlichen Welt- und der feudalen Gesellschaftsordnung, und doch ist es der Glaube der Hauptfigur an seine individuelle Bestimmung, der in die Katastrophe führt. Als Produkt einer protestantischen Kultur, in der sich jeder Gläubige selbst vor Gott zu verantworten hat, steht das Drama dem Selbststeuerungsvermögen seiner Hauptfigur skeptisch gegenüber: Paradoxerweise ist es gerade sein Bestreben, Autonomie zu erlangen, das Macbeth der Fremdbestimmtheit zuführt. Im Rückgriff auf theoretische Überlegungen des Philosophen Harry G. Frankfurt lässt sich jedoch zeigen, dass Macbeth Autonomie mit Handlungsfreiheit verwechselt und dass sich seine Willensbildung mangels übergeordneter Ideale arbiträr und somit persönlichkeitsfremd vollzieht. Eine sinnstiftende Form von Selbstbestimmtheit erlebt er daher erst, als er sich zum Kampf mit Macduff stellt. Indem sich die Hauptfigur in einem säkularisierten Glaubensakt dem aristokratischen Wertekodex unterwirft, kann sie in einer positiven Erfahrung „autonomer Heteronomie“ ihr Selbstbild stabilisieren.

**THE JEW AND THE CITY:
CONTAINMENT AND CIRCULATION OF RELIGIOUS OTHERNESS IN
SHAKESPEARE'S VENICE AND MARLOWE'S MALTA**

ARIANE DE WAAL

The visibility of the religious Other in the urban space, which has once more become a hotly debated issue in Europe over the past few years with the minaret controversy in Switzerland (cf. Traynor) and the burqa ban in France and Belgium (cf. Bhatti and Alami), is already a concern in Elizabethan drama. Both Christopher Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* and William Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* are set in insular (city) states at the intersection of vital trade routes in the Mediterranean that are home to religiously diverse societies.¹ Just as the settings, Malta and Venice, figure prominently in the titles of both plays, so do their protagonists, the Jew and the merchant, who profit from this specific location in their overseas ventures. The economic exchange in which they engage can be ideologically and semiotically linked to the negotiation of religious difference with which, in a period of "drastic change to the urban religious landscape" (Facchini), both plays are preoccupied. While the clearly demarcated boundaries of the Venetian and Maltese islands convey the image of self-contained communities, their network of trade routes points to exchange and interaction. In this essay, I will connect this spatial dimension of the plays to their efforts at containing religious difference and the ways in which the persistent circulation of Otherness hampers such attempts. Basically, I hold that the continuous unfixing of religious identity in *The Jew of Malta* prevents the containment of difference, whereas Shakespeare's Venetian society largely manages to circumscribe Otherness, albeit not without a sense of uneasiness. This uneasiness resonates with the larger sociocultural context of Marlowe's and Shakespeare's plays – the anxieties and "frequent struggles involving London's population of 'strangers'" (Siemon xii; cf. Coonradt 86-87).

¹ Evidently, the playwrights do not purport to deliver a mimetic representation of early modern Malta or Venice but make amendments to historical facts in order to create societies that are culturally and religiously more diverse. Marlowe represents the 1565 Turkish siege of Malta to have been successful in establishing a Turkish claim to the island, and he includes a Jewish population despite the fact that Jews had been expelled from Malta at the time (cf. Lupton 145), just as from England. Shakespeare refuses to place his Jewish protagonists into the Venetian ghetto, to which they would have been confined in early modern Venice (cf. Loomba 142), and both playwrights add a vast and, some claim, unlikely number of trade routes to their merchants' records (cf. Marlowe 11, n. 4; Shakespeare 203, n. 17).

Religious 'War of Position'

The "dialectic of self and other," as established by Edward Said, depends on defining the native subject through imagined differences, against a foreign object (qtd. in Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 112).² Any attempts to identify the Maltese Christians depicted in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* as representative of the Self must fail, not only because Christian subject positions are variously undermined,³ but also since often it is sameness rather than difference that characterises the play's religious groups. Religious belonging is not so much meaningful to their sense of identity as it is mobilised in accordance with the play's overall Machiavellian ethics, for "throughout this play, Christian, Jewish, and Turkish schemers justify their campaigns [...] by reference to religious difference" (Preedy 165).

The encounter between Jews and Christians at the senate-house testifies to this claim. It particularly illustrates how Malta can be conceptualised as the locus of a religious 'war of position,' in which attempts at establishing stable religious identities through inter-group Othering fail. Homi Bhabha explains that

[t]he very possibility of cultural contestation [...], or to engage in the 'war of position', marks the establishment of new forms of meaning, and strategies of identification. Designations of cultural difference interpellate forms of identity which [...] are always 'incomplete' or open to cultural translation. (233)

The confrontation at the senate-house in *The Jew of Malta* is framed as such an instance of cultural contestation, where every religious group needs to look to their "state" (1.1.171). Governor Ferneze endeavours to govern the interpellation of forms of religious identity. He oscillates between including the Jewish community and excluding them as Other. While he initially promises the Turks to collect the tribute "[a]mongst the inhabitants of Malta" (1.2.21), he then commands the Knights to "call those Jews of Malta hither" (1.2.34) and eventually addresses the Jews as "Hebrews" (1.2.38). The alternating signifiers employed in designating the Jews point to a quick descent from inclusion in an ostensibly homogeneous community, the inhabitants of Malta, to a religiously marked minority that yet belongs to Malta and finally to a subject position that is entirely labelled as different and shut off from Maltese identity. Accordingly, although the initial signifier to some extent forecloses this exclusion, Ferneze ultimately strives to interpellate the Jews as Other.

Yet the Christian subject position cannot claim "*positional* superiority" (Said 7) and likewise remains 'incomplete' and open to cultural translation from the other side. Barabas others the Christians just as they attempt to split him off as Other; he retaliates

² This process has been crucial to European and Western identity formation, according to Said: "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (3).

³ Here one only needs to refer to the excessive sexuality associated with Christians, especially with those who are supposedly the most devout, i.e. the friars and nuns. Apart from the friar's regret at Abigail's virgin death, the nunnery is likened to a brothel: "have not the nuns fine sport with the friars / now and then?" (3.3.32-33).

their assault on his Jewishness, for instance, when he asks: “Is theft the ground of your religion?” (1.2.96). The relation between the native subject and the foreign object as proposed by Ferneze is inverted in that Barabas fashions himself in opposition to Christians, turning them into the object. He casts many of his actions and attributes in direct contrast to Christianity. This can be seen, for instance, in the binary pair “smile – moan” when he instructs his slave: “to thyself smile when the Christians moan” (2.3.171). Ferneze himself relinquishes the Christian claim to hegemony when Barabas has replaced him as governor. It is then that he embraces Christianity as Otherness, asking the Jew incredulously: “Will Barabas be good to Christians?” (5.2.75). Significantly, this is the one instance when Ferneze refers to his own group as ‘Christians.’⁴ While Barabas and the Turks frequently mark the Christians as such, their abstaining from this signifier suggests that Christianity is a discourse they do not participate in. They are shaped by the discourse generated from the Jewish and the Muslim perspective, but they do not have the power to shape it themselves. By contrast, Barabas deliberately appropriates discourses of Jewishness, such as the stereotype of the “cunning Jew” (2.3.234).

If one takes the metaphor of the ‘war of position’ more literally than Bhabha intended, the three religious groups depicted in the play appear to be in a ‘standoff,’ as each discredits the other’s claim to true faith. Barabas calls Christians “heretics” (2.3.310); he, in turn, is referred to as an “infidel[...]” (1.2.62); a term with which he goes on to address the Turks (5.5.85); and Ferneze calls the Turks “misbelieving” (2.2.46) and “heathens” (3.5.12). The reciprocal accusations of having the wrong faith seem to suspend each other. Religious identity in the play ultimately remains “fluid and flexible” (Preedy 177), permanently open to translation. Emily Bartels’s observation that “[w]hat Malta ‘means’ within the text depends upon the discourses imposed upon it” (8) can thus be ascribed to religious difference: what it ‘means’ to belong to a certain religious group in Malta is entirely a question of viewpoint.

Fantasies and Failures of Containment

Since it cannot be safely established who occupies the positions of Self and Other in *The Jew of Malta*, I suggest that Malta itself can be posited as the play’s Self, reading the city walls as its boundaries and the casting out of Barabas as an attempt to eliminate religious Otherness in order to achieve religious integrity. Attempts at homogenising society by containing difference can be traced in both Marlowe’s and Shakespeare’s plays.

The Jew of Malta, I would claim, enacts a fantasy of containing and even ostracising the Other. This finds a first outlet in the seizure of Barabas’s wealth, which limits his ability to participate in economic (and ideological) circulation.⁵ Second, there is an explicit proscription of exchange on religious grounds, which Katherine

⁴ The only other use of this signifier by Christians occurs in terms of a threat, when the officer reads out Ferneze’s decree that “he that denies to pay, shall straight become a / Christian” (1.2.73-74).

⁵ My reading partly builds on David Thurn’s approach to economic and ideological exchange in *The Jew of Malta*. As regards the appropriation of Barabas’s capital, Thurn observes that “the Jew’s role in both circuits of exchange” is regulated (161).

verbalises when she commands Mathias as they encounter Barabas on the marketplace: "Converse not with him, he is cast off from heaven" (2.3.157). Third, and most significantly, the autocratic governor attempts to contain, or even erase, difference by availing himself of the city walls. The walls assume a paramount importance in this context. In the course of the play, these fortifications come to stand for the external borders of the nation-state. Just as the unnamed town in which the play is set comes to signify the nation as a whole, for the two are constantly conflated,⁶ the walls gradually enclose the whole of Malta. Tellingly, they are referred to as "Malta walls" (5.3.34) in the last act, and they can therefore be read as the boundaries of the Self. Ferneze initially aims at fortifying these boundaries in order to shut out the external Muslim threat. At the same time, they are used to clear Maltese identity of internal religious difference. Close to an ultimate gratification of the desire to ostracise the Other, the Jew's body is thrown over the walls; Jewish claims to Maltese identity are ousted.

Yet this is only seemingly the case, as hopes of eradicating Judaism are variously frustrated. The walls that enclose the native Self are highly porous. Barabas discloses their permeability when he tells the Turks that

[...] here against the sluice,
The rock is hollow, and of purpose digged,
[...]
I'll lead five hundred soldiers through the vault,
And rise with them i' th' middle of the town. (5.1.84-90)

Far from a realisation of the dominant fantasy, difference will not be marginalised, but Barabas recaptures the very 'middle of the town.' In doing so, the outcast produces a "[c]ounter-narrative[...] of the nation that [...] evoke[s] and erase[s] its totalizing boundaries" (Bhabha 213).

But even before this spectacular crossing of boundaries, continuous endeavours to contain religious difference fail. For several reasons, the appropriation of Barabas's wealth indelibly inscribes Judaism upon Malta instead of erasing it. As Barabas frequently equates himself with his wealth, the "labour of [his] life" (1.2.150), it is his very person that is subsumed under the state. And despite the attempt to confiscate his wealth and his difference, Barabas reinscribes himself into the urban space: "I have bought a house / [...] And there in spite of Malta will I dwell" (2.3.13-15). Further, the conversion of Jewish into Christian property fails insofar as the newly established nunnery is by no means free from the Jewish presence: Barabas has hidden his treasure underneath the now-Christian planks. The swift conversion of his property into a religious house evidences once more the instability of religious identity in the play, which strongly runs counter to contemporary self-perceptions of Malta as the "bulwark of Christianity" and "center of the ongoing crusade against Islam" (Greene 95).

⁶ The conflation of town and state is evident in the indiscriminate references to "Malta" and "the town" in Barabas's speech: "Long to the Turk did Malta contribute; / Which tribute [...] / The Turks have let increase to such a sum, / As all the wealth of Malta cannot pay; / And now by that advantage thinks, belike, / To seize upon the town [...] / Why let 'em enter, let 'em take the town" (1.1.179-189).

Finally, despite Ferneze's initial attempt to interpellate the Jew(s) as Other, as not belonging to Malta, Barabas's centrality is reinforced by the title of the play, which "links Barabas's identity as 'the Jew' to his position as a figure 'of Malta'" (Bartels 4). When Barabas is eliminated in the end, this does nothing to erase the imprints of his Judaism on the Maltese Self. As he is burning in the cauldron underneath, the Jew has become the city.

In what appears to be a more successful attempt at containing difference, the trial in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* serves to permanently curb Shylock's access to religious and monetary exchange. The play enacts a fantasy of containment by punishing Shylock's circulation as a moneylender and a Jew with forced conversion and disappearance into obscurity, which is structurally contrasted by the dissolution of Jessica's confinement in favour of her uneasy integration into Venetian society. In contrast to the way in which Barabas inscribes his meanings upon Malta, Shylock's property is faultlessly "transferred into Christian hands" (Loomba 156); his Judaism ceases to circulate. And while Barabas refuses to be marginalised by re-crossing the border, Shylock loses access to the central public space, the Rialto. The trial thus amends Shylock's claim to centrality, manifest in his living in the heart of Venice instead of the ghetto, which historically "positioned [Jews] on the margins of the city, away from the centre" (Facchini), as it substitutes the lack of spatial with economic marginality. Or, as Amanda Bailey puts it, "Shylock will not be cast beyond the city walls [...] but instead subjected to a form of 'institutionalized marginality' signaled by forced conversion" (18). In this respect, the *Merchant of Venice* can be seen to realise a fantasy of containment.

One could, however, claim that traces of the religious Otherness which is denied to Shylock remain in the interstices of Jessica's not-so-flawless conversion. As much as her conversion can be seen to further efface religious difference in Venice, it in fact dissolves her containment as a Jew. I argue that Shylock imposes the spatial confinement of the ghetto on Jessica. In contrast to his public presence and exchange on the Rialto, she is incarcerated in a self-made ghetto (i.e. her father's house), shut off from interaction with Christians. Shylock urges her:

Lock up my doors, and when you hear the drum
[...]
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools [...];
But stop my house's ears. (2.5.28-33)

Shylock's instructions curiously resonate with the official decree that helped establish the Venetian ghetto in 1516: at night, Jews are not to walk around, gates and doors are to be shut, and they are not to see or be seen by Christians (cf. Calimani 67).

Paradoxically, it is precisely this form of Jewish confinement that justifies and enables Jessica's integration into Christian Venice. This finding corresponds to Robert Bonfil's observation that the development of the sixteenth-century Italian ghetto was in fact conducive to the Jews' reintegration, because it "forced a change in gentile attitudes. The reception of Jews into Christian society was transformed by means of the ghetto from being exceptional and unnatural into being unexceptional and natural"

(18). While Shylock's participation in urban public life has continuously enabled Christians to define themselves in opposition to the "misbeliever, cut-throat dog" (1.3.107), Jessica's containment has facilitated imagining her as Same, not Other. She has been made legible as un-Jewish even before she enters Christian society, primarily through excessive references to her fairness, gentleness and whiteness (cf. Metzger 57). This construction of Jessica has been facilitated by her containment, the dissolution of which results in discomfort on all sides. Her anxiety about entering from confinement into circulation can be traced in the immediately uttered ambivalent line, "I am much ashamed of my exchange" (2.6.36), and pervades the remainder of the play. The final celebration of Christian unions is thus not without dissonance. It yet emphasises the need to contain marital and familial bonds within religious groups. In the last scene, Antonio offers to be bound again, but only to support the Christian bond of Bassanio and Portia, without interference from strangers, which have heretofore been carefully expunged from Belmont in any case.

Kinship across Religious Lines

The bond plot is evidence to the anxieties surrounding sexual and familial links between religious groups. I suggest reading it in terms of a threat of cross-religious kinship that is accompanied by a temporary conversion of both Shylock and Antonio. This can be substantiated by reading the term 'kind,' crucial to the contract between Shylock and Antonio, as pertaining to kinship and the term 'bond' as signifying a familial bond. When Antonio admonishes Shylock for his usury on the grounds that friendship would never "take / A breed for barren metal of his friend" (1.3.128-129), Shylock refrains from charging interest on precisely these terms:

I would be friends with you and have your love,
[...]
Supply your present wants and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys [...].
This is kind I offer. (1.3.134-138)

Irrespective of the (in)sincerity of Shylock's appeal, the contract it initiates is one that rests on friendship as Antonio has defined it. More precariously, it is 'kind' that Shylock offers. I contend that, with this proposition, he not only extends a familial bond to Antonio but also (unwittingly?) offers his daughter to the Christian community, as his bid echoes Barabas's offering of his daughter to her Christian suitors ("As for the diamond, it shall be yours" [2.3.135]). Lorenzo's capture of Jessica from Shylock's house in the ensuing act proceeds as a logical consequence, although Shylock purports not to have anticipated it.

Shylock can thus be seen as exerting patriarchal rights in a way that may well be read along the lines of Gayle Rubin's interpretation of the Lévi-Straussian concept of the exchange of women as a method for maintaining social relations and oppression (cf. Rubin 38-39), which throws yet another light on Jessica's line, "I am much

ashamed of my exchange” (2.6.36).⁷ The contract accordingly functions as a gift exchange across religious and cultural lines. The privilege Shylock hopes to secure by entering into a familial bond with Antonio – for “[t]he result of a gift of women is [...] kinship” (Rubin 36) – is temporarily fulfilled. It consists in a transitory switching of roles between Christian and Jew, which Antonio in part anticipates, perceiving that “[t]he Hebrew will turn Christian, he grows kind” (1.3.174). What Antonio does not foresee is the other part of the equation: as the Hebrew turns Christian, the bond turns him into a Jew. Due to his failure to deliver, Antonio takes up Shylock’s place in society. Like the humiliated Jew, he now “dare scarce show his head on the Rialto” (3.1.40). The bond enables Shylock, by contrast, to usurp the position of the Christian in Venetian society, “mak[ing] what merchandise [he] will” (3.1.116). Although this conversion is redressed by the trial, it testifies to early modern anxieties surrounding the potential merging of religious groups. The significance of the trial then also lies in reasserting the stability of religious identity, restoring Antonio to his Christian position of free exchange and constraining the circulation of Jewishness.

A similar suggestion of inter-religious kinship can be traced in *The Jew of Malta*. In his revenge schemes, Barabas extends kinship to all three religious groups. His promise to make someone heir to his wealth, first reserved for his Jewish daughter, then alluringly offered to the Christian governor’s son (2.3.327) and finally to his Muslim slave (3.4.43), contains an anarchic suggestion of cross-religious inheritance. This exchange of familial bonds in defiance of religious belonging is, in a sense, more playful than in *The Merchant of Venice*, due to the very rapidity and bluntness with which allegiances are switched. And yet that makes it none the less threatening, given that all of the Jew’s offers to bequeath wealth across religious boundaries lead to destruction of the potential heir. As the Jew interferes with Christian genealogy, Ferneze, Katherine and Barabas end up without descendants.

Conclusion

With their negotiation of religious difference, both plays support the idea of a relational theory of religiously marked identity: religious belonging seems to require something outside the Self, a religious Other against which the Self can be defined. At the same time, the urban communities Marlowe and Shakespeare depict strive to stabilise that Other’s identity, to contain his or her difference, in order to generate stability and integrity for their own religious identity. This functions both ideologically, by attributing fixed meanings to Self and Other, and spatially, by erecting and defending boundaries and regulating access to the centre and margin of the city.

In *The Jew of Malta*, however, there is a constant slippage of meanings, and religious identity is continuously becoming unfixed. Ideological and spatial borders remain porous and open up a liminal signifying space that challenges the would-be

⁷ In fact, Jessica, in a self-empowering act, rebels against being thus exchanged as she breaks with the fact that “women are [...] in no position to give themselves away” (Rubin 37) by eloping with Lorenzo.

hegemonic order. Just as the city walls in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century London are outgrown by the swelling population, in part due to the influx of strangers (cf. Howard 4-5), *The Jew of Malta* seems to indicate that the matter of religious Otherness in the city is not to be controlled by borders. Rather, Barabas's opening of a channel of difference through the wall highlights the liminal space of the border as a site of (religious) struggle. At the point of crossing the border, internal claims to religious hegemony are ultimately upset, which points to a shift in topographies as described by Judith Butler: "what was once thought of as a border, that which delimits and bounds, is a highly populated site, if not the very definition of the nation, confounding identity" (49). The significance of the border in *The Jew of Malta* thus clearly confounds the sense of a stable religious identity. In *The Merchant of Venice*, there are similar threats of instability through cross-religious kinship and flawed conversions, but Shakespeare's Christians seemingly manage to regulate Otherness and its urban presence more successfully.

In both plays, efforts at containing religious difference are institutionalised. It is in official institutions that laws are exploited and/or manipulated in order to curb the Jews' circulation, be it at the senate-house or the court.⁸ This is all the more surprising in the case of a Venetian society that prides itself on the "city's freedom" (4.1.38) and "the commodity that strangers have / With us in Venice" (3.3.27-28). Overall, one could claim that the two plays enact fantasies of ousting or at least circumscribing religious difference but also contain their own containments. After all, the Jews that the Maltese and Venetian societies try to ostracise clearly provide a rationale for Christian wishes to curb their hold on the city.

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⁸ Grace Tiffany notes, for instance, that Portia "unnecessarily invokes an anti-alien law that threatens to kill Shylock" (295).

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Zusammenfassung

Christopher Marlowes *Jew of Malta* und William Shakespeares *Merchant of Venice* verhandeln, so die These dieses Artikels, religiöse Alterität im urbanen Raum. Die Konstruktion christlicher Identität in der maltesischen/venezianischen Gesellschaft beruht demnach auf der Abgrenzung zum jüdischen Anderen. Um christliche Identität zu festigen und religiöse Integrität zu erlangen, wenden die Gemeinschaften Strategien zur Beherrschung des jüdischen Anderen an. Während dies in Marlowes Malta größtenteils scheitert, gelingt es in Shakespeares Venedig zumindest partiell. Es wird jedoch auch gezeigt, wie der ideologisch und semiotisch mit dem Handel verbundene Austausch des Anderen feste Sinnzuschreibungen verhindert und die jüdischen Protagonisten sich, hegemonialen Machtbestrebungen der Christen zum Trotz, in den urbanen Raum einschreiben.

TWELFTH NIGHT OR INSHALLAH

SEAN AITA

Kuwaiti director Sulayman Al-Bassam dedicated a trilogy to re-interpreting Shakespeare through a Middle Eastern lens. In the final installment of *The Speaker's Progress*, he presents a radical translation and transposition of *Twelfth Night*. Performed in Arabic by SABAB Theatre Company,¹ the production is set in an unnamed Islamic state, where theatrical representation, considered a subversive art-form tainted with Western influence, is forbidden.

Using the conceit of a show trial, the play is centered upon the restaging of a historical production of *Twelfth Night* from the 1960s, which had contained revolutionary overtones. Al Bassam, in the title role of *The Speaker*, plays a former theatre director, now in disgrace, who is forced to present a documentation of his former production in court in order to renounce it. Live performers and extracts from film clips of the original production are used to support the historical understanding of his errors. He is observed throughout the performance by censors who interrupt the action to sound an alarm whenever the dialogue is improvised or strays from its state-sanctioned course. These censors also employ a yardstick to ensure that the male and female performers do not stray closer than the designated 90cm distance which must be maintained between them at all times. Yet in spite of, or perhaps because of, the constraints placed upon the performers, the restrictions begin to focus the audience's attention towards the very elements that the censors would prefer concealed. Recognising this fact, the performers within the play which include a former actress, representatives from the women's league, the cultural ministry, and the board of tourism, begin to struggle amongst themselves to enhance, or suppress, the underlying message of hope and passion which emerges from the text. Al-Bassam's equivalent to the role of Malvolio, a Mullah-like character from the board of tourism played by Fayez Kazak, becomes a pivotal figure within the cast advocating strict censorship, and the enforced containment of the play's narrative. Al Bassam's challenging, and complexly nuanced production was "originally conceived as a metaphor for the artistic quest for freedom of expression" (Barker) and it is apposite in light of events within the so called *Arab Spring* that SABAB's Malvolio is defeated when he believes himself to be loved by a woman whose name translates as *freedom*.²

SABAB's use of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* as a "poetic starting point" to provide a "framework to engage audiences in a dialogue about Arabic and Muslim culture" (Mulligan) is an appropriate one despite the fact that, for the most part in recent years,

¹ Full company details available from <http://www.sabab.org/>.

² It is interesting to note that the derivation of the name Olivia is not dissimilar being drawn from the Olive branch, symbol of peace and reconciliation.

all external signifiers of the East have been excised from professional Western European productions of the play. Written less than twenty years after the Ottoman Grand Vizir was rumored to have boasted that there was “nothing lacking for the English to become Muslims, except for them to raise their forefingers and recite the confession of faith” (Andrea 24), *Twelfth Night* presents us with a setting which shows evidence of being Islamic in culture, despite the fact that it shares many features of Elizabethan England. Covering much of the area where we find modern day Albania, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina during the period in which the play was written Illyria was for the most part “an unexplored outpost of the Ottoman Empire” (Wallace). Although, as Oscar Wilde tells us, Shakespeare’s choice of setting owes as much to fantasy as reality – “where there is no illusion there is no Illyria” (Wilde 34), I would contend that it operates as an arena in which narratives of culture, border, state, identity, and crucially for this period, *faith* can be explored.

References to Islamic culture and traditions can be found throughout the text. Viola is compelled by her situation to present herself as “an eunuch” (1.2.105) to Count Orsino, and Olivia has a veil thrown over her face before she is willing to speak to the Count’s gentleman Cesario (1.5. 458). Sir Andrew Aguecheek makes this more explicit by lamenting that he has “no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man” (1.3.193-194) whilst Fabian tells us he would not give up his part in the gulling of Malvolio for “a pension of thousands to be paid from the Sophy” (2.5.1206-1207) and Sir Toby frightens Andrew Aguecheek by warning him that Cesario has been “fencer to the Sophy” (3.4.1825) linking the Safavid dynasty to the Ottoman Illyrians.

As Matthew Dimmock points out in *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England*, Sir Thomas More had warned, forty years before the religious schism he so feared came to pass, that the theological arguments of the Lutheran Protestantism might infect the “comen corps of Chrystendom” (Dimmock 27), insisting that it could be in “maner worse than the secte of the great Turke” (27) and that they actively allowed “the Turke to prosper and thereforth to proceed” (27). According to Dimmock, More’s contention had some validity. He suggests that in the 1520s “a moment existed in which a reconciliation between Lutheran and Ottoman was not inconceivable” (28) since both had “similar concepts of religious purity and anti-idolatry” (28) and both faced common calls for Crusades to be launched against them.

For Queen Elizabeth, excommunicated in 1570 by the papal bull *Regnans in Excelsis*, political and economic considerations had contributed to the development of direct commercial trading relations between her state and that of Ahmad al Mansur, Sultan of Morocco, and subsequently with the Ottoman empire under Sultan Murad III who identified her as “the foe of his foes” (Burton 63). The ambiguity of such a position for a Queen whose titles included *defender of the faith* and who was obliged to adopt a “necessary adherence to an oppositional view of Islam in her public dealings” (Dimmock, “The Tudor Experience” 51) or further jeopardize England’s all too precarious status as a Christian nation were not easy to reconcile.

Between 1600 and 1602, during the period in which most commentators agree *Twelfth Night* was written, Elizabeth was maintaining a close epistolary relationship “like to a garden of pleasant birds” (Rosedale 4) with the Ottoman Walide Sultana

Safiye; the Barbary States sent her a series of ambassadors to discuss a possible military alliance, as well as an arms deal; whilst at the behest of Robert Devereux the Earl of Essex, the three Sherley brothers had been dispatched as ambassadors to the court of Shah Abbass in Persia and were busily re-organizing his, not inconsiderable, armed forces.³ Each of these nations was neither fully friend nor outright foe, and the Protestant English increasingly found themselves engaged in a balancing act between three rival Muslim empires fraught with internecine rifts. Arguably the need for insights into Islamic culture and sensibilities had never been greater not least because, as Feste points out, encounters with oppositional philosophies are intrinsically beneficial: “by my foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself” (5.1.2207).

Elizabethan playwrights had responded to this new paradigm throughout the sixteenth century by creating roles for non-Christian characters which, as Dimmock argues “confound what are often considered to be conventional expectations” (“New Turkes”, 17). Indeed, so much so that Jonathan Burton identifies “the shifting religious identity” in Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*, which other critics consider ambiguous, as “strategically reflective of the period’s conditional suspension, and activation of anti-Islamic prejudice” (54). Consequently, in Protestant England a Muslim could be considered an

idotaler, a bloodthirsty barbarian, a heretic, a misbeliever, a harbinger of apocalypse, a sodomite, a fellow anti-idolatorous monotheist, a political ally, a protector, a valued mercantile partner, or a respected adversary to be emulated (Dimmock, “A Tudor Experience of Islam” 51)

However, as Constance Relihan points out in “Erasing the East from *Twelfth Night*,” there were limitations to the degree to which the public would accept Muslims as allies. Relihan argues that one reason for Shakespeare’s lack of ostensivity in presenting the play’s location as unequivocally Eastern is that prejudice within the Elizabethan audience would have rendered him unable to “produce any sympathy” (91) for the characters within the play had he chosen to portray them openly as non-Christians since they “would be denied full human status by his culture” (91). Disguise, identified within the drama as “a wickedness” (2.2.684), becomes for Shakespeare simple expediency. A liminal Illyria is one which is politically and perhaps personally, convenient. The resultant palimpsest makes Illyria and the Illyrians both Christian and Muslim simultaneously. The Eastern identity, though veiled, is still visible through the flimsy gossamer of Shakespeare’s conceit.

Yet, in spite of this insubstantial mask, critical commentary on the play, whether in performance or from purely academic perspectives, which suggest that *Twelfth Night*’s Illyrians might actually dress and behave like Moslems seem notable by their absence. Shakespeare’s cloaking device, whilst on the one hand permitting him latitude to explore facets of a society which was viewed with hostility by the majority of his

³ Robert Wilson emphasises in his paper “When Golden Time Convents: Shakespeare’s Eastern Promise” the fact that the Sherley brothers had no direct commission from the crown for their embassy. Wilson tells us that “in reality the brothers were sent east by the Earl of Essex as a manoeuvre *against* the Queen” and that their true errand was “to induce Iran to attack the Ottomans, thereby releasing Spain to invade England.”

audience, also appears to have contributed to a later performance tradition which seems to have merely paid lip-service to conceptions of an Eastern Illyria.

We cannot know how Shakespeare's Illyrians were costumed in his own time but it seems unlikely that the Eastern setting was indicated by their clothing unless we imagine that one of the "genesareyes gowns" mentioned by Philip Henslowe in his costume inventory,⁴ and most probably utilized in conqueror plays like *The Battle of Alcazar*, could have been pressed into service. The earliest image we have of *Twelfth Night*, the frontispiece engraving illustrating Nicholas Rowe's edition of 1709 (London: Jacob Tonson), shows no signs of an Ottoman frame. However, images from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries indicate that producers during these periods were not unaware of, or unreceptive to, the location's cultural identity though they do not appear to have permitted this to dominate production scenography or costuming. A painting by Francis Wheatley⁵ (see fig. 1) painted between 1771-2, and purporting to be of contemporary eighteenth-century performers, shows the duel between Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Cesario. Although set against a distinctly European landscape, the picture presents actress Miss Elizabeth Young in the satin breeches, waistcoat and topcoat typical of male costume of the period, but with the notable addition of an oriental feathered turban on her head, and an Islamic shamshir (Scimitar) sword in her hand.



Fig 1. Francis Wheatley. *A Scene in Twelfth Night, Act 3*. Oil on canvas, 99.8 x 124.8cm. © Manchester City Galleries.

⁴ An undated handwritten list. Digitised as MSS 1 article 30. <<http://www.henslowe-alleyne.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-030/01r.html>>.

⁵ In the collection of the Manchester City Art Gallery.

In the late nineteenth century, photographs showing previous Ottoman/Islamic settings for the play begin to emerge. A photograph of actress Julia Marlowe taken in 1890 in the role of Cesario shows her wearing the fustanella skirt and bolero jacket typical of Albanian Moslem folk dress, and also carrying the iconic scimitar at her belt (see fig. 2). The costumes worn by amateur actors Fred Knapp and Emily Cornish from the Bates College in Maine University class of 1896 also indicate a Balkan design as does Ellen Terry's attire from the 1884 production at the Lyceum Theatre in London, though an illustration of other scenes from the same production of the play demonstrates this device was not carried through the rest of the production.⁶



Fig. 2. Julia Marlowe as Viola, 1890. Reproduced with the permission of Joe Culliton.

⁶ Published in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* on July 26th 1884 (p. 628), the image shows the costumes to be broadly Elizabethan in style, thus making Terry's attire seem highly incongruous.

These images – uncoupled as they are from a coherent, all-encompassing design and production concept focused on Illyria as an intercultural crossroads – encourage us to dismiss them as typical examples of an exotic and spectacular vision of the East.

Contemporary critical perspectives which have tended to neglect the materiality of the cultures in which Shakespeare's plays are set as well as critical concerns relating to Edward Said's critique of *Orientalism* (1978) have almost certainly discouraged twentieth- and twenty-first-century Western European theatre producers from engaging too closely with East/West inter-cultural considerations when tackling the play. Certainly issues of gender identity rather than interculturality have dominated recent production aesthetics and dramaturgies. Whatever the reasons may be, they appear to have been ubiquitous, as a resolutely occidental model dominates the play's twentieth-century European performance history.

English directors in particular have been remarkably unwilling to see Illyria and the Illyrians as anything other than domestic Christians. Trevor Nunn's film (1996), which claims to be set in a central European militaristic state, was filmed in Cornwall, and makes no attempt to disguise this bucolic location, or the faith of its inhabitants. One of the opening scenes is set in a graveyard dominated by a distinctive perpendicular gothic church tower. Director Lindsay Posner speaking of his Royal Shakespeare Company Production (2001) is equally certain that "Shakespeare has created a very English place" (quoted in Gibson). The majority of Anglo-centric productions confine outward manifestations of religious faith to one character: Malvolio. Literally applying Maria's highly equivocal statement that "sometimes he's a kind of puritan" (2.3.839), costumes worn in performance portraits of Henry Irving, Sir Laurence Olivier, Sir Alec Guinness, and more recently Tim Crouch make few concessions to the bifurcation vision of the "renegado"⁷ who has "turned heathen" (3.2.1472), which Olivia's maid also proposes.

Gregory Doran, one of the first modern British directors to make a serious attempt to engage with the play's Eastern cultural frame, unpicked these comfortable assumptions by presenting, in his Royal Shakespeare Company production (2009), an Illyria "caught between Christianity and Islam" (Marmion). Doran and his designer Robert Jones chose to locate the play in the early part of the nineteenth century using both the traditions of the 'Grand Tour' and the 'Levant Lunatics'⁸ as inspiration for their vision of an Ottoman fiefdom in Greece. But although for Andrew Billen, writing in the *New Statesman*, the "eunuchs, lyre players and sybarite bathing houses" provided a staging which was "beautiful," the production did not seek to explore fully the religious implications of its cross-cultural premise. Coen Heijes in the *Shakespeare Revue* felt that the costume worn by Count Orsino, based loosely on Lord Byron, revealed him as "an expat who might go native at home." By making Orsino part of the Ottoman *Millet* system under which religious minorities, such as Christians and

⁷ Although the traditional stage personification of the *renegado* was one which mocked and misrepresented their condition, the overall picture of the convert to Islam within the early modern period is one of successful integration and social and professional advancement. It was perfectly possible for European apostates to obtain high office within Muslim states.

⁸ Both Michelle Morton and Lucy Barriball explore these influences further in the Royal Shakespeare Company's (2009) programme for the production.

Jews, were permitted an element of self-governance, Doran also falls into line with the performative orthodoxy of the Anglican Illyrian his predecessors favor. This choice, amongst others, caused critic Charles Spencer from the *Daily Telegraph*, picking up on post-Said sensibilities, to judge the frame a conceit which “seems merely picturesque rather than pertinent.” But in spite of such a dismissive, and somewhat superficial, critical response to Doran’s experiment, the influence of Islamic culture and philosophy on Shakespeare’s works has been the subject of recent academic, and theatrical debate.

Reflecting an upsurge in interest in the West’s relationship with Islam in a post 9/11 world, a significant number of books, papers and conferences have offered new insights into the ways in which early modern society engaged with, reflected on, and responded to their Muslim neighbours.⁹ However few have gone quite as far as Dr Martin Lings who, shortly before his death in 2005, argued that Shakespeare must have been “a member of a religious or spiritual order which can best be compared to the philosophy of Sufism” (cited in Thorpe). In his book on spirituality in Shakespeare, *Shakespeare’s Windows Into the Soul* (2006), Lings emphasizes the fact that “before its final secularization in the first half of the sixteenth century our drama was concerned with one topic only, human salvation” (7). He argues that Shakespeare continued this medieval tradition within his plays using characters and plotlines to present the soul’s journey to redemption allegorically.

In Islamic tradition the first children of Adam and Eve were not brothers, but a pair of male and female twins.¹⁰ Like the ‘Seeker of Truth’ in Suhrawadi’s *Story of the Occidental Exile*,¹¹ Sebastian and Viola’s “determinate” (2.1.619) voyage is a spiritual as much as physical one. Providence, literally the guidance of God, returns them from the “blind waves and surges” (5.1.2429) of their “watery tomb” (5.1.2434) throwing them onto the “rough and unhospitable” (3.3.1498) shores of Illyria. Salvation from a series of tribulations is provided after Viola’s invocation of ‘time’¹² identified as ‘Allah’ within the *hadith The Sahih Muslim*,¹³ and Olivia’s gift of a pearl, one of the great rewards found in the Islamic paradise, to Sebastian causes them to accept and to embrace their metamorphosis subsuming their own desires “most jocund apt and

⁹ London’s Globe Theatre presented a *Shakespeare and Islam* series of seminars and performance season in 2004. For examples of significant publications see within the bibliography to this article Dimmock’s works. Also Andrea; Burton; Relihan; Jardine.

¹⁰ Cain and his sister, and Abel and his sister.

¹¹ For a detailed description of Suhrawardi’s story, please see Firoozeh Papan Martin’s *Beyond Death: The Mystical Teachings of Ayn al-Qudat al-Hamadhani*. The tale is based on Plato’s *Allegory of the Cave*, but within his version, humans are not shackled in a cave but imprisoned at the bottom of a well where they are left in total darkness.

¹² “Time thou must untangle this not I” (2.2.697).

¹³ “Abu Huraira reported: I heard Allah’s Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: The son of Adam abuses Dahr (time), whereas I am Dahr since in my hand are the day and the night.” *The Sahih Muslim* Book 27 verse 5580. <<http://www.hudainfo.com/Muslim/027.asp>>. The term *hadith* refers to statements or reports of actions ascribed to the Prophet Mohamed. Evaluated and compiled into collections in the eighth and ninth century, they are regarded as important tools to be used alongside the Koran to support its interpretation. The *Sahih Muslim* is one of the six major collections of these texts used in Sunni tradition.

willingly” (5.1.2324-2325) to the rule of the East. Whether or not such a reading has any external validity or significance, the purpose of research for the practitioner is to find a mechanism through which to engage with the play that helps determine what elements could or should be emphasized in performance. Subjecting the play to this process convinced me even further that religious and cultural appropriation and transformation lie at the heart of *Twelfth Night*'s dramaturgical structure and that they are neglected in contemporary productions.

If the central love story between both sets of couples is viewed as an attempt to interrogate intercultural relationships, then the Duke and Countess, Orsino and Olivia, as representatives of the authority of the state and symbols of Illyrian cultural and religious mores, become much more significant roles than their introspective natures might suggest.

The Sea Captain who helps Viola to adapt to her new circumstances hints that Orsino is a man who holds the power to silence dissenting voices by removing their tongues.¹⁴ Yet this stereotypical image of an Oriental potentate is simultaneously “a noble Duke, in nature as in name” (2.2.72) familiar with Western society having not only been known to, but spoken of in good terms by Viola's late father; conditions which make her disguised embassy to him not only possible, but almost inevitable. A commander who has seen his enemies close to “besmear'd as black as Vulcan in the smoke of war” (5.1.2241), Orsino's martial prowess can be viewed as a reiteration of the common narrative of the bombastic and warlike Turk – the Elizabethan kneejerk response to Ottoman military successes in Europe. His jealous threat to “sacrifice the lamb” which he loves, like the “Egyptian at point of death” (5.1.2310) also plays to the reductive view of the passionate Oriental ruled by emotion rather than reason, but in Shakespeare's hands these tropes are made to feel almost superfluous a tangential nod in the direction of cultural hegemony which he immediately seeks to undermine. Orsino is a romantic and elegant figure, “learn'd, and valiant” (1.5.550), a man filled with qualities reflecting those most highly praised within the Qu'ran such as love, sincerity, constancy and kindness. In spite of the comedy which he draws from Viola's gender ambiguity, there can be no question that Shakespeare intends us to view the *Turk* Orsino as a suitable focus for Viola's, the Christian noblewoman's, affections.

Although Shakespeare makes much of her infatuation with *Cesario*, if the Countess Olivia is additionally considered as a counterpoint to Christopher Marlowe's representations of Turkish womanhood whom “whether wives, mothers, maids or concubines” are “trophies and accessories to men and rarely budge from rather wooden roles” (Kahf 67), then her status, both within her household and Illyrian society at large, offers a significant contrast. She is mistress of her own estate, despite the fact that her dead father's brother resides with her. Olivia is able to “sway her house, command her followers” (4.3.2168) and both “take and give back affairs and their dispatch” (4.3.2168-69): A situation anomalous to Elizabethans, who would have been only too aware that outside the royal family women could not be heirs to their fathers' titles, or lands. She also appears to feel under no obligation to accept the suit

¹⁴ “Your mute I'll be” (1.2.111).

of Duke Orsino, despite his position.¹⁵ Neither her gender nor her veiled seclusion within a *cloister* presents any impediment to the tangible manifestations of her will in relation to the control of her servants, or her future husband.

Whilst costume and scenography are valuable tools to support the foregrounding of an Islamic Illyria, in the theatre modern producers also have another important tool at their disposal: casting. Although it is not always possible to cast a production completely from scratch,¹⁶ the selection of performers with specific ethnic or racial characteristics produces powerful resonance in certain iconic roles. Influenced by the knowledge that Elizabethan perspective allowed for a degree of “slippage” (Hutchings) between Turks and Moors and that often “no clear distinction” (McAlindon 135) was made between them, I chose to cast a young Egyptian actor in the part of Orsino in order to see what impact it might have. The most immediate effect should really have been expected, but was still a surprise. Watching a young dark-skinned Middle-Eastern actor, dressed in the bag trousers and robes of the Levant, rehearsing opposite a white European actress (see fig. 3) immediately reminded me of *Othello*.

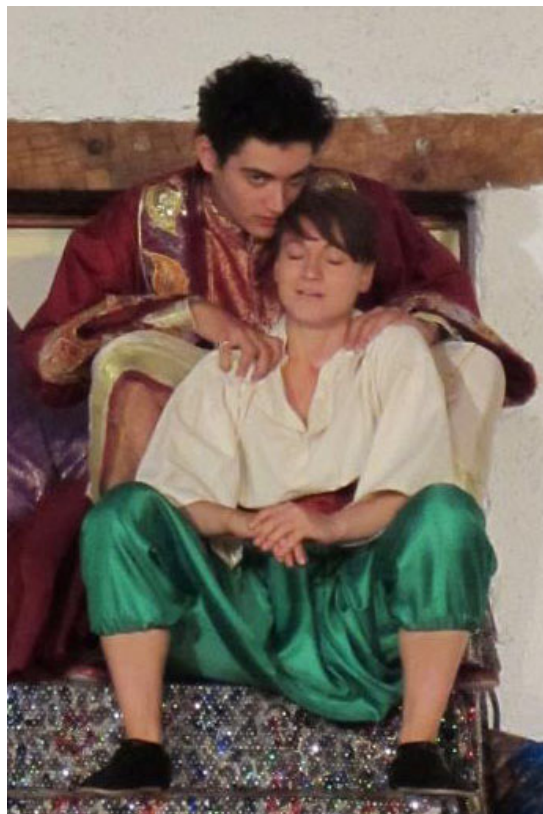


Fig. 3. Josef Mohamed and Fransiska Plutchke as Orsino and Viola. Shakespeare in Styria 2011.
Photograph: Roberta Brown.

¹⁵ Within the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth century, women were free to reject a match, and prenuptial agreements were not uncommon.

¹⁶ Some directors within the UK find themselves obliged to cast from an extant pool of actors engaged by a theatre for a season of work.

Perhaps Shakespeare's assignation of Italianate names to the majority of his Illyrian characters does not represent, as Leslie Hotson contends in *The First Night of Twelfth Night* (1954), an unsubtle attempt at personal flattery for Don Virginio. Instead, Orsino could be considered instead as a figure-ground illusion marrying the Duke of Bracciano's embassy with that of Abd-el-Ouahed ben Messaoud ben Mohammed Anoun (see fig. 4), ambassador of the Barbary States. Messaoud arrived in London in August 1600 and conducted his embassy in Italian through an interpreter. Long the subject of speculation as a possible inspiration for the title role in *Othello*, he also provides a tempting model for the Shakespeare's Illyrian 'Muslim' ruler.



Fig 4. Unknown Artist. Abd el-Ouahed ben Messaoud ben Mohammed Anoun Moorish Ambassador to Queen Elizabeth I. Oil on oak panel, 113 x 87.6cm. © The University of Birmingham Research and Cultural Collections.

Whilst it is perhaps too far-fetched to assert that through Orsino Shakespeare consciously presents us with the sequel to the Prince of Morocco, “the first non-villainous moor in English drama” (Matar and Stoekel 231), or a prototype for Othello, this casting choice invites us to reconsider the way in which within *Twelfth Night* Shakespeare could represent intercultural or interfaith relationships with greater freedom than in his later play, in which Othello's racial and cultural identity is made explicit. Shakespeare's overt introduction to English drama of the Moor in the context of “a sexual encounter with the white/European woman” (230) in *Othello* provides a paradigm which only twenty years later would be partially inverted when Sir Robert Shirley returned to Europe from Persia to pose for a double portrait opposite his Circassian wife Theresa, the daughter of Ismael Khan, and a relative to Shah Abbass. Shakespeare himself, it seems, understood only too well the problems of intercultural

relationships. Amelia Bassano Lanier of Moroccan, Jewish descent has been proposed as a genuinely *dark* lady of the sonnets.¹⁷ As Feste tells us, “every wise man’s son” knows that “journeys end in lovers meeting” (2.3, 740 and 739), and there can be little doubt that the Elizabethans by parleying their excommunicated status as heretical Protestants into a political alliance and trade partnership across cultural and, in particular, religious lines (Andrea 23) created fertile soil for both apostasy and miscegenation.

Al-Bassam’s *The Speaker’s Progress*, which I mentioned at the start of this essay, presents *Twelfth Night* as a revolutionary text. I believe that he has read the play correctly. It is possible to identify a challengingly positive view of an Islamic state within the text, and although the marriages at the end of the play provide an ambiguous and unresolved ending, they can be considered as one of the earliest stage representations of intercultural relationships. *The Speaker’s Progress* confronts its audience with a fundamental question: how are we to live together? *Twelfth Night* presents us with the same dilemma. The heart of Illyria’s “natural perspective that is and is not” (5.1.2416) acknowledges that “what’s to come is still unsure” (2.3.750), but the prismatic vision it presents offers a safe environment in which to explore intercultural and inter-faith perspectives. But until more professional theatre producers are prepared to peep behind the veil, the play will remain, like a popular English advertisement for Turkish Delight, merely ‘full of Eastern promise.’

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¹⁷ Most recently by Martin Green in the paper “Emilia Lanier IS the Dark Lady of the Sonnets.”

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Zusammenfassung

Im Zuge seiner Opposition gegen die römisch-katholische Hegemonie nahm der reformierte elisabethanische Staat im Feld der europäischen Machtpolitik eine Position ein, die in mancher Hinsicht vergleichbar war mit der von Muslimen. Dieser Artikel argumentiert, dass Shakespeare die Handlung von *Twelfth Night* als Reaktion auf die komplexe und widersprüchliche elisabethanische Haltung gegenüber dem Osten im Ottomanischen Illyrien spielen lässt. Aus der Perspektive des Theaterschaffenden setzt sich Sean Aita zudem mit der Frage auseinander, warum fast alle heutigen Aufführungen von *Twelfth Night* das orientalische Setting des Dramas ignorieren. Ausgehend von seiner eigenen Inszenierung aus dem Jahr 2011, die im Rahmen des *Shakespeare in Styria*-Festivals entstanden ist, argumentiert Aita, dass Shakespeares illyrische Figuren (insbesondere Orsino und Olivia) Aspekte ethnischer, religiöser und kultureller *otherness* ins Zentrum stellen, die Regisseure in der Regel vernachlässigen. Schließlich weist Aita darauf hin, dass der Titel, *Twelfth Night*, diese Lesart nahelegt: der Überlieferung zufolge erblickte Mohammed in der zwölften Nacht des Monats Rabî'ul-Awwal das Licht der Welt, und in seiner Bedeutung kommt *What you Will* dem Inshallah erstaunlich nah.

“IN THAT JERUSALEM SHALL HARRY DIE.” KING HENRY IV’S FAITH AND DOUBT

IMKE LICHTERFELD

Ton Hoenselaars judges *King John* to be a play on “the practical and psychological problems of an unrightful monarch” (146). The same can be applied to the plays involving the character of Henry Bolingbroke, later Henry IV, which were written at roughly the same time as the study on the earlier king of England (c. 1595-1598). When usurping the throne in *Richard II*, Henry Bolingbroke seems a strong and pragmatic politician; at the end of *Henry IV Part II* he dies, old, sick and troubled, apparently from similar reasons as Hoenselaars applies to King John.

Bolingbroke’s illness seems, in modern terms, largely psychosomatic, defined by the *OED* as “a. Involving or depending on both the mind and the body as mutually dependent entities. [...] b. Applied to physical disorders caused or aggravated by mental, emotional, or psychological factors” (XII, 770). Henry does not only seem to age prematurely, he also becomes weary of the crown and eventually dies of illness. This idea can be explained in twofold ways: as far as the Renaissance idea of the state as a macrocosm and that of kingship as a microcosm is concerned, there have been various discussions of the sick macrocosm of the state of England corresponding to the sick microcosm the persona of the king,¹ but at the same time the theory of the king’s two bodies can be applied here.² Henry IV’s body natural, his physical body deteriorates while the body politic, i.e. the spirit of kingship will transfer to the next heir: Bolingbroke’s usurpation is thus usually seen in the light of traditional divine kingship and its theo-political implications (Cf. Kantorowicz 39-40), and Shakespeare’s treatment of Henry’s reign is often discussed with respect to the doctrine of the divine right of kings.

Less attention has been paid to the interrelation between the king’s faith and the faith in the king as a reciprocal process. In this respect, this article will also touch upon the idea that Shakespeare uses the issue of faith in his second tetralogy as a lens to

¹ Most of these studies originated in the middle of the twentieth century, among them E.M.W. Tillyard’s monographs such as *The Elizabethan World Picture* and *Shakespeare’s History Plays*. Heinz Zimmermann also concentrates on the ideological crisis in *Richard II* in his more recent article, see bibliography. For a modern discussion which treats this correspondence, diagnosing the body in drama, but with a relation to satirical Jacobean drama, see William Spates. “Shakespeare and the Irony of Early Modern Disease Metaphor and Metonymy” *Rhetorics of Bodily Disease and Health in Medieval and Early Modern England*. Ed. Jennifer C. Vaught. Farnham/Burlington: Ashgate, 2010. 155-170, especially 160-161.

² Kantorowicz’ widely acclaimed study on the two bodies of the king contains a classic chapter on the situation in *Richard II*. Ernst H. Kantorowicz. *The King’s Two Bodies. A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997. (1957¹). 24-41.

focus on the troubled relationship between church and state, clergy and landed gentry that resulted from the Reformation, or, as Richard Rex calls it, the “crisis of obedience” with its “transfer of the ecclesiastical loyalty of the English people from pope to king” (863). Thus the immediacy of the religio-historical context of the Shakespearean era is adapted and can be detected in the histories.

The burden of the king’s two bodies, which naturally affects the anointed king, now also bears down on the usurper and haunts him: the idea that the ‘monarch is sick and therefore the state is sick’ or rather the ‘state is sick and therefore the monarch *becomes* sick’, and vice versa, effectually applies to this monarch who has overturned the old order and has so far proved an able-bodied man but then deteriorates rapidly. However, already at the end of *Richard II*, Shakespeare points to a miraculous, almost supernatural healing cure for the politically weakened new monarch: a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Throughout both parts of *Henry IV*, Henry is continually preoccupied and “obsessed” (Black 19) with Jerusalem³ and later claims that he is convinced that Jerusalem will be his final destination: “It hath been prophesied to me many years, / I should not die but in Jerusalem.” (*2H4*, 4.5.236-237). The curing effect is certainly associated with a religious absolution of sins but it remains to be seen in how far a pilgrimage is feasible, also with regard to ecclesiastic political thoughts in the time of Shakespeare.

The idea of travelling to the Holy Land – though not yet that of dying there – is first presented by Henry Bolingbroke in *Richard II*; in his speech following the execution of Richard, Henry insists on the following decision: “Lords, I protest, my soul is full of woe [...] I’ll make a voyage to the Holy Land/ To wash this blood off from my guilty hand.” (*R2*, 5.6.45, 49-50) It remains to be analysed in what way exactly Henry is convinced that travelling to Jerusalem will serve as a means to prove his faith and Christian virtues as a new monarch after the usurpation of the throne of the divinely anointed head of state, i.e. to do penance for his disobedience towards his God and king. A different strategy is presented by the question whether the voyage might purely serve as a means to solidify his politics, and thus the question poses itself, in how far Henry instrumentalises the idea of a pilgrimage or even a military excursion, i.e. a crusade as a public redress or intended cure to his usurpation.

Jonathan Baldo argues that “[c]rimes against rightful inheritance and dynastic continuity lie at the center of the play’s action” (“Sublime” 82) and the voyage will serve to satisfy Henry’s “craving for forgetfulness” (Baldo, *Memory* 77) by the nation: Through the vow, Henry officially utters an intended obligation to achieve a pardon, i.e. Christian remission of sins: similarly he presents himself as a penitential believer and faithful⁴ Christian at the start of *Richard II* when he is willing to fight a duel that is decided by God’s judgment. Later in *2H4*, his statement in Westminster Abbey appears

³ The historic Henry did travel to the Holy Land, but Shakespeare either neglects this fact for dramatic reasons or is unaware of it: “By not knowing, or not using, the fact that Henry had already traveled to the Holy Land and back, Shakespeare is able to make Henry’s attempts to get there the more dramatically urgent” (Black 20).

⁴ The *OED* lists various entries for the definition of faith, first indicating “I. Belief, trust, confidence”, but also an “Inducement to belief or trust” (II.) and “The obligation imposed by a trust” (III), *OED* V, 678-679.

as a faithful and humble assertion of his previous, vainglory hope of absolution when confronted with the irony of the chamber's name, Jerusalem, in *2 Henry IV*, 4.5.234. On the surface, Henry appears as a character whose faith seems well-established. Nevertheless, he usurps the crown of the anointed king and thereby acts against Christian morals and the doctrine of obedience. Audiences must therefore position, and arguably re-position, themselves in deciding how pragmatic or how religious Henry is. Of course, this often depends on the presentation of the monarch in performances. David Troughton, for example, in the RSC production in 2000 (directed by Michael Attenborough) was a down-to-earth pragmatic politician, but the crown did indeed prove to be an utter burden that fiercely pressed upon his head and visibly left marks upon his temples (cf. Chernaik 131); similarly did Clive Wood in 2006 (directed by Michael Boyd) begin as a strong pragmatist and solid warrior to only end up decidedly aged and marked by signs of illness.⁵ Throughout both parts of *Henry IV*, doubts about the rightfulness of his kingship and the succession after Richard II remain, as Richard's memory haunts Henry: "nothing is more difficult to control, more unruly and more prone to riot and rebellion, than the kingdom of the dead" (Baldo "Sublime" 83). Henry's doubts can underline the psychosomatic nature of his sickness from the crown, but there are two possible reasons for his sickness: first, a guilt-ridden conscience, and second, a caring sickness that could have afflicted the dutiful monarch Henry.

What audiences thus have to negotiate are extremely opposing views of Henry's character: a faithful Christian, devout, loyal to his country, courageous and patriotic, and later a truly insecure king who has lost his innocence (cf. Baldo "Sublime" 92), who regrets the act of usurpation, and who is influenced by power-seeking noblemen around him (once they realise how easily monarchy can be undermined); or: a Machiavellian politician, pragmatic, strategic, tactical, hypocritical, "military" (Parvini 193) and "ambitious, unscrupulous, opportunistic and dissimulating" (Forker 24, cf. Baldo "Sublime" 81, Zimmermann 23-24). Charles R. Forker phrases it shrewdly:

Has Richard masochistically delivered up himself and his throne to a hypocritical enemy who would have seized power in any case? Or has Bolingbroke through luck, percipience, a heroic temperament and skillful manoeuvring simply placed himself in a position to have greatness thrust upon him? The scene leaves these equivocal issues unresolved. (26-27)

As Forker and Bevington have argued convincingly, the play is ambiguous: Henry seems none of these extremes but obviously holds a position or impersonates a role in between these two extremes (cf. Forker 27; Bevington 50). However, Forker completely neglects the issue of faith, and does not consider whether Henry's character changes from *Richard II* to *2 Henry IV* and becomes more pragmatic or more religious through the course of the three plays. Bevington on the other hand evaluates on the vitalizing effect of pragmatism in politics. Black, quoting A. R. Humphreys' edition, argues that "Henry's motives for a crusade are purely penitential in *Richard II*, V. vi. 49-50, whereas in *2 Henry IV*, IV. v. 208-15, 'they seem purely Machiavellian'" (19).

⁵ See a. o. the RSC theatre programme: *Henry IV. Parts I & II*. The Courtyard Theatre. RSC 2007 and production stills.

This might give a first indication of Henry's development into an administrative politician. Neema Parvini highlights the military unification against a common enemy as his main motive: "He proposes to lead a crusade to Jerusalem, thereby uniting the warring factions of his nation against a common, foreign and heathen enemy." (Parvini 196)

The following article will give a short overview of Henry Bolingbroke's behaviour in *Richard II* and then evaluate his positioning towards faith and the intended voyage of faith to Jerusalem and how this is depicted in political terms throughout the following two *Henry IV* plays. Shakespeare's plays investigate, as Hoenselaars puts it, the "delineation of personal and political identities [...], the complex interaction between more or less traditional Christian perceptions of kingship on the one hand and, on the other, the pragmatic views of statecraft" (139).⁶

In *Richard II*, the word 'faith' is only used four times, and two occasions are of particular interest for this argument. Shakespeare has both King Richard and Henry Bolingbroke use the word 'faith' to characterise Bolingbroke, but they present opposing views on the question of a subject's duty with respect to his monarch. The following is Richard's conception of 'faith' contrasted to Henry's conduct:

Mine ear is open and my heart prepared;
The worst is worldly loss thou canst unfold.
Say, is my kingdom lost? why, 'twas my *care*
And what loss is it to be rid of care?
Strives Bolingbroke to be as great as we?
Greater he shall not be; *if he serve God*,
We'll serve Him too and be his fellow so:
Revolt our subjects? that we cannot mend;
They break their faith to God as well as us:
Cry woe, destruction, ruin and decay:
The worst is death, and death will have his day. (3.2.93-103, *my italics*)

Richard presents the rebelling Henry and his supporters as undutiful to Christian faith: he stylises himself as a Christian king, "often compares himself to Christ" (Shell 132), and implies that Henry is revolting against the monarch and by that – as the king is such by the grace of God – against God: faith collapses. What is of interest here is the use of 'faith,' in particular the preposition used by Richard when he speaks of faith *to* God and the king. First, the idiosyncratic use connects the phrase to commonplace idioms such as pledging allegiance or swearing an oath *to* the monarch (Cf. Rex 866). Second, the use opens up an echo chamber of biblical verses that address issues of faith. With the allusion to Mark 11:22, "And Jesus answered, and said unto them, Have faith of God" (Geneva Bible), the stage is set to make 'faith' the central issue in moments of despair. Richard insists that Henry's actions are ungodly because they lack

⁶ I will not discuss Shakespeare's alterations with respect to his sources, which portray Henry less dubious and Machiavellian than, in particular, Shakespeare's *Richard II*. I concede with John R. Elliott and Alison Shell that these calculated changes "bring forth the full complexity of the conflict between an incompetent king and an efficient usurper" (Elliott 271) and thus enable audiences to experience "moralistic interchange" (Shell 126).

faith. At the same time Richard underlines that the kingdom was his care. As *caritas* this sentiment certainly befits the ruler, but if the kingdom being his care is understood here as being his burden, Richard himself lacks faith in his anointed rule. A crisis of faith is thus at the heart of the crisis of kingship.

Henry Bolingbroke opposes the allegations made against him in the next scene (3.3) and insists that he is prepared to be Richard's faithful subject again:

Henry Bolingbroke
 On both his knees doth kiss King Richard's hand
 And *sends allegiance and true faith of heart*
 To his most royal person, hither come
 Even at his feet to lay my arms and power,
Provided that my banishment repeal'd
 And lands restored again be freely granted:
 If not, I'll use the advantage of my power
 And lay the summer's dust with showers of blood
 Rain'd from the wounds of slaughter'd Englishmen:
 The which, how far off from the mind of Bolingbroke
 It is, such crimson tempest should bedrench
 The fresh green lap of fair King Richard's land,
 My stooping duty tenderly shall show. (R2, 3.3.35-48, my italics)

This affirmation of subjection is the only time that Henry Bolingbroke uses the word 'faith' in all the plays in which he appears. In the three plays in which he does, it is mostly the Eastcheap crew that uses the word 'faith', and in *1 Henry IV*, Hotspur does, too; and the Eastcheap crew as well as Hotspur mostly use it negligently and in heated discussion; indeed, 'faith' is used unusually often in both *Henry IV* plays (over 25 instances in each, see Spevack 969), proportionally more than in all the other plays by Shakespeare. So, in stark contrast to other characters in these plays, Henry is portrayed as more reserved or conscious in his choice of the word 'faith'. This is of striking significance and can be interpreted with respect to his personal belief, but equally and more convincingly, in a politically pragmatic perspective: Henry, in a public act to "evoke sympathy" (Shell 128), professes "*allegiance and true faith of heart*" to his king, and in the following never uses the word again. From this instance of rhetoric employment onwards, Henry denies himself an instrumentalised usage of the word, possibly realising the weight of the word and how easily it is toyed with, as can be compared by the other uses of the word by Falstaff etc.

It seems telling enough that Henry uses the word apparently dutifully, but then turns out to prove an undutiful subject. In fact the passage shows that Henry does not use it to profess unconditional loyalty; on the contrary, he makes his faith subject to the requirement of his reinstatement to land and title. The conditional "*Provided*" makes the above 'faith' practically, if not indisputably obsolete: Faith is presented as conditional. This idea is contrary to Christianity⁷ – faith cannot be subject to conditions or meas-

⁷ This article will only briefly touch upon the struggles between Catholicism and Protestantism at the time of Shakespeare's composition of the play when it comes to the idea of a pilgrimage; there are various other studies on this, see Jonathan Baldo's, Glenn Burgess', Karl Gunther and Ethan H. Shagan's, and Alison Shell's studies in the bibliography.

ured according to requirements, and the two aspects of faith and landed inheritance should not dominate politics: “landed interests, and the legislative structures which gave expression to them, had no place in a realm ruled ‘after the doctrine of the gospel’” (Gunther/ Shagan 44) This is even more of an issue in Shakespeare’s age: after the Henrician reform, the fourth commandment is ever in crisis, and the Protestant Lutheran idea behind faith is that of *sola fide*, faith alone. (Cf. Rex 866-867).⁸ “The English Lutherans [during the Reformation] did indeed hope to exploit the official adoption of Lutheran obedience doctrine in order to smuggle or march in further tranches of Lutheran doctrine. Their main rhetorical weapon for advancing this end was to argue that the doctrine of obedience was necessarily grounded upon that of justification by faith alone.” (Rex 884)

Henry IV acts unfaithful towards the legitimacy of Richard’s rule, thus indicating that his use of the word “faith” in this scene, styled like a tribunal, is truly one of negotiation only. Henry uses the term in an act of “*virtù*, the Machiavellian skill at negotiating the destabilizing motions of fortune” (Hoenselaars 143, cf. Schruff 238).

However, this observation does not hold true for all religious words, imagery and symbolism. When realising, for example, that Richard has accepted him as his heir (instead of Mortimer), Henry evokes the name and hence the blessings of God when accepting the chance of receiving the crown: “In God’s name I’ll ascend the regal throne” (4.1.114), obviously using the Lord’s name to create a divine order. Although Lydia Newby calls him “unethical, or at the very least entirely inconsistent” (116), he certainly claims divine kingship for his reign.

Nevertheless, he is duly aware of having broken the divine order and is therefore also aware of his need of active, political sanctification to make up for this disobedience. Possibly, a paradigmatic shift from the old Christian order to a pragmatic one can be read into Henry’s actions, and David Bevington argues that “we regret the destruction of a divinely sanctioned culture only to be replaced by cunning and political expediency; on the other, we applaud the acceptance of a vital historical movement” (45), just as Neema Parvini draws the conclusion that Henry needs “to build a new” (193). So, if there is this shift in order – and the idea of Richard representing the old order and Henry presenting the new order⁹ and ideology is shared by many critics (cf. Parvini 193, Zimmermann 29) – Henry causes a change in the role that religion plays for the idea of kingship by deposing an anointed king and accepting, however clandestinely, that his kingship is not sanctioned by God,¹⁰ i.e. that it is not protected by faith, however faithful the idea of a Christian pilgrimage is presented by him.

⁸ Rex elaborates on Tyndale's doctrine of obedience with regard to Luther's faith alone and the questionable practises of Henry VIII's reformation against the papal influence (872)

⁹ A further aspect that underlines this shift from a religious monarchy to a more worldly organisation of politics is the emerging mobility of people that were willing to support uproar, as might be presented by the noblemen in Richard II and the subjects flocking towards the popular Bolingbroke.

¹⁰ This argument could be challenged on numerous accounts, for example the fact that King Richard interfered with the ordeal by battle at the beginning of the play and thereby clearly rejected the idea that God should settle the dispute. Another aspect is the question that concerns Richard's hand in the murder of Woodstock (cf. MacDonald, 57).

This can be compared to the Henrician denial of the authority of the Catholic church and the debate that was sparked in all aspects of the Reformation (Cf. Rex 864-5, Gunther/Shagan 36). This further aspect that needs to be taken into account is the religio-historical context at the composition of the play: with Henry VIII's abolishment of "papal authority [...] all argued over the implications of the English Reformation by debating the meaning of the king's authority" (Gunther/ Shagan 35). Precisely the same questions dominate Henry IV's reign in Shakespeare's plays: The royal person has denied former values and has seized power in a secular way; applied to Henry VIII, Gunther and Shagan call this "the king's promiscuous mixing of civil and religious authority" (35). The histories display a different rebellion against divinely sanctioned order, but they shows similar traits. In fact, David Bevington argues that the situation surrounding Henry IV can be very easily compared to the early modern era in the last years of Queen Elizabeth I:

The political dilemmas facing Henry IV in the early fifteenth century must have struck Shakespeare's audience as painfully relevant to their own fin-de-siècle [sic] anxieties in 1596-98. Like Henry IV, Elizabeth faced dynastic challenges, uncertain about the royal succession, restiveness in the outlying areas of Great Britain ("History" 19)

Henry IV nevertheless tries to keep to old customs and tries to downplay the revolutionary characters of his usurpation, and here too, there seems to be a comparison to Henry VIII wish to uphold the "'obedience' doctrine" (Gunther/ Shagan 36) and a conservative policy towards radical renewal (cf. Gunther/ Shagan 38, 74).

Another aspect that needs to be kept in mind is that the events in the *Henry IV* plays are intended for dramatic stagings: A curse like that of the Bishop of Carlisle has a historically foreshadowing effect on stage:

The blood of English shall manure the ground,
 And future ages groan for this foul act;
 Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,
 And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars
 Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound;
 Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny
 Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd
 The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls. (4.1.138-145)

The prophecy is held in future contingent through the modal verb "shall" but the spectator, certainly with regard to the discrepant awareness¹¹ of the audience that has a historical knowledge of the medieval strife, knows of its factual character. Henry has usurped the crown and has thereby indeed weakened the state, the country, the nation, at least if we consider the choice of religious words: the Bishop of Carlisle suggests chaos and bloodshed in this Christian country, which he compares to the place of Christ's crucifixion. The usurpation of the throne of England is cause for internal

¹¹ On this term, see Klaus Peter Jochum. *Discrepant Awareness: Studies in English Renaissance Drama*. Frankfurt am Main/Bern/Las Vegas: Lang, 1979, especially the introductory chapter, 9-26 and, to a certain extent, the chapter on Shakespeare's Histories, 133-158.

struggles; and beginning signs of civil unrest are the consequence, the symptoms of the state that becomes sick. But it is also the monarch that falls ill. And it does appear to be the kingly duties that make him sick, which strikes the audience at the beginning of *Henry IV*.¹² He knows that kingship is a role he has taken over, he knows it was a violent overthrow, and he professes to go to Jerusalem “[t]o wash this blood off from [his] guilty hand” (*R2*, 5.6.50).

Shakespeare’s tetralogy clearly suggests that Henry IV is not God’s anointed and that the crown has become secular, as Peter Saccio writes: “He has become the complete administrator, calculating every move, alert to any sign of disloyalty” (7). Bevington and MacDonald agree: the play marks a transition “from the seemingly permanent structures of feudalism and primogeniture to a state of combat and questionable legitimacy, from the king as divinely sanctioned to the king as self-made” (Bevington *Histories* 45); MacDonald is more extreme in his verdict: “you don’t need any water at all (let alone all the water in the rough, rude sea) to wash the balm of an anointed king. The usurpation brings to awareness the essential secular, *fabricated* character of the political order” (56) – but the idea of kingship that Henry instrumentalises are those of faith, of a divine character of monarchy and therefore, notwithstanding his unholy status, the King seems obliged to make the necessary arrangements for the pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Henry’s use of the term pilgrimage needs to be interpreted in various ways, as an act of faith but at the same time as a politico-religious decision in its historical context: In the early fifteenth century, when Henry lived, a pilgrimage could have led to Canterbury to celebrate Thomas Beckett. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* from the end of the fourteenth century are the best advertisement of this popular destination. Henry, however, professes a voyage to the Holy Land. This can be read, on the mere surface of place, as a pilgrimage on a grander scale. Yet, at the same time, and more importantly, in the late sixteenth century, the visit of a Catholic place of worship and forgiveness is not only disputable, but unacceptable after the reign of Henry VIII and the establishment of the Church of England, i.e. during the reign of Elizabeth I (cf. Gunther/Shagan 34-41)

Jerusalem on the other, the cradle of Christianity, allows the idea of a pilgrimage to appear feasible at least at first sight. “The abiding symbolism of Jerusalem, adopted from Judaism, had exerted and incalculable influence on Christian thinking [...] [and cartographical maps showed] Jerusalem as the very physical centre of the earth, thus investing the wholly spiritualized and mystical notion of the new Jerusalem with an exact geographical location.” (Purcell 13) By fashioning himself as a pilgrim to adore the origin Christendom, Henry styled himself as a penitent believer hoping for absolution; second, though – and this applies not only to the early fifteenth but also the late sixteenth centuries –, does the term not imply a humble and peaceful admiration but an act of martial implications. It is utterly impossible to access the Holy Land peacefully at this time. Acre had fallen in 1291, over a century in the past during Henry IV’s reign, and the Holy Land was long lost (Mayer 251); only the idea of official indulgence by the pope was yet an ideal (Mayer 252). Much differently though, in

¹² My thanks go to Barbara Müller for her ideas on the two parts of *Henry IV*.

Shakespeare time: While England “witnessed the greatest stability that Britain saw between the Henrician reformation and the early eighteenth century” (Burgess 142) under James I, the idea of a crusade was one of the past, and since England had renounced the pope, the core idea of a unified Christian (Catholic) fight against the infidels is rendered redundant.¹³

So while a pilgrimage seems impossible, Henry might be applauded for his grand scheme. Henry IV deliberately does not employ the term crusade, but involving arms would have been inevitable. His reasoning is also flawed; the phrase “[t]o wash this blood off from [his] guilty hand” (*R2*, 5.6.50) proves paradox: to wash the responsibility for the usurpation off his hands he is willing to spill more blood.¹⁴ This obviously is not Christian blood but that of infidels: therefore the utterance does not prove an apparent dilemma but shows that Henry – again – is much more aware of the pragmatic implications of his decisions and actions than the mere image of a penitent believer at the beginning might have promised.

Whatever his plans are, inner struggles prevent any foreign excursions. Insisting on a symbolic Christian act of penitence could provoke further military and political failures, thus Henry, in Shakespeare’s plays, cannot afford to leave the civil struggles. However pragmatic, doubts as to the righteousness of his kingship provoke pricks of conscience on Henry’s mind, much supported e.g. by his apparent feelings of weakness in the battles on English ground that seem to convince him to let others take his role at Shrewsbury, to identify as the king and fight for him. The play brings to the fore the contrast between the king’s conviction that he is in power, however, set against his doubtful status as usurping monarch. The “idea that God no longer ‘guards the right’” (Park 219) haunts Henry, and right from the beginning of *1 Henry IV*, Henry faces upheavals and rebellions. These troubles seem to affect Henry not only politically, but also seem to have an exhausting psychological, or psychosomatic effect. Paradoxically, then, Henry seems to have developed a true kingly responsibility, a royal care, comparable to the sentiment expressed by Richard earlier when he mentions his care:

So shaken as we are, so wan with care,
Find we a time or frighted peace to pant
And breathe short-winded accents of new broils
To be commenced in strands afar remote. (1.1.1-4)

Care defines the duty of the monarch as the head of state: he is in charge of its welfare; he has to take care of it. (Cf. Schruff 66) And the state is not well. Trying to responsibly fulfil his role and appease the rebelling noblemen, Henry’s reiterated declarations of intending a pilgrimage are now deigned to pacify the realm and promote a common ideal. This strategic side of a crusading voyage to remote shores,

¹³ Though mentioned in a different context, Baldo’s quote can be applied here: “Shakespeare revives a past that is itself sealed off from the past it would revive.” (Baldo, *Memory* 68)

¹⁴ This reflects a different aspect of Jonathan Baldo’s idea that the Henry IV plays show a “troubled relation with the past.” (Baldo *Memory* 68) One aspect that is central to a similar reasoning is the treatment of the self-fashioning in Richard II, where Richard stylises himself as Christ while Henry has to impersonate Pilate, see Kantorowicz 38.

which evokes heroic deeds of past kings, shows that Henry is clearly a monarch of the new pragmatic order who adheres to his own later advice to “busy giddy minds with foreign quarrels” (4.5.213, cf. Chernaik 143). A foreign excursion could have proved an opportunity for a clean slate.¹⁵ Henry’s motive is pragmatic and not pious (Cf. Knowles 69).

In his pragmatism of holding the country together, Henry cares for the realm and is worn “with care.” MacDonald admits that “[w]e see the tendency to cling to the idiom of the old order nowhere more clearly than in the private moments of Henry IV himself, the very man who has been most practically involved in bringing the old order down” (70). Henry does not pretend to be caring for the state to remind his subjects of former monarchies; it proves that Henry is indeed mentally “shaken” and “wan with care,” stressed and doubtful of his abilities to control the state and his new role as a pastoral monarch, and his body follows this inability to fulfil the internal balancing act between the conflict of old claims and pragmatism: he falls sick. Henry as such is still a medieval monarch, determined by ideas of Christian stewardship, and he at least seems to struggle with the thought of not truly being king by the grace of God.¹⁶ He does not necessarily have to truly feel guilty about the usurpation of the throne, but he does know of his weak status as monarch of England and is keen to dissolve the stain of doubtful succession by undertaking a pilgrimage – if only to prove the Christian character of his status as king by the grace of God and thereby as a king who is adherent of Christian faith. Even though he uses the word ‘guilty’ at the end of *Richard II* when announcing his passage to the Holy Land (*R2*, 5.6.49-50), this must then be interpreted as a solemn description of duty, but it can also make the obligation of travelling to Jerusalem weightier and worthier. At the same time he is duly aware of the potentially dangerous, political implications of his doubtful office and hopes that purely the idea of a pilgrimage will unite the different, if not opposing factions in the country (as he later advises his son to “busy giddy minds with foreign quarrel/ With foreign quarrels; that action, hence borne out/ May waste the memory of the former days”; 4.5.213-215). In his professed role as faithful Christian king, he is as pragmatic, controlling and power-conscious: The crusade, the “holy purpose” (1.1.102), is not to be undertaken for reasons of penitence, but – and very consciously – as a means to unify the nation:

Those opposed eyes,
Which, like the meteors of a troubled heaven,
All of one nature, of one substance bred,
Did lately meet in the intestine shock
And furious close of civil butchery,
Shall now in mutual well-beseeming ranks
March all one way and be no more opposed
Against acquaintance, kindred and allies. (*IH4*, 1.1.9-16)

¹⁵ In chapters 2 and 3, Jonathan Baldo argues for Henry IV’s futile attempts at making the English forget their past. *Memory* 51-101.

¹⁶ As indicated at the beginning with respect to pragmatism and psychology, this reflects upon another parallel to King John in the eponymous play who does encounter exactly the same conflicts as far as the nature of his kingship and the question of his legitimate succession are concerned.

Similarly, he declares later that he will “henceforth rather be myself,/ Mighty and to be feared” (1.3.5-6), an announcement that Warren Chernaik ascribes to the “public façade” (118) and Jonathan Baldo the “theatricality of kingship” (*Memory* 68). Henry knows of the dangers that any king can be overthrown once the subjects do not accept the authority of the king as God’s anointed (2*H4*, 4.5.206-8). Inner struggles, the “need to defeat the ‘English rebels’ (as they are called at 3.2.165)” (Penlington 165) continue to prevent his “business in the holy land” (1*H4*, 1.1.48). Henry’s need to solidify his kingship with “Empire-bolstering exercise” (Penlington 165) is also obstructed by one further aspect: Prince Hal. Hoenselaars highlights the irony of this situation: “It even seems a form of divine punishment for his deft usurpation that he should recognize in his eldest son and successor the very irresponsibility for which he dethroned his predecessor” (144). Henry’s despair at the futility of a good and caring kingship is directly associated with the unruly, “unthrifty” (R2, 5.3.1) son – and Henry’s stress-related, psychosomatic illness is very much influenced by his aggravation with the idea to care for a country which will end in misrule and civil struggle under his heir. Trust and faith in himself (only) and doubt in himself and his son run together in his care of the country, especially since his doubts reason him to ponder the nature of his son as a punishment for his own “mistreadings” (1*H4*, 3.2.11): “usurpation and regicide” (MacDonald 68). Henry IV matures on the throne but turns out not only to be a determinate, but also a sceptic and almost insecure leader of his country, “vulnerable” (MacDonald 55) as his predecessor,¹⁷ aware of his questionable legitimacy and with an unease about his heir’s apparent lack of responsibility. Henry usurped the throne with all its consequences and now has to face the reality of not being able to control all decisions of and in this state. Indeed “uneasy lies the head that wears a crown” (2*H4*, 3.1.31): not only does the crown and its duties weigh heavy on the king but even more so, since the crown proves not to be stable on a Lancastrian head. Henry does neither feel true penitence nor remorse, but he feels responsible for his actions and the royal duties of care, and is aware of his flaws. Henry therefore “speaks of God breeding ‘revengement and a scourge’” (MacDonald 68) against him. Henry might be longing for unquestioned legitimacy and faithful trust in an anointed king; however, the character of his kingship always stands in the shadow of doubt, so this longing can only prove futile.

The question whether Henry’s character endorses a goodly or Godly order leads back to the question that Henry is a crude Machiavellian politician who reigns according to *virtù* (“necessity so bow’d the state/ That I and greatness were compell’d to kiss”; 2*H4*, 3.2.73-74), but that he fashions himself as a Christian patriot, who in the execution of his office is truly confronted with a burden: royal care, suffering, and anxiety of unrest (“God knows, I had no such intent”, 3.2.72). The latter case would make him effectually a tragic character.

A. R. Humphreys states that “[i]n 2 *Henry IV* the King certainly suffers from remorse; he yearns for an expiatory crusade, he admits ‘indirect crook’d ways,’ and he prays God for forgiveness” (xlv); Henry seems indeed “in certain private moments

¹⁷ MacDonald explains the concept of vulnerability with regard to *Richard II*, but it similarly applies to *Henry IV*.

overwhelmed as he contemplates the huge and unruly rabbit he has plucked from what looked like an ordinary-sized hat. He is a man, and in this he is like most of us, not entirely happy about bearing the consequences of his irreversible historical actions” (MacDonald 62). This evaluation makes him appear human and fallible: he is sick – and this sickness might even be interpreted as the consequences of a lack of faith.

Basing his rule on his pragmatism, Henry fails in pragmatically following his own agenda during his reign: always dominated by struggles of inner politics, he is never able to set new goals, but has to face the remainders of an old order, including that of faith and pilgrimage.

Alison Shell states that “Shakespeare has often been characterized as a writer with a compassionate attitude towards human imperfection” (138); it appears that Henry is a prime example for this. Henry’s futile praying is designed to kindle the audience’s pity and compassion. If his illness is psychosomatic, mentally caused by his overarching, impossible duties, it manifests itself through physical symptoms. As the Archbishop explains, Henry suffers from the crown’s implications and demands:

The King is weary
Of dainty and such picking grievances;
For he hath found, to end one doubt by death
Revives two greater in the heirs of life (2H4, 4.1.197-200)

It is certainly worthwhile to take the word ‘heir’ literally in this complaint. Henry’s reign proves difficult, tiresome, and strenuous, as his son acknowledges: “Why doth the crown lie there upon his pillow, / Being so troublesome a bedfellow?” (2H4, 4.5.20-21). This could be read as an interpretation of the crown as troublesome because of divine vengeance because the crown was never inherited, but also because the holder Henry IV feels troubled by it since he knows that it will never sit easy on his head as the state proves such a great burden (with which Richard II failed). “In the world after the usurpation, [...] Henry acquires an uneasiness that will hereafter be part of the business of ruling” (MacDonald 71). The crown reminds Henry incessantly of the uneasiness of kingship and for Henry it is connected to a lingering sour aftertaste; it is a symbol of the king’s status and of his duties to his subjects, a symbol for power and responsibility and as such makes Henry sick, as even Hal realises:

‘The care on thee depending
Hath fed upon the body of my father;
Therefore thou best of gold art worst of gold.
Other, less fine in carat, is more precious,
Preserving life in med’cine potable;
But thou, most fine, most honour’d, most renown’d,
Hast eat thy bearer up.’ (2H4, 4.5.158-64)

Hal exemplifies how Henry is suffering from the duties of kingship:¹⁸ Henry embodies opposites and paradoxes and these appear to make him sick: he has neglected his

¹⁸ Hal is at this time not pre-burdened; he seems very easily to take up the advice, he knows how to play the monarch, to juggle with preconceptions and to insist that his is a rightful inheritance: “This

duties as a faithful subject to his king for the price of the crown which in turn has proven to lie uneasy on his head just as it did on Richard's, but for different reasons. The faith and trust in his kingship have proved just as unbearable and he, too, failed. The dichotomies of trying to appear penitent but being power-conscious, at the same time guilty and proud, professed Christian and pragmatic,¹⁹ the price to pay for the crown, rob him of his energy: "The king, infected with the disease of sleeplessness and visibly declining in his two appearances in the play [*2 Henry IV*], uses very similar imagery of a kingdom afflicted with 'rank diseases' (3.1.39) [as the Archbishop of York who calls the country infected by a fever]" (Chernaik 139-140), at a time when the king still longs for the foreign shores: "And were those inward wars once out of hand/ We would, dear lords, unto the Holy Land" (3.1.102-103) to unify the nation but cannot due to his weakness (cf. Schruff 212). Indeed the play depicts a ruler whose physical body is in utter decay: Renate Schruff claims that the "undividable, inherent dualism" between the king's two bodies is not presented in such a visible manner in any other Shakespearean play (214, my translation).

The idea of his unruly son as punishment for his crimes adds to this. As such the voyage to the Holy Land functions as a promise for God's forgiveness and for an all-healing cure and a possibility to bequeath settled affairs of state as well as leave a pacified realm to his heir (cf. 4.5.208-15). The idea of Jerusalem has two functions: it symbolises Christian virtues and combines them with pragmatic politics. A journey to Jerusalem could support his claim of divine kingship and allows qualities of responsibility and legitimacy to be applied to Henry. Jerusalem is the symbol of Christian faith: travelling there would support Henry's claim of divine kingship, the earnestness of his intentions and it could silence questions about the body politic, i.e. the spiritual claim of rule, but truly reaching Jerusalem on a crusading pilgrimage was out of the question.

Therefore, later finding that the chamber in Westminster Abbey is named Jerusalem seems ironic (cf. Schruff 217): it suggests that a cure for his lack of faith, his scepticism in his kingship and thus a cure for the nation were there all along. This of course, is – on the dramatic level – a mocking jest (cf. Knowles 69); travelling to the Holy Land seemed and proved impossible.

But it turns out that Henry's will also pass on his doubts to his son: "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown" (*2H4*, 3.1.31).²⁰ The father can only find peace of mind by admitting his "guilt-based conscience" (Bevington *Histories* 47) and the truly unfaithful nature of his kingship to his son Hal:

God knows, my son,
By what by-paths and indirect crook'd ways
I met this crown, and I myself know well

new and gorgeous garment, majesty, / Sits not so easy on me as you think. / Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear. / This is the English, not the Turkish court; / Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds, / But Harry Harry" (*2H4*, 5.2.49- 54, cf. Leggatt 108).

¹⁹ Peter G. Platt. *Shakespeare and the Culture of Paradox*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. 150.

²⁰ In *Henry V*, the young king ponders the heavy burden of kingship before the battle (*Henry V*, 4.1.227-281) and prays for God's blessing during the night before the battle of Agincourt remembering the usurpation of his father (4.1.289-302).

How troublesome it sat upon my head.
 [...]

 And all my friends, which thou must make thy friends,
 Have but their stings and teeth newly ta'en out,
 By whose fell working I was first advanced
 And by whose power I well might lodge a fear
 To be again displaced; which to avoid,
 I cut them off and had a purpose now
 To lead out many to the Holy Land,
 Lest rest and lying still might make them look
 Too near unto my state. Therefore, my Harry,
 Be it thy course to busy giddy minds
 With foreign quarrels; that action, hence borne out,
 May waste the memory of the former days.
 [...]

 Laud be to God! Even there my life must end.
 It hath been prophesied to me many years,
 I should not die but in Jerusalem,
 Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land.
 But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie.
 In that Jerusalem shall Harry die. (4.5.183-186, 204-215, 235-240)

Henry admits to the troublesome character of his acquisition of the crown and therefore warns his son of taking heed of its demands. He advises him to opt for pragmatic politics in order to unite the quarrelling factions in foreign undertakings – which can also be interpreted as an “unfulfilled Henrician hope” (Black 25) – and finally accepts that at the end of life, in the face of God, even kings are nothing but humble human being. David Scott Kastan establishes that “[t]he histories expose the idealizations of political power by presenting rule as role, by revealing that power passes to him who can best control and manipulate the visual and verbal symbols of authority.” (159). Similarly, Henry retains the images and preconceptions of Christian stewardship and it seems they represent not merely hollow symbols of his royal presuppositions. It is thus clear that Kastan’s idea does not fully, or solely apply to Henry Bolingbroke. His mind is never free, his proposed faith always inflicted and doubtful.

Dying in Jerusalem can also be read as peaceful (cf. Black 25) and a cure to his internal conflict of religion and ideology. The true idea of a death in Jerusalem derives from a death in arms though, as Baldric (episcopi Dolensis), in his “*Historia Jerosolimitana*” argues: “Under Jesus Christ, our Leader, may you struggle for your Jerusalem, in Christian battleline, most invincible line, [...] and may you deem it a beautiful thing to die for Christ in that city in which He died for us. [...] It is the only warfare that is righteous, for it is charity to risk your life for your brothers.” (Krey 35) More convincing is yet again a pragmatic reading by Henry: a historiographical instruction, a last act of pragmatism towards the necessities of life which he did already profess: “Are these things then necessities?/ Then let us meet them like necessities;/ And that same word even now cries out on us” (2 *Henry IV*, 3.1.92-94). Dying in the Jerusalem chamber is an active tempering with fate – he decides to fulfil

the prophecy.²¹ Hereby, Henry intends to appeal to the chivalric ideal of the beauty of dying “for Christ in that city in which He died for us” (s.a.); Henry uses the martial religious terminology for his own means.

Henry Bolingbroke followed King Richard on the throne by pragmatically overthrowing the system; then he develops into a determined and dutiful carer: a difficult task, burdened by doubt on his legacy, on England, the place that his father called “this earth, this realm, this England” (*R2*, 2.1.50). Henry’s politics are clearly “marked by the impact of religion” (Burgess xiii), but Henry, like King John (cf. Schruff 216) struggles with his position as monarch – doubts upon legitimacy, pragmatism and psychology dominate his reign. At the heart of the *Henry IV* plays lies the disobedience to his former king which Shakespeare wisely promulgates with regard to faith: Using the word ‘faith’ itself only once in a conditional phrase shows that Henry proves most vulnerable in his own rule due to a lack of true Christian faith.

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²¹ This article has not scrutinised the nature of the prophecy and its political implications in their historical context. In this respect, Howard Dobin’s *Merlin’s Disciples. Prophecy, Poetry, and Power in Renaissance England*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990 is helpful, especially 161-162.

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Zusammenfassung

König Henry IV ist in Shakespeares Historien von der Idee besessen, eine Pilgerreise ins Heilige Land zu unternehmen, da ihm der Tod in Jerusalem prophezeit wurde. Bereits als junger, pragmatischer Usurpator am Ende von *Richard II* gelobt er schuldbeladen die Reise, verzögert ihre Durchführung wegen innerpolitischer Streitereien in *1 Henry IV*, inszeniert sich aber durchweg als zukünftiger Pilger und präsentiert sich als gläubiger Christ bis er krank und alt in *2 Henry IV* in der Jerusalem-Kammer der Abtei von Westminster stirbt. Der vorliegende Artikel behandelt die Gründe und Motive der beabsichtigten Pilgerfahrt und erörtert die Frage, ob Henrys Wunsch, Jerusalem zu sehen, tatsächlich Ausdruck seines Glaubens und Zweifeln an der Rechtmäßigkeit seiner königlichen Herrschaft geschuldet ist oder nicht doch machiavellistische politische Motive reflektiert.

RESONANCES OF FAITH AND DOUBT: C.G. JUNG, SHAKESPEARE AND QUESTIONS OF HEALING

CLAUDIA RICHTER

Jung and Literary Studies

It is no exaggeration to say that Carl Gustav Jung has been treated quite cavalierly in the humanities during the past decades. “No doubt the scarcity of Jungian literary criticism in Europe is due to the general dismissal of Jung by the academic world” (van Meurs 21), writes Jos van Meurs in his bibliography of Jungian literary criticism in 1988, and things have not significantly changed. The fact that there has not been a single entry on C.G. Jung in editions of the *Shakespeare-Jahrbuch* in the last twenty years may serve as a piece of hard evidence. Some of the reasons for this neglect are understandable, even though Jung cannot actually be held responsible for all of them.¹ As Robert Segal has pointed out, most of what we have come to associate with Jungian approaches in Anglo-American literary studies are actually more indebted to the so-called nineteenth-century school of “Cambridge Ritualists,” who were interested in the ritual origins of Greek drama (Segal 81ff.). The best-known pseudo-Jungian approaches in literature are probably Northrop Frye’s archetypal criticism, which has elaborated on the idea of the origins of literature in myth and ritual, and sought to establish universally applicable patterns (Frye). Equally noteworthy in this context is the work of Maud Bodkin, whose theoretical appropriation of Jung gave rise to the notion that Jung’s major contribution to literary theory was the assumption of ever-

¹ Given Jung’s reputation in the humanities, it seems necessary to state here explicitly that I would not be interested in Jung if I had the impression that he actually sympathized with fascism, or that his thinking reflected, justified or supported fascist ideologies, anti-semitism or racism. On the contrary, it is my impression that Jung’s thought rather provides effective theoretical tools to analyse and deal with such positions. Unfortunately, scholars in the humanities have read Jung’s writings with much prejudice, if they have read them at all. I would also like to point out here that I consider the blacklisting of Jung counterproductive to a healthy, critical intellectual culture, especially in a time that seems to be in dire need of creativity, originality, interdisciplinarity, or off-mainstream scholarship, as almost any call for research proposals by German and European research foundations nowadays states. A fair number of publications assess the complexity of the situation and the allegations, cf. for example, Jaffé and Casement. Jung’s presidency at the Internationale Ärztliche Gesellschaft für Psychotherapie has been controversially discussed. New results were presented recently by Giovanni Sörge (2011).

returning, trans-temporal, archetypal patterns underlying even modern poetry (Bodkin 1934).²

I should like to point out that the one-sided emphasis on Jung's "archetypal" theory, which is in fact more complex, more provisional and less dogmatic than it has been understood, has distorted and reduced Jung's understanding of literature and the function of art in society, as articulated for instance in his two essays dealing with the relationship between literature and psychology: "Analytische Psychologie und dichterisches Kunstwerk" (1922), "Psychologie und Dichtung" (1930), and in his essay on Joyce, "Ulysses. Ein Monolog" (1932) (Jung, GW Vol. 15). In all three essays, archetypes are hardly mentioned. In fact, Jung was acutely aware of the specific historical circumstances in which a work of art comes into being, and he was probably more painfully aware than anyone else that the modern age was distinctly modern precisely because of its divorce from pre-modern conceptions of the world, religious traditions and social structures.

I want to highlight here the fact that Jung stresses the transpersonal dimension of a work of art, which, however, is less trans-temporal (archetypal) than it is related to specific historical circumstances:

The essence of a work of art is not to be found in the personal idiosyncrasies that creep into it – indeed, the more there are of them, the less it is a work of art – but in its rising above the personal and speaking from the mind and heart of the artist to the mind and heart of mankind. The personal aspect of art is a limitation and even a vice. Art that is only personal, or predominantly so, truly deserves to be treated as a neurosis. (Jung, "Psychology and Literature" 101)

Great poetry draws its strength from the life of mankind, and we completely miss its meaning if we try to derive it from personal factors. Whenever the collective unconscious becomes a living experience and is brought to bear upon the conscious outlook of an age, this event is a creative act which is of importance for a whole epoch. A work of art is produced that may truthfully be called a message to generations of men. (Jung, "Psychology and Literature" 98)³

Although Jung insists that his perspective on literature is that of a psychologist and not of a literary scholar, and that the creative process is ultimately beyond rational explanation, his understanding of the historical dimension of a meaningful and

² In her overview of literary anthropologies, Aleida Assmann discusses Jung in the context of Maud Bodkin, Gilbert Murray and Northrop Frye, thus perpetuating the idea that Jung's contribution to literary theory is primarily the idea of a return of basic motives and patterns in art and literature (90-117).

³ The German original appears slightly more nuanced: "Die große Dichtung, die aus der Seele der Menschheit schöpft, wäre meiner Ansicht nach völlig daneben erklärt, wenn man sie auf Persönliches zurückzuführen versuchte. Wo immer nämlich das kollektive Unbewusste sich ins Erleben drängt und *sich dem Zeitbewusstsein vermählt*, da ist ein Schöpferakt geschehen, *der die ganze Epoche angeht*, denn das Werk ist dann in tiefstem Sinne eine *Botschaft an die Zeitgenossen*" (GW Vol. 15 112, my emphasis).

successful poetic work seems more compatible with New Historicism than the latter would be with Freud, against whom Jung articulates his view. At the same time, his categorical insistence that we must differentiate between the person of the author and his/her work adds a psychological perspective to the theory of the ‘death of the author’ in literary studies:

When the Freudian school advances the opinion that all artists are undeveloped personalities with marked infantile autoerotic traits, this judgment may be true of the artist as a man, but it is not applicable to the man as an artist. In this capacity he is neither autoerotic, nor heteroerotic, nor erotic in any sense. He is in the highest degree objective, impersonal, and even inhuman – or suprahuman – for as an artist he is nothing but his work, and not a human being. (“Psychology and Literature” 101)

Freud’s theories do seem to have encouraged the close scrutiny of an artist’s individual psyche, with special consideration of his or her childhood experiences and sexual life. Jung, however, criticizes Freud with an argument that is reminiscent of contemporary concepts in literary theory. Jung stresses the fact that the artist is part of a community, whose ‘dominant discourses,’ or what Jung’s student and associate Erich Neumann would refer to as the “Kulturkanon” (Neumann 1959) allow for the verbalisation of a limited set of problems only.

Although Jung maintains that ‘creative man’ is ultimately a riddle, he implies that he or she requires a special constitution, which makes him or her more sensitive to the concerns of the period in which he/she lives. The artist is likely to suffer from that which is repressed, and what the canon does not address: that which is relegated to the unconscious, in other words, that which is not (i.e. not yet or no longer) represented in language or in any other symbolical form. The artist thus performs the important social role of conjuring psychic contents from the unconscious. He or she thus works towards *complementing* or revolutionizing the canon. Conjuring up these psychic contents by generating new images and symbols is vital to secure his or her own mental health as well as that of the community. The artist is thus able to bring about innovation and change that are crucial to the survival of the community:

What is of particular importance for the study of literature, however, is that the manifestations of the collective unconscious are compensatory to the conscious attitude, so that they have the effect of bringing a one-sided, unadapted, or dangerous state of consciousness back into equilibrium.

Every period has its bias, its particular prejudice, and its psychic malaise. An epoch is like an individual; it has its own limitations of conscious outlook, and therefore requires a compensatory adjustment. This is effected by the collective unconscious when a poet or seer lends expression to the unspoken desire of his times and shows the way, by word or deed, to its fulfillment – regardless whether this blind collective need results in good or evil, in the salvation of an epoch or its destruction. (Jung, “Psychology and Literature” 97-98)

Although Jung does not explicitly say so, these passages further the impression that Jung thinks of the artist as a ‘wounded healer’ – perhaps in a line of thought with Joseph Beuys, who thought of the modern artist and of himself as a shaman. What characterizes this ‘wounded healer’ or artist-shaman, then, is not primarily the fact that he speaks with the dead like Stephen Greenblatt’s middle-class shaman professors of

literature (Greenblatt 1), but that he is capable of giving birth to a work that speaks to the living. Indeed, the healing function of art on a social level may be an interesting new aspect to consider when analyzing a work's success and popularity.

New Historicism and Marxist cultural materialism have made us conscious of the material conditions of artistic production – including their being tied up in economical set-ups. However, an overemphasis of material and economical aspects of artistic production might also be harmful to the appreciation of the value of art in our society. Most artists today and in the past did not produce art to earn a living – it would be much easier to do something else instead. After the so-called 'religious turn' in the humanities and after cultural materialism in Anglo-American literary studies, new possibilities have opened up for working towards concepts of the spiritual dimension of art and creativity, and they might deserve further theorisation especially in the face of a growing concern about capitalism and commercialization stretching into all areas of our lives. Such a concept would not revive notions of the Romantic "genius" or of the "total artist" (e.g. Greenblatt 2), and ignore the historical and material conditions of artistic production, but would ideally allow for a synthesis of two extreme views. Even though Carl Gustav Jung's work has been criticized for being unsystematic in a way that resists the elaboration of stable theoretical categories, it might be a worthwhile endeavour to rediscover a body of work that has been severely misread, distorted, and simplified. One reason for various misunderstandings, apart from the political context, is probably precisely this elusive quality that characterizes Jung's work, as Michael Palmer argues:

Although invariably sympathetic towards attempts to systematize his thought, Jung was generally less happy with the results. For him, the elusive character of his thinking reflected the elusive character of the psyche itself, to the point indeed where ambiguity became a necessary component of his arguments. (166)

After postmodern philosophy, we may be better equipped today to handle and appreciate such a theoretical disposition.

“And my ending is despair, unless I be relieved by prayer”

Any attempt to apply Jung's understanding of art and literature to Shakespeare and read him as a 'wounded healer' would most likely have to take account of the fact that the Elizabethan age witnessed the fundamental reformulation and destabilization of matters of faith. In this context, it will be relevant to consider Carl Gustav Jung's position on religion, which is very different from that of Freud. The question of Shakespeare's potential healing powers, however, will not be easily resolved, and certainly not on the next three pages, since Shakespeare's work is itself highly complex and contradictory. Hence, it will be a complex task to identify the 'healing potion,' which, if any, his work might contain. Attempting a reading based on Jung's understanding of art as sketched above, one would have to take into account the specific historical situation and reflect on the psychic consequences of crucial historical developments and 'dominant discourses.' The complicated religious situation

as it is reflected in Shakespeare's own work would be of special interest to such an approach, which would expand on the work of New Historicists, such as Stephen Greenblatt's work dealing with the abolition of purgatory, *Hamlet in Purgatory* (2009).

My analysis of the curse in Shakespeare's history plays exemplifies this complicated disposition that seems to characterize Shakespeare's work with regard to matters of faith (Richter 2010). After examining the deployment of and attitude towards curses in the history plays, I had to conclude that curses were "all used in each degree" (*Richard III*, 5.5.152). Sometimes they seemed to be employed mainly for dramaturgical and theatrical purposes, while there was also a running comment on the nature of cursing and its efficacy from all perspectives possible: characters hinted at the curse's relation to prayer or expressed the fear that the utterance of a curse might be dangerous not only for the cursed, but also for the speaker, against whom it might backfire. It was further discussed as an act of material physical violence with the actual potential to kill – whilst such views were simultaneously subverted by a discourse that expressed doubts about the efficacy of cursing. Terms like 'play' and even 'distraction' from metaphysical questions seemed to be most appropriate to capture this perplexing, multifaceted handling of a speech act that is traditionally embedded in a coherent metaphysical world view. If this evasive attitude towards religion and metaphysics is a central feature of Shakespeare's work, we sense that it might be crucial to determining the kind of 'healing' that would have been welcomed by Elizabethan theatre-goers during a time of significant ideological reformulations in a very short period of time.

However, despite the omnipresence of doubt, distraction, and seemingly meaningless play with metaphysical speech acts for theatrical reasons, Shakespeare acknowledges the psychological value of prayer precisely in the last scene of his last play, when he has Prospero ask for forgiveness: "And my ending is despair, unless I be relieved by prayer" (*The Tempest*, Epilogue 15-16). Prospero is certain to end his life in despair, i.e. in a mental-spiritual state of insecurity, doubt and hopelessness, and prayer seems to be the only cure available. In this case, prayer is not merely the solitary spiritual activity or performance of an individual but a collective affair, one that echoes Catholic religious practices, since Prospero is asking others to pray for him, and to be set free with the help of indulgences.

The idea of relief through prayer as an effective method to deal with guilt and other forms of psychic pressure has been of central interest to the study of the psychology of religion. Psychologists have occasionally pointed to the psychological impact of the Reformation, and have drawn attention to the psychological consequences of the reform and abolition of rituals. In his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), William James, who saw himself as a 'pathfinder' in the field of religious psychology, examines the ways in which religious beliefs and practices supported or interfered with an individual's mental health. According to James, the ritual of confession, for example, was a "systematic method of keeping healthy-mindedness on top"; "[A]ny Catholic will tell us how clean and fresh and free he feels after the purging operation" (James 128). Jung, too, in contrast to Freud, appreciated religions as the great systems of healing for psychic illness. As a psychologist, he repeatedly emphasised the fact that he was not interested in whether a religious idea or dogma was empirically true, but

that what mattered to him was its truth in terms of psychic experience, and whether it helped a person to live a healthy, fuller and more meaningful life. Hence, whenever he felt it was appropriate, Jung encouraged his patients to embrace their respective religious traditions and start practicing the faith they were born into. Jung himself, who grew up as the son of a Protestant minister in Switzerland, came to have doubts about his father's faith after a series of disillusioning experiences with Protestantism as it was practiced in his immediate surroundings. Comments throughout his work show that Jung assumed that the reform of worship and abolition of "symbols" by Protestantism had enormous psychological consequences both for individuals and for an entire culture that was affected by it. Considering the cultural impact of Protestantism on Western modernity, Jung was struggling with the question of how to interpret this impact: Was Protestantism responsible for the malaises of modern man, or did it facilitate true individuation? Although Jung's concept of the process of individuation is quite compatible with crucial aspects of Protestant spirituality,⁴ the following section represents a rather pessimistic outlook, where Protestantism is seen as a trigger for the activation of Europe's destructive potentials as articulated in imperialist and colonial projects that were to 'devour the greater part of the earth':

Owing to the abolition of protective walls the Protestant has lost the sacred images expressive of important unconscious factors, together with the ritual, which, since time immemorial, has been a safe way of dealing with the unaccountable forces of the unconscious mind. A great amount of energy thus became liberated and went instantly into the old channels of curiosity and acquisitiveness, by which Europe became the mother of dragons that devoured the greater part of the earth.

Since those days Protestantism has become a hotbed of schisms and, at the same time, of a rapid increase of science and technics which attracted human consciousness to such an extent that it forgot the unaccountable forces of the unconscious mind. (Jung, *Psychology and Religion* 58)

Although this may appear like a speculative interpretation of history, it is tempting to read Jung's understanding of the loss of ritual as a psychologically challenging situation before the background of the emergence of Elizabethan drama in England, where the abolition of traditional worship, after all, was not brought about by collective processes but imposed from above, and which saw the rise of British colonial and imperial endeavours along with the rise of science. Jung defines religion, among other things, as "a relationship with the highest or strongest value, be it positive or negative" (*Psychology and Religion* 98). If prayers, curses, religious "symbols" and performances of worship are no longer reliable, this relationship with the highest will be severely disturbed. And if "the ground of the everyday is [...] shaken" when "assurance in God [is] shaken", as Stanley Cavell points out with regard to early modern scepticism (3), which he sees at work in Shakespeare, there will be potential for creative energies, but also for neurosis, which according to Jung's definition is

⁴ I am thinking of, for example, the emphasis on individualism in Protestant spiritual practice, which historically involved a heightened degree of self-scrutiny, self-reflection and diary-writing. The latter has been central at least to Puritan and Pietist protestantism. For further reflections on Jung's relationship with Protestantism, cf. the collection of essays in J. Marvin Spiegelman, *Protestantism and Jungian Psychology* (1995).

usually accompanied by demoralisation and a loss of confidence: “We should not forget that any neurosis means a corresponding amount of demoralization. In so far as man is neurotic, he has lost confidence in himself” (*Psychology and Religion* 8).

Jung appreciated anything that was able to heal neurosis, anything that would restore a person’s confidence in themselves and reunite them with their inner source of strength that secures the will to live and create, to thrive and survive. His attitude in this respect was quite pragmatic, and he openly admitted that such healing could be achieved with the help of a personal myth, a fiction, i.e. a narrative that would provide the individual with a sense of purpose and meaning. At the same time, Jung struggled for a concept of the real existence of the soul against the dominant culture governed by materialist thinking, which he criticized for having no working concept of the soul or the psyche, but would interpret a religious experience as an illusion. To Jung,

[t]he thing that cures a neurosis must be as convincing as the neurosis; and since the latter is only too real, the helpful experience must be of equal reality. It must be a very real illusion, if you want to put it pessimistically. But what is the difference between a real illusion and a healing religious experience? It is merely a difference in words. (*Psychology and Religion* 114)

Early modern scholarship of the recent years has stressed the significant cultural changes brought about by the Protestant Reformation, and their consequences for artistic production of the period. New Historicist readings have shown the extent to which dramatists were caught between the old and the new faith, and how the Elizabethan stage provided a platform and a play-ground for languages, narratives and fantasies responding to this particular cultural situation. Shakespeare’s own work could be read as a document that exemplifies the degree to which this historical situation must have been psychologically and intellectually challenging to many people. As Michael Witmore among others has shown, Shakespeare’s work presents metaphysical forces as highly instable and unreliable, if they are present at all (124 and *passim*). For the most part, Shakespeare avoids the last questions. If this is a crucial characteristic of Shakespeare’s work, it is also one of the features that made Shakespeare’s work accessible and attractive to modern Western, secular audiences, scholars and critics, who, for the most part, have had little patience for metaphysical questions. Although I am not sure yet how exactly Shakespeare’s work could be interpreted as that of a ‘wounded healer,’ healing in such a psychologically and historically complicated situation would have to be understood less in terms of providing yet another schismatic alternative to Christian dogma (which he refuses to do), but an alternative that involves distraction and play, consisting perhaps of “tale[s] [...] signifying nothing” (*Macbeth* 5.5.25-27) with regard to metaphysical questions, but possibly signifying something about Shakespeare’s key role in the rise of secular Western modernity.

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Zusammenfassung

Der Essay versteht sich als Entwurf für eine Revision der Jung-Rezeption in der Literaturwissenschaft, die einen neuen Zugang zum Werk Shakespeares ermöglichen würde. Der Essay stellt im ersten Teil zentrale Aussagen Jungs über Kunst und Literatur vor, die beweisen, dass Jungs Zugang zur Kunst sich nicht auf ‚Archetypen‘ beschränken lässt, und dass seine Ansichten mehr Anknüpfungspunkte zu gültigen theoretischen Modellen bieten als bisher angenommen. Dabei könnte Jungs Verständnis des Künstlers als ‚wounded healer‘ interessante Impulse für neue Ansätze in der Literaturtheorie liefern. Im zweiten Teil widmet sich der Essay der komplexen Konstellation von Glaube und Zweifel bei Shakespeare vor dem Hintergrund der Reformation. Dabei werden wieder Bezüge zum Jungschen Werkhergestellt, da die psychischen Aspekte sowohl der Reformation als auch der Themen Glauben und Zweifel in den religionspsychologischen und kulturphilosophischen Überlegungen Carl Gustav Jungs eine wichtige Stellung einnehmen.

CALL FOR STATEMENTS – *SHAKESPEARE-SEMINAR 2013*

Money Matters: Shakespeare's Finances

“Put money in thy purse,” Iago keeps reminding Roderigo throughout the play *Othello* but we never actually learn why Iago presses Roderigo for money. Iago is not a spendthrift, he does not follow expensive fashions, and he is certainly not a generous husband. What matters is that as creditor Iago is in control of Roderigo: Iago's demands create a vacuum that arguably sets Iago's plot and the whole play in motion. Money matters are central to the plot of *Othello*, but they are at the same time peculiarly obscure.

Financial transactions, the exchange of goods, credit and debt, possession, profit and loss all feature prominently in the plays (and poems) of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Even Karl Marx was impressed by how accurate Shakespeare portrayed the real nature of money as ‘visible divinity’ that is capable of ‘the universal confounding and distorting of things’ and should be regarded as the ‘common whore’ and ‘common procurer of people and nations.’ Essentially, Elizabethan England was an economy of obligation due to the chronic shortage of ready money. As coins were devaluated, Shakespeare's London saw a credit crunch not unlike the financial crisis we experience today. It is thus hardly surprising that our pecuniary concerns are also central concerns in the plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

The Shakespeare Seminar aims at exploring the link between money matters on stage and the role that money plays in society at large. How do the plays envision the economic, social, and psychic repercussions of financial trade? How do they reflect the beginnings of capitalism in Shakespeare's day? Is money indeed shown to have transformative, and most often corruptive, power, as Marx argued? How is the financial sphere related to other discourses? For instance, how are ideas of financial credit and debt associated with religious and moral ideas of integrity and guilt? Do Shakespeare's financial statements also lend themselves to metatheatrical and metapoetic use? How can we relate our current concerns with financial crises in a globalised capitalist system to Shakespeare's theatrical world? How have theatrical and filmic productions of Shakespeare's plays envisioned the role of money?

Our seminar plans to address these and related questions with a panel of six papers during the annual conference of the German Shakespeare Association, *Shakespeare-Tage* (26-28 April 2013 in Munich, Germany). As critical input for the discussion and provocation for debate, panellists are invited to give short statements (of no more than 15 minutes) presenting concrete case studies, concise examples and strong views on the topic.

Please send your proposals (abstracts of 300 words) and all further questions by **15 November 2012** to the seminar convenors:

Felix Sprang, University of Hamburg: felix.sprang@uni-hamburg.de
Christina Wald, University of Augsburg: christina.wald@phil.uni-augsburg.de

See also: <http://shakespeare-gesellschaft.de/publikationen/seminar.html>