Multicultural Shakespeare:
Translation, Appropriation and Performance

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Bryan Reynolds is Chancellor's Professor of Drama at the University of California, Irvine. He has held visiting professorships at the University of London-Queen Mary, University of Amsterdam, Utrecht University, University of Cologne, University

College Utrecht, Goethe University-Frankfurt, and the University of California-San Diego; and he has taught at Deleuze Camp and The Grotowski Institute, among other academic and arts institutions. He is the Artistic Director of the Amsterdam-based Transversal Theater Company, a director of theater, a performer, and a playwright, whose plays have been produced in the United States and Europe. His books include *Intermedial Theater: Performance Philosophy, Transversal Poetics, and the Future of Affect* (2017), *Transversal Subjects: From Montaigne to Deleuze after Derrida* (2009), *Transversal Enterprises in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries: Fugitive Explorations* (2006), Performing Transversally: *Reimagining Shakespeare and the Critical Future* (2003), and *Becoming Criminal: Transversal Performance and Cultural Dissidence in Early Modern England* (2002). And he is editor of *Performance Studies: Key Words, Concepts and Theories* (2014) and coeditor of *The Return of Theory in Early Modern English Studies: Tarrying with the Subjunctive*, Vols. 1 & 2 (2011; 2014), *Critical Responses to Kiran Desai* (2009), *Rematerializing Shakespeare: Authority and Representation on the Early Modern English Stage* (2005), and *Shakespeare Without Class: Misappropriations of Cultural Capital* (2000). He is currently writing a book, Art at the Edge, with Mark LeVine, on the performance activism in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. And he is writing a book on extreme sports.

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From the Editor

This volume of *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance* opens with an interview with Professor Bryan Reynolds. Professor Reynolds is Claire Trevor Professor and Chancellor's Professor at the University of Irvine, California, where he holds the Claire Trevor Professor endowed chair. An internationally famous American critical and performance theorist, Professor Reynolds invented and developed the transversal poetic research methodology. This methodology combines social theory and performance aesthetics. Shakespeare also constitutes an important area of his research interests. A modern incarnation of a Renaissance scholar, Professor Reynolds is also a playwright, director, and performer. In addition, he co-founded the Amsterdam-based Transversal Theater Company, which consists of American and European artists. The Company has produced a number of his works and gained international recognition.

The interview published here followed the "Experiment in Drama, Theater, Film and Media" conference organized at the University of Łódź in October 2017, at which Professor Reynolds delivered a plenary lecture on the theory and practice of current experiments in theater. It was not his first visit to Łódź; we have also had the honor of hosting him as a University guest on other academic occasions. Moreover, we had the pleasure of hosting his Company while they presented his play *Blue Shade* in one of the local theaters (2007). The Company has also performed the professor's plays in other Polish cities (Warsaw, Gdańsk, Wrocław, Szczecin, Chorzów, Legnica) as well as at various international festivals and meetings in, e.g., Romania, Netherlands, Germany, Hungary, Sweden, Germany, Lebanon, Kenya, and the USA.

The list of Professor Reynolds' publications is astounding. He has authored seven monographs and co-authored ten collections of essays—all published by prestigious academic publishing houses. Several of his plays have also appeared in print.

He has held visiting professorships at the University of London in Drama, the University of Amsterdam in Theater Studies, Utrecht University in Theater Studies, the University of Cologne in American Studies, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main in American Studies, the University College Utrecht in Arts and Humanities, the University of California, San Diego in Theater, Literature, and Cognitive Science, the American University of Beirut in English, the University of Tsukuba in Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Nairobi in the Department of Literature,

Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt in Communications, the University of Lorraine in Arts, Sciences, and Business Management, INSEEC Business School (L'Institut des hautes études économiques et commerciales) Paris, Bordeaux, Lyon in Marketing, among others. Additionally, he has taught at the Deleuze Camp at Schloss Wahn, at the University of Cologne, Germany and at the Grotowski Institute in Wrocław, Poland.

Professor Reynolds has been honored for his academic achievements by a variety of institutions and organizations, including the International Center for Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding (MnM), the University of South Australia, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and the American University of Beirut, Lebanon.

He is known and appreciated for being very modest and kind, always willing to share his knowledge and expertise. I feel honored to have known him for many years, and I am grateful for his visits to the University of Łódź.

The essays in the ensuing part of this volume are written by scholars from the USA, Finland, Egypt, Greece, Singapore, and Poland and cover a variety of topics. They reflect the continued worldwide interest in Shakespeare studies, thereby revealing the bard's formative role of in the constitution of international cultures. The unifying feature of these essays is the appropriation of his works to address local and global problematics present in both theoretical reflections and popular culture.

The essays create an awareness of the compound complexity of the intercultural dynamics of Shakespeare's works. They serve as vital sources for social, political and cultural trajectories, from the political and ideological dissemination of his plays in translations, theater, mass media and digital culture to current cultural theories that are permeated with his powerful universal presence.

Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney

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Interview with Bryan Reynolds*

The interview has been conducted by
Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney (University of Łódź, Poland)

Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney (later as KKC):
Professor Reynolds, first of all, I would like to thank you for accepting our invitation to deliver your plenary lecture at the conference, "Experiment in Drama, Theatre, Film and Media," organized at the University in Lodz in October 2017. Your lecture was the conference's most important event, addressing directly the theory and practice of the current experiments in theatre. Could you, please, say how experimenting influences the idea of modern theater?

Bryan Reynolds (later as BR):
"Theater" means different things to different people, so a commonly-accepted definition would probably be hard to come by. However, we could probably identify elements that would be accepted by most people, even while not committing to a totalizing definition. These might be: 1) a real-time human-driven performance (as opposed to a film or an interactive video game, for instance); 2) the audience is live, experiencing the performance in real time; 3) the audience is aware that they are an audience to a performance; and 4) there is a clear distinction between performers and audience members. I might be able to come up with more elements, but I think these make the point that other than some basic structural elements, theater can be defined or can define a wide range of performance modes. For this reason, experimentation in theater works to broaden the scope of what might be considered theater, perhaps, as a result, presenting a clearer understanding of what theater is or could be. In fact, experimentation in theater emphases the drawbacks to trying to define and contain the potentially extraordinary force of theater, specifically what I refer to as theater's "transversal power."

For me, transversal power is any force, whether physical, material, ideological, aesthetic, emotional, conceptual, etc., that precipitates and drives deviations—"transversal movements"—from the norms and encodings of subjective and official territories. Reconfigurations of thought, emotion, and

* University of California, USA.

experience occur when subjectivity transgresses the parameters maintaining subjective territory—the conceptual, emotional, and physical scope through which people relate to the world based on how they've been socialized and subjugated. By extension, the surrounding organizational structures may also undergo reconfiguration. Transversal power is a catalyst for such transformations, its presence and influence measured by the transformations themselves.

"Experimentation" necessitates, by definition, deviation from established structures, codes, mechanisms, thought patterns, reasoning, etc. Because of this, experimentation in theater is likely to promote, however temporarily, transversal movements, and because theater itself has the capacity for tremendous transversal power, as seen in the impact of theater in early modern England (see my book, *Becoming Criminal*, for details on this), experimentation in theater has the potential to add layers upon layers of unpredictability, thereby generating a profundity to transversality in and through theater and its bearing on subjectivity, insofar as subjectivity remains transversal to the subject, in other words subjectivity crystallizes in the radicality of its departures from the subjective territory of dominant subjectivation and the official territory that this subjectivation mutually supports.

KKC:
You are a world-known critical theorist and performance theorist who developed a research methodology called "transversal poetics," based on this idea of transversal power. Has this methodology stimulated your approach to experiments in theater?

BR:
Yes, in fact my development of transversal poetics inspired me to become a professional theater maker. This happened as I acknowledged the transversal power of theater in my research, as well as in my life, and this drove me to engage or tap into more immediately the source of this power with irresistible curiosity and enthusiasm and yet also with a naivety that was, I think, this research's most valuable asset. At the time, I had no understanding of the remarkable forces I was tapping into. In retrospect, I see that the beginnings of this pursuit had a spiritual quality to it too, and not just artistic-political or critical-theory exploratory, that became ever more apparent in significant as time progressed, even though I was unwilling to acknowledge it back then. To explain this, it would be helpful for me to refer back briefly to the academic roots of transversal poetics, and then go beyond them.

As an undergraduate at UC Berkeley in the late 1980s, I was inspired by psychoanalytic feminism, poststructuralism, cultural materialism, and new historicism—the dominant approaches at Berkeley during that decade and into the 90s as well. Yet, as much as these critical approaches greatly influenced the

directions of my own work, some of their tenets dismayed me because they did not compute with my own life experience, registered untrue, were negative in formulation, disempowering of human agency, delimiting of thought, or offered little in the way of hope for positive changes in the world. The tenets included: 1) The repeated—almost unwavering—discovery by new historicists in their readings of literature and history of the subversion/containment paradigm, that is, the idea that governmental power fosters dissident activity so that it can suppress it in order to further consolidate its authority. This does not allow for any truly subversive accomplishments by minority or oppressed peoples, and therefore does not account for real changes. 2) That much poststructuralist theory denies individual agency and the agential subject. 3) The idea, following Freud, that lack causes desire. 4) The related idea shared by Lacanian post-Marxist psychoanalytic thinkers, like Louis Althusser, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, Slavoj Žižek, and their followers, that subjectivity, like Freud's desire, is also predicated on lack and fueled by both desperation and an antagonistic relationship to natural, environmental processes. This negatively defines subjectivity as well as passion and reduces life to compensation. 5) The idea, grounded in Saussure, that we do and should define through negation utterances, words, symbols, signs, events, life, etc., and, by implicitly extension, that we should also define individuals, societies, and cultures through negation. This promotes an exclusionary logic of differentiation that typically is hierarchical and privileges one variable at the expense of the others. And 6) the over-determination placed by literary-cultural scholars on the value of arriving at totalized and reductive conclusions in both their research and pedagogy, such that complexity, emergences, and fugitive elements are commonly overlooked. All this was emphasized, mostly by contrast, as I also explored, while at Berkeley, many of the religious organizations and seminaries that comprise the Holly Hill neighborhood of North Berkeley, as well as other organizations around Berkeley and Oakland, such as the Hare Krishna's (who owned and shared the house I lived in on Hillegass Ave near People's Park), Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple, and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Center for Transcendental Meditation. I mention this because my research then was as much personal as academic and political. I've always been fascinated by people's faith in belief systems, endeavors in achieving higher or transcendent consciousness, and by processes of identity-formation and subcultural groupings. A vast array of influences during an intense-extensive period, and not just my desire to resolve the problems I mentioned regarding other critical approaches, contributed to the development of the combined socio-cognitive theory, performance aesthetics, and research methodology of transversal poetics. I began this enterprise, academically, while working on my dissertation in the early and mid-1990s at Harvard, and since then I have collaborated, as you

know, with a number of other scholars to improve upon and expand the range and significance of transversal poetics across several disciplines.[1]

A number of philosophical, theoretical, and methodological positions and tactics have enabled transversal poetics to make what I believe are important interventions. These include: 1) That consciousness is emergent, processual, and effected through interactivity with the environment of which it is always already constituent. 2) Like consciousness, subjectivity is also emergent, processual, transversal to the subject, and crystallizes through interactivity with the environments, social and otherwise, through which it moves, relates, and navigates. 3) Individuals, whether or not as subjects or citizens, undergo willful becomings-others and non-willful comings-to-be others insofar as they interact with their environment. 4) The primary object of desire is desire itself, the exuberance of desire that fuels positive vitality. 5) People can harness transversal power, the power of change away from established structures, to realize their own subjective and personal aspirations. 6) State power, which is the power of coherence, can never be totalized or absolute, and is thus always susceptible to transversal power. 7) We can define utterances, words, symbols, signs, events, life, etc., positively through a process of positive differentiation, and thus emphasize emergence, presence, and potential (thereby resisting defining through negation). 8) The non-reductive, non-totalizing investigative-expansive mode of analysis (aka "i.e. mode") seeks comprehension of the subject matter under analysis's relationships to its environment as well as its integral qualities, and investigates diachronically, synchronically, and fantastically. It not only contextualizes critically both the researcher and subject matter, but also considers, subjunctively, "as-if" and "what-if" scenarios that might affect the investigation; in other words, it insists that subjunctive movement is crucial to the process. 9) The investigative-expansive mode is a tactic of fugitive explorations, that is, readings of a given text—with "text" understood as anything analyzable—that defy the authorities and authoritative institutions that reduce and contain meanings, both of the readings and of the text itself. And 10) fugitive explorers venture wherever they are drawn, reconstituting parameters accordingly, as they strive to uncover fugitive elements—human, narrative, thematic, semiotic, and so on—of the subject matter being examined and the environments in which it has been contextualized, particularly those that pressurize the authorities and, by extension, the communities necessary for the substantiation of the authorities'

[1] These include: Joseph Fitzpatrick, Donald Hedrick, James Intriligator, Courtney Lehmann, Kristin Keating, Anthony Kubiak, Lisa Starks, Ayanna Thompson, D.J. Hopkins, Catherine Ingman, Janna Segal, Henry Turner, Adam Bryx, Donovan Sherman, Christopher Marshall, George Light, William West, Cipriana Petre, Mark LeVine, Amy Cook, Anna Kłosowska, Sam Kolodezh, Glenn Odom, and Guy Zimmerman.

power. This process often leads fugitive explorers to endow agency where it had been wanting, evacuated, or forbidden.

Altogether, a transversal-poetics perspective invites and generates processual expansiveness of becomings as an ethos, praxis, and spirituality which inspire without limitations and nurture universality, most immediately, in consciousness and through interconnectedness, identification, empathy and compassion, and far, far beyond "consciousness" in everything else, known and unknown, perceived and imagined, and so on. As a poetics of life, there are no limits to what the transversal can generate or achieve. It includes all religions and modalities, but never resolves on any, other than the inclusive, expansive, positive, and creative forces of transversality itself.

KKC:
I must confess that at the beginning of your lecture I wondered where it would go. It was not a typical academic presentation, but a performance in its own right. You repeated certain phrases, stuttered, sat on the table, made funny movements, and all this was illustrated with controversial music and films. Hope you will not be offended, but since I had not had contact with you for a while I became at one point worried that maybe you went crazy. I believe the readers of this interview would appreciate your explanation of the technique you used at the beginning of your lecture?

BR:
Thank you for this question. The best way for me to answer it, is to say that my objective was to "tickle" the audience as foreplay to the remainder of my lecture, and, in the interest of further clarification, for me to repeat here the opening several minutes of my lecture, since they were a script that I had memorized, taken from my intermedial performance work, *Fractalicious!*, that I can easily recite, contextualized here by stage directions as I move along:

(Professor Reynolds waits nervously in a seat by the stage with his host. The theater is starkly lit. At some point, a host settles the audience and the music fades away. In prosaic form, the host introduces the awkward Reynolds.)

BRYAN
Thank you ... I am delight ... I am ... delighted to be ... delighted, here. *(whispering)* Fractalicious. We are here. It is important that we are ... Most important is that ... We are gathered, so that we can stop ... moving, move, slower, and slower …

(Bryan dashes upstage and back. Electronic music and assorted mechanic sounds punctuate occasionally and then accompany Bryan. Bryan does not notice them. He regroups.)

It is important that we become close, closer, … get to know one another ... so close that ... Does the thought, thought ... Does the thought tickle you? Tickle you. Do you want to tickle me *(whispers)* Tickle me. Tickle.

What is tickle? To be close, but not too close. To move slow in anticipation of touch, but not to touch. To touch, but not too much, lightly, gingerly.

Once the touch is felt, firmly, and with duration, the tickle is gone. The thought is gone, the tickling thought, airy and light, and gone with delight.

Tickle: potential, anticipation, generates intensity, sometimes more tickle-intensity than tickling winds, ideas, or fingers have to offer. More intensity, more torture.

Tickle-torture. Can that be? Of course, kids do it all the time. Parents do it to them. So do lovers. But to death? Death by tickle. Tickle fun. Can one laugh—to death?

Ha, ha. Stop, ha ha, stop that, you're killing me.

Are the ticklish weaker or more fun, funner because they are weaker, or just more willing to resist or to surrender?

Surrender creates opportunities for ungoverned pleasure and expansions, for closeness and intimacy ... sweet surrender. *(whispers)* I want to ... sweet surrender. Sweet surrender.

He's so h-h-h-h-h-h-h-h-hot. So is she. Oh, look at that. Legs, ass, eyes, ears, lips. You make me hot.

Is this a matter of temperature, is it caloric, or about intensity? Heat tickles. Tickling causes heat. Repeat, repeat, repeat. The anticipation of pain is like the anticipation of pickles. When you see that hot guy or girl, and your heart races, do you move slower or faster? Does time slow down or speed up? Does the object get closer or further away? *(whispers)* Come to me. Come on.

Intensity and heat increase with focus. Channeling the sun's rays through a magnifying glass, cooking the object. What's cookin' good lookin'? You're so hot. *(whispers)* I want to eat you.

The potentially tickled relishes in the anticipation, the pre-tickle tickle, the virtual tickle, that is sometimes more intense than the actual tickle, which lingers on no-tickle, when the tickle transitions into touch, plain old touch. No one wants to be plain. *(whispers)* Give me pain. Give me pain. Pain.

Anticipation depends on previous experience with the experience, virtual or actual. If one has not had an orgasm, he cannot anticipate it properly, but he can know when it happens.

The same goes for tickling, and pain, the force of the whip, the burning cigarette against virgin skin. *(whispers)* Don't be shy. Relax. Don't worry, it will hurt a lot.

I repeat myself when I am distressed. I repeat myself when I am distressed. I repeat myself when I am distressed. I repeat ... myself. Distressed.

Repetition reinforces knowledge and memory, but it also causes breakdown, and entropy. We are machines. To subvert the entropic power of repetition is to subvert nature.

To understand repetition as always involving difference is to subvert tautology and boredom. Nothing is identical, nothing, nothing is identical, nothing, nothing, nothing is identical, to itself, to itself, itself, itself, nothing, itself, not, identical to itself, nothing is, not, not, not not in the constant flow, nothing is identical, spacetime, not in spacetime, nothing, nothing is identical, not to itself, itself, not. To understand breakdown and change as creative opportunity, breakdown, change, break, down, breakdown, down break, down, change up, as productive shifts in flows, paths, substances, and connections, is to roll, toooooo roll, roll, roll, is to roll, with roll, roll with, positive differences, is to roll with positive differences. R-r-r-r-r-r-r-roll. *(whispers)* Roll, roll, roll.

People ignorant to this get bored, more distant, sluggish, both slower and further away, lonely, defeated, and static. They cry.

The intensity to closeness passes them by, their slowness devoid of vibrations and creativity, their speed gone unnoticed. They die.

But what happens when our connections to others, to humans and to things, to the environment, become closer, more intense, slower because of increased intensity, faster because of vibrations?

Is this the tickle or the joy of sex, of happiness, and of pain, of the extreme in extreme sports, in extreme life? Is this what it means to be inspired, passionate, exuberant? Is this not what we all want? Exuberance.

When the wing-suited base jumper jumps and flies, does she anticipate? All eyes. Pure experience, pure affect, no time for anticipation. Speed. Pure proprioception. No needs. Everything happens too fast. No thought, no process. She reacts to the vibrations, syncs with the environment.

When the free skier jets down harrowing cliffs on which no object could rest, movement is mandatory, but not necessarily fast or slow (this is relative to control), she experiences. Pure intensity, all tickle, vibrations, closeness to death, slowness in that the whole world, the universe, is present, death, myopic, streamlined, possibly too fast or too slow to navigate.

The free skier goes viscerallectric; pushes fractalactic—motored-consciousness.

Does what, goes how?

Hold on, slow down, you're going too fast, too hot, for me to maintain my frames, for me to grasp and control the meanings. It's hot in here.

Please, hose us off with some delicious transversal terms. Cool us down. You shower us with transversal poetics. Now feed us frozen grapes, strawberries, mangos, and kiwis. Let them melt in our mouths. Yes, okay, slow motion, close up, extremely slow, incredibly close. Action.

KKC:
I believe we can say that the theatre you talk about at your lecture and also performed can be classified as post-dramatic. Am I right? Or maybe there is a different name for this kind of experimental theatre?

BR:
It is post-dramatic, insofar as it is predominantly non-dialogic, non-representational, not naturalistic or realistic predominantly, often gives equal value to design elements as much as to the performances by actors on the stage, etc., but it is also, or perhaps predominantly, *intermedial*. It was designed, however successfully, to affect audiences on deep levels—cognitively, neurochemically, emotionally, physically, in other words, viscerally, intellectually, electrically—to be sure, "viscerallectrically" (visceral+ intellectual+ electric). As I describe in detail, with many examples from contemporary European theater, in my recent book, *Intermedial Theater*, intermedial theater blends consciousnesses, subjectivities, genres, themes, narratives, codes, histories, spacetimes, design elements, andor performance styles so that no one feature is significantly prioritized throughout, such as the present, naturalistic dialogue, or dance, and each feature has potentially equal value in concert with others, thereby making the performance more of a symphony of features, humans, animals, and objects working together, rather than design elements (props, music, lights) supporting performances by humans on stage. Contrary to arguments often made about realistic or naturalistic theater, in which the performances by actors resemble people interacting in everyday life or on television sitcoms and dramas, intermedial theater might more accurately reflect the way people normally engage the world. This is because all of the variables represented in theater are already blended in our everyday lives, in society, in the world, such that noise reduction, filtering, and synthetization, that is, reductionism is the privileged and most common method by which people identify, distill, or manufacture sense and order. People want to reduce unpredictability and structure experience in this interest, so that improvisation, and the surprises it precipitates, are willfully invited or chosen matters of luxury, rather than coping mechanisms born out of necessity or fear. Therefore, noodling

anything, much less the nodals on which we often teeter affectively as a result of various kinds of dynamic engagements, is systematically avoided, unless regulated and performed within clearly delineated parameters, such as when performing standup comedy, playing soccer or ultimate frisbee, collaboratively sailing a boat, driving a car on state roads, and when giving a speech at a wedding. Throughout the short span of the lecture I gave, just as in my own life, I discourage such avoidance in favor of noodling the nodals emergent within established networks by which subjective and official territories are maintained. An important goal of which is to generate conditions for exuberance.

KKC:
Does your theatre, the Transversal Theatre Company, also present such performances? Could you, please, tell us more about it?

BR:
Yes, producing such performances is the driving force behind the Transversal Theater Company. The Amsterdam-based Transversal Theater Company is an ensemble of adventurous, politically-engaged artists who are committed to developing a transversal praxis of consciousness, subjectivity, alterity, performance, and social change combined with an "investigative-expansive" performance methodology (we often teach workshops on "transversal acting" methods—in fact, we have taught at the Grotowski Institute in Wrocław). Like transversal poetics, Transversal Theater pursues comprehension of the intricate workings of a given society's or societies' organizing machinery—and thus the consciousnesses that together comprise it—in the interest of making individuals more aware of the ideational and material means by which their own subjectivity and the subjectivities of others have been formed and are maintained. Transversal Theater encourages conceptual-emotional-physical movements and experiences, even "unexperienceable experiences," outside of established parameters and therefore against personal and societal constraints. It promotes such alternative thinking, feeling, and performance, which expands subjective territory and consciousness and creates more cognizant individuals with enhanced self-empowerment. By blending, intermedially, typically distinct theatrical styles—from abstract expressionism to musical surrealism—and combining intense dramatic action with rigorous philosophical and spiritual engagement, Transversal Theater tries to motivate audiences and actors to venture investigative-expansively into subjunctive and transversal spacetimes that challenge determination, structures, dispositions, and systems in order to inspire learning, compassion, and evolution. This is what I hoped to accomplish with my lecture. As you know, the Transversal Theater Company has toured several shows to Poland, including *Woof, Daddy* to Szczecin, Poznan, and Warsaw in 2005, *Blue Shade* to Wrocław, Legnica, and Łódź in 2007, and

Lumping in Fargo to Chorzów and the 12th International Shakespeare Festival in Gdańsk in 2008. We love to bring performances two Poland because Polish audiences are more receptive to experimental theater. Moreover, we love to come to Poland because, in our opinion, Poland, generally speaking, produces the most exciting theater in the world, along with Romania.

KKC:
As your curriculum vitae indicates you are not only an author of many very important academic books, but also a playwright. Are your latest plays written as the experimental pieces?

BR:
In addition to *Fractalicious!*, which is very much experimental, my most recent new play, *Nabi Saleh*, which is a quasi-musical about the occupation of Palestine, specifically the village of Nabi Saleh, is an intermedial work, and therefore experimental in this regard. We produced an initial version of *Nabi Saleh* in March 2015 at the Cinema Jenin Theatre, Palestine, as a workshop collaboration between the Transversal Theater Company and Palestine's Jenin Freedom Theatre.

The idea for the play came from an experience I had in Nabi Saleh at a protest against the occupation. Every Friday afternoon for almost 8 years, since 2010, the weekly protest in Nabi Saleh began, as it did for me, my collaborator Mark LeVine (in my research on political groups in high conflict zones which use performance as a mode of political activism), and a host of journalists on 21 March 2014, in the home of Bilal Tamimi, one of the leaders of the Nabi Saleh Solidarity, a grassroots organization at the heart of Nabi Saleh, a centuries-old village of about six-hundred people that is a frontline community of resistance in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian struggle over territory in the West Bank. The weekly event comprises a tragic, adrenaline-soaked theater—carefully directed by Tamimi—of the seeming absurd yet powerfully political protest against ongoing land seizures, home demolitions, arrests, and other violence suffered by the local community. It is a microcosm not merely or even mostly of the violence, but equally of the positive and even transcendent power of grassroots, inter-, trans- and in many ways post-national resistance. Palestinians, Israeli and international activists, artists, journalists, and ordinary people come to stand against teargas, rubber-coated steel and lead/live bullets, sound grenades, and bulldozers, all of which are often deployed by the Israeli military.

Before and after the protest that day, and the next day, Mark and I interviewed members of the Nabi Saleh community about their relationship to the weekly protests (which is mixed), issues they regularly contend with, and their perspective on the role of children in the protests (many of all ages participate). It is from these interviews that I wrote the play, *Nabi Saleh*, about the struggles of Palestinians in their everyday lives, with much focus on

a character based on Ahed Tamimi, a young villager who is often a leader in the protests. The performance activism in Nabi Saleh on the part of everyone involved in the protests—all sides—is also the subject of a chapter to the book, *Art at the Edge: Creativity and Conflict in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia,* which Mark and I are currently writing for the University of California Press.

KKC:
I am intrigued, as a Shakespeare scholar, with your approach to Shakespeare, especially your adaptations of *Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet* and *Titus Andronicus*. To what extent do your interventions in the Elizabethan texts reveal your transversal methodology and experiments in theatre and drama?

BR:
It was through studying early modern English drama, especially Shakespeare, that I became aware of the transversal power of theater. In my book, *Becoming Criminal*, as well as in my 1997 *Theatre Journal* article, "The Devil's House, 'Or Worse," which is an earlier version of the fifth chapter to the book, I describe how the transversal power of theater influenced the performative nature of both criminal operations (when people pretended to be different social identities in the interest of perpetrating crimes) and alternative subcultures (such as seen in the fashion of women cross-dressing as men). I don't think I would have become a professional theater maker, or theorist of subjectivity and consciousness, had I not studied Shakespeare. I'm indebted to my teachers as well, most notably Marjorie Garber and Stephen Greenblatt (I studied with Stephen from undergrad through my PhD), for their guidance and openness to my development of transversal poetics while studying under their tutelage.

KKC:
Thank you again very much for your innovative and impressive lecture. I found it a great privilege to talk with you about your methodology and great theatrical and dramatic achievements.

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Receptive Aesthetic Criteria: Reader Comparisons of Two Finnish Translations of *Hamlet*

Abstract: This article examines the subjective aesthetic criteria used to assess two Finnish translations of *Hamlet*, one by Eeva-Liisa Manner (1981) and the other by Matti Rossi (2013), both accomplished translators for the stage. A survey consisting of one general question ("Briefly describe your idea of how Shakespeare translation should sound in Finnish, and what you think are the qualities of a good Shakespeare translation") and five text extracts was distributed on paper and electronically, generating 50 responses. For the extracts, respondents were asked whether one or the other translation most closely dorresponded to their idea of what a Shakespeare translation should sound like and why, along with questions on whether they would prefer to see or read one or the other. The results show that there are no strong shared expectancy norms in Finland regarding Shakespeare translation. Manner was generally felt to be more concise and poetic, while Rossi was praised for his exquisite use of modern Finnish. Respondents agreed that rhythm was an important criterion, but disagreed on what sorts of rhythms they preferred. Translation of the "to be or not to be" speech raised the most passions, with many strongly preferring Manner's more traditional translation. The results suggest that Shakespeare scholars would do well to take variations in expectancy norms into account when assessing and analysing Shakespeare in translation.

Keywords: Shakespeare reception, translation, drama translation, Hamlet, Shakespeare in Finland, Matti Rossi, Eeva-Liisa Manner.

In Daniel Gallimore's stimulating recent article in *Multicultural Shakespeare*, he speaks of the Japanese translator Tsubouchi Shōyō's efforts to translate Shakespeare into "beautiful Japanese" (Gallimore, Shōyō 72). In Gallimore's analysis, beauty often seems to come down to rhythm, effective use of sound devices such as alliteration and diphthongs, and effective contrasts of an "elegant" and "jagged" style (Gallimore, Shōyō 80). In this article, I am less concerned with any absolute markers of "beauty" but rather in the subjective

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responses of actual readers to translated excerpts of Shakespeare. What, in their opinion, are the features and qualities of a successful Shakespeare translation into Finnish? I got the idea for this study when interviewing Finnish theatrical directors about how they go about choosing a translation for performance. I was struck by their varying criteria: one looked for verbs, another cared more for what "sounds good." Because such aesthetic criteria vary by individual, and also over time, I decided to try to identify some of the main criteria modern Finnish readers use to judge Shakespeare translations. As evidence, I selected two *Hamlet* modern translations into Finnish: Eeva-Liisa Manner's (1981) and Matti Rossi's (2013). Manner's translation was initially commissioned by the Tampere Theatre, and continues to be one of the most performed texts of *Hamlet* in Finland today. Rossi's translation was commissioned by WSOY, a leading Finnish publishing company as the final play in its complete works translation project. Rossi was the major translator in this project, translating 16 of 38 plays, and is particularly known for his politically-charged Shakespeare translations of the 1960s, a time when Shakespeare performance was undergoing radical transformation.[1] These are among the best of the translations of *Hamlet* currently available in Finnish.

Both Manner and Rossi are accomplished poets, and their *Hamlet* translations are dynamic and speakable, displaying superb command of rhythm and verse, effective use of sound devices, and creative solutions to translating Shakespeare's imagery. In other respects, however, the two translations are different: Manner's is more compact and somehow angrier, while Rossi's is fuller, more lyrical, luxuriating in the abundant feast of Shakespeare's language. In bringing these two texts together, I seek not to claim that one is better than the other, but rather to use them to examine the subjective criteria by which Shakespeare translations are assessed in modern Finland. In addition, I am curious whether there are differences in the features deemed vital for texts written to be read or performed. While these results may not be immediately applicable to translators and theatre practitioners in other languages and cultures, I hope that they nevertheless shed light on ways that aesthetic and stylistic criteria are discussed and evaluated, while also providing comparative analyses of two translations into Finnish of the same excerpts.

To date, neither translation nor Shakespeare scholars have much compared audience reactions to side-by-side translations. As a historical, classic text, Shakespeare puts heavy demands on the translator, not only due to the inherent difficulty of the language but also due to the pressures and expectations created by previous translations. Translation theorists are well aware of the often contradictory expectations audiences bring to texts. Speaking of re-translation, Lawrence Venuti comments:

[1] For a description of the WSOY Complete Works translation project, see Keinänen.

> A translation may be judged unacceptable by readerships who possess the information that the translator lacked, who value the literary canon or translation tradition that the translator unwittingly challenged, who interpret the foreign text differently from the translator, or who are alienated by the publisher's practices. If the translator succeeds in appealing to an intended audience, the translation may nonetheless be read by a different audience who finds it unacceptable. (29)[2]

Shakespeare scholar Alexa Huang describes literary translation as a "love affair involving two equal partners" (86), a metaphor which in some ways is also applicable to the relationship between translators and their readers. As in love, however, different readers are attracted to different types of translations.

There has been little previous work specifically on readers' expectations of translations in Finland.[3] Within the field of translation studies, reception theory and norm theory seem to offer the most fruitful avenues for exploring audience responses. Reception theory examines "the way a work conforms to, challenges or disappoints the readers' aesthetic 'horizon of expectation,'" a term used by Jauss to "refer to readers' general expectations (of the style, form, content, etc) of the genre or series to which the new work belongs" (Munday 154). But the major aspects of productive aesthetic experience identified by Jauss--*poiesis*, *aisthesis* and *catharsis*—seem to be very far removed from a reader's physical response to the sounds and rhythms of a poetic text, a point Gallimore also raises in connection with Shōyō's translations as challenging the voices and bodies of the actors asked to perform them (Gallimore, Shōyō 84).

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[2] Theories of retranslation do not seem relevant for this analysis, which focuses on reader's expectations in the present moment and not the social, literary and cultural contexts in effect when the translations were done. Rossi is familiar with re-translation for he had earlier reworked some of his own translations. For example, in 1972 he did his first translation of *Macbeth* for a specific theater production, where the speech was quite colloquial. He reworked this translation for another production ten years later, and again in 1997 for a production by the director Kama Ginkas. Ginkas wanted a specific type of unbroken meter, and apparently refused to accept anything else. Rossi's text was later reworked by the Finnish director Jotaarkka Pennanen, for a production in 2002 (Aaltonen 2003: 155). For a detailed look at the history of retranslation in Finland, see (Koskinen and Paloposki 2015).

[3] In studying translations of Dorothy L. Sayers's novels into Finnish in the 1940s and 1980s, Minna Ruokonen identifies general qualities of a good translation: natural and fluent Finnish, a lucid and coherent text which is unabridged and conveys the style (Ruokonen 80). Tiina Puurtinen compares the readability of two translations of *The Wizard of Oz* into Finnish, where she asks two cohorts of 9-10 year-olds to complete a cloze test, finding that students did significantly better on the translation with simpler sentence structures (Puurtinen).

Somewhat similar to Jauss' "horizon of expectations" is the idea of "expectancy norms," which are "established by the expectations of readers of a translation (of a given type) concerning what a translation (of this type) should be like (Chesterman, Memes 64). Most importantly, "expectancy norms. . . are not static or permanent, nor are they monolithic. They are highly sensitive to text type. . . and they are open to modification and change" (Chesterman, Memes 67).[4] Translation norms seem to be somewhat circular, as the practices of translators deemed competent can then affect later translations. In the case of Finnish Shakespeare, for example, Alice Martin has discussed how other translators in the WSOY complete works translation project began to adopt the methods of handling verse and meter which Rossi used in his own early translations (76). Nestori Siponkoski has also analysed the WSOY translation project, focusing on the interplay between copyeditors and translators in four volumes of the series. Although Siponkoski is mainly interested in the extent to which the translators adopt the suggestions offered by copyeditors, isolated examples reveal some of the expectancy norms of these editors: e.g. preferring some archaic expressions rather than modern ones (Siponkoski 123, 153, 169), and preferring solutions considered more poetic in terms of their sound qualities (144) and rhythm (154-57, 170, 171). But even the concept of norms seems problematic for explaining what is essentially a combined physical and intellectual response to a text. Do bodies react in normative ways to poetry?

Before introducing my survey, I want to return to the question of the initial translation brief: Manner was translating directly for the stage while Rossi for the page, and so in this sense his translation is much less targeted than Manner's, a difference which might be expected to affect the translation strategies. According to Aaltonen, "loosely targeted (re)translations are not likely to highlight any particular thematic reading of their source text but rather encourage the perception of it as an open text. Their expected life span is long" (147). Loosely targeted translations are generally "used to integrate foreign texts into the indigenous stock as cultural capital" (148), and indeed WSOY emphasized throughout the project the cultural impact of re-translating Shakespeare's plays. The translator's brief provided by the publisher, however, placed very few limitations on the translators: they were asked to be "loyal" to the original text, which in most cases was the Oxford and Arden Shakespeares; nothing was to be added or omitted; and prose/verse distinctions were to be

[4] "Norms" might not be the best tool with which to discuss literary translation, as Andrew Chesterman notes in predicting "norms of the future": "Curiously, there seems to be one exception to most of the predictions I will propose. This is literary translation. I think this will continue much as it has always been done" (Chesterman, Norms 2). It is also fair to ask whether these extracts were long enough and different enough to elicit information on perceived norms, though it is unlikely that more data would significantly change the results.

observed (Martin 76). Regarding Manninen's translation brief, it seems likely that she was asked to shorten the text for performance, as her translation is shorter and more compact than Rossi's, a fact that several respondents commented upon, some approvingly and some not. Despite these outward differences in translation brief, given Rossi's long history of translating Shakespeare for the stage, I think it is fair to assume that differences in their translations are due more to the translators' own instincts and strategies rather than the translation brief per se.

A Reader Survey of Excerpts from Two *Hamlets*

In an effort to understand the ways readers perceive differences between translations, I put together a survey asking respondents to compare five extracts from each translation. The survey was in Finnish, and was piloted during a public lecture I gave on Shakespeare translation in Finland (March 11, 2015, 19 respondents). An electronic version was available for a few weeks in Spring, 2015, which was distributed through Facebook and University of Helsinki mailing lists (31 respondents). Because the survey did not change between the pilot and electronic versions, I have conflated the results. Of the 50 total participants, 43 were female and 7 were male.[5] The majority of participants were 20-29 years of age (22), with others as follows: 30-39 (8); 40-49 (7); 50-59 (8); 60-69 (3); 70+ (2). Given the low number of responses I have also not correlated with age, but with a larger sample it might be interesting to test whether older participants differ in any important way from the 20-29 year-olds. The vast majority (45) speak Finnish as their mother tongue, with one additional reporting being bilingual in Finnish/English. Two marked Swedish as their mother tongue and one marked English.

Four questions were asked about each pair of extracts: 1) Does one of the texts more closely corresponded to your idea of what a Shakespeare translation should sound like and why; 2) Describe each extract in a few adjectives; 3) Which text would you rather see performed, and why; and 4) Which text would you rather read, and why. The extracts were presented in a random order (so one of the texts was not always "A" or "B"). Respondents were told that the texts were all from *Hamlet* but were not given the names of the translators.

The survey began with a general question: "Briefly describe your idea of how Shakespeare translation should sound in Finnish, and what you think are the

[5] Given the small number of male participants, meaningful comparisons cannot be made between the genders, though it is worth asking why so many more women were inspired to answer such a survey rather than men.

qualities of a good Shakespeare translation." Before assessing the extracts, I wanted the respondents to think about their general aesthetic and other criteria of a successful Shakespeare translation. Not surprisingly, there are almost as many responses as there were participants. Nevertheless, some themes did emerge. The most discussed issue was whether the language should be old-fashioned, modern, or something in between, akin to what David Johnston discusses as the process of "extending the foreign play to another theatre system, while at the same time enabling it to speak vividly of its own different context" (19). Speaking of modern translations of classical drama, Hardwick makes a similar point:

> The focus of productions has shifted towards the creation of production dynamics which *both* make it appear that the production has been created in the language in which it is spoken/acted *and* which seek to communicate to the audience, which may have little or no knowledge of ancient theatre, an intellectual and emotional experience which corresponds to that attributed to the original (174).

In this vein, almost half of my respondents (20) thought the language should be "old." Two thought it should "not be too old," and four thought it should not be "too modern." One of these explicitly said that modern Finnish spoken language (which differs a great deal from written language) should "under no circumstances be used." Only one said Shakespeare translation should "reveal the historical period" and four mentioned the need to be faithful to social distinctions evident in the historical material. Many of those who wished that the language of the translation could somehow reflect the age of the original nevertheless added that the translation should be "easy to understand," which was another leading category, mentioned by 14 respondents. One added that the text should be understandable but "not too simple." I will return to other qualities of the target language below.

A particular problem with Shakespeare translation is what to do with the metrical verse, and again historical changes in literary styles and tastes will affect the translation strategy chosen. For example, the Japanese translator Kinoshita Junji "fears that Shakespeare translation in an arcane, metrical style may sound like parody to modern ears" so he opts for "colloquial, unrhythmical language" (Gallimore, History 96). Differences in the rhythms of Finnish and English make these choices particularly difficult for translators, given that reproducing Shakespeare's iambic pentameter in an essentially trochaic language is well-nigh impossible.[6] Among my respondents, too, after age and

[6] Most Finnish translators choose to work within the natural trochaic rhythms of Finnish, but a few attempt iambic pentameter. See Keinänen.

clarity, the next most mentioned theme was connected to poetic and lyrical qualities, mentioned by nineteen in one way or another. Of these eight thought the translation should be "faithful to the rhythm and meter" of the original, with another three saying that verse should be translated as verse. Two, by contrast, said there was no need to be faithful to poetic form or meter. Related to poetic qualities are the four who said translations should be "faithful to the original style" or "the original qualities of the text." Several said translations should be "light, fluent, natural" (7) or "flowing" (6). A number of respondents (5) mentioned the sonorous qualities of language, with one commenting that ideally a translation would produce "physical pleasure when spoken, just as when reading aloud [the Finnish poet] Eino Leino."

Many respondents wished that translations would capture the nuances of Shakespeare's language. For example, six mention the importance of wordplay, and four mention humour. "Imagery" was mentioned by two. Respondents hoped translators would capture the "richness" (4), "energy and drama" (4), "density" (1), and "theatricality" (1) of Shakespeare's language. Surprisingly few mention fidelity to content (6) or atmosphere/feeling (5).[7]

Many respondents talked about the qualities of *Finnish* they would like to see in Shakespeare translations. As discussed above, the most mentioned quality was "easy to understand." Seven mentioned that the texts should be in good Finnish, "light, fluent and natural." A related concept was "flowing," mentioned by six. One mentioned that translators should take advantage of the qualities of Finnish, specifically its wide vocabulary. Although Shakespeare scholars tend to focus on the beauty of Shakespeare's language, this quality was only mentioned specifically by three in this section, though the concept of beauty came up in discussions of the excerpts. Other adjectives used include "colourful" (2), "memorable" (1), "classic" (1), "sophisticated" (1), and "strong" (1). A few made reference to what might be considered the qualities of translators as well as their translations, such as "creative" (2) and "inventive" (2). One hoped that the translation would be "insightful," help her understand the text in a new way. As you can see, a fairly wide range of criteria were offered as being important for Shakespeare translation, but there was also some disagreement, e.g. over the necessity of fidelity to form, or the preservation of historical, older qualities of language. Table 1 presents these results organized by theme.

[7] C.f. Leppihalme, who in her analysis of a Finnish translation of David Mamet's *Oleanna* found that sticking too closely to the source text can weaken the effect of the target text: "a misguided attempt to respect the *language* of a famous dramatist thus led to a translation that did less than justice to his *text*" (160).

Table 1: Briefly describe your idea of how Shakespeare translation should sound in Finnish, and what you think are the qualities of a good Shakespeare translation.

Old-fashioned vs. modern language prefer old-fashioned, 20 not too old, 2 not too modern, 4 faithful to social distinctions and dialects of older English, 4
Fidelity to Style faithful to original style, 4 faithful to rhythm and meter/verse, 11 no need to be faithful to meter, 2 poetic and lyrical, 19 reproduce sonorous qualities of language, 5 richness of language, 4 energy and drama of language, 4 density of language, 1 theatricality of language, 1 Fidelity to Content wordplay, 6 humour, 4 imagery, 2 fidelity to content, 6 Fidelity to atmosphere, 5
Qualities of Target Language intelligible, easy to understand – 14 (often presented in opposition to "old" language) light, fluent, natural, 7 flowing, 6 colourful, 2 memorable, 1 classic, 1 sophisticated, 1 strong, 1 beautiful, 3
Qualities of Translator/Translation insightful, 1 creative, 2 inventive, 2

I will next present the five extracts, with key points in italics or bold, and the Finnish translations followed by back translations into English, commenting on the main findings from each. For ease of reference, I am placing Manner's text first, but am maintaining the original A and B markings so the reader can see the order in which they were presented on the survey.

Text 1 is one of the most interesting, as this was the one which most clearly divided the respondents and also which most clearly captures some of the main differences between the translations. In response to the question of which text more closely corresponds to their idea of a good Shakespeare translation, fully 70% said Manner, with 22% citing Rossi, with a handful saying both (4%) or expressing no opinion. Respondents who preferred Manner commented mainly on its poetic qualities, calling it "beautiful," whereas those who preferred Rossi found it easier to understand, thought it would be easier for a modern actor to speak, and therefore more believable onstage. The key features here for readers seem to be compactness, inverted syntax, softer alliteration, and the absence of too-prosaic sounding expressions.

Text 1 Hamlet, 1.2.129-34

	A. (Manner)	B. (Rossi)
O that this too too sullied flesh would melt, /	Voi miksei tämä inhon tiukka liha / Oh why can't this disgusting tight flesh	Miksi tämä liian tiivis liha *ei jo sula kastepisaroiksi*!/ Why does this too solid flesh not melt into dew drops?
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,/	*hajota voi ja haihtua kuin kaste?* / dissolve and evaporate like dew?	
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed /	Voi miksei Kaikkivallan laki salli / Oh why does not the Almighty's law allow	Miksi Jumalamme ikuisessa laissaan kieltää **itsemurhan!**/ Why does our God in his eternal law forbid suicide?
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. O God, God, /	ihmisen itse **päättää päiviään**? a person to end one's days? Jumala, Jumala, <u>olen uupunut,</u> / God, God, I am weary	

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable /	Miten joutavalta tuntuu kaikki / How useless everything feels	Hyvä Luoja, miten ikäviä, tunkkaisia,/ ahdistavia ja turhanpäiväisiä ovat / Good Lord, how deplorable, stale, oppressive and trivial are
Seem to me all the uses of this world!	Ja *meno maailman* on turha, turha! And the way of the world is useless, useless	tämän maailman tavat! Iljettävää,/ iljettävää! the ways of this world! revolting, / revolting!

So what makes this text more "poetic"? Perhaps the first thing to notice is the compactness of A versus B, both in terms of the average number of syllables per line (10.5 vs 15.2) and the number of syllables per word. In this short sequence, Manner has two words of four syllables and seven of three syllables, with most of the words being one or two syllables. Rossi, by contrast, has two six-syllable words, one five-syllable word, and six four-syllable words, with most of the rest being two.

Manner is also more "poetic" in the sense of having unusual syntax and word order, as seen in the italicized sections, where *hajota voi ja haihtua* reverses normal word order in order to emphasize the alliteration and assonance on *hajota* ("dissolve") and *haihtua* ("evaporate"). A second example comes at the end of the passage, with the poetic inversion of the usual phrase *maailman meno* into *meno maailman*. Although these texts were not presented in contrast to an English original, we can also notice that Manner has in these lines more fully preserved Shakespeare's three-verb structure ("melt / Thaw, and resolve") with her paralleling of two alliterating verbs, while Rossi makes do with only one verb, *ei sula* (not melt). Manner's verbs of dissolving and evaporation also create a more vivid image of Hamlet's flesh disappearing, not just turning into small drops.

The poetic qualities continue in Manner's more euphemistic vocabulary regarding suicide, as in the bolded section, where the alliterative and assonant *päättää päiviään* (literally: end one's days) contrasts with Rossi's *itsemurha*, which is the standard way of saying "suicide" in Finnish. This usage divided readers, with some thinking that such an ordinary word had no place in a Shakespeare translation. Manner also personalizes the idea of "weary," having in the underlined section Hamlet say *olen uupunut (*"I am exhausted"). The alliteration continues towards the end of the extract, with softer "m" sounds

(*meno maailman*, the ways of the world) before ending with the stronger punch on *turha, turha!* (useless, futile).

Towards the end of the extract, Rossi powerfully captures the feeling of Shakespeare's list of adjectives, "how weary, stale, flat and unprofitable / Seem to me…" though due to the nature of Finnish, Shakespeare's sharp one- and two-syllable words become more like the five-syllable word "unprofitable" closing the sequence (*ikäviä, tunkkaisia, / ahdistavia ja turhanpäiväisiä*), which makes the text feel rougher, with especially hard *t* alliteration on several words, including the angry *iljettävä* at the end, which can be translated literally as "disgusting." At the risk of simplifying things too much, we might say that in this extract Manner's Hamlet is almost playfully poetic, which the respondents preferred, while Rossi's is harsher, more bitter.

Interestingly the preference numbers changed slightly on the questions about seeing vs. reading: only 54% preferred to *see* Manner's text performed, with Rossi increasing his share to 40%, while the numbers stayed almost the same for *read*, with Manner at 54%, Rossi at 34% and "both" at 8%. Most respondents chose the same extract to be seen or read, though four choose to see Manner and read Rossi, and another four chose to see Rossi and read Manner, commenting that Manner had more captivating language, and interesting Finnish. Text 1, in short, seems evidence against shared expectancy norms, although admittedly most of the comments are rather impressionistic.

Let us turn next to Text 2, which comes towards the end of the soliloquy used in Text 1. Here reader preferences were reversed, with a narrow majority preferring Rossi's version (48% to 34%, with another 10% saying both were equally good, and a few expressing no opinion) for, in the words of one respondent, its more successful "balance of poetry and clarity." Manner's version, by contrast, was criticized for trying too hard to be poetic, leading to overuse of alliteration for example, and also, as we saw above regarding Rossi's text, of being at times too prosaic.

Text 2, end of soliloquy in Text 1

	B. (Manner)	A. (Rossi)
Within a month, /	**K**uu**k**ausi vain, **k**uun outo **k**ierto! / One month only, one strange revolution of the moon	**K**uu**k**auden **k**uluessa? Ehti naimisiin jo ennen / In a month? Managed to get married already before
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears /	Näyteltyjen kyynelien suola / The salt of feigned tears	**k**uin hänen valheellisten **k**yyneltensä / her untruthful tears'

Had left the flushing in her galled eyes, /	kun vielä punaa uskotonta silmää, / when still the red of unfaithful eyes,	**k**irvelevä puna jäähtyi hänen silmissään. / stinging red cooled in her eyes
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post /	jo miehen ottaa, niin on kiire juosta / already took a husband, such is [her] hurry to run	Niin ketterästi syntisessä kiireessään / How nimbly in sinful hurry
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets! /	rutsaiseen vuoteeseen *veriveljen* kanssa! / to an incestuous bed with her blood brother!	hän kiiti saastaisten lakanoiden väliin! / she speeds between polluted sheets!
It is not nor it cannot come to good. /	Huono juttu, ei hyvä siitä seuraa. / A bad thing, no good can come of it.	Pahoin tehty, eikä siitä mitään hyvää seuraa. / From such a bad deed, no good can come.
But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue.	Vaan murru sydän; *lukittu on kieli*. But break heart; locked is [my] tongue	Vain minun sydämeni särkyy, sillä minun täytyy vaieta. Only my heart breaks, as I must be quiet.

This extract provides a rather good example of natural vs. stilted alliteration, which readers clearly reacted to. Because the Finnish word for "month" is *kuukausi*, literally *kuu* (moon) + *kausi* (phase), the translators start with /k/ alliteration, both of whom choose to augment it. Rossi does this with a much lighter hand, first asking a simple question, *Kuukauden kuluessa* ("In a month?"), before starting an elaborate and highly-successful chain of premodification with alliterative /*k*/ on the key words ***k**yyneltensä* ("tears") and ***k**irvelevä* ("stinging"). This image of *kirvelevä puna*, stinging redness in the eyes, was thought to work especially well, and its /k/ alliteration, continuing into the next lines emphasizing verbs and adverbs, was also seen as effective. By contrast, Manner's text was accused of working too hard for its alliteration, as in the first line, *kuun outo kierto* (literally: a strange revolution of the moon) was felt to be a bit repetitious and stilted. A similar problem with stilted alliteration was identified in ***v**eri**v**eli* (literally: blood brother), which several commented on as having the wrong connotations for this text.

Rossi was also praised for the poetic juxtaposition of *paha* (evil) in the phrase *pahoin tehty* and *hyvä* (good) in the other underlined section (literally: From such a bad deed, no good can come). Rossi's much more patterned and

eloquent formulation was especially contrasted with Manner's prosaic *huono juttu* (literally, "a bad thing," which comes straight from spoken language), which several respondents commented upon negatively. And while Manner was praised in the first excerpt for her creative syntactic inversions, in this excerpt some commented negatively on *lukittu on kieli* (literally, "locked is [my] tongue"), which was felt to be awkward. The gentle rocking rhythm of Rossi's solution, which ironically is about the closest he ever gets to iambic pentameter (his text is mostly trochaic), is in stark contrast to Manner's more uneven rhythm in the corresponding phrase.

One interesting criticism of Manner, which may be applicable to drama translations more broadly, is its unevenness of style: one respondent remarked that the style shifts from "festive poetic" in the first three lines, to "ugly and grotesque" in the fifth line, to "ordinary, everyday" in the sixth. These comments highlight the difficulties translators face as they negotiate the rather fine line between "too old and therefore not understandable" and "too modern and therefore not Shakespearean," or between poetic diction and more ordinary spoken language. As we have seen, even in a short extract the stylistic range can be broad, and neither of these translators stays consistently at either end of the stylistic extremes.

Again, most respondents preferred to see and read the same text, though this time two preferred to see Manner but read Rossi, whereas five preferred to see Rossi but read Manner. The explanation for this was that Manner was perceived as more difficult (in a good sense, more open to multiple interpretations), but that this does not matter when reading. Perhaps the main lesson of this example is that poetic devices, such as alliteration, must be done absolutely skilfully if not to seem forced, and stylistic consistency is also important.

For my third excerpt, I wanted to include something of Ophelia's speech, to see whether respondents sensed any differences based on the gender of the translator (one of whom is female and the other male). The only comment in this regard is one respondent who felt that the male translator's (Rossi's) Ophelia "sounds like a man speaking, not a young girl." A small majority preferred Manner, citing many of the same reasons they cited with Text 1, praising the text for its poetic language and compactness.

Text 3 Ophelia, 2.1.77-84

	A. (Manner)	B. (Rossi)
My lord, as I was sewing in my closet, /	Istuin huoneessani ja ompelin, / I was sitting in my room and sewing	Istuin huoneessani ompeluksen ääressä, / I was sitting in my room at my sewing,

Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced, /	kun prinssi Hamlet, *ihan suunniltaan*, / when Prince Hamlet, frantic	kun herra Hamlet astui sisään takki auki / when Mr. Hamlet came in, his jacket open
No hat upon his head, his stockings fouled, /	tukka sekaisena, sukat nilkoissa, / his hair a mess, socks at his ankles,	repsottaen, ilman hattua ja sukkanauhoja / dangling, without a hat or garter
Ungartered, and down-gyvèd to his ankle, /		ja törkyiset sukat makkaralla nilkoissa and filthy socks drooping around his ankles
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other, /	törmäsi sisään ryömien polvillaan, /pushed his way in, crawling on his knees kalpeana kuin paita, vaikeroiden / as pale as a shirt, wailing	**k**uin **k**ahleet, **k**asvot **k**alpeina **k**uin paitansa / like chains, [his] face as pale as his shirt ja polvet tutisten ja näöltään surkeana/ and [his] knees trembling and looking awful
And with a look so piteous in purport /	[eliminated reference to "look"]	[eliminated reference to "look"]
As if he had been loosed out of hell /	kuin olisi helvetistä **k**arannut / as though escaped from hell	kuin helvetistä vapautettu sielu, as a soul let out of hell
To speak of horrors—he comes before me.	**k**ertomaan **k**adotetun **k**auhuista. to tell of hellish horrors	joka saapuu *kertoilemaan* kauhutarinoita. who comes to tell horror stories.

Just from the amount of text, it is clear that Manner has chosen to be especially concise with this speech, which eleven respondents commented on favourably, using adjectives like "compact" and "effective." As in the previous examples, respondents were sensitive to differences in tone, and especially inconsistencies between "older" and "more modern" language. In Manner's text,

ihan suunniltaan (beside himself, frantic) was thought to be too modern to work well with the delightfully poetic final phrase, with all of its *k* alliteration. Similarly, *kertoilla* (a form of the verb "to tell") in Rossi's version was thought to be too modern. Capturing nuances conveyed by terms of address in English is also remarkably difficult: Manner uses "prince Hamlet" but Rossi goes for alliteration on ***h**erra **H**amlet*, where *herra* literally means "Mr." The problem here, as several noticed, is that there is a children's book in Finnish with a similar-sounding name (*Herra Huu*). The underlined image in Rossi (literally: filthy socks drooping around his ankles) was felt by some to be bordering on farce. On the whole respondents seemed to like the shorter, freer version (46% to 34%), and also thought Manner's text was clear and easier to follow. Interestingly, this was the text which generated the most blank or "neither" answers, at 16%. As before, most preferred to see and read the same version, though here five preferred to see Manner and read Rossi, while three preferred to see Rossi and read Manner. Aside from the one comment, the gender of the translator or speaker did not seem significant.

No comparison of *Hamlets* would be complete without considering the "to be or not to be" speech. Not surprisingly, this speech generated a lot of comment, as Rossi had decided to commit the sacrilege (in the minds of many respondents) of altering the "accepted" translation of the line (more on that below).

Text 4, Hamlet, 3.1.56-61

	B. (Manner)	A. (Rossi)
To be, or not to be— that is the question: /	Ollako vai eikö, siinä *pulma*. / To be or not? That is the problem.	Olla vai ei? Siitä on nyt *kyse*. Onko *ylevämpää* / To be or not? That is the question. Is it nobler?
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer /	*Jalompaa* onko vaiti ottaa vastaan / Nobler is it to quietly accept	kärsiä vain sisimmässään / to suffer in your inner being
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune /	pahansuovan onnen turmannuolet / the accidental arrows of malevolent fortune	julman onnen sinkoamat ammukset ja nuolet / the shots and arrows hurled by cruel fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles /	vai aseella selvä tehdä murheistaan, / or with arms clear one's woes,	vai nousta taistelemaan vaikeuksiensa / or rise up to fight [one's] troubles

And by opposing end them.	lopettaa ne kerta kaikkiaan? / end them all at once?	tulvaa vastaan ja voittaa ne? / against the flood and defeat them?
To die, to sleep— /	Kuolla – nukkua vain, nukkua – ei muuta – To die – only sleep, sleep – nothing else	Kuolla, nukahtaa, ja siinä kaikki – To die, to fall asleep, and that is all--
No more…		

Manner's text is very close to the first translation done of the lines into Finnish (by Paavo Cajander in 1879) whereas Rossi tries out a new version, removing the particle *–ko* from the first words, changing *pulma* (problem, dilemma) to Shakespeare's English "question" (*kyse*), and *jalompaa* to *ylevämpää* (both mean "noble," with the second being a more exalted way of saying so). Respondents balked at the changes, by far preferring Manner's rendition (62% to 20%, with 18% saying both or not expressing a preference, a large number in itself). A few even commented that this version is different from the one which has been ensconced in the Finnish imagination: *ollako vai eikö olla*, which ironically is not used in any of the five printed translations, so it has in fact developed on its own outside of the play text.[8] Respondents said things like, "this is the one we are used to; it can't be changed" or that Manner's version is "familiar and safe" (which alliterates in Finnish, *tuttu ja turvallinen*). A few, by contrast, thought that Rossi's version was "fresh and new."

This extract also had the most wishing to see/read a different text, with five preferring to see Rossi and read Manner, and six preferring to see Manner and read Rossi. Older Finnish translations of Shakespeare cannot really be said to be "strong" in the sense that people would know them well enough to compare them with new and competing translations, but clearly for these few lines, this is not the case. Any translator of Shakespeare into a foreign language will have to make decisions about lines whose translations have found a place in the vernacular. As can be seen here, there are advantages and disadvantages to both solutions, and some people seem to have almost a visceral reaction to disturbances in the status quo.

Finally, I wanted to include one excerpt of a quick-tempo dialogue with repetition and word play, as these are not the easiest things for a translator to reproduce. Here I chose a few lines from the famous "closet scene," a dialogue between Hamlet and his mother. As before, Manner's text was felt to be a bit lighter, more compact, and poetic, whereas Rossi's text was praised for being more like modern spoken Finnish and hence easy to understand.

[8] See Rissanen.

Text 5, Gertrude's closet, 3.4.10-17

	A. (Manner)	B. (Rossi)
G. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.	G. Isääsi, Hamlet, kovin loukkasit. Your father, Hamlet, you have badly offended.	G. Hamlet, olet pahoin loukannut isääsi. Hamlet, you have badly offended your father.
H. Mother, you have my father much offended.	H. Isääni, äiti, kovin loukkasitte. My father, mother, you have badly offended.	H. Äiti, te loukkasitte pahoin minun isääni. Mother, you have badly offended my father.
G. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.	G. Sinulla, poika, on valheellinen **kieli**. You, son, have a lying tongue.	G. Älä viitsi puhua noin **kevyesti**. Come on, don't speak so lightly.
H. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.	H. Teillä, äiti, on paheellinen **mieli**. You, mother, have a wicked imagination.	H. Älkää te puhuko noin **ilkeästi**. Don't you speak so cruelly.
G. Why, how now, Hamlet?	G. Mutta Hamlet! But Hamlet!	G. Hamlet, mikä sinun on? Hamlet, what's the matter with you?
H. What's the matter now?	H. Mitä haluatte? What do you want?	H. Äiti, mikä teidän on? Mother, what's the matter with you?
G. Have you forgot me?	G. Minua etkö tunne? Do you not know me?	G. Oletko unohtanut kuka minä olen? Have you forgotten who I am?
H. No, by the rood, not so! You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife /	H. *Totta maar*. Olette kuningatar, puolisonne veljen vaimo ja — sen pahempi — minun äitini.	H. *Kautta ristin, en*: kuningatar, puolisonne veljen vaimo. Mutta minun äitini te olette, vaikka toivon, että ette olisi.
And (would it were not so) you are my mother.	Of course [by the Virgin] Mary. You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife and – what's worse – my mother.	By the cross, no: the queen, your husband's brother's wife. But my mother you are, even if I wish you weren't.

Respondents especially liked the shared rhymes in Manner (*kieli, mieli*, language/mind) as a means of translating Shakespeare's repetition. Interestingly, the *kevyesti/ilkeästi* rhyme did not generate comment, perhaps because it's not as pure as the first, and at four syllables feels a bit laboured. Rossi's text, nevertheless, was felt to be modern, more like normal spoken Finnish, e.g. in its normal word order at the beginning, whereas Manner starts with "father," the object of the clause. A similar inversion is found in the underlined section, *Minua etkö tunne*, with *minua* unusually placed in the first position, adding to the text's poetic qualities. Manner's text was thought to be sharper, more compact in an effective way, though one expression, *totta maar* was thought strange as it is a dialect word and very colloquial, out of keeping with the rest of the excerpt (though others liked this, saying it "suited Shakespeare translation"). Respondents tended to like both versions (46% preferred Manner, 26% liked both or expressed no preference, while 28% preferred Rossi). This was the only text where a clear majority of those who would prefer to see and read a different text chose to see Manner and read Rossi (only two in the other direction), thus suggesting that Manner's more playful and compact text was experienced as working better on stage.

So, what do we learn from these comparisons? Perhaps that there are no strong shared expectancy norms regarding Shakespeare translation, or at least these respondents preferred different sorts of texts. In this sample, Manner was generally thought to be more poetic, while Rossi more prosaic, but both had their admirers. Manner was generally thought to use "older" forms more successfully, but Rossi's more modern translations, with their frequent uses of spoken Finnish, were also preferred by some. "Rhythmic" was mentioned by many, though again readers disagreed on which extract they experienced as being more rhythmic. Manner was admired for her "compact" and "effective" texts and Rossi criticized for his "wordy" ones, but Rossi's translations were also thought to be "more interesting" since all those words require thought and interpretation. Interestingly, only one respondent consistently preferred Manner's texts, and only one Rossi's; most preferred some combination of one and the other. For translators, these results perhaps provide comfort in that you can never please everyone. Shakespeare scholars would do well to take variations in expectancy norms into account when assessing and analysing Shakespeare in translation.

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Translation as Rewriting: Cultural Theoretical Appraisal of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in the Ewe language of West Africa

Abstract: The cultural turn in translation theory brought attention to the idea that translation is not a purely linguistic phenomenon but one that is also constrained by culture. The cultural turn considers translation as a rewriting of an original text. In this paper, I attempt to find reflections of the cultural turn in a translation into an African language. As such, the paper reads William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in the Ewe language of West Africa, *Shakespeare ʃe Makbet*, as *rewriting*. Walter Blege is the translator and the Bureau of Ghana Languages is the publisher of the target text meant for Ewe language audience in Ghana. The target text is for learning and acquiring the Ewe language especially in the area of developing reading comprehension skills. Following Andre Lefevere and Jeremy Munday, this paper suggests that *Shakespeare ʃe Makbet* is a rewritten text as it follows some cultural constraints in its translation. The study provides insight into the motivations for some of the translator/rewriter's choices. Given the less attention paid to the Ewe language and many other African languages, the paper proposes translation as a socio-psychological tool for revitalizing interest in the learning and acquisition of African and other lesser-known languages**.**

Keywords: Blege, Ewe, *Macbeth*, Shakespeare, translation, West Africa.

Initial translation theories, such as the theories in the Equivalence paradigm, have focused on purely linguistics aspects. Anthony Pym defines a paradigm as "a set of principles that underlie several theories (in the general sense outlined by [philosopher of science Thomas] Kuhn)" (3). Stemming from Structuralism, theories in the Equivalence paradigm suggest possibilities where Source Language and Target Language expressions can have the same value especially in the areas of form, function or reference. They argue that there is natural equivalence between languages and what a translator does is to discover this equivalence. Oettinger, for instance posits that "Interlingual translation [is] the replacement of elements of one language, the domain of translation, by equivalent elements of another language" (Oettinger 110). For others like

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Catford, all the translation materials are to replace a translation unit. "Translation may be defined as follows: the replacement of textual material in one language (Source Language, SL) by equivalent material in another language (Target Language, TL). (Catford 20). Eugene Albert Nida and Charles Russell Taber argue that translation is a reproduction rather than replacement. "Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message" (Nida and Taber 12). Embedded in all these explanations is the notion that there exists a kind of equivalence among expressions in all natural languages. Some translation practitioners and linguists have agreed, however, that lexical meanings are not necessarily equivalent across different languages. Theo Hermans (9) for instance rejects the notion of "translation as reproducing the original, the whole original and nothing but original". While the early theories in the equivalence paradigm attempted to find the equivalents of source texts (STs) in target texts (TTs), theories in the purpose paradigm suggest that the purpose of a translation is the most crucial factor in how to engage in a particular translation (Munday 81).

However, linguistic aspects such as meaning in translation have posed problems: what type of meaning is intended? Later, the possible types of meaning are considered essential and are put under the cultural aspects of translation. This new perspective suggests that context, history, and convention must guide translation activities (Bassnett & Lefevere in Munday 125-135). This shift is referred to as the 'cultural turn' in translation: the shift from "translation as text to translation as culture and politics" (Munday 192). Drawing from Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Bruno Latour, this perspective argues that translation usually is a resistance against assimilation by source cultures. As such, translators create new texts, which are hybrids. For cultural translation theorists, equivalence is untenable as there are no clearly separate linguistic and cultural spaces in the contemporary world, so that we find equivalence in culture A for expressions in culture B. Although this paradigm emerged outside of translation studies, translation scholars like Anthony Pym propose the possibility of engaging translation from this perspective. As such, he suggested that translation should consider the translator's point of view so that translation will focus on people instead of focusing on texts. This perspective no longer thought of translation as a linguistic activity carried out in isolation, but as the product of a wider cultural context. In other words, this approach differs from the traditional linguistic approach by which the word, phrase, sentence, and text are the main translational units. With this new perspective, culture is the main translational unit. This approach treats translation as a micrographic cultural shift and focuses on the shift from the source text to the translated text, from the author to the translator and from the source culture to the receptor culture. Translation then becomes a strategy that connects two cultures that, perhaps,

have an unequal power relationship and thus mirroring and sometimes subverting perceptions about the two cultures (Gentzler 59).

The work of early Christian missionaries in translating the Bible into indigenous languages is mainly what defined the formal beginning of translation in Ghana. Motivated by the success of this project, linguists later worked to produce orthographies, dictionaries, and primers for indigenous languages. Noticeable among these early missionary translators were Johann Christaler Gottlieb, who with the help of two local colleagues (names unknown) translated the Bible into Twi. Johannes Zimmermann translated the Bible into Gã in addition to writing a grammar book for the language; and Carl C. Rheindorf and Christian Obobi, who read, wrote, and preached in both Gã, the local language, and the missionaries' languages (Ameko). According to Ameko, there were Muslim scholars at the court of the Asantehene (ruler of Asante) who translated, into Arabic, the historical occurrences and laws of the Asante nation. These translations of Akan records (mainly oral) into Arabic were destroyed in the destruction of Kumasi, the capital city of the Asante nation, by the British army on a number of occasions during the Anglo-Asante wars. These were probably the first formal translators in the territory of present day Ghana (Ameko).

After the attainment of independence, Ghana established an institution to develop her languages: the Bureau of Ghana Languages (BGL). This institution also became responsible for translating classical works into Ghanaian languages for study in schools. In an interview, a prominent literary scholar and poet, Professor Kofi Anyidoho, once attested to the efficacy of this method, like many others of his generation, when he said that he read such works as Tolstoy's stories and the Arabian tales in Ewe (Akomolafe). These translations are now almost extinct.

Andre Lefevere, the main proponent of 'translation as rewriting', suggests that there are factors that control the "acceptance, reception and rejection of a literary text. These factors are power, ideology, institution and manipulation" (Munday 193). The control of literature by these constraints, among others, is what Lefevere refers to as *rewriting* (Munday 193). *Rewriting* is the production of a text based on another text with the intention of adapting that other text to a certain ideology or to a certain poetics and, usually, to both (Hermans 137). Lefevere sees translation as the most obvious form and potentially the most influential form of *rewriting*, as "it is able to project the image of an author and/or a (series of) work in another culture, (Lefevere *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation* 9). Lefevere cites as an example Fitzgeralds translation of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*, where he took liberties with the original, in order to make it follow the western conventions of his time. According to Lefevere, this fundamental process of *rewriting* is evident in translation.

In Lefevere's view, professionals within the system and the patrons outside it direct the function of translation in a literary system. While the professionals (e.g. academics, critics, reviewers, translators) partially control the poetics, the patrons (e.g. institutions, powerful individuals) partially control the ideology (Munday 127-136). *Rewriting* manifested in the early years of postcolonial Ghana. In keeping with his Pan-African ideology, the founding president of Ghana started a full-scale translation initiative. Through the Bureau of Ghana Languages, the initiative was organised and conducted by the state itself and translated western literature into nine Ghanaian languages: Akan, Dangme, Dagbani, Dagaare, Ewe, Gã, Gonja, Kasem, and Nzema. *Rewriting*, translation is done through adherence to or defilement of constrains. In what follows, we discuss some of these constraints.

Constraints on Rewriting

Four major constraints influence rewriting namely, ideology, patronage, poetics and universe of discourse (Lefevere *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation* 9-13). However, Lefevere posits that constraints are conditioning factors and not absolutes. Translators may choose to go with or against them, that is, to stay within the perimeters marked by the constraints, or to challenge those constraints by trying to move beyond them. Ideology is "a set of discourses which wrestle over interests which are in some way relevant to the maintenance or interrogation of power structures central to a whole form of social and historical life" (Eagleton 116 in Lefevere 59). Lefevere maintains that the most important consideration in the translation process is ideology and that ideology and poetics determine the solutions to problems encountered during the translation process.

The tendency of most societies to maintain an ideology makes them resist any attempt that contradicts that society's ideology. For instance, a society that frowns on the explicit exposure of the public to sex and taboo terms may compel a translator of D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterleys Lover* to *rewrite* the novel by substituting taboo words with euphemisms. Lefevere points out that, patrons, that is, the people or institutions that authorize or publish translations, also impose ideologies on the individual translator. When this happens, the foremost reason for which an author writes a book may be lost in the translation of the work and patrons' ideologies take precedence.

Lefevere (*Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation,* 15) refers to patronage as people or institutions "that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature". Translators have limited independence with respect to what and how they translate. Patrons include institutions (e.g. educational establishments, national academies), groups (e.g. political elite,

publishers) and powerful individuals (e.g. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in early postcolonial Ghana). Patronage ensures that the literary system conforms to societal ideology. For instance, institutionalised religions in history detested the translations of scriptural texts such as the Bible into vernacular. It is also encouraged to read the Quran in its original Arabic language. In these cases, translations are perceived to potentially become blasphemous and subverting God's word.

There are three main components of patronage: the ideological component, the economic component and the status component. The ideological component acts as a constraint on subject matter and presentation styles. The economic component is concerned with the remuneration of writers and translators/rewriters. The status component concerns prestige and recognition. Patronage is classified as differentiated or undifferentiated. It is undifferentiated when a single person or institution dispenses all three components, as under totalitarian regimes where focus is directed at maintaining a status quo. Patronage is differentiated when economic success is relatively independent of ideological factors, and does not necessarily bring status with it.

Poetics is generally, what literature should be (Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation* 15-20). Poetics consists of two components: 1. inventory and 2. the function of literature in the social system. The functional aspect of poetics regulate subject matter and ensures that they are relevant to the society. The functional component of poetics is closely connected to the dominant ideology. The institutions which enforce dominant ideologies, for instance, determine the kind of works that can be considered classical and eventually form the canon at a point in time. These works can be recommended for study at universities, among others. They may keep their status so long as they are "reinterpreted or rewritten" in line with the prevailing ideology (Munday 196). While some works attain this status shortly after publication, others take a long time to reach this position. Poetics go beyond languages and societies and determines ideology. An example is the adoption of British English poetics by Anglophone African countries, a legacy of colonialism. The inventory component of poetics is not immediately subjected to direct influence from the institutions and may tend to be more conservative. The conservative influence is evident in how genres lead a shadowy existence as "theoretical possibilities" even when they are not actively used (Lefevere 34-35). A poetics change over time so that the prevailing poetics is different from that which existed at the beginning of a literary system.

Universe of Discourse is described as objects, customs and beliefs that are thought unacceptable in a certain culture. Every society has unique cultures, customs and beliefs. For instance, a thing that is considered a jest differs in various languages, so that, a word-for-word translation is perhaps impossible. In such a case, translation involves a combination of choices. During rewriting,

translators' attitudes toward the Universe of Discourse is heavily influenced by the status of the source culture of the text, the status of the target culture, including the kinds of acceptable texts, acceptable diction, the intended audience and the "cultural scripts", which audiences are familiar with or readily accept (Lefevere 87). The status of the source text can also be an important consideration. A text that is highly respected in its own culture may not have the same status in another culture. In addition, a culture with a low status will prefer translations from a culture or cultures it considers superior to itself.

The Target Text

Shakespeare ƒe Makbet, that is, Walter Blege's translation of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* from English into Ewe, is the target text (TT) in this study. It is the only known translation of Shakespeare's work from English into Ewe. *Macbeth* then is the source text (ST). The translation is targeted at the Ewe people in Ghana, mainly students, since the translation is done mainly for the purpose of teaching and learning the Ewe language especially in the area of developing reading comprehension skills.

Ewe is a member of the Gbe sub-group of the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo language family. The language is spoken in the Volta Region in the south-eastern part of Ghana and other parts of the country. It has about 2,250,000 native speakers, and a national population of 3,112,000 speakers in Ghana (Ethnologue). It also has speakers in other parts of Africa including Togo, Benin and marginally in the Badagry area of south-western Nigeria. There are several dialects of Ewe in Ghana; so the Bremen Mission, circa 19th century, developed a standard. This standard is the written variety and although it is based on the southern Ghana dialects of the language, it is not identical with any of the dialects (Agbozo 18). This standard variety is used in the target text. The Ewe culture then is the receptor culture of this translation.

Ideology in the TT

There are evidences of institutional and individual ideologies in the TT. The government through the BGL imposes the institutional ideology. The individual ideology is that of the translator/rewriter. The BGL is, among other things, to research into and promote Ghanaian cultures (http://www.ghanaculture.gov.gh/index1.php?linkid=331&page=2&sectionid=602). The translator/rewriter is then under a constraint to produce a translation with the parameters that the BGL set. In other words, the translator/rewriter is compelled to produce a translation that is enriched with Ewe cultural nuances and avoid introducing into the TT foreign

ethno-cultural ideas, or if any at all, reduce their prominence by, perhaps, using metonyms. Example (1) is an instance:

(1) (Act 2, Scene 1):
ST: Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep. *Witchcraft celebrates*
Pale Hecate's offerings, and withered murder,

TT: Adze-tɔ-wo le woʃe za kɔnu-wo wɔ-m kple Hekate-hɛ la,
Witchcraft-owner-PL BE their night ritual-PL do-PROG with Hecate-knife the,
Witches are doing their night rituals with the Hecate's knife

In this instance, "Pale Hecate's offerings" translates as "Hekate-hɛ la" which back-translates as "the Hecate's knife". According to Boedeker, Hecate is a goddess in Greek religion and mythology. She is the goddess associated with the dead, the moon, crossroads, torches, dogs, and sacrifices, among other concepts; and mostly portrayed holding two torches, a key, or knife. Hecate is not a known god in Ewe cosmogony or mythology. It does not have an equivalent concept or expression in the Ewe culture that can very well carry the meaning and notion of Hecates like the Greek equivalent. A solution to this lack of equivalence will be the use of several phrases or sentences to express the functions of Hecates. Furthermore, introducing Hecate into the Ewe culture may be considered as cultural adulteration. The translator then uses one feature of Hecate: *knife*, to represent the concept to which audience could associate since they know what a knife is.

The individual ideology of the translator/rewriter also reflects in the TT. Walter Blege, the translator/rewriter of the target text, is a Christian and a member of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the heir to the Bremen Mission in Ghana. Kofi Agawu reported that Blege is also a well-regarded musicologist, and composed a full-length opera titled *Kristo* (Christ), among others. The opera, *Kristo*, is a narrative of the introduction of Christianity into Ewe territory and the sagas that came with it. He also was the founding council president of the church's university college: the Evangelical Presbyterian University College in Ho, Ghana. The translator/rewriter's Christian orientation/ideology perhaps influence the choices he makes, especially concerning religious concepts. For instance, he translates 'hell' as 'tsiẽʃe' rather than 'dzomavɔme':

(2) (Act 2, Scene 1)
ST: I go, and it is done. The bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to *hell*.

TT: He-le yɔ-wo-m be na-va dziʃo loo, alo *tsiẽʃe.*
And-BE call-3SG-PROG to ASP-come heaven NULL, or *afterlife*
And calls you to heaven or to the afterlife

In the Ewe cosmology, 'tsiẽʃe' is a metaphysical abode: the unknown village, across the river (an equivalent of Acheron in Greek mythology). This is where the dead, mostly those who lived good lives, live as ancestors and to be re-born as 'amedzɔdzɔwo', 'the reincarnated'. A bad person's soul wonders in the form of a ghost (restless, haunting, and destroying) until certain rites are performed to 'cleanse' (like purgatory in Catholic theology) him/her before s/he can enter 'tsiẽʃe'.[1] This does not depict a place of suffering like 'hell'; rather it is a place of rest from earthly struggles. This 'afterlife' is an equivalent of the Christian 'heaven'. The Ewe word for 'hell' is 'dzomavɔme (*dzo*:'fire'-*ma*:'PRIVATIVE'-*vɔ*:'finish'-*me*:'in') which means a place of 'eternal fire'. The lexical choice here is, perhaps influenced by a certain ideology. Christian ideology is likely to invoke the assumption that any person that belongs to a different religion is 'unsaved' and goes to 'hell' after death and that it is only the Christian who goes to heaven or a place of comfortable rest after death. In other words, the 'afterlife' of a non-Christian is, perhaps, nothing close to the Christian heaven and since heaven and hell are the only binary variables of the afterlife, hell is the only option for the non-Christian.

Patronage & Universe of Discourse of the TT

The translator/rewriter of the TT is an employee of the BGL. Moreover, as the BGL is a well-known institution and supported by the government, translating for it will perhaps contribute to the ethos of the translator/rewriter among educated Ewe people, and, perhaps, elevate his socio-economic status. The translator will be constrained in service of the power initiated by BGL and by extension, the government. He also stands the risk of losing all privileges if he diverts from the patron's influences. The type of patronage evident here is the undifferentiated where the government, through the BGL, takes control of ideology, economy, and status. This translator, for instance, was later among the founders of the Ghana Education Trust Fund. Although there is no evidence that, this translation was the reason for his appointment by the government into the founding committee; the study assumes that it, perhaps, has some influence in addition to his credentials as a renowned scholar in education and music.

[1] For further discussion, see: Ahortor, Godson. 2016. "Salvation and Morality: the Interconnections in African Thought". *European Scientific Journal,* vol. 12, No. 26: 220-234.

Patronage of the TT also includes its use in the classrooms. For instance, two of the general goals of the teaching syllabus for Ghanaian Languages and Culture in Junior High Schools (elementary schools) are 1. to "appreciate the historical and cultural heritage of [students'] linguistic community", and 2. to "acquire the socio-cultural values in the literature of their language" (Ghana Education Service ii). In addition, a rationale for teaching this subject is to motivate "children to love and be proud of their own culture which is rich in cultural and moral values especially contained in proverbs, folktales, euphemisms, etc." (ibid.). During assessment, "Knowledge and Understanding" take up "40%" of the total grade for this subject. Out of this "30%" is allocated to "reading" and "10%" to "listening" (Ghana Education Service ix). Reading texts such as the TT are therefore essential to students' education.

Regarding universe of discourse, a source text is chosen for a certain reason and the guidelines for the translation are drawn to lead to the achievement of the purpose for the translation. The translator/rewriter works towards meeting the set criteria. Ghana is a former British colony and member of the Commonwealth of Nations. British culture perhaps holds a high status among Ghanaians due to the colonial experience, and this could make some Ghanaians see their own cultures in comparison to British culture. This reflects in naming, for instance. Until recently, some Ghanaians prefer English names to indigenous names, and some translate their indigenous names into English as they grow and become independent of parental control. The same reflects in the choice of the ST. A text in another culture other than British could have been chosen. Germans, for instance, had influences on Ewe language and culture. The current Ewe orthography and the first ever description of the Ewe language was done by German missionary linguists. The choice of a British classic over a German one, for example, is evident of the perceived high status of British culture and Ghana's colonial history as a former British colony likely influenced the choice.

Poetics in the TT

There were literature texts in the Ewe language such as the Adiku's novel *Bumekpɔ* 'Think Through It', and Wiegraebe's *Evegbalexelxle* 'Ewe Reader' during the early postcolonial period in Ghana. The status of Shakespeare's work as a classic or canonical text perhaps influenced the choice. The status of Shakespeare as one of the best writers in history also constrain the choice. This constraint reflects in the title of the TT, which includes the name of the author. The name of the author comes before the tittle of the work. No known work in literature has 'Macbeth' as its tittle, so the author's name could have been omitted from the tittle. By its positioning, the author's name is emphasized to immediately give prestige to the work:

(3)
ST: *Macbeth*

TT: *Shakespeare ƒe Makbet*
Shakespeare POSS (‘s) Macbeth
Shakespeare’s Macbeth

Currently, however, most teachers of the Ewe language use Ewe texts, that are not translations, in the classroom. Examples of these include: (1) novel: Akafia’s *Ku Le Xɔme* ‘Death is in the Room’; (2) Poetry: Seshie’s *Akpalu ƒe Hawo* ‘Akpalu’s Songs’; and (3) Drama: Bidi Setsoafia’s *Tɔgbui Kpeglo II* ‘Chief/King Kpeglo II’, among other texts. This is a change of poetics.

One aspect of poetics concerns the inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, symbols, prototypical characters, and situations. Literary systems have their own inventory that they consider essential to the enrichment of the system. In translation/rewriting, some of these devices are incorporated either purposefully or not. In the Ewe literary system, one of such devices that serve this purpose of linguistic enrichment is the proverb. A proverb is “a phrase, saying, sentence, statement, or expression of the folk which contains above all wisdom, truth, morals, experience, lessons, and advice concerning life and which has been handed down from generation to generation” (Mieder 24). A proverb demands a careful linguistic unmasking before understanding the import of the expression. Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*, stated that proverbs are the oil with which words are eaten. This underscores the essential role of proverbs in the linguistic/cultural adornment of a literary system. In Ewe culture, a proverb is an elevated form of language and being able to incorporate proverbs into one’s utterance is a sign of competence in the language. In this kind of literary system, a translator/rewriter translates some expressions from the ST into the TT as proverbs. It is evident in the TT for this study, that the translator/rewriter does this kind of manipulation. The following is an example:

(4) (Act 3, Scene 4)
ST: Sweet remembrancer!
Now, *good digestion wait on appetite*,
And health on both!

TT: …detsi vivi-e he-a zikpui
…soup sweet-FOC pull-PROG seat
…delicious soup pulls seat (to itself)

Here, an existing Ewe proverb is used as the translation of the English expression that is not necessarily a proverb in the source culture. Had the English expression been a proverb, we may assume that the translator/rewriter tries to maintain the complex linguistic nuance of the ST. The choice of

a proverb as the translation of a non-proverbial expression is, perhaps, an attempt to enrich the TT with such linguistic choices that are considered high language in the receptor culture. The fact that the TT is mainly for teaching the Ewe language to students who might otherwise be incompetent in the language lends credence to this postulation. As stated earlier, one of the general aims for teaching Ghanaian Language and Culture is to "acquire the socio-cultural values in the literature of [the] language" (Ghana Education Service ii). The translator/rewriter helps in achieving this goal.

Towards Developing African Languages Through Translation

Recent studies suggest that most students in various countries in Africa found it burdensome, and to some extent futile, to acquire African languages. For instance, Gamuchirai Tsitsi Ndamba's study in Zimbabwe found in some schools in the Masvingo district that the majority of respondents favoured English as a medium of instruction right from the infant grades so that they can better acquire the English language. According to the respondents, English is a gateway to success in school and subsequent employment opportunities. Elsewhere (Agbozo 73-78), I found similar results in Ghana and Herbert Igboanusi found same in Nigeria.

A similar situation is prevalent in the area of creative writing. Most of the major novels, drama, and collections of poetry in contemporary Africa are written in the Indo-European languages, with English dominating the statistics. In the Ewe language for instance, the last major known creative work was published in the early 1990s. The major creative writing awards on the continent: the Golden Baobab Prize, the Cain Prize and the Etisalat Prize, consider only works written in English. The only known African language award is the Mbati-Cornell Kiswahili Prize for African Literature which Cornell University administers.[2] There is also the dearth of translations of Indo-European classics into African languages unlike the case in the early postcolonial period.

In the midst of these, translation is a potential socio-psychological method of revitalizing African and other lesser-known languages. "Translation [is] a kind of dialogue or conversation among languages [and it] is another challenge to the orthodoxy" (Ngũgĩ 5) of Indo-European languages' hegemony. The positive attitudes that people have towards the Indo-European languages could be manipulated by persuading people to shift this positive attitude to works that are translated from those languages. Social psychologists (e.g. Eagly & Chaiken) believe that persuasion can influence people to modify their beliefs,

[2] http://kiswahiliprize.cornell.edu/

values, and or attitudes. What we must do in the 21st century and beyond is to translate major works from the Indo-European languages into African languages. In addition, we must translate the winning stories, novels, and poems in the creative writing contests on the continent into African languages. The curiosity that will develop among readers to find out how these works turn out in their own languages will make them read these translations. Such translations could be manipulated/rewritten so that rich linguistic nuances in the African languages are incorporated. As the readers read these translations, they get to learn their own language. Jalada Africa sets an example of this proposition when it translated Ngũgĩ's short story "The Upright Revolution: Or Why Humans Walk Upright" into 30 African languages in 2016.[3]

Conclusion

As exemplified in this paper, translation includes cultural and ideological transportations and that translations are produced under various constraints, as they are constituents of complex literary systems. Translation then is realised as *rewriting* and undertaken within the framework of the target language, culture, and ideology in the service of power. The theory brought a new perspective to translation studies. Translation is not static. An activity is subject to transformations. This makes translation keep up with the Global Turn and equip translation studies to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world (Darian-Smith & McCarty). The translation of *Macbeth* from English into Ewe, as shown in this study, provides a ground for upholding Lefevere's assertion that translation is a form of *rewriting*. However, it remains to be seen whether it is only *rewriting* that the translator of this work does, since he also finds equivalences of the ST in the TT. Translation could also be adopted as a method of developing African languages especially in an era where interest in these languages is dwindling.

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[3] https://jaladaafrica.org/2016/03/22/jalada-translation-issue-01-ngugi-wa-thiongo/

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Shakespeare in Hawai‘i: Puritans, Missionaries, and Language Trouble in James Grant Benton's *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, a Hawaiian Pidgin Translation of *Twelfth Night*[1]

Abstract: In 1974, the Honolulu-based director James Grant Benton wrote and staged *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, a Hawaiian pidgin translation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. In Benton's translation, Malolio (Malvolio) strives to overcome his reliance on pidgin English in his efforts to ascend the Islands' class hierarchy. In doing so, Malolio alters his native pidgin in order to sound more *haole* (white). Using historical models of Protestant identity and Shakespeare's original text, Benton explores the relationship between pidgin language and social privilege in contemporary Hawai‘i. In the first part of this essay, I argue that Benton characterizes Malolio's social aspirations against two historical moments of religious conflict and struggle: post-Reformation England and post-contact Hawai‘i. In particular, I show that Benton aligns historical caricatures of early modern puritans with cultural views of Protestant missionaries from New England who arrived in Hawai‘i beginning in the 1820s. In the essay's second part, I demonstrate that Benton crafts Malolio's pretentious pidgin by modeling it on Shakespeare's own language. During his most ostentatious outbursts, Malolio's lines consist of phrases extracted nearly verbatim from Shakespeare's original play. In *Twelf Nite*, Shakespeare's language becomes a model for speech that is inauthentic, affected, and above all, *haole*.

Keywords: *Twelfth Night*, Reformation studies, puritanism, pidgin and creole languages.

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In 1974, James Grant Benton (1949-2002), a local Honolulu director, actor, and stand-up comic, took Illyria—the mythical backdrop of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*—and reimagined the island in terms of contemporary Hawai'i. Benton's adaptation was staged that December in Honolulu at the University of Hawai'i's Kennedy Theatre in collaboration with Kumu Kahua Theatre, and the play has been performed several times in Hawai'i and once in Los Angeles during the past four decades since Benton's first production.[2] Benton's play is unique in that it is written entirely in Hawaiian Creole English—or what locals from Hawai'i simply call pidgin, or Hawaiian pidgin. Benton titled his play the irreverent *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*—the pidgin rendition of Shakespeare's original title, *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*. In *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, linguistic mobility along the pidgin spectrum is linked with social mobility in contemporary Hawai'i. In Benton's translation, Malolio (Malvolio) becomes a pivot for the play's exploration of class, race, and language tensions on the Islands.[3] In his efforts to woo his mistress Princess Mahealani (Olivia) and marry up in the Islands' social hierarchy, Malolio alters his native pidgin in order to sound more *haole*—the Hawaiian term for foreigner, or more generally, a white person. While Malvolio speaks more or less like the other characters in Shakespeare's original play, Benton's Malolio is wholly subsumed by his quest for linguistic self-fashioning as he struggles to give up his native pidgin for a language that he thinks resembles standard English.

In *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, Benton deploys both historical and linguistic models in crafting Malolio's pretentious behavior and speech patterns. My argument in this essay is two-fold: first, I demonstrate that Benton characterizes Malolio's social aspirations within the interlinking contexts of religious conflict in both early modern England and in post-contact Hawai'i; in particular, Benton aligns historical caricatures of radical puritans with cultural views of Protestant missionaries from New England who arrived in Hawai'i beginning in the 1820s. Malolio's character is palimpsestic, bearing the traces of two interposed historical moments of confessional identity and conflict. In the second portion of this essay, I argue that Benton reaches back to the early modern world not only to reimagine the roots of Anglo-American religious radicalism but also to reimagine Shakespeare's original language within the linguistic and social context of contemporary Hawaii. In Benton's play, echoes of Shakespeare's own

[2] Since its inaugural 1974 performance, *Twelf Nite* has been performed in Honolulu at Mid-Pacific School/Kumu Kahua (1985-1986 season), Diamond Head Theatre (1994-1995 season), the University of Hawai'i's Kennedy Theatre (April-May 2005), and the Hawaiian Mission Houses (August 2013, August 2017). It has been produced once in Los Angeles by the East West Players (May-July 1995).

[3] In discussing the two plays, I use Shakespeare's original character names in reference to *Twelfth Night,* and Benton's Hawaiian-inflected names in my treatment of the equivalent scenes in *Twelf Nite*.

language resurface in surprising moments—most prominently in Malolio's haughty gripes about the other characters. What is surprising about Benton's translation is that Malolio's most pretentious and verbose moments of speech are often comprised of phrases that are extracted almost word-for-word from Shakespeare's original rendering of the lines. In *Twelf Nite*, Shakespearean language becomes a model for what inauthentic, scolding, affected, and *haole* language sounds like. Religious radicalism compounded with Shakespeare's own language provide the unlikely historical and linguistic scaffolding for Benton's creation of a modern Malolio, a character who enables local audiences to reflect on what it means that the way one speaks often determines class privilege and economic advancement in contemporary Hawai‘i.

Pidgin, Race, and Privilege in Hawai‘i: from the Nineteenth Century to the Present

A discussion of *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*'s historical and linguistic frameworks must begin with an overview of Hawaiian pidgin. It is important to note that Hawaiian pidgin is distinct from the Hawaiian language itself, which is the language that the Native Hawaiians—or *kānaka maoli*—spoke prior to contact with Westerners, and what some Native Hawaiians continue to speak today. By contrast, Hawaiian pidgin has its origins in Hawai‘i's plantation economy and is a creole language that bears the linguistic features of Hawaiian, English, and the languages that immigrant plantation workers brought with them from throughout the Pacific Rim. The first sugarcane plantation was established in Hawai‘i in 1835; in subsequent decades, immigrant laborers began arriving from China, Japan, Okinawa, the Philippines, Portugal, and Puerto Rico to work in the Islands' plantations (Sakoda and J. Siegel 3-14). Pidgin developed in response to the language pressures of these multilinguistic working conditions, in which Native Hawaiians and recent arrivals found themselves laboring alongside each other in Hawai‘i's sugarcane and pineapple fields. Marleen Booth and Kanalu Young offer the following definition of the language in their 2009 documentary film *Pidgin: The Voice of Hawai‘i*, produced by Pau Hana Films:

> Pidgin one language we talk in Hawai‘i. Mo den half da peopo hea. Different from Hawaiian. Maybe a little bit like English, but get all kine stuff from odda kine languages mix in. Like from Hawaiian, Cantonese, Portuguese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino—you know, all da peopo wen work da plantations.[4]

[4] Additional details about *Pidgin: The Voice of Hawaii* can be found at http://pidginthevoiceofhawaii.com, and DVD copies of the documentary can be purchased directly through the website. An opening selection of the documentary can be found on

Pidgin was born out of these multicultural social and labor conditions. Pidgin—first one that was based primarily on Hawaiian, and then one based primarily on English[5]—provided a common language through which the workers could communicate with each other and the *luna*, or plantation overseers. These *luna*, like the workers, were also non-*haole* immigrants to the Islands. While Hawai‘i no longer relies on a plantation economy, which has been supplanted by international and domestic tourism, pidgin is still spoken to some degree by a majority of residents of Hawai‘i. One estimate attributes pidgin usage as a first language to about half of the state's 1.4 million inhabitants ("Ethnologue"),[6] and pidgin continues to remain the primary language of Hawai‘i's working class.

Most Hawai‘i locals are bilingual, and can speak to some degree both pidgin and standard English. That Benton chose to undertake a pidgin translation of Shakespeare was unprecedented, considering the language's history of being vilified and suppressed in Hawai‘i. Discrimination against pidgin speakers in Hawai‘i has long been a covert mode of racial and socioeconomic disenfranchisement, both in the work force and in the public education system. Kent Sakoda and Jeff Siegel, linguists at the University of Hawai‘i, have described the stigma attached to pidgin usage on the Islands: "While recognized as being important to local culture, [pidgin] has at the same time been denigrated as corrupt or "broken" English, and seen as an obstacle to learning standard English, the official language of the schools, government, and big business" (18). Beginning in 1924 up through the 1960s, territorial Hawai‘i implemented a two-tier public school system comprised of English standard schools and district schools. In order to gain enrollment in the English standard school system, children had to pass examinations demonstrating oral proficiency in standard American English; those who spoke English as a second language or pidgin English were often relegated to an alternative district school system for students who could not pass the standard English language exams. Judith Hughes (70-1), of the University of Hawai‘i, has noted that the two-tier school system was motivated as much by race and class anxieties as it was by concerns over educational quality, in that the alternative school system kept pidgin speakers segregated from children whose families spoke proper American English. Even after the dismantling of the English Standard School system, contention remained over pidgin use in Hawai‘i's classrooms. In 1987, the Board of Education (BOE) of Hawai‘i proposed a policy on language use in the classroom, which sought to ban the use of pidgin in the public schools

YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7X9AAeDCr4. Accessed October 26, 2017.

[5] For a discussion of the transition from a primarily Hawaiian-based pidgin to an English-inflected one, beginning around 1875, see Sakoda and J. Siegel (5-6).

[6] For an illuminating discussion of this statistic, see Alia Wong's 2015 *The Atlantic* essay on the stigma facing Hawaiian pidgin speakers.

(Lippi-Green 168). In the workplace, pidgin likewise has been perceived as a professional liability. In 1985, Hawai‘i-born meteorologist James Kahakua applied for a broadcast position with the Honolulu office of the National Weather Service. While the weather service found Kahakua qualified, his interviewers told him that his pidgin English disqualified him for the job; ultimately, they hired another candidate from Ohio, who had less meteorological experience than Kahakua. Two years later, the same year that the BOE proposed outlawing pidgin in the classroom, the state's ninth district court heard Kahakua's case. Kahakua lost the lawsuit (Lippi-Green 182). As Kahakua's attorney described the situation: "The employer did not want Kahakua on the radio because [he] did not sound White" (Hearn; qtd. in Lippi-Green 184). To speak pidgin in Hawai‘i has been, and continues to be, grounds for discrimination in every phase of one's life—from the schoolyard to the workplace.

As a result of longstanding attempts to suppress the use of pidgin in the classroom and in professional contexts, pidgin speakers still face social stigma in contemporary Hawai‘i. Writing in 1938, John Reinecke, a sociologist at the University of Hawai‘i, described how the desire to speak standard American English in Hawai‘i often embodies a desire to become more *haole*—or white—and to partake in *haole* privilege. What Reinecke wrote in 1938 remains an astonishingly accurate description of perceptions of language and social class in Hawai‘i today:

> The emotion-charged attitudes associated practically everywhere with the use of different levels of speech take on additional significance in Hawaii, for there the type of English spoken is connected with race as well as with class differences. The only persons to whom standard English is native are (roughly speaking) the few Americans and British, locally known as Haoles, who occupy an envied position of economic advantage. Good English and the Haole are associated in the popular mind. "A Haole," defined a Japanese girl, "is a person who speaks a beautiful language." To be like a Haole has been, by and large, to share in his economic and social advantages, to feel one's self more closely approximate to that state of a "real American" which the schools and press glorify. Yet at the same time it implies being "haolefied," dissociating one's self from one's class and racial group. Therefore the use of "good English," always a class fetish emphasized by the pedagogic mind, becomes in Hawaii doubly a fetish, about which play ambivalent sets of attitudes. (Reinecke 783)

One ramification of this past and ongoing discrimination against pidgin speakers in Hawai‘i is that there is only a small albeit growing body of literature written in Hawaiian pidgin.[7] Although a small number of Hawai‘i-born writers have

[7] In recent years, writers from Hawai‘i—including the novelist Lois Ann Yamanaka, the slam poet and essayist Lee Tonouchi, the short story writer Darrell H. Y. Lum, and

begun publishing both literary and scholarly writing in Hawaiian pidgin in the decades since Benton's production, *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* was one of the first attempts to reimagine pidgin as a language suitable for literary writing. *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* is a translation into the vernacular, an attempt to make Shakespeare's language come alive for an audience who speaks pidgin as their native language. The pidgin of Benton's play is vigorous yet agile, and his language captures the range of emotions, settings, and moods that Shakespeare's original version evokes. In writing *Twelf Nite*, Benton elevates pidgin to the literary stature of Shakespeare's original language, while at the same time questioning the claims to privilege and exclusivity that this literary inheritance represents for local audiences.

Much like contemporary Hawai'i, Benton's pidgin translation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* contains a multitude of pidgins.[8] In *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, the pidgin English of Benton's characters not only reflects their actual social standing but also their social aspirations. Indeed, while all of Benton's characters speak pidgin to some degree, the heaviness of their pidgin differs according to their social class. Dennis and Elsa Carroll, theater critics at the University of Hawai'i, describe the play's various pidgins as such: "[t]he most pretentious, inflexible, and studied characters … [use] the lightest pidgin; the most unpretentious and spontaneous characters, … [use] the heaviest and most free-wheeling" (67).[9] Among all of Benton's characters, however, Malolio alone makes a concerted effort to remake his language in his efforts to direct his social and economic fate.

Benton's Malolio grapples with the legacy of a language that has been stigmatized. He despises pidgin, even as he speaks it himself. He tries to

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the poet Joe Balaz—have published literary works in Hawaiian pidgin. In 2000, the first translation of the New Testament was published under the title *Da Jesus Book*, the culmination of thirteen years of translation work by the Pidgin Bible Translation Group, a local group of twenty-seven pidgin speakers and biblical studies scholars. Additional details about *Da Jesus Book* project can be found at http://www.pidginbible.org/ and a reading from the pidgin translation of the Lord's Prayer from Matthew 6: 9-13 can be watched on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9_V5BXaXJc. Accessed on October 26, 2017.

[8] According to Sakoda and J. Siegel, "Pidgin remains a primarily spoken language, and it is spoken in a variety of ways. Some people speak "heavy" or "strong" Pidgin, which is very different from English. (Linguists call this form the "basilect.") Other people speak a "lighter" form of Pidgin, which is close to standard English. "This is called the "acrolect.") The majority of speakers speak varieties in between (the "mesolects") and can switch back and forth between lighter or heavier forms of Pidgin as required by contextual factors such as who they're talking to, topic, setting, and formality" (19-20).

[9] For a discussion of the registers of the pidgin in *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, see also Dennis Carroll's editorial note to Benton's play (185).

suppress pidgin speech—both in others and in himself. In Benton's version, as in Shakespeare's original, Malolio chastises Count Opu-nui (Sir Toby Belch), Sir Andrew Waha (Sir Andrew Aguecheek), and Lope (Feste) for their boisterous revelries. But in Benton's adaptation, Malolio takes offense not just at the loudness of the holiday merriment, but also at the language in which that merriment is being expressed. Consider what he says to the raucous trio here, in both Shakespeare and Benton's respective versions:

> Malvolio: Have you no wit, manners, nor honesty but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night? (Greenblatt et al. 2.3.82-3)
>
> Malolio: You bagas crazy, o wat? You no mo brains, manners, o honesty except but to *babble like women who pound poi* at dis time of da night? (Benton 200)[10]

In Shakespeare's play, Malvolio likens the trio's noisy merriment to the clanging of tinkers, or itinerant metal workers who repaired pots and pans for customers as they traveled from town to town. But Benton's Malolio describes this ruckus with a striking comparison that seems to have little to do with the Shakespearean original, likening their babbling to the sound made by women who pound poi—a food staple in Hawaiian culture, made from the pounded and fermented tubers of the taro plant.

Interestingly, the Hawaiian word for pidgin is *‘ōlelo pa‘i ‘ai*, which means literally, "pounding taro language." It is uncertain as how that term came to be, but what is clear from Malolio's screed is that he takes offense not just at the loudness of the revelers, which is the import in the original Shakespearean comparison; rather, he rails against the language in which those revelers are expressing themselves, which is pidgin. Malolio hates pidgin. He hates how it sounds and he hates its social association with Hawai‘i's working class. He hates pidgin, even as he—and perhaps especially because he—speaks pidgin himself. So he works to eradicate all traces of pidgin from his own language, even as he struggles to figure out exactly how proper English should work. As Malolio struggles to assimilate the *haole* language of the Protestant missionaries into his native pidgin, Benton explores his character's language anxieties against the backdrop of early modern English religious conflict.[11]

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[10] I cite all further references to the play parenthetically by page number, as Benton's prose translation does not make use of line numbers.

[11] In a parallel case study, the anthropologist Webb Keane (*Christian Moderns*; and "Sincerity, "Modernity," and Protestantism") has argued that religious belief often manifests itself in material and linguistic markers of identity—what he terms a "semiotic ideology." In studies of Dutch Calvinist missions to the Indonesian island of Sumba, beginning with the Dutch East Indies ventures, Keane argues that the arrival of Protestantism on the island shaped the Sumbanese sense of subjectivity and agency. I thank Gabriel Tusinski for these references.

Two men pounding *poi*, a Hawaiian food staple made from fermented taro. Waimeia, Kauai. R. J. Baker (c. 1912). Hawaii State Archives Collections.

English Puritans and New England Missionaries in *Twelf Nite*

In Shakespeare's play, Maria describes Malvolio's killjoy tendencies using the language of radical confessional identity: "Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of Puritan" (2.3.129). In her assessment of Malolio, Benton's Kukana offers blunter commentary: "Well, I know dat he is one Puritan," she insists (201). Upon finding Maria's letter with its cryptic reference to M. O. A. I., Shakespeare's Malvolio reveals his conviction that he has been favored by Jove—a conviction not unlike the Reformed belief in election.[12] He exclaims: "Jove and my stars be praised. … Jove, I thank thee!" (2.5.150-55). In his adaptation, Benton plays up Shakespeare's original confessional elements, translating the interjected references to Jove in ways that highlight Malolio's religious fanaticism and

[12] David Bevington (328) has noted the similarities between Malvolio's conviction that Jove has his economic interests in mind, and Reformed views of personal election.

delusion. While a 1606 act of Parliament banned the practice of using God's name on the secular English stage,[13] Benton's adaptation is, of course, not limited by religious and political attempts at censorship, leaving him free to reimagine Shakespeare's lines as an unmistakable profession of Malolio's Protestant faith: "Praise da Lord and my stars. … Tanks again, eh, God" (209). In Shakespeare's version, Malvolio's final line appears: "I will smile, I will do everything that thou wilt have me" (2.3.154-5). In the original, he addresses Olivia, professing that he will do exactly as she purportedly commands in her letter: "Thy smiles become thee well. Therefore in my presence still smile, dear my sweet, I prithee" (2.3.152-4). But Benton cuts the lines about smiling, thus rendering Malolio's final line as a kind of prayer, a direct address to God: "I going do everything dat you like me do," he says (209). Malolio reemphasizes his new-found certainty that he has found favor with God at the end of Act 3, after misreading his mistress' reaction to his sartorial decision to don yellow garters: "dis is God's work, so tanks, eh, God. … Nutting can come between me and Mahealani except air. One mo time, tanks, eh, God" (217). More so than in the Shakespearean original, Benton's Malolio traces the source of what he believes will be his good fortune to divine providence. As Malolio senses that he is on the cusp of moving up Hawaii's social hierarchy, he begins pandering to the God of the *haole* missionaries.

Past productions of *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* have dramatized Malolio's particular brand of religious fervor. In the 1995 production of *Twelf Nite* at Honolulu's Diamond Head Theatre, which featured Benton himself as Malolio, Benton has his character flash God the shaka sign—a local gesture of solidarity, born out of Hawaii's surfing culture. Benton's Malolio, in Benton as Malolio, is certain that he has God on his side (Ardolino 23). That same year, the Los Angeles's East West Players staged the only continental United States production of the play to date, directed by Brian Nelson (Foley). Nelson visually tracked Malolio's growing religious preoccupations by having him sport an oversized silver cross, a reference to multiple and overlapping cultural contexts: Nelson's cross is a visual marker of the puritan antitheatricalism that posed threats to the Renaissance stage, the Protestantism brought to Hawaii by the New England missionaries in the 1800s, and the variety of contemporary American evangelical fundamentalism that attacks religious and cultural diversity.

[13] William P. Holden has interpreted Malvolio's prayers to Jove as indication of his religious hypocrisy: "A stage Puritan would not lightly traffic with the heathen Jove, nor with the Christian God" (125). However, Holden's argument ignores the constraints imposed by the Parliamentary prohibition against using God's name on the secular stage. For a discussion of the parliamentary act, see Jeffrey Knapp (1-21).

James Grant Benton as Prince Amalu (Orsino) in the original 1974 Kumu Kahua production of *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* Directed by Terence Knapp. Kennedy Theatre, University of Hawai‘i archives.

Religious fervor, in both Shakespeare and Benton's plays, is inextricably linked with a particular culture of reading. Shakespeare's Malvolio suffers from a tendency popularly associated with early modern English puritans—a penchant for reading so literally as to distort the cultural and inherited meaning of texts, especially scriptural texts. In his convoluted interpretation of Maria's forged letter—his attempts to decode the cipher-like M. O. A. I.—Malvolio employs the contorted textual reading practices that the English cleric Richard Hooker criticizes in the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*. According to Hooker, puritans abuse "the word of God, whether it be by misconstruction of the sense of by falsification of the words" (1:99, 304).[14] In his study on Reformation reading

[14] Referenced in Maurice Hunt ("Malvolio, Viola, and the Question of Instrumentality" 282). For an expanded version of Hunt's argument about stage portrayals of Puritans in light of Hooker's ecclesiastical theology, see Hunt's chapter by the same title

practices, James Simpson echoes Hooker's frustration with reformist reading habits that seek to interpret texts outside of their larger historical and cultural traditions. Simpson has argued that radical puritan encounters with texts attempted to repudiate all textual ambiguity—even as those Reformed readers relied on textual ambiguity to further their own scriptural interpretations:

> For all the intensity and ambiguity of this reading experience, the converted reader must, however, simultaneously become a tireless reader, and yet deny the possibility of ambiguity in scriptural reading. The plain, evident simplicity of Scripture is perhaps the most insistent theme of evangelical polemic in this period… Evangelical writers must make this commitment [to the literal sense of scriptural text] for many reasons, not least because, if a movement is to ground itself on a text, the text must be unambiguous. If evangelical polemic must insist on the plainness and easy legibility of the literal sense, however, it must also strenuously repress its moment of origin in the reading of ambiguity. (90-91)

It is precisely this habit of radical puritan reading, one that erases existing social and cultural contexts to pursue a self-serving textual interpretation, that characterizes Malvolio's tortured attempts to extract meaning from what turns out to be an inherently nonsensical text.

In staging Malvolio's fall, Maria crafts a trap perfectly tailored for a reader with puritan literalist tendencies. In attempting to make sense of the cryptic assemblage of letters referenced in the Maria's letter—M. O. A. I.—Malvolio acknowledges that the letters do not quite appear in the sequence that they should in his own name. Regardless, he insists on extracting an interpretation from the text to justify his belief that he has been predestined, not to a heavenly elect, but to a social and economic one. In his interpretation of the letter, Malvolio adopts a specious reading practice that is reminiscent of puritan literalism: "M. O. A. I. This simulation is not as the former. And yet to crush this a little, it would bow to me, for every one of these letters are in my name" (2.5.122-4).[15] Malvolio is intent on "crushing" the text to make it conform to his prior interpretation, to render textual ambiguity decidedly unambiguous.[16]

(*Shakespeare's Religious Allusiveness* 73-96). For an earlier readings of Hooker's response to Puritan literalism in light of Malvolio's narrow reading practices, see also Simmons (182); and James F. Forrest (261-2, 264).

[15] Benton's translation of the lines reads: ""M. O. A. I." Dis meaning no stay da same; and yet, if I wen bend da letta, da baga would bow to me, because every one of dose lettas stay in my name" (208).

[16] The resonances between Malvolio's tortured reading practices and Reformation literalism has been documented by critics. For a partial list, see Maurice Hunt ("Malvolio, Viola, and the Question of Instrumentality" 282-3); Hunt (*Shakespeare's Religious Allusiveness* 78-9); Bevington (328); Paul N. Siegel (222-4); J. L. Simmons (182); Donna B. Hamilton (97); and Aaron M. Myers (32). In finding historical models

In Benton's play, Malolio is reviled by the other characters in large part because of his bookish tendencies and aspirations—a detail that is entirely Benton's own development. In *Twelf Nite*, Kukana criticizes Malolio's tendency to parrot what he's read from books, not insignificantly, within the context of the fact that he, like her, is a mere laborer:

> Kukana: Da devil of one Puritan dat he is, and everything he say to peopo he wen read from one book; and *when he do his work around da house and you look at him, he tinking, "Dese guys love me and wat I do."* So because we got his ack wired, dis is how my revenge going fo work. (202, emphasis mine)
>
> Maria: The devil a puritan that he is, or anything constantly but a time-pleaser, an affectioned ass that cons state without book and utters it by great swaths. The best persuaded of himself—so crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies—that it is his grounds of faith that all look on him love. And on that vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work. (2.3.135-41)

Kukana scorns Malolio on account of his status as a laborer, in lines that have no precedent in Maria's parallel speech in Shakespeare's original version. Malolio is a worker, like the others, in a wealthy woman's house, which marks him as a part of Hawai'i's working class. It is the contradiction between what Malolio is—a blue-collar hospitality worker—and what he aspires to be that infuriates Kukana. Another difference between the two versions of the play is that while Shakespeare's Malvolio reads books written in his own vernacular English, this isn't the case for Benton's Malolio. For Benton's local audiences, it would be clear that Malolio's books are written in standard English, not the pidgin of everyday conversation. With a few exceptions—including Benton's own play—pidgin has never been a written language with its own orthography. It is not a stretch to see that Kukana's attack on Malolio's bookishness is a barely veiled attack on his aspiration to "talk *haole*."

Kukana's criticism of Malolio's pretenses encodes a suspicion that his variety of puritan-like behavior is an excuse for his efforts at social advancement. Her economic argument against the legitimacy of Malolio's bookishness resonates with caricatures of the stock puritan character in early modern stage plays, which attributed radical reformist tendencies to those who were overly eager to scale the social strata.[17] As Paul N. Siegel has pointed out,

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for Malvolio's alleged puritanism, Hunt (*Shakespeare's Religious Allusiveness* 78) has noted similarities between Malvolio's excitement over the cryptic M. O. A. I. and the preference among some Reformists for using hieroglyphs and cyphers to chronicle their spiritual progress. On this point, Hunt cites William Haller (97).

[17] For an overview of the stock puritan figure in early modern performance, see Holden (125); and Hamilton (94). The hypocritical puritan character remained a stock role on

contemporary charges against puritans often hinged on claims that their religion served as a front for their own economic and material self-interests:

> This was a standard charge made against Puritans: they do not really believe in their religion or any other religion but use it as a means to hide the evil they perform to advance their material interests… When Maria says, therefore, that Malvolio is not constantly a Puritan or anything else but a "time-pleaser" (that is, one who adapts his conduct to the opportunities afforded by time), she is merely making the charge that was made against Puritans generally: they are concerned with their religion only insofar as it serves their profit. (218)

In Benton's adaptation, Malolio's new-found interest in books is directly linked to his desire for economic and social advancement. He sees reading books as a direct means to bettering himself, to proving in practice that he is the socially elite person that he already believes that he is elected to become:

> Malolio: I going be proud, I going read smart books. I going baffle Count Opunui, I going remake myself; I mean, I going be one champion boy. I no tink I fooling myself, because every reasoning points to dis, dat my lady love me! (209)

In his reimaging of a Hawaiian Illyria, Benton reworks early modern caricatures of puritans as social climbers hungry for material and social gain, and also as bad readers who misinterpret texts and their contexts. In Benton's dramatization, Malolio falls into a trap that is custom made for someone who aspires to be more bookish, but who, as a native pidgin speaker, finds written language both baffling and obscure. When he comes upon the letter that Kukana has written, he reveals his own unfamiliarity with the mechanics of how written language works: "Ooo prose, gotta conscioustrate," he proclaims (208). He misreads the written letter, and it is his very reliance upon written language that eventually leads to his temporary incarceration.

For Malolio, it is written texts—and specifically, books written in standard English—that embody true social capital. Malolio wants language to be absolutely unambiguous, and for that, it needs to be written down and standardized—de-pidginized, so to speak. In the process of doing so, he strips that language of its wider cultural contexts. His desire to start reading in order to improve his language and his ability to speak standard English—the English of the Protestant missionaries and the American mainlanders—is opposed to the Hawaiian language, which had no written equivalent prior to contact with

early modern stage, making appearances in the drama of Ben Jonson, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Middleton, William Cartwright, and Jasper Mayne—among others. For an illuminating discussion of Shakespeare's treatment of puritans within the context of early modern antipuritan stage satire, see Knapp (51).

outsiders. And of course, his desire to learn to speak from books runs contrary to the orality of Hawaiian pidgin, ever changing to suit the needs of Hawaii's diverse population. Written language promises what Malolio feels that pidgin, with its plantation roots and oral heritage, can never offer: the promise of social mobility and *haole* privilege.

Malolio and Linguistic Self-hatred

In his efforts to speak like the books he reads, Malolio unwittingly commits a number of social and linguistic gaffes. Indeed, much of the comic relief of Benton's play centers on Malolio's unsuccessful attempts to speak standard English when he is trying to prove his social superiority before the others. But for Benton's audience members who are familiar with Shakespeare's own play text, these moments of comic buffoonery are striking in that they jangle with phrases from the original. In other words, Benton creates Malolio's pretentious language by incorporating unadulterated lines from the Shakespearean text, which against the pidgin of the play, sound comical and pretentious. An example of Benton's tendency to do this occurs in 1.5, in which Malolio chastises Princess Mahealani (Olivia) for taking delight in Lope's (Feste's) antics. Here is what Malvolio says about Feste in Shakespeare's version:

> Malvolio: I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal. I saw him put down the other days with an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone. Look you now, he's out of his guard already. Unless you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged. (1.5.75-9)

Compare the lines above to Benton's version, in which I have italicized the phrases that are verbatim Shakespeare:

> Malolio: I tink dat *I marvel* dat you *take delight* in one *barren rascal*. I saw om make facetious wid one regular *fool dat had no mo brain* den one piece of black coral. Look at him, he no can tink already. *Unless you laugh and minister occasion to him*, he get stuck throat. (194, emphasis mine)

Benton's literary strategy in crafting Malolio's inauthentic language is to lift phrases directly from Shakespeare. In a surprising application of Shakespeare's language, Benton has Malolio appear at his most pretentious precisely when he's speaking Shakespeare's own language, leaving his audience to assume that at least some of the books that Malolio is reading include Shakespeare's own works. In *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, Shakespeare's language serves as a model for

pretentious, inauthentic language—the very kind of language for which Malolio is mocked, both by the other characters and by Benton's audience of Hawai‘i locals. There is a word in pidgin to describe Malolio's pretentious language: "hybolic." One local pidgin reference book from the Islands humorously defines it as an attempt to "talk like one intellectual-kine *haole*"—or in other words, to try to sound like an educated, upperclass white person (Johnston, "Hybolic"). When Benton wants Malolio to come across as most "hybolical," he leaves Shakespeare more or less intact.

Malolio is not the only character who speaks verbatim Shakespeare, and not all of Benton's verbatim uses of Shakespeare come across as sounding ludicrous. Indeed, some of the play's most moving lines are those that correspond most closely with the original text. For example, in Benton's rendition, Lahela (the equivalent of Shakespeare's Viola in disguise as the boy Cesario) presents a powerful meditation upon the accidental comic-tragic mix-up, as she realizes that Mahealani has fallen for her—the mere messenger—instead of falling, as planned, for her master the Count Amalu (Orsino):

> Lahela: I mean I know Prince Amalu neva give me no ring … I must be da man. If it be so, poor lady, she would be betta to love one dream. […] You know, as women, it's our frailty dat is da cause—not we—fo dat's wat we made of, and such we be! […]" (199).

For the most part, Lahela's pidgin is a direct rendering of Shakespeare's verse:

> Viola: None of my lord's ring? Why, he sent her none.
> I am the man. If it be so, as 'tis,
> Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
> …
> Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we,
> For such as we are made of, such we be. (2.3.23-25, 30-1)

Benton's version is an expertly calibrated pidgin equivalent of the original language. Considering how unusual it is to hear and read pidgin in literary and poetic contexts, Benton understood that lines like these would astonish native pidgin speakers encountering them for the first time. At the same time, Benton was unwilling to leave the translation intact, and he inserts abrupt pidgin interjections into Lahela's speech:

> Lahela: I mean I know Prince Amalu neva give me no ring … I must be da man. If it be so, poor lady, she would be betta to love one dream. *Ho, ass why so hard!*[18] You know, as women, it's our frailty dat is da

[18] *Ass why hard*: That's why hard. Pidgin equivalent of "Tough luck."

> cause—not we—fo dat's wat we made of, and such we be! *Ass not fair*![19] (199, italics mine)

What are we to make of the unevenness of Benton's rendition, of his tendency to suddenly veer away from the original into pidgin colloquialisms?

Benton's tendency to insert pidgin interjections into otherwise luminous translations of Shakespeare has been viewed not as indication of Benton's iconoclasm, but as evidence of his play's literary flaws. For example, according to Frank R. Ardolino, a theater critic in attendance at the 1995 Diamond Head production, the play's pidgin rendering posed an aesthetic failure on Benton's part to fully incorporate pidgin into the original, or to find an equivalent for Shakespeare's language: "Benton's most extensive and important linguistic changes involve the finding of pidgin equivalents for Shakespeare's poetic images. … but sometimes Benton's pidgin awkwardly deflates the tone of Shakespeare's words" (24). Dennis Carroll and Elsa Carroll offer a more generous interpretation of the disruptions caused by Benton's pidgin interjections, arguing that Benton deliberately retreats from Shakespeare in the name of comic relief:

> Benton repeatedly used a tactic of deliberately blaspheming against some of Shakespeare's poetry, first setting the audience into a misleading mood of sanctification by evoking the original through near-quotation, then comically deflating the mood by an obstreperous burst of pidgin or by a four-letter word. (Carroll and Carroll 67)

In intentionally disrupting the cadence and progression of Shakespeare's language, Dennis Carroll maintains that Benton "stresses the more farcical aspects of the original model" (185). Nevertheless, what both Ardolino and Carroll overlook is the fact that there are passages where Benton retreats from Shakespeare's language into the familiarity of pidgin that are not quite accounted for by either of their proposed explanations. Contrary to Dennis Carroll's view, the comic insertions in Lahela's speech are entirely unique to Benton; there are no equivalent lines in Shakespeare. Furthermore, Benton's heavy pidgin interjections are not awkward, as Ardolino maintains in his disapproving review, but masterfully incorporated. Something else must explain Benton's decision to veer away from Shakespeare in these pivotal moments in the play.

Benton's retreats from Shakespeare seem to suggest that there is something suspect about the original; that in undertaking his pidgin translation, he was doing what his character Malolio was trying to do, to upgrade his pidgin English. In short, in translating Shakespeare for a pidgin-speaking audience, Benton nevertheless remained deeply uncomfortable letting the original

[19] *Ass not fair*: That's not fair.

language stand unaltered and unquestioned. Consequently, even when Benton finds a pidgin equivalent for the Shakespearean original—as in his translation of Viola's speech—he refuses to sustain those lines for more than a few fleeting moments. Although Benton remained keen in his translation to elevate pidgin to the literary status of Shakespeare, he could not but feel uneasy about using Shakespeare's language as a benchmark to measure his own literary output. It is this tension that produces some of the most fascinating and jarring moments in the play, and captures the larger political and cultural tensions surrounding language and social mobility in contemporary Hawai‘i. In his efforts to demonstrate that pidgin can evoke what "high literature" purports to do for its audiences, Benton also revealed his sense that this literary inheritance is something that must be resisted and overcome. Even as Benton strived to emulate Shakespeare's poetic power, the play's pidgin nevertheless perpetually works to undermine its literary benchmark.

What Benton ultimately does with Shakespeare's language mirrors what he has his characters say about Shakespeare's language in the play. Paradoxically, as Benton worked to reinterpret Shakespeare's poetry for contemporary audiences in Hawai‘i, his characters reveal decidedly anti-poetic sentiments. There are two telling instances of the play's anti-literary suspicions. First, when Lahela (Viola), approaches Mahealani (Olivia) with yet another proposition from Count Amalu (Orsino), she greets the lady with a line that is nearly verbatim Shakespeare:

> Lahela: Aloha to you lady, may da heavens rain odors on you.
> Andrew: Dis baga is full of tirty-cent poetry. "Rain odors"—well! (211)

As in the original play, Sir Andrew Waha dismisses Lahela's fawning attempts at flattery. Yet in a divergence from the original, Benton reimagines Andrew's retort as a critique of Lahela's pretentious language, which he dismisses as "tirty-cent poetry." The 30-cent poetry that Andrew mocks, of course, is no other than Shakespeare's original language. The second example comes from Act 1 of the play, in which Lahela describes the prepared speech she has written for Mahealani as real poetry: "[T]ook me long time fo write dis speech, and besides, dis is real poetry, you know." What Mahealani says next might be read as a comment upon the political and sociolinguistic uncertainty of Benton's literary project: "Ass all I need to hia—one nodda poet" (196). Mahealani's response is unique to Benton's version, and there is nothing in her response in Shakesepare's version that reveals any animosity whatsoever toward poets and poetry. The play harbors a deep distrust of "real poetry" and the poets who write them, and Mahelani and Andrew's sentiments seem to encode a larger suspicion about standard or proper English—the kind of language for which Shakespeare himself becomes an avatar in the play.

Pidgin and Social Mobility in Contemporary Hawai‘i

At the end of *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, Benton's Malolio—like his Shakespearean counterpart—is harshly punished for his social aspirations and for his viciousness toward the other characters. In addition, Benton's Malolio is also punished for his hatred of pidgin, and for his desire to erase his own cultural identity. Like the early modern puritans, Benton's Malolio works to uproot language and texts from their wider social contexts, and for this he is viciously punished by Kukana and the others. However, although Malolio is the only one who is punished for his social aspirations at the end of the play, he is not the only character who expresses those aspirations in *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*. Indeed, Princess Mahealani refuses to marry Count Amalu because "she no like his rank, she no like his land" (191). The issue of land ownership in Hawai'i is a fraught and contested subject, and is directly linked to political and economic power in the Islands. Mahealani's desire to move up the Island's social hierarchy by marrying up and into—or rather back into—the land that was taken away from the Native Hawaiians mirrors Malvolio's desire to scale the Islands' social ladder by ascending its linguistic one. Malolio is consequently not alone in his class aspirations, and Benton's play forces his audience to contemplate whether Malolio deserves the severity of his punishment for expressing social aspirations that many of the play's characters share in common. After all, in Benton's linguistic economy, Malolio has managed to gather something of value from his recent attraction to written language. Malolio's ability to write is his saving grace, and his facility with written language is what enables him to secure his freedom at the end of the play.

In Shakespeare's play, Malvolio convinces Feste to fetch him a candle, pen, ink, and paper by leveraging whatever remaining social capital that he has left: "Good fool, as ever thou wilt deserve well at my hand, help me to a candle, and pen, ink, and paper. As I am a gentleman, I will live to be thankful to thee for't" (4.2.76-8). He makes the same entreaty later in the scene, again using the same argument: "Good fool, some ink, paper, and light. And convey what I will set down to my lady. It shall advantage thee more than ever the bearing of letter did" (4.2.104-6). He leverages the promise of future gain a third time: "Fool, I'll requite it in the highest degree" (4.2.112). On the contrary, Benton strips Malolio's pleas of any form of class privilege or promise of future financial gain; in his entreaties, Malolio makes an appeal to something else—the promise of friendship: "Eh, pal, I like you do one favor for me. Can you get me one candle, one pen, one ink, and one paper … please. I one true friend and if you help me, you neva going regret it" (228). Benton's Malolio makes the same promise later: "Please get me da pen, paper, and light. I promise I be your friend" (228).

In pleading for his freedom, Malolio is asking to be perceived for his potential qualities as a friend, rather than for any social advances he can proffer on Lope (Feste). In Benton's version, it is this definition of himself as a friend—not as a superior—that convinces Lope to fetch the light, pen, ink, and paper that will enable Malolio to write his way out of confinement. While Benton's play is rooted in Hawai‘i's class hierarchy and culture, its ending is nevertheless quintessentially American, with its implicit fantasy of a sense of self that transcends class boundaries or identities: Malolio first and foremost wants to bestow his friendship, not his social advantages as a gentleman—a title that Shakespeare, of course, was deeply invested in acquiring for himself during his lifetime. However, Malolio's promise of friendship quickly comes to naught once he gains he freedom and learns that Lope, like the others, was a co-conspirator in the plot:

> Lope: Why "some stay born great, some achieve greatness trown upon dem." I was involved in dis too, but dat's pau.[20] …
> Malolio: I going revenge da whole pack of you. [Exits] (237)

The class-consciousless friendship that Malolio described while imprisoned in the cage fails to translate into reality at the end of Benton's play. At the close of *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, it seems that Malolio's final attempt at self-erasure has backfired.

Benton's paradoxical Malolio embodies the political and social contradictions of what pidgin means for locals from Hawai‘i. Malolio is reviled for trying to speak something other than pidgin, but he also models the process of linguistic reinvention that nearly every local from Hawai‘i must undergo in order to achieve professional success in the Islands or on the mainland United States. While Malolio's social and linguistic pretentions, blunders, and insecurities lie at the heart of the play's comic moments, his aspirations are understandable—and some might argue, economically justified—in contemporary Hawai‘i. Benton intended for his audience to laugh at Malolio's expense, to mock him for his language mix-ups and errors as he tries to speak standard English. Yet to be able to laugh at Malolio's slips and mistakes assumes a bilingualism on the part of Benton's audience, who must know both pidgin and standard English, to be equally conversant and comfortable in both. In other words, Benton's audience must have already moved up the linguistic and social hierarchy, to have already done what Malolio now desperate wants to do himself. In doing so, Benton turns the tables on his audience, forcing them to acknowledge the ways in which their own social aspirations and advancements mirror those of Malolio. *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* is a meditation on the role pidgin

[20] *Pau* – Native Hawaiian word for "finished," or "done."

plays in defining an individual's social standing in Hawai'i, and Benton's often conflicted relationship with Shakespeare's original text illuminates Hawai'i's paradoxical place within the Anglo-American cultural and literary tradition. If the play's treatment of pidgin is contradictory, those contradictions are telling of the complexities surrounding social life and status on the Islands. The best and most memorable scenes from *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* emerge from these contradictions and capture the core issues surrounding social power and identity in contemporary Hawai'i.

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Hamlet Underground: Revisiting Shakespeare and Dostoevsky

Abstract: This is the first of a pair of articles that consider the relationship between Dostoevsky's novella *Notes from the Underground* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Acknowledging Shakespeare's well-known influence on Dostoevsky and paying close attention to similarities between the two texts, the author frames the comparison by reflecting on his own initial encounter with Dostoevsky in David Magarshack's 1968 English translation. A discussion of previous Anglophone scholarly attempts to explore the resonance between the texts leads to a reading of textual echoes (using Magarshack's translation). The wider phenomenon of Hamletism in the nineteenth century is introduced, complicating Dostoevsky's national and generational context, and laying the groundwork for the second article—which questions the 'universalist' assumptions informing the English translator-reader contract.

Keywords: Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, *Hamlet*, Hamletism, underground, nihilism.

Hamlet, the Underground Man and a Naïve Reader

I first read Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground* (in a Modern Library edition of David Magarshack's 1968 English translation) when I was a graduate student.[1] I was pursuing an MA in Shakespeare Studies and—like a medical student perpetually identifying symptoms of the illnesses he is learning to diagnose—I saw Shakespeare in every book I came across. Perhaps it was inevitable, then, that the novella's anti-hero seemed to me a Hamlet figure. Of course, had I been registered for an MA in nineteenth-century Russian literature, it would have been inevitable for different reasons: firstly, the

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[1] Other English translations of the novella's title include *Notes from Underground*, *Letters from the Underworld* and *Memoirs from the Underground*. Kyril Zinovieff and Jenny Hughes (xi-xv) note that these variations still follow Constance Garnett's original (mis)translation; *Zapiski iz Podpol'ya* is, more accurately, "Notes from Under the Floorboards".

prominence of Shakespeare (and *Hamlet* especially) in Russian literary discourse and intellectual debates throughout that period; secondly, the prominence of Shakespeare (and *Hamlet* especially) throughout Dostoevsky's oeuvre. I will invoke the first of these considerations at various points in this article. Although I will not be applying myself to the second, it is useful to locate *Notes from the Underground* in relation to Dostoevsky's major works by foregrounding the novella's seminal status. "If Dostoevsky's total production can be separated into creative periods at all," posits Ernest J. Simmons (106), "the dividing date should be 1864, when *Notes from the Underground* was published." It thus serves as "a kind of prologue" to *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, *The Possessed* and *The Brothers Karamazov*.

If I was a student of Russian literature, I might also have known that the connection between the 'Underground Man' (Dostoevsky's unnamed narrator) and Hamlet was already well established, even if one were limited to literary criticism available in English.[2] John Jones (175) situates Dostoevsky's interest in *Hamlet* within the convention of linking its protagonist to "the indigenous 'superfluous man' ... the Russian of good will and reflective talents who cannot find a part to play in the barracks state." Nonetheless, he observes, "While [Dostoevsky's] contemporaries used *Hamlet* to expatiate on thought and action along Goethe's and Coleridge's lines, Dostoevsky took to himself the Prince's miraculous throw-off about being too much in the sun and had his own hero do something about it, take himself out of the sun, underground, beneath the floor." (Jones 175) Konstantin Mochulsky also positions the *Notes* squarely within the context of nineteenth-century 'Hamletism', describing their narrator as "the new Hamlet" (Mochulsky 248). Other direct comparisons include those made by Jerome J. Rinkus ("Like Dostoevsky's Underground Man, Hamlet suffers because he is hyperconscious"—in them we see "a common human tendency to prefer estrangement"; Rinkus 79) and, more recently, David Denby (the Underground Man is "a spiteful modern Hamlet"; Denby n.p.).

The fullest treatment of the resonance between the two characters is Stanley Cooperman's essay "Shakespeare's Anti-Hero: Hamlet and the Underground Man", in which the author asks:

> The man ... who mocks himself no less than others; who burlesques his own postures; who sees all action as absurd and all inaction as sterile; who makes a fetish of his own inconsistency; who takes a perverse pride in his own suffering; who sees men (including himself) as puppets and the world as a bloated carcass; who makes plans while proclaiming the futility of any plan ... who desperately searches for goodness while convinced of the impossibility of

[2] The narrator-protagonist is sometimes incorrectly referred to as "Ordinov"—this is a conflation with a character in the early story "The Landlady", which is sometimes published along with the *Notes*.

> goodness; who laughs, weeps, snarls, blesses and curses in all but the same breath—what can become of such a man? In the character of Hamlet, and in the literary existentialism of the nineteenth century, he becomes the Anti-Hero. (Cooperman 37)

For Cooperman, Hamlet and the Underground Man both fit the profile of "the hero of spiritual perception rather than action"; these anti-heroes seek to expose ugly truths rather than accept the philistinism of "a corrupt world unaware of its own corruption" (39). Writing in 1965, Cooperman was responding to then-prominent readings of *Hamlet* (by Knight, Battenhouse and Goddard) that had appeared to justify or condone Claudius' actions—or at least, in Cooperman's opinion, had not expressed adequate condemnation of Claudius as a metonym for the hypocrisy and corruption of Denmark. Cooperman's aim was thus to demonstrate that "Hamlet's bitter puns, asides and ironies are not the discharge from a sick mind, but rather the commentaries of a perceptive one" (46). Hamlet's "strange and anti-social behavior" is "something more than simple negativism" (48); he is not just a "confused intellectual" (49).

The comparison between *Hamlet* and the *Notes* thus implies—indeed, depends upon—a sympathetic reading of the Underground Man. While it was once a critical commonplace that Dostoevsky presented (or at least 'intended' to present) the Underground Man satirically, during the latter half of the twentieth century scholars increasingly adopted a view here articulated by Robert Lord: "the Man from Underground ... is not what he has sometimes been supposed to be: a social outcast ... an outsider. He may seem on first acquaintance a bundle of traits which could be loosely labeled psychopathic or, at the very least, abnormal. It is only gradually that this blatantly perverse human being begins to resemble *us*." (Lord 36) The Underground Man, in other words, is Everyman. Cooperman's essay briefly entertains the opposite, conservative reading: "If the court represents health, then the disease most certainly is Hamlet's; if the world of appearance is a fine place after all, the Anti-Hero's emphasis upon corruption defines nothing more than his own neurosis, and the Underground Man is less a seer than a patient." (Cooperman 39-40) But Elsinore is not healthy, and the world of appearance is not a fine place; for Cooperman, the Underground Man is such a charismatic, enigmatic creation precisely because Dostoevsky cannot keep him at an ironic distance. Neither Hamlet nor the Underground Man can be "despised or explained away as psychological or spiritual monsters":

> If *Notes from the Underground* is usually read as a case history of neurosis, Hamlet has been played too often as a bloody revenger, a pale, romantic, and womanish figure, complete with 'poet's collar' and much sighing, or a violent madman. The spiritualism and existential symbolism of Shakespeare's drama, however, like that of *Notes from the Underground*, can be reduced to no comforting formula. Its truth is the realization that affirmation—that faith itself—is based upon consciousness and suffering. (61)

It is worth remarking on a few aspects of Cooperman's analysis that chime with some of my present concerns. Firstly, *Hamlet* is read through the prism of the *Notes* (which is taken as a fixed or familiar reference point), rather than the other way round. This says something about the status of Dostoevsky's novella in the 1960s,[3] but it also differs from the typical practice among Shakespeare scholars who seek to trace Shakespeare's influence on other writers. Secondly, Cooperman does not make any direct textual comparisons between the two works. He does connect some of the images—linking, for example, the imagery of corruption in *Hamlet* to insects that feed on rotten matter and thus to the Kafkaesque 'insects' of modern existential literature, in which category he includes the *Notes*, whose narrator has "wished to become an insect many times" (Dostoevsky/Magarshack 98)[4]—and he also identifies stylistic parallels, notably the twin protagonists' shared propensity for "continuous statement and counterstatement" (Cooperman 56).[5] Reading Constance Garnett's 1918 translation of Dostoevsky, however, Cooperman finds no explicit verbal echoes. Thirdly, it may be noted that Cooperman's engagement with debates over the interpretation of both *Hamlet* and *Notes from Underground*—contestation over the 'meaning' of Hamlet and the Underground Man—matches the shifting connotations of Hamletism in nineteenth-century Russia, which I will suggest are key to our understanding of the relationship between the two texts. But first, back to the excitement of my graduate student 'discovery'.

Blithely unaware of extant scholarship on the phenomenon of 'Hamlet Underground', I was struck by the resonances between the two protagonists: men of "antic disposition" (*Hamlet* 1.5.172); men whose intellectual acuity leaves them disillusioned and unable to participate in a world of action, claiming that conscience and consciousness cause paralysis; men whose self-denigration is matched only by their misanthropy and misogyny. Admittedly, the fit wasn't perfect. I had to ignore the Hamlet described by Ophelia as "Th'expectancy and rose of the fair state,/ The glass of fashion and the mould of form" (3.1.146-7), characteristics lost when his "noble mind" is "o'erthrown" (3.1.144). Moreover,

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[3] A few years either side of Cooperman's essay, Joseph Frank declared, "Few works in modern literature are more widely read or more often cited than Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*" ("Nihilism" 1) and Lord affirmed, "*Notes from Underground* could almost count as a work of our own century. It really belongs to the Literature of the Absurd, and in many suprising ways it anticipates Musil, Kafka and Camus" (Lord 35).

[4] Unless indicated otherwise, subsequent quotations from Dostoevsky refer to David Magarshack's 1968 translation of *Notes from the Underground* in *The Best Short Stories of Fyodor Dostoevsky* (2001).

[5] See Lord (205-6) for an analysis of this style in the *Notes* based on what Mikhail Bakhtin called the author's technique of "contrapuntal inner dialogue". Yuri Levin, connecting Hamlet and the Underground Man, refers to the latter as a "paradoxalist" ("Dostoevskii and Shakespeare" 70).

Hamlet's despair over his fellow-men (unlike, it seemed to me, that of the Underground Man—although here Cooperman would have disagreed) does not stem from pettiness or bitter pessimism but from his recognition that humankind's behaviour is deplorable, even though we can be "noble in reason" and "infinite in faculties" (2.2.286-88). Furthermore, Hamlet is a young man who has just returned from university, whereas the (experienced) narrator of the *Notes* is in his forties. Nevertheless, I had undoubtedly found evidence of textual interplay between *Hamlet* and *Notes from the Underground*—or, at the very least, "associative richness", the term used by Claes Schaar (20) to describe the effect of infra- and inter-contextual association in the conscious and subliminal minds of reader and author. I was vaguely aware, when I discerned 'echoes' of *Hamlet* in *Notes from the Underground*, of the various surfaces those word-sounds had encountered on the way. But it did not occur to me to ask: How many times have they been distorted or blurred in the process of translation? And is it not odd that I hear them as if they are crystal clear?

This article is the first of a two-part undertaking in response to such questions. Magarshack's translation appeared in 1968 (a few years after Cooperman's essay) and it specifically invokes *Hamlet* as a precursor to the *Notes* through direct Shakespearean quotations and allusions. In the second article, I will return to these, assessing what happens when multiple acts of translation are rendered 'visible' to an English reader with no prior knowledge of Russian. In the present article, however, I want to discuss the relationship between *Notes from the Underground* and *Hamlet* that can be discerned if we allow the translator to remain (temporarily) 'invisible'.

Of Mice and Men: Death, Disease and Antic Dispositions

Images of sickness dominate Shakespeare's descriptions of Hamlet's world, a land stricken by "th'imposthume" that "shows no cause without/Why the man dies" (*Hamlet* 4.4.27-29). In the *Notes*, instead of one young man oppressed by the rotten state of Denmark, we encounter "a sick man" (Dostoevsky/ Magarshack 102) who represents a nation of diseased men; the Underground Man concludes that "we have all lost touch with life, we are all cripples" (212). This physical suffering betrays a psychological illness or moral impotence: an immorality most clearly manifested in the Underground Man's cruelty towards Liza/Lisa, the prostitute. He justifies the trauma that he causes her—promising her redemption from the brothel but, finally, paying her for sexual submission to him—by claiming that an insult is "a sort of purification" because it is "the most corrosive and painful form of consciousness": "the memory of that humiliation will raise her and purify her" (211). Ignoring the ways in which this contradicts his own experience, he perversely considers it a form of purgation; he wants her

to be pure because he cannot be, projects his self-disgust onto her, loathes her as a symbol of immorality even though he recognises that this is unfair. He admits that "I was angry with myself, but of course it was she who would suffer for it ... 'She's to blame for everything,' I thought" (203); here we are reminded of Hamlet's treatment of Ophelia and Gertrude.

T.S. Eliot's criticism of Hamlet—that his fury at his mother has no "objective correlative", that it outweighs her "insignificance" (Eliot 58)—echoes the Underground Man's complaint: "It is somehow your own fault" and yet "it is abundantly clear that it is not your fault at all": "there isn't really anyone you can be angry with ... there is really no object for your anger" (Dostoevsky/ Magarshack 105).[6] Our understanding of his complex attitude towards women is deepened when we read that, as Liza was about to embrace him, he was overcome by "a feeling of domination and possession ... How I hated her and how I was drawn to her at that moment! One feeling intensified the other. This was almost like vengeance!" (207-8) The Underground Man's disillusionment with himself and the society in which he finds himself, as well as his inability to take any moral action against it, is bound up with his misogynistic treatment of Liza: "She guessed that my outburst of passion was nothing but revenge, a fresh insult for her, and that to my earlier, almost aimless, hatred there was now added a *personal*, *jealous* hatred of her." (208) Liza is a conflation of Ophelia, whom Hamlet loves but offends and ultimately destroys, and Gertrude, who elicits from him both desire and repulsion.

Fractured parent-child relationships are central to the Underground Man's psyche. Talking to Liza, in the midst of his romanticised homily on the importance of family structures, he reveals: "I grew up without a home. That's why I suppose I am what I am—a man without feeling." (179) In his closing diatribe, he chastises himself and his contemporaries, because (like Hamlet, who is fatherless at the beginning of the play) "for a long time we have been begotten not by living fathers" (213). He continues, "soon we shall invent some way of being ... begotten by an idea", having earlier referred to men born "out of a test tube" (102). The Underground Man is a product of a society that is on the verge of a new modern age. He is caught between a traditional, hierarchically-structured world, where concerns of rank and the preservation of "honour" (115) drive his anachronistic obsession with duels and revenge, and a world of new and foreign ideas, in which, according to "the laws of nature", the Underground Man fears "everything will be calculated and specified with such an exactness that there will be no more independent actions or adventures" (116). What place is there for volition—"One's own free and unfettered choice, one's own whims"—when "our ends" are determined for us, "Rough-hew them how we will" (*Hamlet* 5.2.10-11)?

[6] Hamlet is also unable (or unwilling) to identify the cause of his melancholy: "I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth" (2.2.280).

This ideological battle is set, as in *Hamlet*, against a backdrop of warfare. The Underground Man considers himself morally superior to the power-hungry, bloodthirsty men of his age: "Take all our nineteenth century ... Look at Napoleon, the Great and the present one. Look at North America—the everlasting union. Look, finally, at Schleswig-Holstein ... And what, pray, does civilisation soften in us?" (114) He frequently expresses his hatred of sword-rattling military men, from the ladies' man Zverkov to the army officer he once determined to bump into on Nevsky Avenue. His resentment of the soldier-figure, however, betrays an envy of "men of action" (96)—a constant refrain in the narrative. He cannot be one of those "people who know how to avenge themselves and, generally, how to stand up for themselves" (101) because he is paralysed by hesitancy and indecisiveness. He feels oppressed by his manservant Apollon precisely because Apollon is "never in doubt" (196). Presented with a metaphorical "wall", a potential obstruction to any course of action, the "man of great sensibility" will capitulate: he will "think and consequently do nothing" (102)—just as Hamlet, in "thinking too precisely on th'event" (*Hamlet* 4.4.41) is like Pyrrhus, who, "like a neutral to his will and matter/Did nothing" (2.2.439-40).

This mental and physical paralysis is inextricable, in the *Notes*, from the conceit of sickness: "To be too acutely conscious is a disease, a real, honest-to-goodness disease" (99) because "the legitimate result of consciousness is to make all action impossible" (108). The man thus diseased becomes full of "spite" (102), directed towards others as well as to himself; he considers himself a coward, a "mouse" that "has accumulated such a large number of insoluble questions round every one question that it is drowned in a sort of deadly brew, a stinking puddle made up of its doubts, its flurries of emotion, and lastly, the contempt with which the plain men of action cover it from head to foot while they stand solemnly round as judges" (103). Hamlet, too, is aware of how his actions may be judged: "Am I a coward? Who calls me villain?" (*Hamlet* 2.2.523-27). The ashamed and insulted "mouse" has nothing left to do but "scurry back ingloriously into its hole", an underground world like the narrator's "funk-hole" (103), a refuge where one can escape from taking arms "against a sea of troubles" (*Hamlet* 3.1.59).[7] His psychological funk-hole is stifling, however, and even here he cannot avoid consciousness—he still longs to be an insect, a worm, a louse—until he is released from that burden by death.

Hamlet, emblematically contemplating a skull and exchanging morbid jokes with a gravedigger, muses over mortality. The Underground Man becomes

[7] Applying a Freudian reading to the play, it could be argued that Hamlet, too, sees himself as a kind of rodent. He dubs his theatrical contrivance to confirm Claudius' guilt "The Mousetrap" (3.2.226) and, when he kills Polonius on the mistaken assumption that it is his uncle behind the arras, he calls him "a rat" (3.4.24). If Hamlet unconsciously identifies with Claudius—as his father's killer and his mother's new husband—these epithets apply equally to the protagonist.

grotesquely fascinated by the macabre details of a prostitute's burial, which he relates to Liza with cruel delight. Short of dying, the only way of numbing the pain of consciousness is, it seems, to retreat into the funk-hole of insanity. Those who are insane are marked out as unique; they are not merely cogs in a machine, or ants on an anthill. Madness is a way of asserting independence and free will over determinism, individuality and personality over rationality: "[If] the mere possibility of calculating it all beforehand would stop it all and reason would triumph in the end—well, if that were to happen man would go purposely mad in order to rid himself of reason and carry his point! ... man exists for the purpose of proving to himself every minute that he is a man and not an organ-stop!" (121)[8]

The question of Hamlet's madness has always been a puzzle: to what extent is his "antic disposition" feigned, and to what extent is his behaviour that of a man who is truly distracted? How would modern psychologists diagnose his condition? Hamlet's socially inappropriate (because unrestrained) conduct during the performance of 'The Mousetrap', for example, or his graveside tussle with Laertes, match the Underground Man's predisposition towards theatricality and melodrama. Consider his outlandish behaviour at the dinner party held for Zverkov, or his admission that, croaking to Liza in a faint voice having burst out crying a few moments before, "I was, what is called, *play-acting* ... though my fit was real enough" (203). Hamlet's quibbles, riddles and obscure questions seem to be both a despairing attempt at prevarication and a sincere effort to come to terms with his circumstances. The Underground Man imagines the "gentlemen" of his "audience" accusing him of duplicitousness: "You long for life, yet you try to solve the problems of life by a logical tangle! And how tiresome, how insolent your tricks are, and, at the same time, how awfully frightened you are! ... You assure us that you are gnashing your teeth, but at the same time you crack jokes to make us laugh." (126-27)

Indeed, extrapolating the 'death' of Dostoevsky as author of the *Notes* and therefore as creator of their narrator, we can imagine the Underground Man styling *himself* on the version of Hamlet he may have encountered in the Petersburg theatre that he regularly attended. We can even imagine him triumphantly reading Belinsky's comment, in 1840, that Hamlet "is weak and self-disgusted; however, only those who are themselves low and trivial can call him low and trivial, overlooking the splendour and magnificence of his worthlessness"—or we can guess at his reaction, as one of the men who "talk

[8] The image of the stops in a musical instrument echoes Hamlet's envy of those who are not "a pipe for Fortune's finger/To sound what stop she pleases" (3.2.60-61) and his outrage at Rosencrantz and Guildenstern: "Do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe?" (3.2.334). As Kenneth Lantz (95) notes, however, Dostoevsky's use of the "organ-stop" (which can also be translated as "piano key") is more likely derived from Diderot's *Entretien entre Diderot et D'Alembert* (1769).

and talk and talk", to Belinsky's complaint that Hamlet "hesistates and only *talks*, but never *acts*" (in Levin, "Dostoevskii and Shakespeare" 125).

The view that Hamlet's "worthlessness" is splendid and magnificent was, however, increasingly contested in mid-nineteenth century Russia. I have mentioned already that, although those aspects of Hamlet and *Hamlet* discernible in *Notes from the Underground* could be seen as consistent with Dostoevsky's use of Hamlet as a character 'type' in his later novels, in the *Notes* this similarity is an uncomfortable one—not least because Hamlet is a young man, whereas the narrator of the *Notes* is in his forties. The second, more detailed portion of the *Notes*, however, refers back to a period in the Underground Man's youth. This is a significant narrative arrangement and provides a further key to the ambiguous interplay between *Notes from the Underground* and *Hamlet*. The temporal structure of the *Notes* may be related to the shift that occurred in Russian attitudes to Shakespeare away from the obsessive Hamletism of the earlier part of the century towards an increased disillusionment both with Shakespeare and with Russian adaptations of *Hamlet*. When the *Notes* were published in 1864, Tolstoy's infamous rejection of Shakespeare was still four decades away—but even amidst the Bardolatry of that tercentenary year, 'Hamletism' was being used in Russia as a term of opprobrium.

Hamletism, 'the West' and *Notes from the Underground*

Nikolai Polevoy's 1837 production of his modernised translation of *Hamlet* was a crucial part of Shakespeare's entrenchment in Russian public life. "It is possible," Yuri Levin writes, "that it was this translation that also drew the attention of the sixteen-year-old [Dostoevsky] to the playwright"; passages from Polevoy's text "made such an impression on him that he was to quote them in the 1860s and 1870s, even though by then newer translations of the tragedy existed" ("Dostoevskii and Shakespeare" 41). It is also possible, Levin suggests, that the young Dostoevsky managed to see the famous tragedian Pavel Mochalov perform the role of Hamlet in Moscow before he moved to Petersburg in May 1837. (We may note, on the point of the Underground protagonist-narrator's age, that Mochalov was almost forty himself at the time.)

In Polevoy's version, "the image of Hamlet was somewhat distorted, his state of spiritual loss, his frustration, his despair over man's wretchedness were intensified and stressed" (Levin, "Shakespeare and Russian Literature 122). This distortion, however, captured the zeitgeist; Hamlet gave voice to the frustrations of many young Russian intellectuals who anticipated social reform but remained politically impotent, in the same way that "while being fully aware of the inhuman and hostile nature of his surroundings and clearly seeing that it is his moral duty to fight against it, Hamlet feels himself to be unequal to the task" (124). The presiding sense of helplessness encouraged criticism of Hamlet as

self-criticism. In the eighteen-sixties, however, when the drive for practical political reform had gained new impetus, the inactive and withdrawn Hamlet was viewed with less sympathy: "In the new historical context the 'Hamlets' of the forties had degenerated into the so-called 'superfluous men'. In other words, Hamletism became identified with self-centred individualism." (126) Levin also points out that, on an aesthetic level, Shakespeare's poetic influence was regretted by Russia's growing school of realist writers, who wanted a return to 'natural' language (Dostoevsky in turn offered his own 'fantastic realism' as an alternative to what he saw as stifling realist prose).

A parallel mid-nineteenth century ideological and literary conflict between and within generations is the central focus of Joseph Frank's essay "Nihilism and *Notes from Underground*". He points out that, in the subtitle to the second part of the *Notes*, "Apropos of the Wet Snow", and in the curtailed extract from a poem by Nekrasov that functions as its epigraph, Dostoevsky evokes "an image of Petersburg in the forties—an image of the most 'abstract and premeditated city in the world', whose very existence had become symbolic in Russian literature of the violence and unnaturalness of the Russian adaption to Western culture", thus signalling his intention "to satirise the sentimental social Romanticism of the forties" (Frank, "Nihilism" 50-1). Frank maintains that Dostoevsky wanted to reveal the destructive nature of this dependence on foreign ideas and foreign literature: the Underground Man, in his encounter with Liza, is reminded that he is "speaking as though [he is] reading from a book", and he constantly refers to himself as "bookish" (Dostoevsky/Magarshack 183). His narcissistic withdrawal into a world of ideals prevents him from appreciating either Liza's pain or her generosity. This "idealistic egoism of the forties, with its cultivation of a sense of spiritual *noblesse* and its emphasis on individual moral consciousness" (Frank, "Nihilism" 57) resonates with the phenomenon of Hamletism. Tragically, Liza becomes the victim of a self-centred Hamletism that prizes "exalted suffering" over "cheap happiness" (Dostoevsky/Magarshack 211).

Dostoevsky maintained an ambivalent attitude towards the nations of western Europe. He had drawn inspiration from Shakespeare and other European literary forebears, but he did not wish to see Russia fall prey to the perceived bourgeois materialism and shallow morality of 'the West'. His disenchantment was confirmed by what he saw during his travels in France, England, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy—a series of journeys undertaken in 1862, shortly before he began writing *Notes from the Underground*, and described in *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (one of the last pieces by Dostoevsky published in *Vremya* before the magazine was forced to close in 1863). The connection between the texts is clear, but for Frank it is not just that "certain motifs" of the travel sketches turn up in *Notes from the Underground*: "a much deeper and more fundamental relation exists ... than has generally been suspected. Indeed, it would hardly be an exaggeration to regard *Winter Notes* as a first draft of the more famous work." (Frank, "The Encounter with Europe" 237)

Dostoevsky would later return to live for short spells in Germany, France, Switzerland and Italy, and continue to wrestle with his gambling demons. In his first encounters, however, the distinctions drawn between Russia and the West were clear. Western Europe is "irresistibly attractive" to Russians, and "Western values" are "admired by the educated Russian on the level of reason and conscious doctrine", but this is matched by a "Russian refusal to kow-tow to Europe emotionally" because, as Frank summarises it, "at heart all Russians have been, and will continue to be, secret Slavophiles ... The Russian nature is thus in continual, surreptitious revolt against what it most reveres [about Europe]; and the dialectic of this revolt is embodied in *Winter Notes* by Dostoevsky's own self-dramatization." ("The Encounter with Europe" 239-40) Writing about himself as disillusioned traveller, Dostoevsky is writing about Russia's paradoxical relationship with the West—and, in doing so, he gives us "the first glimpse ... of that cranky, eccentric and irrational individual" (240) who will become the narrator of *Notes from the Underground*.

Dostoevsky's travels in England included a visit to the Haymarket Theatre, which was transformed into the "Hay Market" brothel of *Notes from the Underground*; he also saw the Crystal Palace, which he described in the *Winter Notes* as "something out of Babylon ... out of the Apocalypse" and which, as Frank affirms, "re-appears [in *Notes from the Underground*] as a symbol of the total and definitive triumph of materialism accepted as mankind's final ideal" ("The Encounter with Europe" 243). Shakespeare, removed in time from this England for which Dostoevsky expressed such disdain, remained untainted in his imagination. But what about Hamlet, specifically, as an icon of western European literature and culture in the nineteenth century—a figure revered by the same British and Germans (and even the Italians and the French) whom Dostoevsky seemed so to despise after his travels? What does this mean for *Notes from the Underground* as addressed to Russian readers? Are the Hamlet-like characteristics of the Underground Man targeting the self-deprecating sufferers of Hamletism, depicting the *reductio ad absurdum* of the Hamlet idolised by Russians in the eighteen-forties? Insofar as Dostoevsky had as a young man himself held fast to a certain Romantic idealism, is *Notes from the Underground* "a public, albeit a veiled, renunciation of his past", as Lev Shestov claimed (in Katz 150)? Perhaps. Yet there is something else to the relationship between the Underground Man—"an educated man, a modern intellectual" (149)—and the student from Wittenburg.

Fathers, Sons and Freedom

The reworking of Hamlet's dilemmas in *Notes from the Underground* is more than just another criticism of the Hamletism of the eighteen-forties with the hindsight of the eighteen-sixties; it is also addressed to the younger

generation. *Notes from the Underground* was partly conceived as a riposte to Chernyshevsky's popular socialist-utopian novel *What is to be Done* (1863), which argued that, because man is essentially reasonable, he will ultimately form an ideal society—a society in which his best interests are served—if he is able to discern what his best interests are. In the first part of the *Notes*, the narrator rejects this utilitarianism and struggles with the implications of scientific determinism and the emblematic "two times two makes four". He refuses to renounce his free will, and famously asserts that man's "advantage" is not as important to him as the ability to act *against* his advantage, if he should choose to do so. Dostoevsky was an earnest participant in the debate that raged in Russia during the eighteen-sixties over the nature and function of art, in particular its relation to the material orientation of socialism and nihilism. Shakespeare was a central subject in this debate, as in Dostoevsky's well-known complaint that the nihilists "admit it with pride: boots are better than Shakespeare" (in Catteau 204).

We are reminded in an authorial footnote that individuals such as the Underground Man "not only may, but actually must exist within our society, considering the circumstances under which our society was formed" and that he is "one of the characters of the recent past" who is *also* "a representative of the current generation" (95). For Dostoevsky, disillusioned with an older generation over-dependent on foreign literature and a younger generation rejecting non-realist prose, there could be no more appropriate character to have in mind; Hamlet Underground is a conglomeration of nineteenth-century Russian critical interpretations of *Hamlet*. He is the incarnation of a Hamletism that is both dangerously Romantic and painfully Rational. Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* (1862), which engaged directly with inter-generational conflict, was in part responsible for the currency of the term "nihilism" in the early 1860s—as had been the case with his "superfluous man" in the previous decade—and it spurred Chernyshevsky's novel; for Turgenev, Hamlet stands for "Analysis and egotism, and therefore lack of faith. He lives for himself alone ... He is a sceptic—always reflecting and brooding upon his own self; always concerned with his situation and never with his responsibilities." (in Levin, "Nihilism" 126) And yet the young prince's reluctance to play the revenging son is bound up with the metaphysical dilemma of reason and free will—he is unwilling to accept the role that appears to be determined for him.

Why is it, then, that having paced a dining-room for three hours and having listened, outraged but submissive, to the drunken conversation of his old school acquaintances, the Undergound Man eventually reacts to Zverkov's declaration that "Shakespeare [is] immortal"? (Dostoevsky/Magarshack 165) Levin remarks of this moment that, since "acknowledgement of Shakespeare's greatness became a banal point of common agreement" in nineteenth-century Russia, and since lampooning "such idle chatter by ignorant people" was a well-

established practice of writers such as Belinsky and Nekrasov, Dostoevsky "contributed nothing new in this respect" ("Dostoevskii and Shakespeare" 44). This comment returns us to the difficult matter of relating the author's views to those of his narrator. Frank would argue that Dostoevsky's strategy is to present the Underground Man ironically *at all times*, and that readers and critics should be wary of any association between author and narrator. Although the Underground Man's vitriolic outbursts express Dostoevsky's opposition to nihilism, for instance, Frank disagrees with those who view the psychological sado-masochism of the *Notes* as an expression of the author's own darker attributes. Nevertheless, as conscious 'intention' is not the sole determinant of creative processes, and given that Dostoevsky's satirical intent was blurred—while writing the *Notes*, we know, Dostoevsky was in the midst of a personal *annus horribilis*, and these private difficulties evidently informed his sympathy with the tortured Underground Man—a psychoanalytic reading may furnish some useful insights.

Freud affirmed a close alignment between Dostoevsky the man and the characters created by Dostoevsky the author, suggesting that young Fyodor felt tremendous guilt over his father's premature death in 1839 because that event fulfilled a suppressed Oedipal wish. This is the same process, of course, that a Freudian would identify in Hamlet's emotional turmoil: he cannot simply blame and kill Claudius because his uncle has fulfilled his own hidden desires. As we read in the *Notes*, "your reasons evaporate, there is no guilty man, the injury is no longer an injury but just fate." (109) According to Freud's rather overstretched interpretation, Dostoevsky's epilepsy represented the desire to enter a death-like state in order to sympathise with his dead father; Hamlet, too, wishes for death—that "this too too solid flesh would melt" (*Hamlet* 1.2.129).

Although Freud was writing about *The Brothers Karamazov*, his essay is relevant to the *Notes* not only because of the link with *Hamlet* but also because both guilt and filial anxiety inform the narrator's psyche. The Freudian reading thus complements an Existential reading concerned with the limited agency of either character. For Frank, the Underground Man alone can be, or feel, guilty, because he alone refuses to accept that his life is not determined: taking responsibility for his actions (or lack of action) places him within a moral framework, and in this way even his 'immoral' behaviour is preferable to the abjuration of that responsibility. According to the Underground Man, the negation of action caused by consciousness is deemed superior to the ignorance of "men of action"; he complains that "Every decent man of our age is, and indeed has to be, a coward and a slave." (132) The protagonist of *Notes from the Underground*, like the "modern intellectual" who inverts the medieval revenge plot in *Hamlet*—a different kind of "coward and slave"—problematises the defined moral framework of his age. Hamlet and the Underground Man see themselves simultaneously as the victims of a time "out of joint" (*Hamlet* 1.5.189) and as doomed rebels fighting against a pre-determined fate.

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Rosalind and *Śakuntalā* among the Ascetics: Reading Gender and Female Sexual Agency in a Bengali Adaptation of *As You Like It*

Abstract: My article examines how the staging of gender and sexuality in Shakespeare's play *As You Like It* is negotiated in a Bengali adaptation, *Ananga-Rangini* (1897) by the little-known playwright Annadaprasad Basu. The Bengali adaptation does not assume the boy actor's embodied performance as essential to its construction of the Rosalind-equivalent, and thereby it misses several of the accents on gender and sexuality that characterize Shakespeare's play. The Bengali adaptation, while accommodating much of Rosalind's flamboyance, is more insistent upon the heteronormative closure and re-configures the Rosalind-character as an acquiescent lover/wife. Further, *Ananga-Rangini* incorporates resonances of the classical Sanskrit play *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* by Kālidāsa, thus suggesting a thematic interaction between the two texts and giving a concrete shape to the comparison between Shakespeare and Kālidāsa that formed a favourite topic of literary debate in colonial Bengal. The article takes into account how the Bengali adaptation of *As You Like It* may be influenced by the gender politics informing *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* and by the reception of this Sanskrit play in colonial Bengal.

Keywords: *As You Like It*, 19th-century Bengali theatre, cross-dressed heroine, female sexual agency, Kālidāsa, classical Sanskrit drama.

My article appraises a 19th-century Bengali adaptation of *As You Like It* in the light of some key observations on homoeroticism and female sexual agency that have emerged from commentators on Shakespeare's cross-dressed heroines over the last three decades. My article further tries to demonstrate how this Bengali play, *Ananga-Rangini*, registers echoes of, and enters into a dialogue with, a text originating in a different noetic regime from Shakespeare's. The text in question is the classical Sanskrit play *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* ["The Signet Ring of *Śakuntalā"*] or *Śakuntalā* by Kālidāsa, who is "widely acknowledged as the supreme poet and playwright of the classical Sanskrit tradition" (Johnson ix) and

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was active between 400 to 500 CE (Sengupta and Tandon 4). This article will try to contextualize why *As You Like It* has been neglected as a performance text in the Bengali theatre, taking into account the representation of transvestism and female sexuality in Shakespeare's play. The article will then examine how *Ananga-Rangini* adapts *As You Like It*, with particular attention to the expressions of female sexual desire and agency in these two plays. In the final section, the article will locate the resonances of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* in *Ananga-Rangini* and examine how the interactions between the Shakespearean and the classical Sanskrit text help bring the Rosalind-equivalent of the Bengali play closer to the contemporary Bengali expectations of femininity.

The Neglect of *As You Like It* in Bengali Theatre

The title page of the Bengali play *Ananga-Rangini* ["Ananga and Rangini"] by Annadaprasad Basu has the descriptive tag within parentheses, *milananta natak* ["a play ending in union"], followed by the acknowledgement, *mahakavi Shakespearer "As You Like It" namak nataker chhaya avalambane* [literally, "based on the shadow of the master-poet Shakespeare's play named *As You Like It*"]. *Ananga-Rangini* may be identified as an indigenized adaptation, or what Nazmul Ahsan calls a "cultural translation" of the comedy by Shakespeare (xii). This play exhibits "the localization of names and places, the addition of song and dance, adaptation of plot, and even interpolation of characters and scenes" that comprised the routine for "indigenized staging of Shakespeare in India" (Trivedi 153), although there is no record of this play being performed.

When Annadaprasad Basu published this adaptation of *As You Like It* in 1897, there had already been a substantial history of Shakespeare reception in Bengali from the early 19th century. There were two main channels for the dissemination of Shakespeare to a Bengali-speaking audience: first, "a new educational curriculum [introduced and sponsored by the British colonial regime] designed for the training of the native bourgeoisie"; and second, the Bengali public stage, which tapped Shakespeare as a repository of "plots and characters that could be freely adapted and repurposed" (Supriya Chaudhuri 102). Reflecting on the Western-educated Bengali audience's interaction with Shakespeare, R. K. DasGupta finds that

> [m]ore important than [the] circumstantial influence of Shakespeare on the dramatic technique [of the nascent Western-style Bengali commercial theatre] is the influence of the English poet on the nineteenth century Bengali mind. […] It was through his great tragedies that we came to realize that there was a great literature other than our own and in many ways different from it. We discovered the difference and yet acknowledged its greatness. (25)

One of the several indices of this intellectual engagement would be found in the 19th-century Bengali adaptations of Shakespeare, which were attempted by the Western-educated Bengalis but did not necessarily presuppose the Bengali audience's earlier acquaintance with Shakespeare.

Prior to the publication of *Ananga-Rangini*, there had been in print at least 23 dramatic adaptations or translations of Shakespeare in Bengali, whether or not they were actually staged (Mitra 198-99). This estimate does not take into account the paraphrases and novelizations of Shakespeare's plays in Bengali. This tally also leaves out "a translation into Bengalee, of Shakespeare's tragedy of the Tempest [sic]" that was executed by one Mr. Monckton, a Briton and prospective civil servant, at the Fort William College, Kolkata (formerly Calcutta) in 1809 (Roebuck 187). Now lost, this is the first recorded translation of Shakespeare in Bengali (Mitra 198). The same year as the publication of *Ananga-Rangini* saw the staging of *Hariraj*, based on *Hamlet*, written by Nagendranath Chaudhury and available in print since 1896 (Mitra 52-55; Raha 76). It proved to be the most popular and lucrative adaptation of a Shakespeare play, whether a comedy or a tragedy, for the 19th-century Bengali theatre.

R. K. DasGupta in his observations quoted above registers Shakespeare's momentous impact on the Bengali intellectual almost exclusively in terms of his tragedies, and this emphasis on the tragedies is quite apposite because Shakespeare was probably the single-most important Western author to catalyze the inception of a tragic vision in Indian dramaturgy (Das 110). As R.K. Yajnik reminds, the "Hindu philosophy" that governed ancient India drama "does not lead to a great tragedy," and it was in Shakespeare that the Indian student "came across a profound study of the genuine tragic atmosphere" and found Shakespeare's mode of tragedy "particularly impressive" (152). However, the comedies and romances of Shakespeare were also adequately represented among the Bengali translations and adaptations of Shakespeare in the 19th century. On the other hand, the history plays were entirely ignored for Bengali adaptations. In fact, 10 out of the tally of 23 published texts mentioned earlier are adaptations of comedies (*The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*) and romances (*Cymbeline*, *The Tempest*, *The Winter's Tale*). However, Annadaprasad Basu's text seems to have been the only dramatic adaptation of *As You Like It* up to that time in Bengali. It would be followed by a faithful Bengali translation of Shakespeare's play (retaining the original characters and cultural setting) only in 1923, namely, *Maner Matan* by Saurindramohan Mukhopadhyay. There is also no evidence for the staging of *Ananga-Rangini* itself (Datta 169), although it was published during the heyday of the public theatre in Kolkata. Moreover, the 1923 translation of *As You Like It* was primarily targeted at a reading audience and in all probability it was never performed. Another faithful translation of the play, by Sunilkuamr Chattopadhyay (published 1957), appears to have had the same fate. Even

a more recent Bengali translation of the play by Abu Shahriyar (entitled *Apnar Jeman Pachhanda*, published 2012) is too prosaic and does not seem to be meant for a stage production.

The absence of a stage history for *Ananga-Rangini* seems to be an anomaly, since the text of the play reflects knowledge of contemporary staging conventions—with its clear demarcation of acts and scenes, full delineation of entrances and exits and precise inclusion of stage directions. The play also appears to be eminently stage-worthy in terms of the language, characterization and its handling of the action. This can hardly be said of several earlier dramatic adaptations of Shakespeare, for example, Hurro Chunder Ghose's unstaged plays *Bhanumati-Chittavilas Natak* (published 1853, an adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice*) and *Charumukh-Chittahara Natak* (published 1864, an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*) (Rina Ghosh 56-63), or a play that was actually performed in the public theatre, Lakshminarayan Chakraborty's *Nanda-bangshochchhed* (published 1873, an adaptation of *Hamlet*). Although no performance history is available for *Ananga-Rangini*, one may treat it as a potential performance text, relating the play to contemporary performance conventions and the stage history of *As You Like It*. This can help resist at least partially "the logocentricity that continues to be affirmed in the 'dramatic text', which curiously survives the onslaught of deconstructive performative strategies, non-verbalism, physical theatre, invisible theatre, and a spate of non-textual activist interventions and infiltrations" (Bharucha 85-86).

This noticeable omission or negligence that fell to the lot of *As You Like It* enables the conjecture that the play did not appear compatible enough with the taste or competence of the Bengali adaptor, whether or not aiming for the stage. This phenomenon may be partially traced to Shakespeare's experiment with transvestism, gender and sexuality in *As You Like It*, which demands a level of cultural competence on the part of the audience for its adequate appreciation. To be sure, other plays by Shakespeare featuring cross-dressing heroines had been adapted in Bengali earlier than *Ananga-Rangini*. Hurro Chunder Ghose's *Bhanumati-Chittavilas Natak*, which may be recognized as the earliest extant and officially acknowledged dramatic adaptation of Shakespeare in Bengali, is in fact based on *The Merchant of Venice*. Before the publication of *Ananga-Rangini* there had been another Bengali adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice*, namely, *Suralata* by Pyarilal Mukhopadhyay, published 1877 (Mitra 197). There also had been two adaptations of *Cymbeline* in Bengali before 1897, namely, *Susheela Veersingha Natak* by Satyendranath Tagore (published 1868) and *Kusumkumari Natak* by Chandrakali Ghosh (published 1868) (Mitra 196). The latter was also commercially produced in the Bengali public theatre as early as 1874 (Lal and Chaudhuri 96-97). But it needs to be recalled that *The Merchant of Venice* and *Cymbeline* do not capitalize upon the heroine's transvestism for the greater part of their lengths or attempt prestidigitation over gender and

sexuality to the same extent as *As You Like It*. According to Lal and Chaudhuri's survey, none of Shakespeare's plays featuring transvestite heroines appeared on the Bengali stage in the 19th century—except for the adaptation of *Cymbeline* (a sombre play with a long-suffering and less than ebullient heroine). Besides, no Bengali adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice* would be commercially produced earlier than Bhupendranath Bandyopadhyay's *Saodagar* in 1915 (Lal and Chaudhuri 103). More curiously, the only major Bengali staging of *As You Like It* in the Kolkata-based Bengali theatre seems to have taken place as late as 2012. The production in question, *Hridmajhare* ["In the Middle of the Heart"], was staged by the troupe Nandikar using a tailor-made translation-adaptation by Kanchan Amin, and directed by Supriyo Chakraborty, Sohini Sengupta and Kamal Chattopadhyay.

Going by this estimate, one may surmise that some features of these cross-dressing comedies of Shakespeare, such as their ludic exploration of gender and sexuality, and their insistent exploitation of the device of the doubly cross-dressed boy actor of Shakespeare's own stage, did not agree with the horizon of expectations that the newly established theatrical practice of 19th-century Kolkata catered to. According to one line of argument about Shakespeare's stage, the boy actor's body was not an invisible feedstock for the theatrical construction of female identity, but a key source of aesthetic/sexual stimuli and signification (Jardine 9-36; Callaghan 31-32; Sedinger 67-75). Male transvestism would be leveraged in Shakespeare's comic theatre through "references, implicit or explicit, to the body beneath that of the actor's impersonation (including scenes of broad, bawdy humour); excessive attention to the age, beauty and apparel of the cross-dressed boy, and especially to the complex sexual appeal of boy actors twice cross-dressed" (Zimmerman 47). These devices could not be replicated on the Kolkata stage. One of the hallmarks of the Western-style Bengali commercial theatre introduced in 19th-century Kolkata was the deployment of actresses for female roles, itself a ground-breaking and tendentious move, as opposed to the all-male cast of traditional Bengali theatre forms such as the *jatra* (Raha 30-31; Dutt and Sarkar Munsi 49-53, 122-23). The presence of the actresses on the Bengali stage would rule out at least one level of the metatheatrical jokes in *As You Like It* surrounding the doubly cross-dressed or reverse-cross-dressed boy actor in Shakespeare's all-male theatre. Comparably, it is on record that the "earliest instance of Shakespeare being inducted into a folk form [in India] is found in the 1860s in a script of *As You Like It* in the *yakshagana* form" of the Karnataka region of southern India (Trivedi 153), which is traditionally enacted by an all-male troupe. However, one also has to review the surmise that *As You Like It* was neglected by Bengali adaptors simply because they did not have in mind a theatre with female impersonators (like Shakespeare's own). This speculation fails to explain why *As You Like It* was a favourite on the English commercial

stage (which deployed actresses from 1660 onwards) and why Rosalind was a role much coveted by a succession of leading ladies in the Anglophone world (Latham lxxxvii-xc; Dusinberre 13-26). This problem will be taken up shortly.

Rosalind's Bengali Avatar and the Question of Sexuality

With respect to the number of lines, the role of Rosalind is the longest among women characters in Shakespeare's dramatic corpus (Richmond 43). It is perhaps also the most fraught and challenging role counting all of Shakespeare's cross-dressed heroines since it plays off against each other four layers of identity or performative functions: (i) the tacit one of the boy actor essaying the female role of Rosalind in Shakespeare's theatre, (ii) Rosalind, (iii) Rosalind masquerading as the garrulous boy named Ganymede in the forest of Ardenne, and (iv) Rosalind *as* Ganymede playing the caricature of herself in a game of make-believe to cure Orlando of his lovesickness and advance her love with him. According to Phyllis Rackin, "the ambiguities of the conclusion to that play involve not only gender but sex itself, and not only the character Rosalind but also the boy actor who played her part" (36). As opposed to this, the Bengali adaptation, which seeks to transpose Shakespeare's play to an Indian or Bengali frame of reference, does not or cannot exploit the substratum of the boy actor's embodied performance for its construction of the cross-dressed heroine. It thereby misses several of the inflections on gender and sexuality that inform the original play.

In the Bengali adaptation, Shakespeare's Rosalind is rechristened as the *Rangini* of the title, the name reflecting the playfulness and ebullience of the original character. The *Samsad Bengali-English Dictionary* (1968) glosses the Sanskrit-derived Bengali word *rangini* as a feminine adjective meaning "jocular, gay, frolicsome, sportive, taking frenzied delight in," and also, at the dark end of the spectrum, "wanton" (1084). The male lead, Orlando, is adapted as *Ananga*, which is another name for Madana or Kamadeva, the god of love in the Hindu pantheon. The name is thus suggestive of the character's physical beauty as well as amorousness. If the word *anangarangini* is taken as a compound adjective (the original Bengali title does not have the intervening hyphen used in this article for the sake of clarity and disambiguation), it would signify a woman "who takes a frenetic delight in love." This description would apply to Rangini, but only partially, since her boldness and playfulness are finally contained by the play to suit the model of the dutiful wife. When Rangini cross-dresses for exile, she assumes the name of *Jnan*. This is meant to recollect aurally Shakespeare's *Ganymede*, but the Sanskrit word *jnan* ["wisdom"] cannot encompass the homoerotic connotations of Rosalind's alias. The boy Ganymede is Jupiter's cup-bearer and love interest in classical mythology, which made the name quite

familiar in early modern English literature on same-sex love between men (Dusinberre 9-11). Further, the name along with its derivative *catamite* served as a catchword in Shakespeare's England for a boy or young man who sold his sexual favours to older men as a passive recipient of anal intercourse (Orgel 496-97; Brown 251-56). The Bengali adaptation's cultural milieu hardly afforded any space for relishing or even acknowledging this risqué association, and it was therefore wisely avoided by the play.

In Shakespeare's play *As You Like It* homoerotic frisson is generated on the level of the verbal text by two sets of interactions, the first between Ganymede and Orlando, and the second between Phoebe and Ganymede (although Phoebe's amorous feelings for Ganymede are unreciprocated). At the same time, it also needs to be acknowledged that Shakespeare's play offers ample opportunity for containing or bypassing the homoerotic possibilities inherent in it, which is the reason why the play has worked over the centuries with an exclusively or predominantly heterosexual interpretation. The Phoebe-Ganymede interaction can be made to lose its erotic intensity by being cast in the farcical model of an obtuse woman's amorous delusions. As in Shakespeare's play, Rangini is hyperbolically dismissive of the Phoebe-equivalent, named Phullara in the adaptation, and calls her abusive names such as *Chandi* [a fierce, destructive form of the Hindu mother goddess] and *Shurpanakha* [an amorous female demon in the *Rāmāyana*] (Annadaprasad Basu 93, 94).

Towards the end of Shakespeare's play, Ganymede asks Orlando: "Why then tomorrow I cannot serve your turn for Rosalind?" (5:2:43-44) The question, coming from a person whom Orlando takes to be a sexually knowledgeable boy, can be construed on one level as an invitation to a same-sex coitus, although the theatrical irony involving Ganymede's real identity as a woman character within the fictional economy of the play would be entirely clear to the audience. The Bengali play retains the line, but does not highlight its risqué possibilities (Annadaprasad Basu 112). This is probably because the late 19th-century author was diffident about bringing in a joke about male-male intercourse. Incidentally, the homoerotic potential of Ganymede's proposition has been exploited in a recent Bengali adaptation of the play, *Hridmajhare* produced by Nandikar in 2012. In that play, the Orlando-equivalent is scandalized and protests vociferously when he suspects the Ganymede-equivalent to be a man having sexual designs on him. But *Ananga-Rangini* does not toe that path. In fact, Rangini reveals her true identity not in a moment of well-calculated triumph but is compelled to do so as a restorative measure when the already-wounded Ananga is in the throes of a fever and disconsolately pining for Rangini (Annadaprasad Basu 112). More importantly, *Ananga-Rangini* totally discards the Epilogue of Shakespeare's play, which is spoken by Rosalind drawing attention to the boy actor playing the role and revelling in the confusion of gender and sexual propensities (Rackin 36-37, 39).

It becomes thus evident that *Ananga-Rangini* is incapable of juggling the resources of homoeroticism or cross-dressing in a self-conscious and aesthetically motivated way. One needs to bring in a timely proviso to qualify the picture. Which is to say, the convention of all-male acting or cross-dressing in traditional or folk theatre would hardly be unknown to the 19th-century Bengali audience. Besides, there is increasing evidence that homoeroticism or homosexuality, although largely muted or marginalized, was not entirely alien to the archive of Bengali experience (Bhaskar Chaudhuri 151-64, 209-21). These two issues are brought together in some oblique comments made by Girish Chandra Ghosh (1844-1912), the greatest ever actor-manager of Bengali theatre and the most successful playwright of his time, in an article originally published in the magazine *Rangalay* ["The Theatre"] in 1901. The title of the article is *Purush Angshe Nari Abhinetri* ["Actresses in Male Roles"]. Although Girish was a Shakespeare aficionado all his life and had also proclaimed the similarity of his own theatrical practice with Shakespeare's artistic credo, he completely rubbishes all-male or cross-dress acting. He calls it an anomaly, which committed theatre-practitioners should avoid. Girish also objects to Sarah Bernhardt's famous portrayal of Hamlet in 1899 (821-22). He in the same article finds faults with Binodini Dasi's transvestite performance as the 16th-century Vaishnavite mystic Sree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the 1884 play *Chaitanya Leela* written and directed by Girish himself (820), a performance that took the spiritual life of Bengali Hindus by storm (Gangopadhyay 197-98). Girish's peroration in the article is quite revelatory and may be quoted at some length.

> Some critics, citing the example of the *dohars* [chorus boys] belonging to the *jatra* troupes, advise that boys should be cast in female roles. It appears that such critics have never seen *jatra* performances. If they had, they would never blame the managers of public playhouses [like Girish himself, for hiring actresses] even in the name of religious strictures. Some religious groups have on some occasions mounted amateur performances deploying boys [for female roles]. If the detractors [of public theatre] have enjoyed such performances, only they can explain why they have. Certainly, the majority of the playgoers will not sympathize with them. (823)

Girish's stance towards the supporters of all-male acting becomes especially admonitory when he takes up the topic of boys cast in female roles:

> Those who advocate all-male performances should keep their views to themselves. Otherwise, dramatic performances will never improve in Bengal; and *the boys who will unfortunately have to essay female roles will have to stay as women within male bodies for the rest of their lives*. (823; emphasis added)

Girish ends his article on a rather grave and disconcerting note as he avers, "We can give examples for this, but *we do not agree to identify and expose them who still inhabit a woman-like state after essaying female roles in their boyhood*. It is easy to understand that boyhood habits die hard. If one does not see reason, we cannot help" (823; emphasis added). In view of this sentiment, *Ananga-Rangini* can be seen as taking a rather informed and guarded stance about the staging of homoerotic frisson while also trying to accommodate Shakespeare's comic idiom.

Incidentally, Girish adapted for the Bengali stage at least three famous Bengali novels that feature transvestite roles or sequences: Bakimchandra Chattopadhyay's *Kapalkundala* (staged 1873), Bankim's *Bishabriksha* (staged 1878) and Romesh Chunder Dutt's *Madhabikankan* (staged 1881). All these novels have intense tragic overtones and do not admit of the effervescent comicality of *As You Like It*. More importantly, Girish later includes a transvestite heroine in his tragic play *Bishad* (produced 1888). It revolves around Saraswati, the king of Ayodhya's neglected wife who takes the disguise of a boy named *Bishad* [meaning "melancholy" in Sanskrit] in order to serve the (female) prostitute with whom her husband cohabits, and finally sacrifices her life for him. The role reminded the 20th-century scholars Sukumar Sen of Bellario/ Euphrasia in Beaumont and Fletcher's tragi-comedy *Philaster* (333), and Devipada Bhattacharya of Sebastian/Julia, Cesario/Viola and Fidele/Innogen in Shakespeare's plays *The Gentlemen of Verona*, *Twelfth Night* and *Cymbeline* respectively (xlv). All these characters from early modern English plays are hospitable to homoerotic resonances at multiple levels, and in fact Girish's own play generates tantalizing homoerotic confusions as both the husband and the prostitute feel drawn towards the boy servant Bishad. However, the reviewers in contemporary periodicals ignored such possibilities. What they appreciated instead was the depiction of Saraswati as the paragon of chastity and wifely devotion, befitting the highest patriarchal ideals of Hinduism (Gangopadhyay 236-37). It is again noteworthy that the two 20th-century scholars who liken Bishad with early modern English characters do not mention Ganymede/ Rosalind, presumably because Rosalind is far more playful than these characters and she shares none of their dejection.

One may also add here that a lesser-known Sanskrit play, *Viddhaśālabhañjikā* ["The Carved Female Statue"] by Rājaśekhara (late 9th century to early 10th century CE), features a transvestite heroine and the plot revolves around the confusion over her gender. The play also has a comic sub-plot featuring the mock-marriage of a court jester with a boy dressed as a woman, reminiscent of Ben Jonson's comedy *Epicoene, or The Silent Woman* (Gray 4). But the Sanskrit play does not try to explore questions of gender and sexuality (at least to the extent *As You Like It* does), does not present the heroine on the stage for the greater part of its duration (Gray 6) and follows a clear

heteronormative trajectory. The play was available in an English paraphrase by the Orientalist scholar Horace Hayman Wilson (354-60) from the early 19th century. Besides, a scholarly edition of the play in the Devanagari script was published from Kolkata in 1883 with annotation and commentary by Jibananda Vidyasagara, the then Superintendent of the Sanskrit College, Kolkata. The play was first fully translated into English in 1906 (Gray 1), and a Bengali translation by Jyotirindranath Tagore (1849-1925) was published in 1310 BS or 1903-4 CE (Manmathanath Ghosh 158). But *Viddhaśālabhañjikā* does not seem to have been widely known among the Shakespeare-reading Bengali audience. The play is not mentioned in comparative studies of Shakespeare and classical Sanskrit drama that occur regularly in the Bengali periodicals of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and does not seem to have inspired the creation of transvestite heroines for the Bengali commercial stage.

One may hazard the guess that it is the characterization of Rosalind as a strong-willed, loquacious and playful woman, and not the homoerotic overtones of the character, that proved to be the foremost reason why the Bengali readers and adaptors were not much fond of the character. This is further supported by the fact that *As You Like It* did not elicit much attention from Bengali commentators on Shakespeare, although it was established in the Anglophone world as a major comedy by the 19th century. The inclusion of the play in college curricula testifies to its canonicity in colonial Bengal. *The Calcutta University Calendar; 1871-72* shows that a question paper for the Honours examination in English asks the students to explain the lines from *As You Like It*, "You must borrow me Gargantua's mouth first" (3:2:205) and "… that which here stands up / Is but a quintain" (1:2:216-17), spoken by Celia and Orlando respectively (cxxvii). The same examination back in 1870 demanded, "In what does the peculiar charm of 'As You Like It' appear to you to consist?" (*Calendar* for 1870-71; cxxvii).

However, the favourite Shakespeare play for late-19th- and early-20th-century Bengali critics is evidently *The Tempest*. It generated comments from a galaxy of literati including Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay (1838-94), Haraprasad Shastri (1853-1931), Priyanath Sen (1854-1916), Hirendranath Dutta (1860-1942), Balendranath Tagore (1870-99) and Lalitkumar Bandyopadhyay (1868-1929), apart from Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) himself (Mitra 187-94). What is more, Srishchandra Majumder (1860-1908), Sudhindranath Tagore (1869-1929) and Kshirodbihari Chattopadhyay produced full-fledged journal articles comparing Miranda with the eponymous heroine of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's novel *Kapalkundala* (1866), treating the two characters as variations on the theme of feminine innocence and purity. One would be hard put to find even a stray afterthought on Rosalind coming from them. Haraprasad Shastri considers such diverse female characters as Miranda, Desdemona, Dame Quickly, Cleopatra and Lady Macbeth (139), but does not take Rosalind into

account. In a serialized essay on Shakespeare, the philosopher, politician and educationist Hirendranath Dutta mentions Rosalind twice in passing to illustrate the variety and distinctiveness of Shakespeare's women characters, also mentioning in the same breath such a wide assortment of characters as Titania, Miranda, Doll Tearsheet, Isabella, Catherine of Aragon, Cleopatra and Innogen (*Shakespeare*, 3:480) and Desdemona, Ophelia, Perdita, Portia, Emilia and Dame Quickly (*Shakespeare*, 3:482). Elsewhere, Hirendranath in his serialized comparative study of Shakespeare and *Kālidāsa* takes the examples of Cordelia, Innogen and Regan, but does not mention Rosalind (*Kālidāsa o Shakespeare,* 2: 244). This neglect towards Rosalind may be traced to the fact that Rosalind's playful disingenuousness and effervescent sexuality made her unfit to be stereotyped conveniently either as a socially inexperienced romantic heroine like Miranda, a menacing seductress like Cleopatra or an inhuman villainess like Regan.

One critic is of the opinion that in the Bengali adaptation under review Rangini and Sarala (the Celia-figure) have been rendered coy and naive in order to suit Bengali cultural expectations about pure, virginal young women (Rina Ghosh 199). But it may be demonstrated that the play amply retains in the character of Rangini much of Shakespeare's playful heroine and the frankness of her desire. For instance, Rosalind's racy rejoinder, "Some of it is for my child's father" (1:3:9) is replicated in Bengali (Annadaprasad Basu 26). Further, the Celia-equivalent named Sarala in the same scene apostrophizes in mock horror, "Ananga, wherever you are, rush in and fill my sister's belly at once, for she cannot stay empty-bellied anymore. If you are late, she may start biting at bricks out of sheer hunger" (Annadaprasad Basu 27). Such a frank celebration of female libido is not to be found even in Shakespeare's play. Since the Bengali adaptation dispenses with the character of Touchstone, Rangini and Sarala in fact remain the only purveyors of broad, earthy humour in it.

Nevertheless, the Bengali adaptation by and large emphasizes those parts of the play that ascribe a feminine core to Rosalind. Shakespeare's Rosalind, for example, protests, "Dost thou think, though I am *caparisoned like a man*, I have a *doublet and hose* in my disposition?" (3:2:178-80; emphasis added). The Bengali play renders this faithfully when, after guessing Ananga's presence in the forest retreat Rangini feels her passions as a woman aroused and asks Sarala, *amar ange dhuti chadar bole antareo ki tai?* ["I am wearing *dhuti* and *chadar* (like a 19th-century Bengali Hindu gentleman) on my body, but is my inside also like that?"] (Annadaprasad Basu 59).Rosalind finds her disguise to be a hindrance when she learns that her lover Orlando is present at Ardenne and cries, "Alas the day, what shall I do with my *doublet and hose*!" (3:2:200-1; emphasis added). Likewise, Rangini exclaims in the identical situation, *Hari! Hari! E dhutichadarer phal ki?* ["By Lord Hari! What use is the *dhuti* and *chadar* now?"] (Annadaprasad Basu 59). Rangini also repeats Rosalind's query,

"But doth he know that I am in this forest, and in *man's apparel*?" (3:2:208-9; emphasis added). For all her swaggering and attitudinizing, the fact that Rosalind swoons on being shown the napkin soaked in Orlando's blood betrays her feminine self—an episode that is retained in the adaptation (Annadaprasad Basu 102). Further, the Bengali play, true to the horizon of expectations it presupposes, transmutes Rosalind into the traditional figure of an acquiescent and devoted wife even before she gets married. Unlike Shakespeare's jubilant heroine, after doffing her disguise Rangini remains silent out of compunction for having deceived Ananga for so long. Her cousin Sarala has to request Ananga on her behalf to pardon her (Annadaprasad Basu 118).

Rosalind, *Śakuntalā* and Female Sexual Agency

Ananga-Rangini invites comparison with Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* (c. 400 CE – c. 500 CE) through its reconceptualization of the forest of Ardenne and its native denizens. Kālidāsa reworks a non-descript *ākhyāna* or narrative from the *Ādiparva* (Book I) of the *Mahābhārata* to produce an engaging poetic play about (heterosexual) love, estrangement and reunion, which has been compared with Shakespeare's romance *The Winter's Tale* (Johnson x; Malagi 120-24). The plot of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* would be familiar to the 19th-century Bengali readers, thanks to the famous paraphrase by Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar (1820-91) entitled *Śakuntalā* (first published 1854), which was often prescribed for school syllabi. To summarize the play quickly, Duṣyanta, king of the lunar dynasty of Puru, goes on a hunting expedition and meets the virginal beauty Śakuntalā (the natural daughter of the sage Viśvamitra and the apsarā or celestial nymph Menakā) at the hermitage of her foster-father, the sage Kaṇva. Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā fall in love with each other, get married hastily and secretly through the mutual exchange of vows and consummate their marriage, following which he leaves for his capital Hastināpura giving her a signet ring. Owing to the curse of the sage Durvāsas, when the pregnant Śakuntalā goes to the capital city she is unable to show the ring and Duṣyanta fails to recognize her. Śakuntalā is whisked away to heaven by her mother and gives birth to her son at the semi-celestial hermitage of the sage Mārīca, where they are granted residence. When the lost signet ring is accidentally recovered, Duṣyanta is full of repentance for the loss of Śakuntalā and despairs of having a son and heir. The play ends happily as Duṣyanta is united with Śakuntalā and their son at the hermitage of Mārīca. When Sir William Jones translated the play into English in 1789 under the title *Sacontala; or, The Fatal Ring: An Indian Drama*, it constituted a foundational text of the Orientalist project and "inaugurated the modern phase of the cultural relationship between India and the West" (Devy 26). It received enthusiastic attention especially from the German Romantics.

The Bengali adaptation of *As You Like It* under review recalls the atmosphere of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* by showing the forest of Ardenne as a *tapovan*, a Sanskrit-derived term for a religious retreat or penance grove. This point has been mentioned in passing by Saubhik Datta in his doctoral dissertation (170). The honourable precedent of the Sanskrit play warrants the ascetic retreat to be used as a locus for love plots. Besides, the Bengali play also calls the forest dwellings *ashram* and introduces the Silvius-figure as a *tapaskumar* (young unmarried ascetic or hermit), the Phoebe-character as a *tapaskumari* (young unmarried ascetic woman) and the Corin-equivalent as an unnamed *tapasvi* (ascetic). They are not shown to be countrified shepherds as in the Shakespeare play. When Rangini proposes to buy a hut from the Corin-equivalent, there is no talk of property and wages as in Shakespeare's play (2:4:66-95). On the contrary, the Corin-character declares that the religious retreat is exempt from the rule of money and offers her the *ashram* of her choice as a gift for a life-time (Annadaprasad Basu 48). Moreover, the Duke Senior of the Bengali play is shown dressed as a *tapasvi* (an ascetic) and performing *puja* (devotional rituals) regularly, Jaques's famed melancholy is recast as quasi-religious abstinence, and the play ends on a sober note as Pundarik (the character corresponding to Duke Frederick) renounces the world to become a monk in spite of his daughter's tearful protests (Annadaprasad Basu 50, 104, 49-50, 132). In keeping with the religious mood of the penance grove, the Bengali play stretches out the reference to Duke Frederick's conversion into a full-fledged scene (Act 5, scene 9), with passages in Bengali and Sanskrit copiously describing the bliss and glory of asceticism (Annadaprasad Basu 127-32).

The Sanskrit play is evoked by the Bengali one through several scattered echoes, mostly of an ornamental nature. In Act 3 of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, the heroine Śakuntalā is reported to be "gone down with heatstroke" (32), but she is actually lovestruck and pining for Duṣyanta, who spies on her as she is "resting on a smooth rock covered in flowers" (33), with her "[l]imbs cushioned on flowers - / Bruised lotuses …" (38). He also observes that "[h]er breasts are smeared with lotus balm" (34) for its therapeutic efficacy. Meanwhile, her friends Anasuyā and Priyamvadā affectionately fan her with lotus leaves, but she is so lovesick that she fails to notice the soothing breeze thus generated (34). The atmosphere of this scene is recalled in *Ananga-Rangini* especially through the details of curative measures. In order to succour the wounded and lovelorn Ananga, a still-disguised Rangini offers to take him to the cool shade of a mango tree where she has strewn the ground with the petals of lotus. She instructs Ananga to lie down on the ground placing his head on her lap and promises to cover his forehead with wet lotus petals and fan him ceaselessly with a palm frond (Annadaprasad Basu 113). Duṣyanta offers Śakuntalā a similar treatment in the Sanskrit play: "Will moist air, stirred by the fans of lotus fronds / Suffice to cool and refresh you? / Or shall I massage, in my lap, your lotus-reddened

feet?" (39) Further, in the Sanskrit play Duṣyanta notes with alarm and pity that Śakuntalā's "cheeks are drawn, her bosom shrinks, / Her waist contracts, her shoulders stoop, / Her colour drains" (35). Similarly, Rangini in the Bengali play observes with great anxiety that Ananga's face has become pale, his limbs have become loose, his brows are slightly wrinkled and his lips have lost the colour of blood (Annadaprasad Basu 112-13). Rosalind does not show any comparable sign of solicitude or the eagerness to soothe the pained lover in the corresponding scene of Shakespeare's play (Act 5, scene 2); she continues instead with her juggling of words and identities.

In addition, the Bengali play's treatment of the Phoebe-equivalent, named Phullara, is more sympathetic than the Shakespearean text's approach to Phoebe, especially when Phullara is seen pining for Jnan in long stretches of verses with Sanskritic diction. She apostrophizes the moon and blames it for causing pain to lovers (Annadaprasad Basu 79), which would be reminiscent of *Duṣyanta*'s complaint in the Sanskrit play that he finds "the moon, for all its frozen marrow, / Dart[ing] solar beams" (33). Phullara's complaint here has a distinct feel of classical Sanskrit drama or love poetry, which would be recognized by the target audience. Phoebe in Shakespeare's play is not allowed such lyrical and ornamental soliloquies. Phoebe's long speech about Ganymede starting with "Think not I love him, though I ask for him" (3:5:110-36), made in the presence of Silvius, reveals Phoebe's escalating infatuation with Ganymede and her diffidence about admitting to it at that point. But Phoebe does not have any fulsome soliloquy like Phullara's where she can wallow sensuously in her lovesick sentiments. Besides, Phullara in the same scene writes a letter to Jnan on a banana leaf (Annadaprasad Basu 80), which would recall Śakuntalā etching a love letter with her nails into a lotus leaf as an outlet for her pent-up passion (37). Further, in the Bengali play Hymen is replaced by an unnamed *apsarā*, a celestial maiden (Annadaprasad Basu 123-24), whose kind is celebrated in Hindu mythology for ethereal beauty, eternal youth and expertise in the performing arts. This character may be faintly suggestive of Śakuntalā's mother Menakā, who is never seen in the Sanskrit play but casts her shadow over it.

It has been observed that for colonial India "the Shakespeare-Kālidāsa interface" constituted "the site for the intersection of colonial modernity and Indian traditionality perceived as classicism" (Kapoor 219). *Ananga-Rangini* may also be seen as encapsulating (rather obliquely and succinctly) within its remit a popular topic of 19th-century Bengali criticism, namely, the comparison between Kālidāsa and Shakespeare as poets and/or dramatists. One of the pioneering contributions to this topic in Bengali was made by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay in his essay *Śakuntalā, Miranda evam Desdemona*, originally published in the monthly *Bangadarshan* in 1875. In this essay Bankimchandra famously finds the unmarried Śakuntalā to be similar to Miranda and the married Śakuntalā to be similar to Desdemona (88). In the same essay, he remarks that

Shakespeare's play is like an ocean, profound, tempestuous and formidable, while Kālidāsa's is like a *nandankanan* (heavenly garden), which can boast of everything beautiful and pleasant but cannot partake of the sublime (87). Although Bankimchandra does not point this out directly, this distinction between Shakespeare and Kālidāsa is an especially unmistakable one because tragedy as a genre or worldview was beyond the latter's purview and horizon of expectations, while Shakespeare was the supreme exemplar of the tragedy for the 19th-century Bengali reader. The Sanskrit scholar and educationist Haraprasad Shastri in an essay originally published in the monthly *Bangadarshan* in 1878 seconds Bankimchandra's opinion when he argues that *Kālidāsa* delineates only the beautiful aspect of the human heart, whereas Shakespeare is unparalleled in his lifelike depiction of the complexities, inconsistencies and irregularities of the human heart, in the creation of rounded and realistic human beings (138-39). The dramatist Kshirodprasad Vidyavinod (1863-1927) in an 1895 essay also regards Kālidāsa as a poet of beauty and *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* as the consummate embodiment of beauty (545), although he considers Bhavabhūti (8th century CE Sanskrit poet) to be more accomplished than Kālidāsa in poetry (546). The philosopher and politician Hirendranath Dutta seems to be in perfect agreement with Bankimchandra's thesis as he declares Kālidāsa to be the supreme poet of beauty and his faculty for feeling beauty to be super-human (*Kālidāsa o Shakespeare,* 2:250; 8:750). On the other hand, Rabindranath Tagore in his essay *Śakuntalā* (originally published in the monthly *Bangadarshan* in 1902) prominently departs from this favourable estimation of Shakespeare. He praises *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* for showing a deep emotional-spiritual bond between human beings and the non-human Nature, and, by contrast, he critiques *The Tempest* for representing what he takes to be man's unabashedly predatorial and colonizing approach towards Nature (728-29). Rabindranath summarizes, "One finds only *daman* ["subjugation"] and *peedan* ["persecution"] in *The Tempest*—in *Śakuntalā,* only love, peace, amity" (726).

The play *Ananga-Rangini* is not in a position to address so decisively the apparently entrenched aesthetic preferences or cultural tendencies for appreciating Shakespeare and Kālidāsa in colonial Bengal. But this Bengali play tries to negotiate one received classic (Shakespeare) with the help of registers borrowed from another (Kālidāsa). Supriya Chaudhuri sees the reception of Shakespeare in India as characterized by the co-presence of three different kinds of *time*—"the 'universal' time of the classic, the sedimented time of history, and the time of a reformed present" (102). For the 19th-century Western-educated Bengali intellectual, Kālidāsa (as re-introduced through Orientalist scholarship) too would inhabit all these three times and be open for re-appropriation. The fact that the Bengali play in question affiliates itself both to an early modern English play and a classical Sanskrit one gives a measure of its participation in the necessarily hybrid and multi-accentual colonial modernity of 19th-century Bengal.

Taking a cue from the Bengali play's unacknowledged and inchoate appropriation of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, it is possible to see *Ananga-Rangini* as hosting in its adaptation of the Shakespeare play some of the gender politics that also informs the Sanskrit play. Romila Thapar sums up the many avatars of *Śakuntalā* across texts noting that,

> [t]he mother of a hero in an *ākhyāna* and the self-reliant woman of the *Mahābhārata* had been transmuted into the romantic ideal of upper caste high culture in the play by *Kālidāsa*, then cast as the child of nature in German Romanticism, and ended up as the ideal Hindu wife from the perspective of Indian nationalism and its perceptions of Hindu tradition. (257)

Thapar also looks askance at Rabindranath's fervent reading of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, where she locates a patronizing scheme of sin and expiation. She summarizes it thus: "The child of nature was an innocent girl who was led astray, but she remained submissive, long-suffering, patient and still devoted to her husband and was finally exonerated" (262). The fetishization of passivity and meekness as feminine virtues that Thapar ascribes to Rabindranath's reading of *Śakuntalā* has been marked more recently by another scholar, Shampa Roy, to be a key principle of William Jones's rendition of the play. According to her argument, the reshaping of Kālidāsa's heroine by Jones through deliberate mistranslation:

> seems to echo writings like Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of the Sublime and the Beautiful* for instance which naturalises an aesthetic ideal in which feminine beauty is inseparable from weakness, softness, compliance, fragility and dependence. It also seems to draw from the burgeoning field of conduct literature that was positioning similar ideals of the most repressive standards of female propriety or from those conservative fictions of the time in which romantic love is represented in ways that make it incompatible with female sexual agency. (Roy 68)

The same critic also contends that Jones's rendition emphasizes Śakuntalā's "rusticity," implying a Rousseauistic model of closeness to Nature and freedom from the guiles and artifices of civilization (Roy 68). She goes on to claim that

> [i]t is in fact this Śakuntalā—pastoral maiden, innocent, exotic, a near fantasy creature closely associated with nature—that the German Romantics chose to respond to and appropriate for their purposes, that Goethe, Schlegel and Herder raved about and that was closely intertwined with their image of India as profoundly spiritual, idealistic and mystical. (Roy 69)

Moreover, G.N. Devy, noted literary scholar and linguist, had suggested earlier that *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* has been favourably accepted by Western readers

because the text consolidates a certain image of India that is consistent with their expectations. Devy has read the play's plot as metaphorizing the colonial encounter, where the colonized intellectual collaborates in the perpetuation of the "self-image" foisted on him by the colonizer and loses "the right to share a universe of discourse" on egalitarian terms (26-27). Devy indicates that the representation of femininity in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* is linked with the colonizer's construction of the identity of the colonized. He remarks, "One could speculate why Sir William Jones chose this play, rather than some other, like Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭika* (a realistic comedy in which the heroine is a strong and active character), to present India's image to the Western world" (27). Such remarks, showing the imbrication of gender and colonialism in the reception of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* can help appreciate how culturally potent the cross-fertilization of this Sanskrit play with *As You Like It* can be.

The precept that Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā represented the ideal of feminine beauty and conduct seems to have been popular among Bengali readers in the 19th century. The essayist Chandranath Basu (1844-1910), a leading ideologue of the Hindu revivalism of 19th-century Bengal, wrote a full-fledged treatise on this theme, called *Śakuntalā–tattva* ["The Philosophy of *Śakuntalā*"], first published in 1881 and consisting of essays (revised and enlarged for the book) published earlier in the monthly Bangadarshan. In the third chapter of the book, Chandranath cites the authority of Harriet Martineau (65) and John Stuart Mill (66) to suggest an essential, universal difference between men and women in terms of their intellectual faculties and emotional constitutions, and counts it as Śakuntalā's advantage that she does not have the sharp mind of a Portia, Rosalind or Isabella (65). He subsequently produces a chart at the end of the chapter, cataloguing the insights about the differences between men and women that he has secured by analyzing the character of Śakuntalā. The chart deserves quotation in full, because such an overt and confident declaration of gendered ideology is not always easy to come by.

1. Man's body is strong; woman's body is weak.
2. Man is endurant because of bodily strength; woman is endurant because of the strength of the heart. Woman is better than man in endurance.
3. Enterprising activity is a natural characteristic of man; it is a situation-specific characteristic of woman.
4. Man is better than woman in wisdom and bodily strength; woman is better than man in the strength of the heart. Man's character has the quality of expansiveness; woman's character has the quality of depth. Man is less capable of self-absorption, feeling the external world and totally identifying with the external world; woman has all these qualities to an incalculable degree.
5. Woman's spirituality is deeper than man's. But man's spirituality is relatively independent; woman's spirituality is dependent on the material world.

6. Man's intelligence is a result of his power of judgement; woman's intelligence is only an expression of her heart.
7. Woman is a reservoir of opposites – she is tough in spite of being soft, strong in spite of being weak, injudicious in spite of being intelligent, dependent on the material world in spite of being spiritual. There is no mystery in the world like woman. (Chandranath Basu 67)

At the conclusion of the chapter, Chandranath commends *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* for illustrating the characteristics of man and woman so precisely and elegantly within its limited space. He also declares that the play proves Kālidāsa's matchless artistic merit and his superiority to Shakespeare (Chandranath Basu 67-68).

All the expectations of the ideal Hindu womanhood as derivable from *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* are not strictly imposed on Shakespeare's heroine by the Bengali adaptation, but they are in effect brought to a dialogue with the Shakespearean legacy that is retained in the play. To be sure, *As You Like It* itself gestures towards matrimony and heterosexual domesticity (at least provisionally) as a most desirable state of affairs. Jean E. Howard aptly notes that the play "dissects the problems of marriage, but many marry at the end" (592), just as many re-join court life at the end despite being conscious of its pitfalls (591). The Bengali play, in fact, emphasizes the importance of matrimony much more than *As You Like It* does. The title page of the play quotes six lines from Hymen's song, beginning with "Wedding is great Juno's crown, / O blessèd bond of board and bed" (5:4:130-31), thus announcing the bliss of matrimony to be one of its principal themes. Besides, as has been already discussed, the Bengali play also tries to pigeonhole Rangini into the role of the ideal wife: she is full of utmost solicitude for the wounded and indisposed Ananga, and she is speechless in remorse for deceiving him in her transvestite avatar. Additionally, *Ananga-Rangini* has a non-Shakespearean scene (Act 5, scene 6) where six holy hermits expatiate upon the great happiness associated with the day of wedding (121-22). There's another additional short scene (Act 5, scene 8) where Rangini's father, as would be expected of a Bengali father giving her daughter away in marriage, enquires if the newly-weds have dined and if the guests have been adequately entertained (Annadaprasad Basu 124-25). In the final scene of the Bengali play, a hermit blesses Rangini after her wedding, "As Lord Narayan reigns in Vaikuntha with Goddess Lakshmi, as Lord Shiva reigns in Kailasa with Goddess Durga, as Lord Indra reigns in heaven with his wife, so you accede to the throne with your husband and glorify the capital of the kingdom," while another hermit wishes that Rangini and Sarala may have world-conquering sons (Annadaprasad Basu 126). In absence of the sexually polyvalent Epilogue, the Bengali play privileges the heteronormative closure as an exclusive choice. A happy and prosperous married life is suggested unequivocally to be the best situation Rangini and Sarala can aspire to within the available cultural paradigm.

Ananga-Rangini seems to admit of a lesser degree of experimentation with social roles and cultural fixtures than *As You Like It* attempts. But the Bengali play does manage to enlist the precedent of Shakespeare's Rosalind in order to explore some possibilities of female self-expression, to which it would otherwise have no access. The Rosalind-figure in *Ananga-Rangini* is identifiable as a woman character who in her final role as a submissive lover/wife is consistent with the prevalent expectations of the 19th-century Bengali culture that the play caters to. What *Ananga-Rangini* loses in terms of aesthetic appeal because of its reformulation of Shakespeare's heroine, it gains in terms of the Rosalind-character's congruence with the ideal of femininity that is perceptible in the reception of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* in 19th-century Bengal. *Ananga-Rangini* negotiates, refashions and co-opts both Shakespeare and Kālidāsa in order to achieve a composite model of fictive femininity that would be consistent with the aesthetic tastes and cultural expectations of the Shakespeare- and Kālidāsa-reading Bengali audience of its time. The Bengali play, in its cross-fertilization of literary influences from two culturally and aesthetically distinct texts, constitutes a significant (but hitherto underappreciated) case in the history of aesthetic adaptations and cultural mediations of Shakespeare.

Note: All quotations in English from *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* are keyed to W.J. Johnson (trans.), *The Recognition of Śakuntalā*, by Kālidāsa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). All Shakespeare quotations are from Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard and Katharine Eisaman Maus (eds.), *The Norton Shakespeare Based on the Oxford Edition* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997). All translations from Bengali into English are by the author of this article unless otherwise indicated. The present essay follows throughout, for all Bengali persons mentioned by it, the Bengali convention of referring to a person by her given name rather than her family name.

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What bloody film is this? *Macbeth* for our time

Abstract: When Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* hit the screens in 1971, its bloody imagery, pessimism, violence and nudity were often perceived as excessive or at least highly controversial. While the film was initially analysed mostly in relation to Polanski's personal life, his past as a WWII child survivor and the husband of the murdered pregnant wife, Sharon Tate, in retrospect its bleak imagery speaks not only for his unique personal experience but also serves as a powerful comment on the American malaise, fears and paranoia that were triggered, amongst other things, by the brutal act of the Manson Family. We had to wait forty four years for another mainstream adaptation of the play and it is tempting not only to compare Kurzel's *Macbeth* to its predecessor in terms of how more accepting we have become of graphic depictions of violence on screen but also to ask a more fundamental question: if in future years we were to historicise the new version, what would it tell us about the present moment? The paper proposes that despite its medieval setting and Scottish scenery, the film's visual code seems to transgress any specific time or place. Imbued in mist, its location becomes more fluid and evocative of any barren and sterile landscape that we have come to associate with war. Seen against a larger backdrop of the current political climate with its growing nationalism and radicalism spanning from the Middle East, through Europe to the US, Kurzel's *Macbeth* with its numerous bold textual interventions and powerful mise-en-scène offers a valid response to the current political crisis. His ultra brutal imagery and the portrayal of children echo Polanski's final assertion of perpetuating violence, only this time, tragically and more pessimistically, with children as not only the victims of war but also its active players.

Keywords: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Polanski, Kurzel, mise-en-scène, children, politics, location, conflict, Brexit, ISIS.

When Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* hit the screens in 1971, its bloody imagery, pessimism, violence and nudity were often perceived as excessive or at least highly controversial, earning it an 'X' rating. While the film was initially analysed mostly in relation to Polanski's personal life, his past as a WWII

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child survivor and the husband of his murdered pregnant wife, Sharon Tate,[1] in retrospect its bleak imagery speaks not only for the director's unique personal experience but also serves as a powerful comment on the American malaise, fears and paranoia of the time that were triggered, amongst other things, by the brutal act of the Manson Family. For Polanski it was a strictly personal loss. For the Hollywood community, however, it meant an end to a happy/hippie era and the beginning of a new one with people locking their doors at night and looking at strangers with distrust. 60s counterculture literally ended on that fateful night. As Deanne Williams observes, "For Polanski's personal tragedy was a potent symbol that heralded the end of the sixties" (153). Seen together with other prominent English-language titles of the time, *Macbeth* seemed to symbolise the beginning of some "dark ages" to come, which Polanski epitomised quite literally by depicting medieval Scotland, but other films of the era addressed as well through their focus on a thin line between good and evil. Polanski's *Macbeth* is therefore just as much a period piece offering "a wide-ranging meditation upon the larger political and social events of the sixties" (Williams 146) as are such prominent American and British productions as *Dirty Harry* (1971), *The Godfather* (1972), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Taxi Driver* (1976), *Performance* (1970), *Get Carter* (1971) and *The Wicker Man* (1973), to mention a few.

We had to wait forty four years for another mainstream adaptation of the play and it is tempting to compare Kurzel's *Macbeth* to its predecessor in terms of how more accepting we have become of graphic depictions of violence on screen. Viewed from our post-Tarantino era's perspective, Polanski's work, initially criticised for its high levels of brutality, no longer raises eyebrows. Its profusion of blood stems as much from Polanski's experiences as it takes cue from Shakespeare's own bloody imagery. Kurzel's violence, though quite graphic in detail, appears more stylised and aestheticised by comparison. It follows in the footsteps of Zack Snyder's *300* (2006), a Hollywood adaptation of a comic series, which also depicts battle sequences in slow motion as if to suggest, as Manhola Dargis of *New York Times* aptly notices: "that there's a timeless aspect to this slaughter and, perhaps by extension, an inevitability to such violence."

Whereas numerous reviewers point to this and other visual effects in an attempt to trace Kurzel's artistic heritage,[2] they leave a more fundamental question unanswered: if in future years we were to historicise the new *Macbeth*,

[1] Deanne Williams addresses this tendency in her article "Mick Jagger Macbeth" in *Shakespeare Survey* Vol. 57 (2002) dedicated to the play and its afterlives.

[2] For example, Manohla Dargis mentions *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Matrix* as influences. Mark Kermode in his review for *The Observer* sees the affinities with *300* (2015) and Leslie Felperin compares it to *Game of Thrones* in a review for *The Hollywood Reporter* (2015).

what would it tell us about our present moment? The paper tries to provide an answer to this question by focusing on two aspects of Kurzel's adaptation. First, it analyses Kurzel's mise-en-scène not only in an effort to trace its artistic lineage but also to show how despite its medieval setting, Scottish scenery and apparent historical accuracy, the film's visual code offers a possibility to read it in a twofold way: symbolically, as it seems to transgress any specific time or place, and as a more specific reference to the current political crisis. Second, the film's most powerful and dominant theme is discussed in support of the latter interpretation of the mise-en-scène. Children provide it with a visual frame and become a driving force for the protagonists' actions. Both Kurzel's landscape and his emphasis on the motif of children and violence open up the film to more radical readings and situate this version of *Macbeth* quite firmly in the discussions about contemporary political crisis spanning from the Middle East, through Europe and beyond. Thus, this paper takes issue with Lars Kaaber's statement in his book *Murdering Ministers* that Kurzel's *Macbeth* has "few moral or political messages to convey" (xix).

A short synopsis of Kurzel's film will help picture its overall atmosphere and thematic preoccupations. The film opens with a funeral of the Macbeths' toddler on a heath. The grieving couple together with just a handful of mourners are being watched by the witches from a distance. Macbeth then prepares a young boy soldier for combat. The youth together with numerous others dies on the battlefield, leaving Macbeth victorious but shaken. The battle is observed by the three witches with a small girl and an infant who then approach Macbeth and Banquo with their prophecy. When the king visits Macbeth's humble dwellings to thank him for the victory, Macbeth, persuaded by his wife, decides to take his life. On the way to the king's tent, he is handed a dagger by the ghost of the dead boy soldier, urging him to take action. After Macbeth brutally kills Duncan, Malcolm enters the tent, sees the carnage and flees. Following Duncan's murder, the couple's mental disintegration progresses quickly. Banquo is murdered in front of Fleance, who escapes into the woods aided by the girl witch. Macbeth's growing cruelty culminates in his order to burn Macduff's wife and children at the stake. Lady Macbeth's remorse and grief grow proportionately to his violence. Distraught, she talks to another one of her deceased children in a chapel and then is last seen dead in her bed. During the final battle Macbeth keeps seeing the apparition of the dead boy soldier. He lets Macduff deliver a fatal blow towards the end of the duel. Prophecy fulfilled, the witches, who have been watching the fight from afar, leave the battlefield. Fleance picks up Macbeth's sword and runs towards the setting sun. In a parallel motion, the young Malcolm leaves the throne room as if to meet the challenge.

Kurzel's work is visually striking due to its colour pattern which alternates between cold blue and grey and saturated red and orange. The contrast is powerful and the film hardly ever offers anything in-between. During the first

battle sequence predominantly shot in the cold blue palette, soldiers appear to emerge from a mist which entombs them, giving them an eerie and ghost-like quality. The fog also creates another effect. It turns the location of the action into a place lacking concrete and tangible substance. Even though Kurzel has repeatedly emphasised in interviews that he brought *Macbeth* back to where it belongs, meaning Scotland,[3] the end result is that we see a netherland populated by ghost-like figures. The soldiers' identical black war face painting and beards prevent easy recognition or differentiation. Ghost-like, almost faceless, the two armies emerge from the mist and immediately collide and blend in the first one-to-one physical combat. The difference between the two sides of the conflict becomes blurred as we cannot say with any certainty who is the winner and who is the loser ("when the battle's lost and won") but, more importantly, who is on the right and who is on the wrong side of this war ("fair is foul and foul is fair").

Thanks to its fluid character and colour scheme, Kurzel's 11th century Scotland comes to represent any location characterised by never-ending conflict. This can be further shown on the basis of the second equally powerful colour motif that one does not typically associate with the Scottish landscape. After the opening scene showing the funeral of the Macbeths' child, we read an inscription about a civil war raging in Scotland, which is supposed to pin the action down to this one specific location. However, the imagery that follows seems to give "Scotland" from the film a more metaphorical dimension. In the next wide shot we see a lonely figure set against a desert-like scarlet landscape (fig. 1).[4]

Fig. 1.

[3] For example, when interviewed by Cassam Looch from HeyUGuys at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XxcvzFth1Ho or by Henry Northmore for *The List* at https://film.list.co.uk/article/74987-interview-justin-kurzel-it-was-the-vision-of-michael-fassbender-as-macbeth-that-first-intrigued-me/.

[4] All the images from the films are screen grabs publishable under Fair Dealing.

Even though the shot lasts approximately five seconds and is immediately superseded by the battle sequence filmed in cold grey and blue filter described above, the impact of this small fragment is undeniable. When placed between the two dark sequences, that of the funeral and the battle scene, it stands out and creates a lasting impact. Its purpose becomes clearer towards the end of the film when similar imagery is repeated again with Birnam wood moving towards the Macbeths' castle in the form of floating red ash from the burning trees. The red setting thus functions as a foreshadowing device with the lonely figure, probably Macbeth, from the opening frame already anticipating his own bloody end at the film's closing as well as playing the role of a framing device (fig. 2, fig. 3).

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Moreover, whereas the saturated red and orange may also be a visual tribute to Polanski's pre-credit sequence which starts with a wide shot of a desolate landscape immersed in red, purple and pink of the glowing sunrise, it may just well reference other, perhaps more surprising, titles including *Apocalypse Now* (1979) (fig. 4), *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) (fig. 5) and the opening sequence of *The Exorcist* (1973) set in Iraq (fig. 6). In the case of the first example,


Fig. 4.


Fig. 5.


Fig. 6.

it alludes to the carnage of war. In the last two, the red burning sun becomes a visual attribute of the desert, identifying the location as "somewhere in the Middle East."

Thus, the film's Scottish and medieval location extends and expands via its visual referencing and colour pattern to encompass other similarly coded war films but also the geopolitical region which is in the thralls of war. Through its subtle visual allusion to the imagery we have come to associate with the Middle East, it is a painful reminder that what we watch is not just 11th century Scotland whose internal disputes we can observe with curious detachment but something much larger and at the same time closer to home, a conflict that touches us all and knows no geographical or national borders.

Whereas Polanski's version offered the viewer some relief by presenting normal everyday life activities, laughter and play, Kurzel's landscape does not feature such frivolous behaviour. As Peter Bradshaw of *The Guardian* notices: "The movie never entirely quits the battlefield ('heath' is replaced with 'battlefield' in one early tinkering with the text) above which the air finally becomes blood red in a dusty fog of war – a Scots Outback, maybe." Anthony Lane of *The New Yorker* expresses a similar opinion, noticing the omission of Duncan's line about the Macbeths' castle being "a pleasant seat" with delicate air or that of the porter: "The problem is not that Kurzel cuts the words, which is his absolute right, but that he destroys the conditions from which they might conceivably have sprung. We need *some* reminder, however fleeting, that there was a time when the natural order prevailed." He then concludes: "Kurzel is weaving a nightmare, and nothing is permitted, in the heroine's phrase, to peep through the blanket of the dark."

Indeed, Kurzel's vision is probably the darkest of all *Macbeth* adaptations we have seen so far. It belongs to the post 9/11world whose media landscape has been perpetually bombarded by the news of war and terrorist attacks in Syria, Turkey as well as major European cities from Berlin, Brussels, and Paris to London and Manchester. Even though it was made in 2015, its pessimism seems to be a response to the growing divides and spread of nationalism and radicalism affecting America and Europe where the idea of wall building has literally won the day as right-wing politicians promise to safeguard their nations from alien invaders. In this regard, it is useful to address one more aspect of Kurzel's visuals although this time moving on to its paratextual rather than textual aspect. A poster designed for 2015 *Macbeth* is particularly interesting in the context of the politics of location. While it clearly alludes to the poster for Polanski's adaptation (fig. 8) as in both we can discern the shape of Great Britain, the 2015 poster explores the idea of divides more poignantly with Fassbender's face pointing left towards The Hebrides, and Cotillard's face pointing right towards Europe (fig. 7). The map shows a country split by war, which is symbolised by the couple who are torn in pain, looking in opposite

Fig. 7.

Fig. 8.

directions, clearly facing an imminent divorce. Marion Cotillard's presence in the film introduces an interesting dynamics. Being a foreigner in a strange land gives her character more vulnerability and her actions more urgency. We can also analyse her in the context of European women who have travelled to war zones (see: Syria) to meet, accompany and marry contemporary "warriors" to then shockingly discover that their levels of cruelty was more than what they had bargained for. The image does not just reflect the content of Kurzel's *Macbeth* but seems to represent the current political situation in Europe with its growing divisions. The map of the conflict-torn Great Britain is a post-Brexit Britain with Scotland being pro EU and France seen as the last bastion of hope in the process of a possibly spreading European disintegration. This is interesting in the context of the recent French presidential elections and the pro-European Macron's hard position on Brexit, suggesting a tough future divorce.

Discussing Kurzel's film and Shapiro's book *The Year of Lear* in May 2016 before the results of the Brexit referendum, Todd Landon Barnes commented:

> Today, as we remember last year's Scottish Referendum and await the Brexit Referendum this June, European unions may seem shakier than ever. Shapiro's book informs current debates when he narrates how King James spent 1606

> similarly frustrated by his unsuccessful attempts to unite the kingdoms of Scotland and England as "Great Britain." This was the year Shakespeare's plays became distinctly "British," rather than "English," as he and his fellow players joined James's political architects in rewriting, performing, and plotting a distinctly British history.

Rather ironically, then, Kurzel chooses *Macbeth*, which originally served as a tool in the process of unification and was meant to be King James I's pleaser, to show a country in the state of a mounting disintegration. Even though the film came out a year before the Brexit vote, its pessimism almost prophetically foreshadowed the results of the referendum which showed divisions not only within the "united" Kingdom of Britain, but also within the "united" Europe. Last but not least, the map of Britain discernible in the poster comes significantly in the shape of individuals to bring home the idea that behind grand schemes of politicians often performed in the name of and for the sake of nations there lies personal suffering and that every tragedy has a human face.

Despite the fact that Kurzel's *Macbeth* takes place in Scotland, it manages to create an impression of an never-ending conflict spreading like a virus, affecting everyone involved, men, women and, as the film purports, especially children. The opening image shows a close-up of the Macbeths' dead toddler (fig. 9). Even though we do not know the cause of the child's death, the shot recalls images of innocent war casualties in Syria whose little bodies are dressed in white and adorned with green leaves (fig. 10).

Fig. 9. ("The innocent casualties of civil war: 320 dies in Syria massacre").

Fig. 10.

The camera then cuts to reveal the grieving parents together with just a handful of mourners, standing in the middle of an unwelcoming and harsh landscape with a merciless wind blowing from every direction. It seems like a hostile environment to bring up a family where loss is common and life precarious. The Macbeths' grief informs the protagonists' actions as they try to give meaning to their life and translate their pain into action. The decision to

murder Duncan thus stems from their personal tragedy. In her book *Precarious Life*, Butler asks a fundamental question "whether the experiences of vulnerability and loss have to lead straightaway to military violence and retribution" (xii). She develops the notion of precarity and grievable lives in her next book *Frames of War* in which she discusses the function of military power used to "maximise precariousness for others while minimising it for the power in question" (25). The Macbeths seem to operate according to this mechanism. They appear to have lost more than one child. We see one buried and another one appears in Lady Macbeth's hallucinations. Instead of her famous "sleepwalking scene," she is depicted talking to her dead child (who appears to have died from smallpox) to emphasise her growing mental distress ("Wash your hands. Put on your nightgown. Look not so pale. To bed."). Claire Hansen is of the opinion that a great number of children in this version of *Macbeth* derives from Shakespeare's text since "*Macbeth* is a play famously preoccupied with succession—and of course, with the interruption or disturbance of primogeniture. Justin Kurzel's recent film adaptation of *Macbeth* (2015) hones in on this concern by highlighting the role of children amidst its bloody, dramatic landscape." I wish to propose that instead of the term "succession" the word "survival" fits Kurzel's version more with the focus on the theme of children in the context of their parents' desperate attempt to provide them with security and a shelter from war. Significantly, during the uprising, Duncan and his son Malcolm are shown safe in their tent. They do not fight but wait for the news from the battlefield. Seeing how precarious life is if you are not in the possession of the crown motivates the Macbeths to seek protection for their future offspring even at the price of other lives.

In contrast to the play and Polanski's version, Lady Macbeth knows of Macbeth's plans to murder Macduff's wife and children and even tries to stop him, saying "What's done cannot be undone"—a line lifted from her "sleepwalking scene." She is then forced to watch Macduff's wife and children burned at the stake in a gruesome public spectacle of death. Macbeth himself sets Macduff's wife and children on fire. This becomes a turning point for Cotillard's Lady Macbeth, who seeing the deaths of other children begins to regard all lives as "grievable" and hence "valuable" (Butler, *Frames*, 25). She acknowledges "precariousness as a shared condition" (28). In Polanski's adaptation, the murder is secret and performed in Macduff's castle away from public view and scrutiny.

Unless they are related to the king, older children in the film are not protected from war but are forced to participate in combat as shown in the scenes following the funeral. Straight from the burial Macbeth and Banquo are on the battlefield tying swords to the forearms of young teenage soldiers who are too small and weak to even hold weapons. Macbeth coaches a boy soldier who in the film represents his son's alter-ego. During the brutal battle sequence, the

boy's throat is slit, which is shown in slow motion to ensure that this image becomes imprinted in the viewer's memory. The dead boy then haunts Macbeth, who appears to suffer from PTSD and sees him in every crucial moment from the scene with the dagger, which in this version is passed on to Macbeth by the teenager, to the final moments of Macbeth's life. The recurrent image of the dead boy highlights Macbeth's fragile state of mind—he is a product of war as Kurzel and Fassbender claim in numerous interviews.[5] More importantly, however, the boy soldier's numerous appearances serve to emphasise the cruelty of war with children as its unwilling participants and victims.

Macbeth opens with the shot of a dead child and closes with the shot of Banquo's son, Fleance, who grabs Macbeth's sword and is shown running away from the camera into a blood-shot red landscape. This movement is cross-cut with Malcolm's identical run towards the red light at the end of the hall in his castle, thus implying that they are two adversaries who will eventually meet and clash. Banquo's issue has been promised the crown. Yet it is difficult to read if Fleance's actions are motivated by that prophecy or simply because he is aware that Malcolm is after him just as Macbeth was and so he is preparing his defence. The film comes full circle as the death at the beginning is matched by the anticipation of yet more deaths to come. Polanski also shows a circular nature of violence by offering a surprising twist at the end of his adaptation with Donalbain seeking the witches in the hope of getting the crown from his brother, Malcolm. As pessimistic as that finale is, it is surpassed by Kurzel's depiction of children fighters.

Again, it seems fitting to draw parallels between the ubiquitous presence of children in the film whose life is at constant risk and the current situation in the Middle East. The film was released in 2015 which saw an unprecedented until then number of 14 million children impacted by conflict in Syria and Iraq then entering its fifth year. Since then many vulnerable children have regularly fallen prey to ISIS recruitment strategies becoming the youngest army of children fighters, serving as couriers, spies, soldiers or even suicide bombers. As UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake claims: "For the youngest children, this crisis is all they have ever known. For adolescents entering their formative years, violence and suffering have not only scarred their past; they are shaping their futures. [...] As the crisis enters its fifth year, this generation of young people is still in danger of being lost to a cycle of violence—replicating in the next generation what they suffered in their own." Reading these words, it is hard

[5] For example, Fassbender compares him to soldiers coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan with PTSD during a press conference in Cannes 2015 while Kurzel mentions interviewing soldiers coming back "from recent wars" in preparation for the film (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2IyD0LGtnk). Kurzel talks about Macbeth being the product of war in numerous interviews, for example in "*Macbeth* (2015) Behind the Scenes Movie Interview" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iuIbKxpLXSA).

not to see Kurzel's *Macbeth* as a timely reflection on and a response to this overwhelming crisis. Asked why he wanted to play Macbeth, Fassbender answered, "I did it for the kids. I wanted 15-year-olds to be excited about Shakespeare" (DVD commentary). It is unlikely that many 15-year-olds will be allowed to watch this version of the play on their own as it is 'R' rated. Still, Fassbender may have done something "for the kids" by taking part in the film that is a strong oppositional voice against violence against children.

If there is any safe zone present in Kurzel's dark universe, it is strangely associated with the secluded world of the weird sisters. Instead of three witches, we have three adult women, one girl and one infant. They are clearly on the outskirts of society, self-proclaimed outcasts, who find safety in their exclusion. Kurzel's witches are depicted observing events from a safe distance, serving more as the film's moral compass than its source of evil. Kurzel explains his approach to adapting Shakespeare's witches:

> I wanted to ground them, so that they feel as though they could possibly be real travellers. That they had a kind of dignity, they felt more human. My inspiration came from a lot of travellers, and the idea that they were from the land rather than mystic beings. Just underplaying them, really. Also, I'm allowing them to traverse through the possibility that they're a figment of Macbeth's imagination—created from the shadows of war. Which is why we were interested in having them appear on the battlefield, perhaps as observers and watchers of his tragedy. (qtd. in Lambie)

They only get involved in the action directly once when the girl witch brings Fleance to safety, protecting him from the murderers. The women's wisdom is shown to be paying dividends as their offspring is spared in the otherwise male-dominated brutal world. With the image of the women constantly wondering around the barren Scottish landscape comes yet another association with war refugees without any permanent lodgings or stability. Even though the film shows an impressive castle (Bamburgh Castle shot on location in Northumberland), the film's landscape predominantly features humble dwellings and a little wooden church that looks more like a hut. According to Anthony Lane, what we see are "merely a gaggle of tents, pitched like nomads' dwellings in a bare land," which creates further associations with the current refugee crisis.

Conclusion

With hindsight, Polanski's *Macbeth* can be analysed not solely in the context of his personal life but also in the light of the Vietnam War, which as Sontag points out, was the first one "to be witnessed day after day by television cameras, introduced the home front to new tele-intimacy with death and destruction" (21).

One of the most powerful images that may have finally put an end to that conflict by causing an unprecedented public outcry was, as she calls it, "The signature Vietnam War horror-photograph from 1972, taken by Huynh Cong Ut, of children from a village that has just been doused with American napalm, running down the highway, shrieking with pain" (57). Kurzel's Scotland is fluid and evocative of any barren and sterile landscape that we have come to associate with war. However, seen against a larger backdrop of the current political climate with its growing nationalism and radicalism spanning from the Middle East, through Europe to the US, this adaptation with its numerous bold textual interventions and powerful mise-en-scène also seems to be a valid response to the current political crisis. Its ultra-brutal imagery and the portrayal of children echo Polanski's final assertion of perpetuating violence, only this time, tragically and more pessimistically, with children as not only the victims of war but also its active players.

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Shakespeare in Digital Games and Virtual Worlds[1]

Abstract: Shakespeare's plays have long flirted with using various artistic and medial forms other than theatre, such as cinema, music, visual arts, television, comics, animation and, lately, digital games and virtual worlds. Especially in the 20th and 21st century, a fascination with Shakespeare both as a historical and theatrical figure and as a playwright has become evident in screen based media (cinema, television and video), ranging from "faithful," almost documented performances of his plays to free style adaptations or vague film references. Digital games and virtual worlds carry on this tradition of the transmedial journey of Shakespeare's plays to screen based media but top it up with new forms of interaction and performativity. For the first time in the history of mankind everyone can enjoy firsthand from his armchair and for free the experience of taking part in a play by the Bard by entering a virtual world as if it was a stage and by assuming roles through avatars.

The article attempts first to introduce the reader to the deeper needs that gave rise to animation, a fundamental aspect of digital gaming and virtual worlds. It then tries to illuminate the various facets of digital performance and gaming, especially in relation to Shakespeare-themed and inspired digital games and virtual worlds, by putting forward some axes of classification. Finally, it both suggests some ideas that may be of use in rendering the Shakespeare gaming experience more "complete" and "theatrical" and ends by acknowledging the immense potential for the exploration of theatricality and performativity in digital games and virtual worlds.

Keywords: Shakespeare; digital games; virtual worlds; media and performance; computers and theatre.

The Journey Towards Digital Animation

During the Rennaissance, the quest for perspective spread from visual to theatre arts. The need to embed human physicality in theatre sets designed in perspective cropped up (Causey 68-90). In terms of spectacle, there were two major strategies used. In the one, there was an attempt to transform three

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dimensional human physicality into two dimensions, and, in the other, the incredible training of the human performer was believed to lead to extraordinary levels of movement expression and control.[2]

Animation can be considered as an answer merging the two strategies and giving a final solution both to the transfiguration of human three dimensional physicality onto two dimensions as well as to the quest of the performer extraordinaire, or the Über-Marionette (Olf 488-494). The word "animation" means giving life to inanimate beings by movement (Bell "Death and Performing Objects"). The designed performing agent may be a representation of a human being, of an anthropomorphised one or not; in any case it is artificial, man-made and can only move depending on the intention of its animator. It fulfills the longed for condition for the complete embeddedness of physical performance into its environment and the condition of the Über-Marionette at the same time. Without the animator's intention, the animated agent remains empty, dead, inert (Bell "Death and Performing Objects").

The creation of animated sequences by hand gradually gave way to the use of digital technologies and the animator's studio was replaced by digital software (White viii). Digital techniques offer the chance to both create digitally and move the animated agent**,** a function simulated in digital gaming when customising and navigating avatars in virtual worlds.

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[2] The former strategy was explored through painting, techniques of the observer, photography, cinema and animation and the latter through theatre and animation. Animation in fact "marries" the two strategies and provides a unified result. Photography managed to represent three dimensional indexical human physicality onto two dimensions, but, it failed to capture the present in its continuity. Cinema managed to capture the present in its continuity and render human presence and its environment "equal" by projecting the already captured moving image onto a two dimensional a screen. But, however fascinating human physical performance was, a "disobedient" actor always stood in the way of a director's vision. Theatre theorists and directors from their side shaped their theories and practices upon the need to make physically and psychologically the actor's ego disappear and create the perfect performer, the Über-Marionette. To name but a few major innovators, Stanislavski attempted to immerse actors into the role reality to such a degree that they would become marionettes in a fictional world. Meyerhold put forward his theory and practice on Biomechanics to train extremely articulate performers so that they would become marionettes in the hands of the director. Craig's approach is the most emblematic in the quest for the integration of human performance and physicality into the theatrical set. For a detailed account on simulation and embeddedness in theatre and digital media, see Causey, Matthew. *Theatre and Performance in Digital Culture: From simulation to embeddedness*, London, New York: Routledge, 2007. Also, for a better understanding of the position of iconicity and two/three dimensionality in Shakespeare's plays see Georgopoulou, Xenia. *Gender Issues in Shakespeare's Theatre and the Renaissance***.** Athens: Papazisis, 2010. especially 183-198.

Digital animation has moved a step further. Instead of providing a strict sequence of action, as analog animation does, be it puppet theatre or animated film, it opens up towards programming artificially intellingent performing agents that are capable of performing in a virtual environment (digital game, virtual world) or physical reality producing non linear sequences of performing events.[3] So, not only the strings of the digital puppets are pulled invisibly, the actual puppets may exhibit signs of intelligence.

Digital Games, Digital Role Playing Games and Virtual Worlds

Digital animation, apart from being a tool for the creation of animated films, was quickly used in the design of digital games. Digital games are often called video games, electronic games or computer games.[4] Many different definitions and approaches have been provided in the gaming literature (Crawford 1982; Juul 2005; Aarseth and Calleja 2009; Salen and Zimmerman 2004, qtd. in Aarseth and Calleja 2009, to name but a few). A digital game may roughly be defined as an "interactive challenge on a digital platform, which is undertaken for entertainment" (Habgood 18).

Digital role playing games are a popular genre of digital games. These games seem to expand the horizons of theatre and performance and have been discussed as a "new performance art" (Mackay), and in relation to "cyberdrama," "internet theatre," "digital and networked performance" (Jamieson 23). Digital games are not predicated on the taking of roles and role playing, where as digital role playing games are based on role taking and playing, character control and/or embodiment through avatarial extensions in gaming fictional worlds. Digital role playing games run on various digital

[3] Of course, animation in the form of analog puppet theatre always sought simulations of autonomous performing agents, e.g. in India, birds were put in puppets' mouths. See Pischel, Richard and Tawney, Mildred, *The Home of the Puppet Play*, Luzac and Co., Publishers in the India Office, London 1902, accessed at http://ia600302.us.archive.org/16/items/homeofpuppetplay00piscrich/homeofpuppetplay00piscrich.pdf [27/1/16], p. 4.

[4] The term "video game" signifies a game with graphics, an iconic game, as opposed to a text based one and refers to a result (icon) appearing on a screen. The hardware involved in the interface of the first video games was analog, so video games are not necessarily exclusively digital. In Latin, the verb «video» means "to see". Accessed from http://www.archives.nd.edu/cgi-bin/lookit.pl?latin=video [20/1/16]. An "electronic game" again is not necessarily a digital one. Thus for example, the electronic game *Tennis for two*, created in 1958 and played on a monitoring screen was defined as analog. Accessed from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tennis_for_Two [20/1/16]. A "computer game" signifies a game running on a computer platform, and this excludes, strictly speaking for example mobile phone applications. The term "digital" is preferred as it refers to all digital platforms and not merely computer ones.

platforms and are classified according to certain criteria, some of them being network connection capability and potential,[5] interface result (Bowman 30),[6] camera perspective[7] and the number of players.[8] Several other criteria may be of use in making a classification of digital role playing games such as genre (war, strategy, adventure), platform, e.g. personal computers, game consoles and mobile game devices (King and Krzywinska 24) and aim (serious games, educational or advert games). The current analysis focuses on MMORPGs and MMOGs, as well as Virtual Worlds.[9]

MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER ONLINE ROLE PLAYING GAMES (MMORPGs)

The dominant form of digital role playing games is Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORPGs).[10] MMORPGs worlds appear to continue to exist and evolve even when players are offline. In MMORPGs, players from all corners of the world get simultaneously connected to the game system in real time and interconnected through the internet. Players interact with each other, with the

[5] Two major categories are shaped through the use of this criterion, offline digital role-playing games, which may or may not offer potential for connection to a local network and/or internet, and internet digital games, such as Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORPGs), in which the presence of the world wide web is necessary, because the connection and interaction between the players becomes possible through the internet and game servers.

[6] According to this criterion, digital role playing games may be distinguished in iconic and textual terms, the former being defined as actualizing the virtual world through the use of the image, the latter through the use of text. Digital textual role playing games such as MUDs are considered precedent forms for the advent of almighty iconic MMORPGs. See also Tychsen, Anders, «Role-Playing Games - Comparative Analysis Across Two Media Platforms», accessed from http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Anders_Drachen/publication/229019796_Role_playing_games_comparative_analysis_across_two_media_platforms/file/e0b4952322ce681505.pdf [19/1/16], p. 75.

[7] This criterion refers to the route through which the perception of the virtual environment as well as avatarial embodiment and/or control are apprehended. In the case of first person camera perspective, the perceptive horizon of physical reality is simulated, with the player and the avatar sharing the same perspective through the eyes of the latter, a perceptual strategy that may immerse the player in the belief that he/she actually is the avatar. In the case of third person camera perspective, the player is able to see the avatar he/she controls. Digital role playing games offering both options and switching at any time between the two are also available, not rare.

[8] In the case of one sole player competing with the game system, digital role playing games are called “single player,” in the case of many, “multiplayer”.

[9] Virtual Worlds may be just environments to navigate through, where as MMORPGs are navigable environments where gaming aims are sought (winning, gaining experience points, collaborating, learning a new skill e.t.c.) by the players.

[10] Referred to as MMORPGs.

game system and its Non Player Characters or NPCs, characters controlled not by other players but by the game system. Their interaction is rendered possible through avatars which players usually customize according to needs and tastes. MMORPGs usually belong to the war or adventure genre. Players have as their base neutral spaces, cities, villages which are considered safe, hence the term "safeholds" applicable to such places. It is from there that gameplay sets off and there where players return during gameplay in order to buy and/or sell equipment, socialize and heal themselves from a wound. Beyond these safeholds, life can be very dangerous. The acquisition of experience points, which leads to avatar progress and development, usually takes place by navigating through dangerous grounds and the accomplishment of missions. Characters in MMORPGs can be controlled by players (Player Characters or PCs) or by the game engine (Non Player Characters or NPCs). The former are co-players in the game universe, where as the latter's basic functions are to allocate missions to PCs, buy or sell equipment to them and to deliver useful information. Players may, within the framework of gameplay, develop written communication between each other, in the form of short text messages known as "chat," as well as oral one, through the use of microphone. In both cases, players may be involved in active role playing, in producing speech in roles e.t.c.

MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER ONLINE SIMULATIONS OR MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER ONLINE GAMES (MMOs, MMOGs)

MMOs or MMOGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Simulations or Massively Multiplayer Online Games) such as *The Sims* are also popular. Gameplay in MMOs and MMOGs resembles free play more closely than a rule-based game with a typical quantifiable outcome and partially overlap with presence, function, navigation and interaction found in Virtual Worlds, such as *Second Life* (Reynolds 24-28).

VIRTUAL WORLDS: SECOND LIFE

Virtual worlds are a networked cyberspacial phenomenon, spatially based depictions of persistent virtual environments, accessible by avatars, which represent the participants involved (Bell "Toward a Definition of 'Virtual Worlds'" 2-3); crafted places inside computers that are designed to accommodate large numbers of people (Bell "Toward a Definition of 'Virtual Worlds'" 2); and persistent, avatar-based social spaces that provide players or participants with the ability to engage in long-term, coordinated conjoined action (Thomas and Brown 37). To sum up, a virtual world is characterized by synchronisity, persistency, network of people, networked computers and avatarial representations. It may host perplex interactions between participants (Bell

"Toward a Definition of 'Virtual Worlds'" 2-3). One of the most emblematic cases of virtual worlds is *Second Life*, developed by Linden Lab and firstly launched in 2003.[11] Accessible through the internet, *Second Life* allows its residents to develop interaction between them by using avatars. Various everyday activities, like socializing, participating in public or private events, buy or sell products and services can be achieved through avatar representatives. *Second Life* also simulates the economy, with its Linden Dollars currency. Participants may embark on investments of various sorts or kickstart businesses. Artistic events such as visual arts exhibitions, theatre shows and workshops are organised and attended by participants through their avatars all over the world.

Virtual Worlds partially overlap with MMORPGs and MMOs. Their main differences with MMORPGs are the lack of usual gaming aims like winning/beating enemies and that the MMORPGs game structure allows a vertical linear development of the avatar through upgrading and gaining experience points, where as avatar development in Virtual Worlds is horizontal, linear. As for the MMOGs, they are in essence Virtual Worlds, only more restricted ones.[12]

Role and Role-playing in Digital Role Playing Games and Virtual Worlds

The protocol for the gamer to participate in a virtual performance in MMORPGs, MMOGs and Virtual Worlds is common, to create and customize an avatar which interacts and performs with the avatars assumed by other players, write in chat form (text), play already recorded voice archives and/or perform live by speaking on a microphone. Avatarial performance contains potential for proxemics, body language, facial expressions and general movement capacities.

So, the double meaning of the term "role" (Pavis 317-318), role as dramatic persona and as text, speech, can be met in digital role playing games and virtual worlds. Role as dramatic persona is illustrated through the synergy of player and avatar and as text in the form of written text and oral improvisation. The player in role produces written text and impromptu verbal utterances which other players receive and respond to. Through these multiple interactions active role gameplay may be constructed. The avatar, a form of our mediatized body, functions as a model acting on our behalf in the game universe (Klevjer 94). The

[11] Accessed from http://secondlife.com/ [20/1/16]. See also Wikipedia, «Second Life», accessed from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Life [20/1/16].

[12] For example, Virtual Worlds imply a never ending landscape, where as MMOGs usually take place in specific locations. MMOGs are also by nature more playful and game-like because they contain some obstacles for the player, e.g. avatars may get hungry and the player has to cater for that need.

avatar simulates the double nature of our body in any case, body-as-subject and body-as-object. We comprehend the virtual body of the avatar thanks to the comprehension we have of ours (Klevjer 89-93). The modes of embodiment in digital role playing games do not differ from those used for millenia in forms of dramatic representation, impersonation on one hand and personification on the other (Landy 14). Impersonation, the pretension to being somebody else, in digital role playing games occurs through the use of first person camera perspective where as personification, the dramatic use of objects in make believe play, occurs through the use of third person camera perspective.

The two modes of acting in role in drama representation, in theatre and performance get remediated in digital role playing games. They are transformed into analogous functions under the limits imposed by the digital platform involved. Man in digital gaming and virtual worlds moves from central stage, as actor, to the backstage where s/he becomes a director and playwright of digital marionettes in the case of third person games. In the case of first person games, s/he remains an actor but wears a mask s/he may actually sometimes see. Role playing is a distinct genre as well as a mindset, and it allows the players to play in role in any digital game they wish (Heliö 70). For example, even Packman may be experienced as a role playing game if the player projects some fictional reality other than the game system's, and invests it in the pursuing of the game goals.

Shakespeare in Digital Gaming and Virtual Worlds

Shakespeare and his plays in relation to cinema have inspired a rich literature. Examples including Ball (2013), Buchanan (2014), Jackson (2007) and Shaughnessy (1998). Various authors have preferred to examine Shakespeare's plays in relation to the screen in general, including television and video, such as Boose and Burt (eds.) (2005), Davies and Wells (1994), Holderness (2002), Rothwell (2004) and Rothwell and Melzer (1990). A key reference that has seen the opening up towards other arts and media, such as music, comic books, internet and digital media, though without extended reference to digital games, is Burnett, Streete and Wray (eds.) (2011), *The Edinburgh Companion to Shakespeare and the Arts,* which contains a chapter by Best dedicated to Shakespeare on the Internet and in Digital Media (Best 558-576). Another example of some specific interest in this subject is Öğütcü's chapter on "Shakespeare in Animation" (Öğütcü "Shakespeare in Animation"). The most relevant titles on Shakespeare and Videogames are Best's "Electronic Shakespeare: Which Way Goes the Game?" (Best "Electronic Shakespeare: Which Way Goes the Game?" 29, 37) and Bloom's "Videogame Shakespeare:

Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" (Bloom "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" 114-127), which also appears in *Shakespeare Studies*, vol 43.[13]

Shakespeare and His Plays in Digital Gaming and Virtual Worlds

Before entering the realm of Shakespeare and his plays in digital gaming and virtual worlds, it should become clear that they have also offered inspiration to analog forms of gaming, such as board games or storytelling RPGs. For example, Uberplay launched in 2004 the board game *Shakespeare: The Bard Game,* which draws inspiration from the Shakespearean theatrical universe (Bloom "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" 116). Another instance of analog RPG is Paul's and Rosvally's *Revenge of the Groundlings,* created for Game Chef, a game-design competition, the 2011 theme of which was Shakespeare (Bloom "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" 118). So, in fact, the gamification of Shakespearean plays follows both analog and digital strands.

In an attempt at classification, Bloom ("Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" 115) distinguishes digital games based on Shakespeare, his era and his plays into i) *theater-making games*, games that turn their player into a creator of theater (actor, dramatist, theater manager, or designer) ii) *drama-making games,* in which the player inhabits or controls a Shakespearean character and iii) *scholar-making games*, that turn the player into a student of Shakespeare and his theatre. Although Bloom's classification addresses successfully the frame criterion, it does not seem to take into account other equally important criteria, such as role-playing capabilities and the potential of the game and level of relevance to Shakespeare and his plays.

This article presents a rather narrative account of Shakespeare in digital gaming and virtual worlds. The underlying axes around which the current analysis is organized are i) interface result ii) the simplicity or perplexity of game mechanics, which may or may not encourage role playing practices and iii) the level of relevance to Shakespeare and his plays.

One of the first, relatively speaking, **digitally enhanced instances** of Shakespeare's plays are the the *BBC Shakespeare Animated Tales*.[14] These animated short films have been created in order to introduce children and young

[13] Bloom, Gina, "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games", pp. 114-127, in *Shakespeare Studies,* vol. 43, Siemon, James R. and Henderson, Diana E. (eds.), Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Madison and Teaneck 2015, pp. 320.

[14] Accessed from http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006v9mm/broadcasts/2008/05 [4/2/16].

adults to some of Shakespeare's works. *A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Twelfth Night, King Richard III, The Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It, Julius Caesar, The Winter's Tale, Othello* have been selected and various animation techniques, some digitally aided ones, like cel animation, were used for the creation of these twelve 26 minutes animated films (Öğütcü 115).

In the field of **digital performance**, Shakespeare's plays have been an inexhaustible source of inspiration. Long before the advent of iconic MMORPGs and Virtual Worlds, they have inspired "cyberformance," "hyperdrama" and Internet Relay Chat Theatre sessions (Jamieson 25-26). Artists such as *Burk*, The *Hamnet Players*, The *Plaintext Players and Desktop Theatre* have contributed considerable sessions of performance in cyberspace (Jamieson 25-26). The *Hamnet Players* have actually "staged" in an IRC channel in 1993 their *Hamnet* (*Hamlet*) and, in 1994, *pcbeth,* their version of Macbeth.[15]

In terms of **digital text based-games**, such as MUDs and MOOs, but also playful questionnaires and chat games, Best names a few digital games inspired by the Bard and his plays (Best "Electronic Shakespeare: Which Way Goes the Game?" 29, 37). He refers to automated multiple choice questionnaires and Jeopardy format games that allow the player to type an answer rather than selecting it from a list. Such applications are: *Romeo and Juliet* Jeopardy Game from Quia.com; *Sea Of Troubles*, an interactive DHTML game; the *Playwright Game,* a Web-based choose-your-own-adventure by PBS; and the more recent *ilnsultThee* iPad mobile application, in which the player "generates Shakespearean barbs worthy of the bard" (Bloom "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" 116).[16]

Some of the **early digital games, rather simple, with no potential for elaborate role-playing, but exhibiting some iconic ambition** include: *Design a Postcard* – Shakespeare's Globe (Bloom "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" 117); Shakespeare's Globe theater online game *Hemmings' Play Company,* in which players pretend to be Elizabethan theater managers;[17] *William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Murder Mystery* from E.M.M.E. Interactive (1997), which included interaction with Branagh's film of *Hamlet*, puzzles, and some action scenes (Best "Electronic Shakespeare: Which Way Goes the Game?" 29); the University of Guelph's Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP) *Speare*, based on the play *Romeo and Juliet,* in which gamers score by capturing 'knowledge spheres' from enemy spacecraft and successfully put them into lines from the play (Best "Electronic

[15] Accessed from http://www.marmot.org.uk/hamnet/ [4/2/16].

[16] Such as "Thou clouted folly-fallen maggot pie" or "Thou artless urchin-snouted fustilarian".

[17] Accessed from http://playground.shakespearesglobe.com/aurochdigital/gameone/ [4/2/16].

Shakespeare: Which Way Goes the Game?" 37); *Romeo: Wherefore Art Thou?* ("Shakespeare in Videogames"); and *Hamlet, The Video Game,* award-winning indie adventure game based on William Shakespeare's Hamlet.[18]

More ambitious and elaborate in its conception as well as graphic designing and role-playing potential is the **MMOG** *Arden, the world of William Shakespeare,* developed by Castronova at Indiana University (Best "Electronic Shakespeare: Which Way Goes the Game?" 29, 37). The game is inspired by Shakespeare's plays, mainly by *Richard III* (Huang and Ross 9-10).[19] Players assume avatars, navigate through a virtual Elizabethan setting called Illminster, "interact with the characters from Shakespeare's plays, play card games with other players, and answer trivia questions on Shakespeare to level-up" ("Shakespeare in Videogames"). Players of the MMOG *Arden* are actually required to collect soliloquies and speeches and exchange them in order to receive goods and conditions suitable for the upgrading of their characters. In terms of educational intention and impact, the game setting is said to promote learning of Shakespeare, but, on another level, it serves as "a venue for experiments on economic behavior" ("Shakespeare in Videogames") or as a "virtual laboratory for research on macro-level social phenomena" (Huang and Ross 10). *Arden* is often seen as a truly innovative online project, with a high degree of user participation, but, in fact, it fails to inspire original user interpretations (Huang and Ross 10). Although Castranova was aiming to provide a "realistic Wars-of-the-Roses-era economy," he admits that the project was "overly ambitious" (Lehman 18). Another version of *Arden* was envisioned, *Arden II: London's Burning,* in which the Bard gave way to omnipresent monsters, hence no real attachment to Shakespeare could be perceived anymore.

In terms of elements of Shakespeare's plays imposing on the gaming universe in **already existing digital games**, the most prominent cases are a real-time strategy video game called *Empire Earth*, the 6th scenario of which is based on *Henry V*,[20] and the MMOG *The Sims*, with *Veronaville* as one of the three pre-made neighborhoods in *The Sims 2* base game.[21] *Veronaville* is divided into two areas. On the right, there is the "Italian" side, with Mediterranean-style architecture and on the left the "English" side, vaguely inspired by Stratford-upon-Avon. The two main families in *Veronaville* are the Capps and the Montys,

[18] Accessed from https://taigame.org/en/game/hamlet [4/2/16].

[19] Castranova, the developer of Arden argues that "*Richard III* fits easily into MMOG conventions, because of such elements as battles 'knights in shinhing armor, and peasants and woodworkers' in the play."

[20] Accessed from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empire_Earth [4/2/16].

[21] Accessed from http://sims.wikia.com/wiki/Veronaville [4/2/16]. See also "Shakespearean Sims", accessed https://transmedialshakespeare.wordpress.com/2015/11/20/shakespearean-sims/ [7/2/16].

echoing respectively the Capulets and the Montagues. Summerdream family is another option for the player, influenced directly by *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* with characters names such as Titania, Oberon, Puck and Bottom. In *The Sims 2 Veronaville*, gameplay is encouraged, organised around the main conflict at the heart of *Romeo and Juliet* and attempts to remediate most aspects of the story. But the ending is not predestined. Some fragments of the introductory narrative are here provided: "Patrizio Monty never forgot Consort Capp's broken promise. But now his grandson Romeo has fallen for the Capp heiress. Will the Elders live to see the two families united?...Juliette Capp has fallen for Romeo, golden child of the rival Monty clan. Can the Capps set aside their grudge and put Juliette's happiness first?...The Capps and Montys have been feuding for years, but that hasn't stopped the younger generation from crossing boundaries and falling in love. Will their actions lead to ruin or bring the families together?" ("Shakespearean Sims"). Other plays of Shakespeare having seen the gamelight of *The Sims* MMOG are *Othello*,[22] *Hamlet*[23] and *King Lear*.[24]

Apart from digital theatre-making themed gaming instances, there is also the option to explore theatre-making in already existing virtual worlds such as ***Second Life*** (see 3.2.). The most obvious connection between Shakespeare and *Second Life* is *SL Shakespeare Company*,[25] which developed a replica of the Globe Theatre in the virtual terrains of *Second Life* and run live performances of Shakespeare's plays. The company organises virtual auditions in cyberspace, in which everybody may take part. Their productions include *Hamlet* and *Twelfth Night*.

And, last, but not least, come some **digital games that contain some sort of reference** to the Bard ("Shakespeare in Videogames"). For example, in *The Simpson's Game* for the PS3 in the final level you have to fight William Shakespeare along with Benjamin Franklin, Buddha and God; in the *Medal of Honor* for the PSX if the player succeeds in entering a cheatcode he/she is then allowed to play as Shakespeare in the multiplayer mode; and in *Mario's Time Machine*, where Mario has to restore some stolen goods to the rightful owners, one of the "eras" the player may visit thanks to the time machine is 1601 Stratford-Upon-Avon.

Some digital games contain reference to Shakespeare's characters ("Shakespeare in Videogames"). Such examples are the MMORPG *World of Warcraft*, where Ophelia, William, Mortimer and Randolph Montague may be

[22] Accessed from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h0mmtsL6Oyc [4/2/16].
[23] For a "contemporary" version of Hamlet, see relevant video accessed from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqpLBn8GEOE [4/2/16]; for a medieval one, see video accessed from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSV7_8Q_VKQ [4/2/16].
[24] Accessed from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymTg6n7PqIY [4/2/16].
[25] Accessed from http://slshakespeare.com/ [4/2/16].

found in the zombie family; Puck, Edgar, Duncan and Cordelia characters star in *Final Fantasy* series; and Hamlet in *Nexon* and *Mabinogi Theater Missions*.[26]

Finally, quotes from Shakespeare's plays may be found in the several digital gaming occasions ("Shakespeare in Videogames"). Dr. Pickman from *Manhunt 2* at one point utters "*What Seest thou else in the dark backward abysm of time*," one of Prospero's lines from *The Tempest*; Mei Ling quoting *Richard II* in *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots*, "*The tongues of dying men enforce attention like deep harmony. Where words are spent, they are seldom spent in vain*"; the Council of Loathing from the MMORPG parody *Kingdom of Loathing* states that they "*don't suppose you'd bugger off this mortal coil*" in reference to *Hamlet*; in one of the ads for the PS3, a dramatic voice narrates a version of a *Henry V* famous speech.

Within the rather promising field of mixed-reality technologies, which do often integrate physical performance to digital environments, such us Wii, Machinima and Kinect, *Play the knave,* a playful application of University of California may be encountered (Bloom "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" 119-123). Bloom describes *Play the knave* as a Kinect "enabled game for Windows, *Play the Knave* offers users an immersive, embodied experience of staging a scene from a Shakespeare play... the screen shows a three-dimensional image of the theater stage the players have chosen...each player's avatar (i.e., the costumed actor) appears on the stage ready to perform. Shakespeare's script lines scroll at the bottom of the screen, and in a kind of theater karaoke, the players perform, their gestures and voices mapped onto their avatars" (Bloom "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games" 120).

Conclusion

The article has attempted to clarify theatre and performance in digital gaming and virtual worlds and the terms under which the remediation of physical performance and puppetry is actualized in digital environments. Furthermore, it traces the impact of Shakespeare as a theatre persona, historical figure and playwright as well as of his plays on digital games and virtual worlds. Three axes for the classification of digital games connected in some way to Shakespeare are suggested, i) the interface result (text, icon, mixed reality) ii) the simplicity or perplexity of game mechanics, starting from simple games to more elaborate ones such as MMORPGs, MMOGs and Virtual Worlds, which allow extensive role playing practices and iii) the relevance or ambiguity of

[26] Accessed from https://mabinogi.nexon.net/News/Announcements/60/00Abt/mabinogi-hamlet [7/2/16].

connection to Shakespeare and his plays. A further evaluation of each example of digital gaming based on Shakespeare is still pending. Nonetheless, it is worth highlighting that although the spectacular side of digital gaming has being given a lot of attention by game designers, the lack of innovative and well supported ideological functions in these games fails to complete an effective transmedial journey of Shakespeare's plays. Although theatrical and performative, first and third person digital games not only have a long way to go to simulate analog communication between avatars (Vallius, Manninen and Kujanpää 74-82),[27] they also lack the fundamental artistic urge to rephrase universal important issues. In terms of aesthetics, the lack of historical accuracy in costumes and sets as well as the mixing of architecture and fashion styles (pseudo-tudor and suburbian cheap contemporary architecture, for example) renders flat the aesthetic dimension of most games. In terms of game mechanics, the customization of an avatar may resemble the building of a role in theatre, but still has a long way to go, with life goals such as "Rock Star" or "Swimming in Cash".[28] In order to have some really interesting samples of digital gaming inspired by Shakespeare's plays, their creators need to contemplate also the political dimension of the Bard's plays and find ways to get it through to the players. Modding is a practice that may be of use in the development of interesting approaches towards Shakespeare's plays.

However, digital games and virtual worlds may not be of relevance to Theatre Studies just because of the remediation of theatre plays, as in the case of the Bard. They respond to the deeper quests in the philosophy of the spectacle, theatre and performance. Although certain theatrical and performative criteria in digital games and virtual worlds such as dramatic text, role and audience are present, the extent to which these games and worlds are theatrical and performative transfigurations remains to be clarified. First person digital games and virtual worlds could be considered as mediatized forms of theatre and performance, where as third person ones of puppet theatre. Even if they cannot be considered strictly speaking theatrical and performative phenomena, they tend to contribute to a theatrical and performative discourse. Of course, theatre and performance draws from make believe play through impersonation, and specifically from role playing, where as puppet theatre draws from playing with toys through personification. In fact, digital games and virtual worlds, by providing a platform to act on as a virtual stage and avatars to play with, respond in their unique mediated way to the rather Shakespearean certainty that "all the world is a stage". In addition, by means of digital animation and avatarial control, they

[27] For example, there is space for the improvement of chronemics, kinesics and oculesics in MMOs/MMOGs.

[28] Accessed from http://sims.wikia.com/wiki/List_of_Lifetime_wishes#List_of_Lifetime_Wishes [7/2/16].

actually rephrase the man/marionette debate (Olf 488-494) and offer their own alternative to the *Über-Marionette*, one of the most emblematic quests of the 20th century avant garde theatre and performance.

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Decentering the Bard: The Localization of *King Lear* in Egyptian TV Drama *Dahsha*

Abstract: *Dahsha* [Bewilderment] is an Egyptian TV series written by scriptwriter Abdelrahim Kamal and adapted from Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The TV drama locates Al Basel Hamad Al Basha, Lear's counterpart, in Upper Egypt and follows a localized version of the king's tragedy starting from the division of his lands between his two wicked daughters and the disinheritance of his sincere daughter till his downfall. This study examines the relationship between *Dahsha* and *King Lear* and investigates the position of the Bard when contextualized in other cultures, revisited in other locales, and retold in other languages. It raises many questions about Shakespeare's proximity to the transcultural/ transnational adaptations of his plays. Does Shakespeare's discourse limit the interpretation of the adapted works or does it promote intercultural conversations between the varying worldviews? Where is the Bard positioned when contextualized in other cultures, revisited in other locales, and retold in other languages? Does he stand in the center or at the margin? The study attempts to answer these questions and to read the Egyptian localization of *King Lear* as an independent work that transposes Shakespeare from a central dominant element into a periphery that remains visible in the background of the Upper Egyptian drama.

Keywords: *King Lear*, The Arab Shakespeare, Adaptation, Localization, *Dahsha*, Local Shakespeare, Global Shakespeare.

Introduction

In today's globalized world, Shakespeare could travel to global destinations that he had never imagined he would one day reach. Shakespeare's plays have been produced in every continent and been translated to most of the world languages. The plays have been adapted to different media, transplanted into different cultures and recreated in many revisionary works. New versions of Shakespeare have emerged: the American Shakespeare, the Russian Shakespeare, the Japanese Shakespeare, the Arab Shakespeare, etc. This global dissemination of the Bard raises many questions about his proximity to these transcultural/

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transnational recreations. Does Shakespeare's discourse limit the interpretation of the adapted works or does it promote intercultural conversations and encounters between the varying worldviews? Where is the Bard positioned when contextualized in other cultures, revisited in other locales, and retold in other languages? Does he stand in the center or at the margin? This study attempts to answer these questions through the analysis of the localization of Shakespeare's *King Lear* in the Egyptian TV drama *Dahsha* by scriptwriter Abdelrahim Kamal. *Dahsha* locates King Lear's counterpart, Al Basel Hamad Al Basha, in an Upper Egyptian environment and translates the King's tragedy to an Upper Egyptian locale to tackle themes of revenge, authority, chaos and political transition in Egypt. The study endeavors to examine the Egyptian localization of *King Lear* as an independent work that transposes Shakespeare from a dominant element into a periphery that remains visible in the background of the Upper Egyptian drama. It is an attempt to fill a gap in the Arab Shakespeare studies through locating Arabic adaptations of the Bard into a global phenomenon of cross-cultural and cross-media reproduction of his plays.

The Arab Shakespeare: Intercultural Encounters

The adaptation of Shakespeare, the travel of his plays to other countries and the transmission of his theatre to other literary genres and media started as early as the seventeenth century. The re-opening of theatres in England after the end of the Commonwealth period witnessed a new-born interest in Shakespeare that resulted in an array of reproductions and adaptations of his plays. Shakespeare was increasingly adapted in the eighteenth century reaching a climax in the middle of the century. "At the height of this revival, in 1740-1741", Jean I. Marsden expounds, "Shakespeare constituted almost one fourth of London's theatrical bill" (76). Marsden adds that "the form of these adaptations was markedly different from their predecessors in the Restoration and early eighteenth century" (77). An assortment of Shakespeare's adaptations followed these early revisions. John Keats, for example, transformed *King Lear* to an historical drama in seven tableaux titled *King Stephen* in 1819, and Bertolt Brecht adapted Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* in his unfinished work which had the same title and was written between 1951-1953. The Bard was reproduced in hundreds of screen adaptations all over the world starting from the second half of the twentieth century. In February 2017, The IMDb listed 1.245 screen productions adapted from William Shakespeare's works, and in September 2017, the list increased to 1.302 productions ("William Shakespeare"). In October 2017, the MIT Global Shakespeares video and performance archive showed 450 global performances of the Bard performed in forty-three different languages. Twenty three out of the 450 videos belong to the Arab world.

The MIT Global Shakespeares archive is one of the few sources that shed light on the Arabic adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. The Arab Shakespeare is often neglected in books and studies on the adaptation of the Bard. Graham Holderness complains that "the Arab world went unnoticed in the numerous edited volumes on international Shakespeare reception and appropriations" ("Arab Shakespeare"). For example, *Postcolonial Shakespeare* (1998), a collection of articles edited by Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin has no mention of Arabic adaptations. Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006) discusses different appropriations of Shakespeare, yet there is no single reference to any Arabic example. Even when the second edition of the book was published in 2013, the negligence of Arabic adaptations continues to exist. In *Adaptations of Shakespeare: A Critical Anthology of Plays from Seventeenth Century to the Present* (2000), editors Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier examine various examples of adaptations that represent a range of cultural politics in six countries: Britain, Spain, Germany, the United States, Canada, and South Africa. The Arabic adaptations are again absent from the anthology. This scantity of references to the Arab Shakespeare may in turn be due to the non-sufficient efforts done by Arab scholars to contribute to an international discourse on the global/local Shakespeare. It may also go back to the western scholars' neglect of the few Arabic contributions to the field. This study is an attempt to fill in this gap and contribute to the local/global Shakespeare dialogue.

The transmission of Shakespeare's works into Arabic culture and literature started as early as the nineteenth century through translations and adaptations. In the mid-nineteenth century, several Arab writers and theatre artists drew on their cultural encounters in the western world and introduced the Arab audiences to western playwrights that included the Bard. Graham Holderness notices that the Arab world knew Shakespeare in the last decades of the nineteenth century through theatre as his plays formed the repertoire of theatrical companies in Egypt and the rest of the Arab countries ("Arab Shakespeare"). The expansion of the British Empire and the acquisition of colonies in the Arab region constituted also one major factor that contributed to the introduction of Shakespeare to Arabs. Shakespeare was studied in schools, written on in journals, and viewed as a model of western intellectuality. In order to appeal to Arab audiences, most of Shakespeare's plays, whether translated or performed, were transposed into Arabic culture and contributed to what is currently known as "local 'Shakespeare,'" a field of Shakespearean studies which is defined by Alexander Huang as:

> Interpretations that are inflected or marked by specificities of a given cultural location or knowledge derived from a specific geo-cultural region. Locality, in the full sense of the word, denotes the physical and allegorical coordinates of Shakespearean performance, appropriation, and criticism. ("Shakespearean Localities" 187)

Najib Al Haddad is recorded to be one of the first Arab dramatists to appropriate Shakespeare to Arabic culture. In 1892, Al Haddad adapted *Romeo and Juliet* from a French translation of the play and created a new Arabicized version titled *Shuhadaa Al Gharam* [*The Martyrs of Love*]. Al Haddad placed the lovers' story in an Egyptian environment and wrote it in prose and verse to appeal to Arab audiences. This early adaptation of Shakespeare was followed by many others. For example, Tanyus Abduh presented a French-based adaptation of *Hamlet* to the Arabic stage in 1902, and Khalil Muttran adapted *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *The Merchant of Venice* in the early twentieth century. *Julius Caesar* was adapted by Muhammad Hamdi in 1912 and by Sami Al-Juraidini in the same year. Contemporary adaptations of Shakespeare include The Arab Shakespeare Trilogy (*The Al-Hamlet Summit*; *Richard III*, *An Arab Tragedy*; *The Speaker's Progress*) by Kuwaiti playwright and theatre director Sulaiman Al Bassam, in which the playwright merges Shakespearean drama with Arab politics. The Arabian Shakespeare Festival—founded in 2013—is devoted to building bridges between the West and the Arab region through braiding Shakespeare and Arab stories and poetry to illustrate common human values, as their mission statement says ("About").

It is true that Shakespeare found his way to the Arab audiences through theatre and translation, but this early literary travel of the Bard was restricted mainly to elite intellectuals and was limited to the doors of theatres and the pages of translated texts. It is through TV and films that Shakespeare found his way among wider audiences of lay public. Shakespeare lent his plots to a number of Arabic movies in the second half of the twentieth century that achieved considerable success on cinema and TV screens. For example, *Hamlet* was rewritten in 1979 to be rendered into a movie titled *Yomhel wala Yohmel* [God Forgives but Never Forgets] starring famous Egyptian actors Farid Shawky and Nour El Sherif. A localization of *King Lear* appeared in 1979 in a film titled *Al Malayeen* [The Cursed] and *Taming of the Shrew* was revisited in the popular 1962 film *Ah Min Hawa* [Beware of Eve]. Many contemporary productions also borrowed their plots from Shakespeare including *Ruud Al Muzun* (2014) [Thunder of Clouds], a Jordanian TV series based on *Romeo and Juliet*; and *Hobbak Nar* (2013) [Your Love is Like Fire], an Egyptian revision of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

What is remarkable about the Arabic localizations of Shakespeare is the relocation of the plays into a foreign land and culture that are often seen to be distinct from the western. Add to this the new media used to reproduce the Shakespearean works. Although Shakespeare remains present in the background of these localizations, his presence does not dominate the new production. The Bard switches his position from the dominant to the periphery and the localized work metamorphoses into a dominant. In most cases, the Arab audiences are not even aware of the Shakespearean source of the story as the original

Shakespearean text gives way to a new story in a process named by Alexander C.Y. Huang "palimpsest" (24). In a palimpsest, the global and the local simultaneously co-exist to produce an intercultural appropriation. Huang explains:

> The key to theatrical interculturalism is the conscious process of exhibiting 'incongruent' foreign elements, or the simultaneous juxtaposition of the local and the foreign. The *fabula* of the foreign play—or its cultural location(s)—is recycled and reassigned to a new local context through theatrical (re)presentation. Bewildered and annoyed at one moment or another, the audience sees the concealment of old lines and the revelation of new ones. In this sense, cross-cultural stage translation resembles the making of a palimpsest. ("Shamlet: Shakespeare as a Palimpsest" 23-24)

In his article "The Lure of Intercultural Shakespeare," Yeeyon Im contends that to label a Shakespearean appropriation as intercultural, equal relationships must be maintained between the Shakespearean work and the appropriation in which "Shakespeare does not 'dominate' over other cultural elements" (239). Answering the question: "What is the essence that makes a production Shakespeare even after metamorphosis?", Im refers to Shakespeare's logocentrism, spirit, and international currency that make Shakespeare visible even after the palimpsest (243). The essence, however, in the simultaneous universality and interculturalism of Shakespeare lies more in what Aristotle called a fable (*mythos*) which creates a plot or action (*praxis*) and serves as a basis for new dramas and revisions located in different cultures and pronounced in different languages. Sukanta Chaudhuri and Chee Seng Lim elaborate that "Shakespeare's text is seen as the starting point of a sustained, open-ended intertextual discourse based on no single language or culture, and embracing much more than the written word" (ix).

I agree with Chaudhuri and Lim that the intertextuality of the recreations of Shakespeare's plays indicates a process of intercultural encounters, yet I would argue that Shakespeare is not the real starting point in this intertextual stream of discourse. The *mythos* and *praxis* in Shakespeare's plays are not authentically his. They are revisions of older fables that Shakespeare himself puts in a new Elizabethan locale and expresses through new language and medium. This subverts the idea that Shakespeare is the real center and repository of the fables. Shakespeare is part of a whirl of intertextual reproductions of older *praxes*. Yet, he could be seen as a hegemonic center and a literary colonizer of these *praxes*. The popularity of theatre in the sixteenth century (similar to today's TV and Cinema) and the political and cultural superiority of Elizabethan England paved the way for Shakespeare to be a hegemonic center. The expansion of British colonies in the last centuries reinforced his position as a colonial symbol that permeated into the culture and the educational system of

the colonized countries. Shakespeare being a hegemonic center does not negate his universality. He is still a global icon in the contemporary geographical sense of the word and in the sense of connecting nations through history. I would contend that Shakespeare is not a prototype; he is an archetype that stands as a focal point when the fable is reconstructed.

The universality of Shakespeare remains hegemonic when his centrality is not shaken off. This hegemonic centrality runs the risk of delimiting the interpretation of the new works and denying the creativity of the host culture. The hegemony of the Bard is deconstructed when his plays are localized to different cultures and languages; and his characters change names, locations, and identities. The localized work stands as an independent creative recreation that refutes the disparaging view of adaptations as inauthentic reproductions of the original. Huang refers to this marginalization of adaptations when he writes: "Despite the significance of textual and performative appropriations, critical ideologies and biases have, for a long time, relegated them to the periphery and limited the interpretive possibilities" ("Shakespearean Localities" 189). Gary R. Bortolotti and Linda Hutcheon criticize this fidelity discourse concluding that "fidelity becomes a less than useful evaluative aesthetic criterion" (445). Bortolotti and Hutcheon analyze adaptation from a biological point of view arguing that the process of adaptation is similar to heredity where genes determine relationships between ancestors and forebears. Like genes, narrative ideas transmit from one work to another, get relocated into a different environment and projected through different media to give rise to a new independent story that shares a core narrative with the older heritage. Fischlin and Fontier remark that any adaptation of the Bard "is, and is not, Shakespeare" (4) since the adapted work invokes the Shakespearean play and yet remains different. I totally agree with Bortolotti and Fischlin's arguments and would add that Shakespeare is more decentered and the adapted work is more independent when the new production is more culturally and linguistically detached from the original. Faithful reworking of Shakespeare's plays is sort of duplication, whereas adaptations are evolutions.

The Arab Shakespeare localized on stage or in films and TV series decenters the Bard and pushes him to the background of the fable. Shakespeare makes only one element of the new recreation, while other elements are made of the adaptor's agenda, the local socio-cultural milieu, and the political contextualization of the revisionary work. The localized recreation becomes, to use Bortolotti and Hutcheon's words, a "phenotype" created through a "process of selection" (448) that fits the preoccupation of local audiences. Within the same biological analogy context propounded by Bortolotti and Hutcheon, I would suggest that what distinguishes the literary descendants of Shakespeare is not only the core narrative idea (*mythos and praxis*), but also the focus on human passions which connect all people regardless of one's culture, religion or

race. Shakespeare utilized stories from previous literature in order to serve the Renaissance humanist philosophy, of which he was an ultimate representative and example. Bernard D. Grebanier remarks:

> Shakespeare is perhaps the perfect expression of Renaissance humanism. His profound sympathy for humanity enabled him to pierce to the very core of his characters; his unexcelled gifts as a poet made his men and women unforgettable creatures of flesh and blood. (qtd. in McClinton 15)

This aspect of Shakespeare could be viewed as the dominant gene that is always present in the literary descendants as well as literary forebears.

Dahsha as a "Palimpsest": Replicating a Core Narrative Idea, Relocating Tragedy

Dahsha (2014) [Bewilderment] replicates both a core narrative idea inherited from *King Lear* and previous works and the humanist philosophy of Shakespeare. It relocates the human passions of love, hatred and revenge in an Arab context through the story of an old patriarch descending into madness after giving away his vast lands in the village of Dahsha to his two perfidious daughters who flatter him before exposing their ingratitude and leading the whole village into chaos and anarchy. The core narrative idea of the drama makes the parallel to *King Lear* unmistakable. The drama, however, has its own storyline that looks purely Upper Egyptian for a person unaware of the Shakespearean source. Scriptwriter Abdelrahim Kamal deconstructs *King Lear* and constructs an Upper Egyptian TV tragedy in which characters are renamed, events are relocated, and relationships are redefined. Lear turns into an Upper Egyptian senile father and tycoon named Al Basel Hamad Al Basha and Gloucester into Al Basel's brother Allam. Gloucester's legitimate and illegitimate sons Edgar and Edmund become Allam's sons Muntasar and Radi. The king of France transforms into Al Basel's nephew Bilal who is in love with the youngest and most beloved daughter Neema (Cordelia). The dukes of Albany and Cornwall come to be Al Basel's sons-in-law Abu Zeid and Amer who are married to his wicked daughters Rabha (Regan) and Nawal (Goneril). The fool is Al Basel's nephew and the duke of Kent is his faithful guard Jaddallah. New characters are added to the drama to complete the family tragedy; they include: Sakan, Al Basel's sister, and Muhran and Abu Deif, two more step-brothers of Al Basel.

The pre-Elizabethan patriarchal society of *King Lear*'s world gives way to an Upper Egyptian counterpart in *Dahsha*, and the dark prairie Lear wanders in turns into an Upper Egyptian remote village full of desert and dark streets.

Given the Egyptian context and the TV medium, the origin of *Dahsha* remains mostly unrecognized (except perhaps to educated elites) which leaves space to the receptors to interpret the tragedy away from the Bard's influence. The presentation of *Dahsha* in this context moves the Bard far from the center and creates an independent revision of *King Lear*. The hegemonic Shakespeare remains concealed in the background of the reinvented drama. The new appropriation acquires autonomy from the mutation of the fable: change of locale, language, medium, and geo-cultural and political thematic focus.

Shakespeare's senile Lear who gives up his authority in order to "shake all cares and business from our age, / Conferring them on younger strengths, while we/ Unburdened crawl toward death" (Shakespeare 1:1:37-40) transforms into a revengeful patriarch in *Dahsha*. While Lear's love-test is a "mere form, devised as a childish scheme to gratify his love for absolute power and his hunger for assurance of devotion" (Bradley 250), Al Basel's love-test is a scheme to show off his daughters' love in front of his step-brothers and to deprive them [his step-brothers] of his wealth after his death. It is also an attempt to redeem his masculinity since man's masculinity in Upper Egyptian culture is partly measured by his ability to conceive male children. Through transferring his fortunes to his daughters, Al Basel wishes to compensate them for the masculinity they lack and, hence, vindicate his virility. "God created you girls, and I will make you men" (*Dahsha*), Al Basel tells his daughters before distributing his lands among them. Al Basel's banishing of his youngest and most beloved daughter Neema is also an act of revenge since she insists on marrying her cousin who is considered to be her father's adversary. "In her heart lives my enemy" (*Dahsha*), Al Basel talks about his beloved Neema before swearing not to see her till his last day. The TV drama breaks then into a cycle of karmic events. Al Basel's sons-in-law decide to revenge the atrocities they believe he has committed in the past against their fathers. Amer, Nawal's husband, wants to overcome his inferiority complex since his father was one of Al Basel's servants. Abu Zeid, Rabha's husband, suspects that Al Basel has killed his father who was a partner in Al Basel's secret weapons business. The escalating hatred of the eldest daughters to each other and their growing sense of revenge emanate not from their sexual attraction to a common lover, but from their desire to satisfy their husbands' whims and hunger for power and revenge, as well as their fear of divorce which is a social stigma in Upper Egypt.

To dig deep into the origins of tragedy in *Dahsha*, a long history is recalled through flashbacks and reminiscence. The missing characters in *King Lear*, who make the King's behavior looks childish and pretenseful, are given lives in *Dahsha*. One of the missing elements that obscure the unnatural relationship between King Lear and his daughters is the absence of the mother figure. The only reference to the daughters' mother in *King Lear* occurs when Lear visits Regan after being dismissed by Goneril. Regan claims that she is glad

at seeing her father. Lear, in indirect reference to Goneril's ingratitude and in menace to Regan, says that if she were not glad, he would divorce her dead mother because she would have cheated on him to conceive dishonest daughters like Goneril and Regan: "If thou shouldst not be glad,/ I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,/ Sepulchring an adultress" (Shakespeare 2:4:120-122).

In "The Absent Mother in *King Lear*," Coppélia Kahn reads the mother figure metaphorically to be hidden in the king's inner mind and his hankering for motherhood. Kahn refers to the King's description of his state of mind after losing Cordelia as "*hysteria*" and links the word to the disease of "*hyster*," which means "the mother" (240). The mother figure in *Dahsha* is no longer a metaphorical subject. She exists in the person of Al Basel's mentally defective mother, Baraka. Al Basel's attachment to his youngest daughter and his feeling of revenge is closely linked to the history of his mother who is recurrently referred to in the drama's flashbacks. Al Basel's mother was forced by his step-brothers and step-mother to sleep in the barn and to unwillingly endorse documents that deprive her of her husband's inheritance. As a child, Al Basel had to strive hard to protect his mother and his sister Sakan after being dismissed from his father's house. Even after marriage, Al Basel spent most of his time doing business far away from his wife and daughters, which created an emotional distance between them. The only one who used to join him in his business travels was the youngest daughter Neema. In one scene, Rabha expresses her hatred to her father and her youngest sister because, as she tells Neema: "He [Al Basel] gave us his money, and he gave you his heart. I hate you and I hate him" *(Dahsha*). The daughters' mistreatment of their father is not an act of ingratitude brought up by natural wickedness anymore; it is the result of emotional distance that nourishes physical revenge.

The emotional suffering of Al Basel and the treachery of his daughters are expressed through animal imagery that translates the western baroque imagery used by Shakespeare in *King Lear* to an Upper Egyptian cultural context. Shakespeare uses a long list of animals in his play to describe Lear's downfall and the unnatural relationship between the king and his daughters. The list entails, among others, snakes, pelicans, snails, rats, mice, bears, boars, horses, dogs, and wolves. When Goneril asks her father to reduce the number of his men if he wants to stay at her house, he cries: "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is/ To have a thankless child.— Away, away!" (Shakespeare 1:4:285-286). He complains to Regan that Goneril "'struck me with her tongue, / Most serpent-like" (Shakespeare 2:4:154-155) and says that he prefers to "be a comrade with the wolf and owl" (Shakespeare 2:4:204) than subject to his daughter's cruelty once more. The reference to Goneril as a snake reflects the Elizabethan people's obsession with animal imagery and implies a metaphorical biblical connotation of the snake as a treacherous and poisonous creature: "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that

the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" (Genesis 3:1). The snake metaphor suggests that the king, like Adam, is dismissed from his kingdom/heaven because of a treacherous daughter. In another situation, the King refers to both Goneril and Regan as "pelican daughters" (Shakespeare 3:4: 70), as if they were two pelicans that suck down his blood to feed their own families.

Abdelrahim Kamal deploys animal imagery in *Dahsha* that mirrors Upper Egyptian environmental and cultural contexts. Al Basel likens his daughter Nawal to a horned viper and a scorpion when she dismisses him from her house:

> The horned viper, the scorpion bit me. How could I father a snake?! . . . Her name is not Nawal. Her name is Scorpion. . . . Rabha will take care of me and will cure the poison the scorpion has injected in my heart. (*Dahsha*)

The animals selected by Al Basel to describe his wicked daughter are familiar to Upper Egyptian villagers and audiences. The horned viper, for example, is one of the very dangerous snakes that live in Egypt and is known for its demonic appearance.

> If there's one snake in all of Egypt most likely to be mistaken for a devil, it's the horned viper. This highly venomous desert snake has a hornlike scale protruding above each of its eyes, giving it a truly demonic appearance. ("List of Snakes that Live in Egypt")

Describing Nawal as a horned viper reinforces her monstrosity and villainy as well as the locality of the story. When the eldest daughter Rabha refuses to welcome her homeless father, he stops by the poor people of the village and complains that "Rabha's heart has been replaced with a biting dog that barks day and night" (*Dahsha*). Again, Al Basel refers to an animal which is common to see wondering in the Upper Egyptian villages' streets at night.

Shakespeare and Abdelrahim Kamal use an animal imagery pattern not only to express the tragic heroes' anger at their daughters' perfidy, but also to foreground their nobility. King Lear associates himself with the horse, which was the main means of transportation in the Elizabethan age and the symbol of knighthood. The horse is the king's means to escape the hell of Goneril when she grumbles about the riotous manners of his men and requests him to disquantity his train. The king orders to saddle the horses to escape the house of his treacherous daughter: "Darkness and devils! / Saddle my horses; call my train together: / Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee. / Yet have I left a daughter" (Shakespeare 1:4:240-243). Al Basel, on the other hand, associates

himself with the camel which is known for its patience, nobility and self-esteem, and often referenced to Arab culture. Al Basel compares his self-worth to the dignity of his camel which died from humiliation when unable to revenge his degradation. Al Basel remembers the story of his camel to teach his grandson the values of honor and self-esteem, and to echo the dreadful conditions he experiences at the hands of his two disobedient daughters. The camel was very compliant with Al Basel's commands. However, one day he refused to bow down when ordered by Al Basel who beat him harshly with a stick till the camel shed tears. That night, Al Basel was advised not to sleep near his camel as he used to do since the camel would probably avenge his humiliation. Al Basel put a filled burlap bag on his bed and hid to watch the reaction of the camel. The camel grunted and angrily kicked the burlap bag and tore it into pieces with his sharp teeth. In the morning the camel was shocked at seeing Al Basel still alive. He stopped eating for three days and on the third day he died of a broken heart. In another instance, Al Basel's sadness at leaving his favorite daughter Neema is replicated in the story of his favorite camel, Zahzahan, who was born on the same day as Neema. When Al Basel takes Zahzahan from his old house and moves to live with Nawal, the camel feels terribly sad about leaving his attendant Jabra and stops eating till he dies. Al Basel repeats Zahzahan's story when he is mistreated and dismissed by Nawal. He refuses to eat and starts to perceive that he has made an abysmal mistake against Neema.

Another parallel between *King Lear* and *Dahsha* is the commentary given through the stories of Lear and Al Basel on the two works' contemporary contexts. *King Lear* was written with the backdrop of the succession crisis in England after the death of Queen Elizabeth and the ascension of King James I (James VI of Scotland) to the throne. *King Lear* reveals the Jacobean liaison between monarchy and patriarchy which maintained a mythical image of the monarch as the protector of nation and family. The play also reflects a stage of political turmoil and instability in England when the idea of unity between Scotland and England was popularly negotiated. King Lear represents a highly reverend king whose abuse results in the rage of nature and the distortion of national and familial order. This political background of the play makes it a rich source for adaptations that give political commentary on global and local political unrest. Sainte Heloise notes that "every time political unrest occurs, Lear will appear again as an alarm signal" (1). R.A. Foakes argues that the play was acted and understood in the mid-twentieth century within the context of political dictatorship and oppression in Europe:

> Only after the outbreak of the Second World War was serious attention given to the 'political chaos' shown in the play, and Edmund, Goneril and Regan began to be seen as precursors of the Machiavellian 'realpolitik' associated with fascism and Nazism. . . . It was not until about 1960 and after that the play

> began to be considered in direct relation to a new political consciousness engendered by the Cold War, the rediscovery of the Holocaust, the renewed interest in Hiroshima, and the development of the hydrogen bomb, and then the building of the Berlin Wall. In this context the tyranny and obsession with power of Lear himself became more noticeable, and the similarity between his behaviour and that of Goneril and Regan, emphasized by Peter Brook in his 1962 production, turned the play, as noted earlier, into bleak vision of negation. (70-71)

The scriptwriter of *Dahsha*, Abdelrahim Kamal, categorizes the series as "an Upper Egyptian TV social drama that has nothing to do with politics" (Mahmoud). Despite Kamal's de-politicization of the drama, I tend to see it in the context of Egyptian politics in the second decade of the twenty-first century. *Dahsha* regenerates the ideas of aging, political instability, abuse of power and anarchy which resonate in both Lear's story and 2011 Egypt. Al Basel's mastery over Dahsha and his maintenance of power and peace through a dictatorial rule repeat the status-quo of Egypt before the revolution of January 25, 2011. Ex-president Mohammed Hosni Mubarak was often presented to the public as a father-president figure in order to maintain the image of his presidency as protecting both familial and national structure. Mubarak's old age and notorious delegation of authority to his son and political businessmen were popularly believed to be the main reasons behind the Egyptian revolution, the following chaos, and the re-installment of order. The main slogan for demonstrators marching the streets of Egypt in January 2011 was "Bread, Freedom, and Social Justice", which echoes the people's need of economic prosperity, freedom of expression, and fair distribution of wealth. In *Dahsha*, Al Basel starts to lose his power as a capable leader when he cedes his authority to his daughters and their husbands. His escalating decline stems not only from his sons-in-law's sense of revenge and hunger for power, but also from the people's need of security and subsistence which he could not provide after losing mastery. This leads to the dissolution of discipline in the village and the spread of chaos and anarchy. A parallel could be clearly noticed between the drama's events and 2011 Egypt in one of the most painful scenes in the series when the people of Dahsha kill one another for the gold spikes Al Basel wants to give to his beloved daughter in front of the whole village. Neema, the delicate daughter who represents fidelity and good intentions in the drama, is crushed in the stampede for the precious fortune. Security and peace could only be restored by the end of the drama when a new police force takes over the police check point in Dahsha and fills the security gap in the village, in clear reference to the riots and chaos in 2011 and the Military Supreme Council rule of Egypt after the stepping down of Mubarak.

The TV drama refers also to the common belief that the post-January 25 chaos in Egypt was partly created by foreign interference. The disorder and turmoil in Dahsha are fueled by a foreigner whose name is El Afandi [the gentleman] and who is only concerned with stealing Al Basel's weapons and gold spikes. El Afandi speaks in a dialect different from the Upper Egyptians of Dahsha and the other "Arab Sheikhs" with whom he conducts secret weapons business. He is the one who tricks Abu Zeid into believing that Al Basel has killed his father and succeeds to feed his revengeful spirit against his father-in-law. The Pandora box opens in Dahsha when, like Lear, Al Basel fails to realize the disastrous consequences of dividing his lands and trusting unfit people to rule the village. The same picture could be seen with Mubarak failing to realize that the failure of his regime lies in handing over the country's economy and administration to incompetent businessmen.

It is not only the place, themes and characters that are localized in *Dahsha*, the concepts of tragedy and hamartia are also contextualized to achieve catharsis for Egyptian audiences. It is universally accepted that in his tragedies Shakespeare tries to follow the model of tragedy proposed by Aristotle. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle defines this model as follows:

> A tragedy . . . is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude, in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions. (Butcher 23)

Aristotle clarifies that in a tragedy the events are "terrible and pitiful" (39) and lead eventually to "reversal" of the hero's fortunes from good to bad to "recognition". Aristotle explains recognition as "a change of ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune" (41). In both *King Lear* and *Dahsha*, the tragic heroes experience reversal of their situations from being a highly respectful king/ a village chieftain into mad old men humiliated by their own daughters. Lear's death in Shakespeare's play is the ultimate source of pity and generator of catharsis for Elizabethan audiences, whereas the tragic hero in *Dahsha* remains alive after the death of his two wicked daughters and his beloved Neema, which is seen in an Upper Egyptian context more serious, agonizing and cathartic than death. For Egyptian audiences, death is a path to rest and peace. Life after the death of one's children is a path to misery and pain. This terrible agony is described in a famous poem titled "Yamna" by Upper Egyptian poet Abdurrahman Al Abnudy, in which his aunt muses over her past life and the approaching of death:

> Don't you ever live for one day past your kids
> Don't you ever, Abdurrahman!
> Life is full of all sorts of pain and grief
> That people do not know,
> But the hardest is when you live
> After your kids go
> Only then
> Will you learn what death is!! (Aboubakr)

In the twenty-third episode of *Dahsha*, the father of the village's check point officer tries to kill Al Basel thinking he has killed his son. He retreats and decides not to shoot him because in death Al Basel would find relief, and in life he would see suffering and humiliation after losing his dignity and sanity. The officer's father says:

> I want to kill Al Basel Hamad Al Basha, not an insane person. What does death have to do with a dead person like you. Your relief is now in death, and your misery is in life. I won't relieve you. You are not even Al Basel any more. You are his remains. (*Dahsha*)

The last episode of the TV drama gives a very distressing picture of Al Basel living beside the tomb of his beloved daughter who was killed by the mob fighting for the gold spikes. Al Basel is seen crying, praying for death, and begging the caretaker to take him down into the grave and put an end to his miserable life. Al Basel's tragic flaw is his desire for revenge and the catharsis arises from his wish for death which is not fulfilled.

Conclusion

The core narrative idea in *Dahsha* is both connected and disconnected to the Shakespearean tragedy of *King Lear*. The old man who is wronged by his daughters and descends into madness is present in the TV drama but repositioned in a new environment and culture, which makes Shakespeare both present and absent in the story. The localization stands as part of an intertextual series of writings and shakes off the centrality and hegemony of the Bard. In this realm of intertextuality, no writing is original. All writings become sequences of intercultural and intertexual reproductions. "A text", according to Barthes, "is a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (146). If the idea of originality is not existent, authority ceases to exist, and the creativity of adapted texts, and sometimes their superiority over Shakespeare's plays, remains open to question and analysis.

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Book Reviews

Ton Hoenselaars, *Shakespeare Forever! Leven en Mythe. Werk en Erfenis* [Shakespeare Forever! Life and Myth. Works and Heritage] (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2017. Pp. 431).
Jo de Vos, Jürgen Pieters and Laurens de Vos, *Shakespeare. Auteur voor Alle Seizoenen. Met een Terugblik op 50 Jaar Voorstellingen in de Lage Landen* [Shakespeare. Author for All Seasons. Looking Back on 50 Years of Theatre Productions in the Low Countries] (Tielt: Lannoo, 2016. Pp. 272).

Reviewed by ***Coen Heijes***[*]

It does not happen very often that Dutch books on Shakespeare are published in the Low Countries, but recently two have found their ways, one in the Netherlands, and one in Belgium. *Shakespeare Forever!* was written by Ton Hoenselaars, professor in Early Modern English Literature at the University of Utrecht, and is a book about Hoenselaars's personal experience with Shakespeare, while teaching and studying the bard for over thirty years. He sets out the goal of his book in the first chapter, telling us that he wants to demonstrate that the works of Shakespeare are often unjustly so considered to be 'difficult' or 'elitist', and that reading or watching Shakespeare need not be a frustrating, but can rather be a very enriching experience. Shakespeare, Hoenselaars argues, is not so much a schoolmaster, but a grandmaster, who in the end teaches us nothing, except that every apparent reality has its reverse side. In this way, Shakespeare presents the complexity of human existence, not so much because he chooses sides, but because he understands all of his characters, be they law-abiding, ordinary citizens or bloodthirsty tyrants, be they princesses or prostitutes. With this book, Hoenselaars wants to sketch a portrait of 'his' Shakespeare, the man with whom he spent more time than with anyone else, but also of the Shakespeare such as others have seen him through the centuries, and, in the end, the book is also about 'our', 21st century, Shakespeare.

The book has a clear structure: it starts with chapters on Shakespeare's life and times, next discusses the comedies, histories, and tragedies, and ends with chapters on translations, and Shakespeare's afterlife. Although

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Shakespeare's sonnets do not have a separate chapter, they are discussed throughout the book, for example in chapters two and three, where Hoenselaars discusses the facts of Shakespeare's life, and to what extent his work might tell us something about the man behind the plays and poetry. Hoenselaars shows us how little we actually know about Shakespeare's life, and how this has given rise to a plethora of far-fetched theories on the authorship of his work. He does so in a conversational, easy manner, clearly demonstrating himself to be a Stratfordian in the process, and making short shrift of the Oxfordians, whom he compares with religious fanatics. The lack of information has caused many to delineate details of Shakespeare's life and character from his plays and sonnets. Hoenselaars argues that one should be wary of this, as early modern literature did not so much aim at expressing the private life of the author, but rather aimed at 'translatio, imitatio, and aemulatio'. Interestingly, Hoenselaars himself uses Shakespeare's handwritten monologue for *The Book of Sir Thomas Moore* (1603), as a way to tell us something about Shakespeare's possible character. Shakespeare first uses the word 'other', next abbreviates it to 'oth' and finally even reduces it to 'o' as it reoccurs in the text: Shakespeare obviously is inspired and abbreviates the less important word, because they'll be written out properly later on. Although the argument might be tentative, at the same time, it is also interesting and tempting to try and get some grip on the man behind the work. Hoenselaars argues how Shakespeare was both a poet, aiming at a relatively small, more highbrow audience of readers, and a playwright, aiming at a wide group of spectators. Recalling his own personal memories as a student in the seventies, he shows us how important the theatrical aspect was in the second half of the 20th century, as a visit to Stratford was an obligatory part of the Shakespeare course at a Dutch university. The aspiring academics were confronted time and again with the question: but what would it look like on stage?

Chapters four, five, and six focus on Shakespeare's plays. Again, Hoenselaars uses an almost conversational tone, intent on avoiding the jargon and pervasive referencing of academic literature. While the chapter on tragedies divides its attention between the major plays, his chapter on comedies is relatively brief and focuses almost entirely on *The Tempest*, showing the possible autobiographical echoes, and the doubts it raises on mankind's capacity for spiritual growth. Once again, the personal touch is captivating, as when Hoenselaars describes how the half line 'Something too much of this',—in Hamlet's description of his friendship for Horatio (act 3, scene 2)—, fascinated him for years: was Hamlet embarrassed for his feelings, even with his best friend; did he want to express how he could rise above his feelings; how to translate this half line?

It is in the chapter on the histories, however, that Hoenselaars seems to be enjoying himself the most, and in which he wants to bring across the obvious

fascination he feels for these plays. Plays which, ironically, are among the least performed in the Netherlands, with the exception of *Richard 3*. He uses many and long citations from these plays (in Dutch translation), discussing both tetralogies, and demonstrating the many complex layers of these plays, while at the same time discussing the (implicit) conservative ideology from their representation of history. Special attention is given to the afterlife of the histories, and how new interpretations have emerged, as in Hytner's 2003 *Henry 5*, employed to criticise Blair's support for the invasion in Iraq. The afterlife in the Netherlands started in 1651, when a play by Lambert van den Bosch (*Roode en Witte Roos*) on the strife between the houses of York and Lancaster was in part based on *Richard 3*. The play was written against the background of the critical situation in the young Dutch Republic. William 2, Prince of Orange, had just died in 1650, and his heir was born a week afterwards. The discussion on whether or not to install a Lord Protector led to a debate between on the one hand the republican-oriented capital Amsterdam, and on the other hand the house of Orange, with its many privileges in the provinces. In this fascinating example, Hoenselaars points out how the urgency that the histories must have had in Shakespeare's times, was transported to the Netherlands, where the example of a Lord Protector who murdered young princes, must have been a serious cause of concern. Hoenselaars also includes more recent examples, such as the 2015 *Kings of War*, by Ivo van Hove, conflating *Henry 5*, *Henry 6*, and *Richard 3* in a four and a half hours' modern production, and performed abroad with English surtitles to wide critical acclaim.

In a separate chapter on translation, Hoenselaars argues how a translation is much more than merely changing the language of the text from early modern English to modern Dutch or Flemish. Translations are also a form of negotiation between different cultures, different ways of looking at the world. He shows how translations have changed through the centuries and discusses the current trend to adapt or rewrite Shakespeare, for example in the 1997 mega production *Ten Oorlog* by Lanoye and Perceval, who rewrote the eight histories, and where the polished, rhetorical style of the beginning was gradually taken over by foreign elements and hip-hop influences, reaching a climax in *Richard 3*. The process of translation and adaptation itself has become much more ambivalent than in the Romantic era. On the one hand there is a desire for identification with one of the world's most popular authors, while on the other hand there is a determination to undermine the canonical status and to express one's own, personal, contemporary voice. This brings Hoenselaars to the huge gap between non-Anglophone countries, - where Shakespeare on stage was reborn on stage time and again as a contemporary -, and the situation for the British audience, who are still confronted with a language that has not been spoken for more than 300 years and has, in effect, become a language waiting to be translated in contemporary English. This, however, Hoenselaars argues, is still seen as

blasphemous by most, leading to the paradox that attempts to protect the national icon only seem to mummify him and alienate him further and further from today's audience. Although Hoenselaars provides evidence of a few, more liberal minded voices in this debate, such as Dennis Kennedy and Stanley Wells, he concedes the strength of the conservative, romantic anti-translation lobby. And he philosophises what a true pity it is that no one has ever asked Alan Bennet to rewrite Falstaff's pub scenes in contemporary English, perhaps even with a light touch of the Yorkshire accent, or that Ian McEwan or Julian Barnes have never rewritten *Julius Caesar* in analytical English, in order to bring us closer to the real Shakespeare.

Although all chapters in his book partly refer to Shakespeare's afterlife, the last chapters specifically zoom in on this, not only in the Netherlands, but also elsewhere, ranging from a production of *Richard 2* on a ship of the Dutch East India Company off the coast of Sierra Leone in 1607, to another *Richard 2* with Ian McKellen in Bratislava in 1969, during the Russian occupation, when McKellen realised it was his first time ever to experience a crying audience. Crying, because Richard's words could have been their words, and for a while the English Shakespeare became a contemporary of the Czechoslovakian audience. But Hoenselaars goes beyond theatre and touches upon the afterlife in literature, opera, classical music, movies, and even into the realm of popular music pointing out Shakespeare's afterlife in David Bowie, The Eagles, Led Zeppelin, and Madonna. Shakespeare is everywhere, Hoenselaars argues, and when a proper balance can be found to bridge the gap between highbrow Shakespeare and creative attempts to reach out to a larger audience, such as in Baz Luhrmann's adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, many of the objections to de-mummifying Shakespeare will disappear.

Of particular interest in these last chapters, is Hoenselaar's account of Shakespeare during and after war periods and it is here that Hoenselaars himself expresses his fascination even more directly as when he discusses Shakespeare in concentration camps, post Holocaust productions of *Merchant*, or Zadek's 1965 movie *Held Henry* (Henry the Hero), a fierce reaction to the political hypocrisy in England during and after World War Two, as exemplified for example by Laurence Olivier's *Henry 5*. Hoenselaars becomes even more personal, when he discusses his former professor English literature in Leiden, Fred Bachrach, who had been interned in Japan during World War Two. Prisoners were allowed one book, and Bachrach chose Shakespeare's collected works, secretly using it for Shakespeare lectures during the Japanese occupation. Hoenselaars was deeply impressed when, as a student, he was told this story and shown this book by Bachrach. As was I, merely reading about it. Shakespeare behind barbed wire, Shakespeare as survival poetry: if one thing would demonstrate the bard's ability to survive the centuries, and not just as an elitist hobby, it is surely this. In writing his book, Hoenselaars aimed at a broad

audience, and his easy style makes one feel as if one is standing next to an enthusiastic guy in a pub, going on and on about his hobby. But then, this surely is Hoenselaar's hobby, and it is contagious in its style, its wide-ranging examples, its personal touch, its incredible enthusiasm for Shakespeare. Those who enjoy the bard, those who enjoy culture, those who are interested in history, they would love this book, although Hoenselaars wonders if the 50,000 audience going to a football match would also really be interested. Well, Hoenselaars had me captivated, and to be honest, I'm also one of those 50,000.

The other book, *Shakespeare. Author for All Seasons*, takes a different approach than Hoenselaars and focuses on theatre history in Flanders and the Netherlands over the last half century. It is written by three generations from the University of Ghent, Belgium: emeritus professor English literature Jo de Vos, professor literary studies Jürgen Pieters, and dr. Laurens de Vos, a graduate from Ghent, who is currently teaching theatre studies at the University of Amsterdam. Their book aims at providing an overview of some of the main productions of Shakespeare's most important plays in Flanders and the Netherlands since the late 1960s. Shakespeare has been performed in Flanders and the Netherlands more than any other playwright, - which explains the title *Shakespeare. Author for All Seasons* -, and both directors and actors consider Shakespeare like participating in the Champions League. It is the ultimate test to demonstrate one's skills. The specific time frame was chosen because of the change in the late 1960s, in the way directors approached Shakespeare on stage. The text-oriented, and often pseudo-historical approach gave way to a more present-day approach, and a personal interpretation, in which directors used the Shakespearean text and context with more freedom, in the wake of directors such as Brecht and Brook. The authors, however, aim to move beyond an overview of productions, and want to integrate this with a thorough introduction on the life and plays of Shakespeare, the historical context, and why and how his plays have formed a challenge for directors and actors in Flanders and the Netherlands. The duality of Jonson's poetical praise of Shakespeare, who describes Shakespeare as both 'the soul of the age' and as 'He was not of an age but for all time!', also permeates the book. The book hovers between the two poles of, on the one hand, the historical analysis and Elizabethan/Jacobean context of his plays, and on the other hand, the way directors and actors coped with him in the last 50 years in Flanders and the Netherlands. Ultimately, the authors aim at providing an accessible book to help their readers in a further enjoyment and understanding of watching Shakespeare's plays.

The structure of the book is straightforward. After an introduction in chapter one, which also provides some brief information on Shakespeare's life and times, the following nine chapters are grouped according to the plays, or groups of plays they discuss. Chapter two starts with the history plays, followed by three chapters on three major tragedies: *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*.

Chapter six discusses the comedies, which is followed by a chapter on two 'love tragedies', *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*. Chapter eight again highlights two plays, the 'problem plays',—*The Merchant of Venice* and *Measure for Measure*. The book is rounded off by a chapter on the Roman tragedies, and a final chapter on *The Tempest*.

Chapter two, on the histories, starts with an extensive part on the historical context of the play, as the authors describe the sources of the play, the relationship of these plays to Elizabeth and James, the concept of the 'King's Two Bodies', and also the importance of history in not so much 'objectively' representing, but in providing an object lesson for the future. They indicate the after effects that must have been felt in Shakespeare's time of the chaos of the Wars of the Roses, the religious struggles in Europe, and how the English and later British nation slowly came into being, reflected in part by the movement in the histories. Next, they show how criticism on the histories has evolved, starting with the 'Tudor myth' of Tillyard, which saw the histories as a perfect illustration of an Elizabethan world view in which a belief in order, as represented by the monarchy, would be central. In the course of the 1960s they see this change with Kott's 'Grand Mechanism', and productions become increasingly critical of the histories, seeing them as a continuous power struggle of cruelty and violence, rather than a teleological movement towards harmony and peace. The relatively large amount of space awarded to the historical context and the critical development leaves, unfortunately, less space for a description of histories in Flanders and the Netherlands. The authors decided to zoom in on *Ten Oorlog* (To War), an adaptation of the two tetralogies in 1997 by Lanoye (author) and Perceval (director). It turned out to be a huge success, and in 2015 it gained the first place in the top-100 of the most important productions in the Dutch-speaking theatre, ahead of Joost Vondel's *Lucifer* (1654). Reworking the eight plays to six, performed in the course of three evenings, each evening would focus on a particular theme: the (often destructive) father-son relationship, the battle between the sexes, and man in conflict with himself in a battle between moral awareness and the inability to suppress destructive violence. Perceval and Lanoye repeatedly argued they wanted to dust off the plays' British history and focus on the grand, universal story of the tetralogies.

In the next three chapters, on the three major tragedies, it is particularly in the chapters on *Lear* and *Hamlet* that the authors extensively discuss the performance history in Flanders and the Netherlands, whereas in the chapter on *Macbeth*, the authors tend to focus more on the historical context of the play. In Flanders and the Netherlands, *Hamle*t is by far the most often performed play on stage, and the authors select six productions for further analysis. Interestingly enough, the authors not only discuss the more traditional productions and translations of *Hamlet*, and how the various directors coped with the challenges of this play, they also include interesting adaptations, such as *Hamlet vs Hamlet*

(2014) from Cassiers (director) and Lanoye (translator). Although language, characters, and plot were unmistakably interwoven with *Hamlet*, the changes resulted in a (partially) new play. Horatio and Fortinbras were removed, and a new character, Yorick's ghost, was added to the plot. Almost continually on stage with Hamlet, he functioned as Hamlet's good or bad conscience, always supporting one Hamlet versus another Hamlet. Hamlet himself, or herself, was played by the actress Abke Haring, who received the prize for best female lead role of the season. She played Hamlet as an androgynous adolescent, a character, which the authors described as neither man nor woman, neither youth nor adult, neither a doubter nor self-assertive, neither introvert nor extravert, but rather the sum of these poles. Hamlet's world was dominated by ruthless power and politics, which Hamlet occasionally may have seen through, but which he would be unable to escape from.

Just as in Hoenselaars' *Shakespeare Forever!*, which we reviewed above, the comedies once again receive relatively little attention. One may wonder why this is the case, seeing for example that *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Twelfth Night* are amongst the most often performed productions in the Low Countries. Only three of the more 'problematic' comedies, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Measure for Measure*, and *The Tempest* receive a more extensive treatment. Perhaps the darker undertones provide a more attractive venue for analysis. *Merchant* is firmly placed in the historical context and the authors argue how the audience, in an anti-Semitic, Elizabethan context, would have had little trouble recognizing the cruelty of Shylock and enjoying the 'happy' ending. In their analysis of present-day productions, they focus on the 1982 production by Marijnen, in which Shylock's vindictive behaviour near the end was seen to be the almost logical conclusion of his equally vindictive environment, which would continue to regard him as an outsider. It might have been interesting for the authors to also have discussed the public outcry that this production raised, being the first production in the Netherlands to actually stage a Shylock who showed vindictive traits. Then again, in a book aiming a providing an overview of 50 years, one has to make necessary choices.

Finally, both the Roman tragedies and the two 'love tragedies' (*Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*) each have a separate chapter. It is interesting to see how the authors monitor the development on stage from the almost integral versions of *Romeo and Juliet* of the 1970s to the post-modern, deconstructivist approach of the 1980s in which adaptation, irony, caricature, and detachment were used more extensively. They round off with an analysis of the production by De Vos in 2013, which tried to balance the tragedy and youthful energy of the play and introduced allusions to the Palestine-Israeli conflict, while maintaining intimate and poetical scenes between the two lovers. It is noteworthy that the authors not only zoom in on the major productions, but occasionally also touch upon smaller

productions, such as the 1985 *Othello* adaptation by De Bruycker, which was renamed *Hotello, de Vloek van het Huwelijk* (Hotello, the Curse of Marriage). The adaptation focused on Othello and Desdemona, and the actual dialogues taking place between them, thereby revealing the lack of communication between the two spouses. It was this lack of communication that was seen as the cause of the tragedy. Likewise, in the chapter on the Roman tragedies, the authors present almost a kaleidoscope of productions. They range from the internationally acclaimed 2007 *Romeinse Tragedies* (Roman Tragedies) by Van Hove,—which combined *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* in a five and a half hour production—, to a radical adaptation by Gerard Jan Rijnders in 1988, named *Titus, geen Shakespeare!* (Titus, not Shakespeare!). The 1984 murder on the American-Jewish broadcaster Alan Berg, who invited his audience to phone in and voice their feelings, no matter how spiteful, was the basis for his production. Alan Berg was played by Titus (!) Muizelaar and the stories of Berg got entangled with Shakespeare's play, allowing brutal and contemporary 20th century reality to break into an ancient conflict of revenge.

Like Hoenselaars, the authors of this book also argue strongly (and enthusiastically) that Shakespeare has not lost his relevance in 21st century Flanders and Netherlands and will not do so in the foreseeable future. Key features in this are not only the theatricality of his plays, but also the broad variety Shakespeare offers for interpretation. The diversity of productions and adaptations of Shakespeare, and the fascination the authors share for the theatre is evident throughout the book as the authors analyse how directors and actors deal with the challenges of playing Shakespeare for contemporary audiences in Flanders and the Netherlands. The ability to contemporize not only the context, plot and characters, but also the language of the plays, so much more available to directors in Flanders and the Netherlands than to their English counterparts, is an unmistakable part of the creativity with which directors can approach Shakespeare and the infinite variety this offers. The subtitle of the book, *Looking Back on 50 Years of Theatre Productions in the Low Countries*, implicates that the book would focus on these productions, and to a certain extent it does, but equally, and occasionally even more important to the authors, is placing the plays in the Elizabethan context, and providing an analysis of the content of the plays. At times, this leaves, unfortunately, somewhat less room for productions, but it is a conscious choice made by the authors and they themselves are aware of the setbacks. One cannot do it all, and with the choices made by the authors, they succeeded in writing a highly interesting, and readable book. They wanted the book to be a (critical) homage to Shakespeare and the unforgettable impact he made on the stage in Flanders and the Netherlands, as well as a useful guide in enjoying and understanding his plays. In that, they surely succeeded.

Kahn, Lily, *The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations: Isaac Edward Salkinson's Ithiel the Cushite of Venice and Ram and Jael. A Bilingual Edition and Commentary* (London: UCL Press, 2017. Pp. x+540).

Reviewed by ***William Baker***[*]

Yiddish translations and versions of Shakespeare especially in reference to *The Merchant of Venice* have received attention. Except for Lily Kahn's fascinating recent work in *Multicultural Shakespeare* and elsewhere (2017), little has been published on Hebrew translations and versions although there has been research on twentieth-century Hebrew translations: see for instance Shelly Zer-Zion's "*The Merchant of Venice* in Mandatory Palestine and the State of Israel," which focuses on performance and production rather than linguistic and translation issues.

Lily Kahn's study with its bilingual text of *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice* is consequently a most welcome antidote. Her twenty-six page "Introduction" is particularly instructive. Its four sections focus on: "The historical and literary background to the first Hebrew Shakespeare translations" (1-3); the pioneering translator from English to Hebrew "Isaac Edward (Elizer) Salkinson's [1820-1883] life and works" (3-9); "Salkinson's Shakespeare translations" (9-23); and "This edition of *Ithiel the Cushite of Venice* and *Ram and Jael*" (23-26).

In the first part of her "Introduction" Kahn places the first Hebrew Shakespeare translations in their historical and intellectual contexts as "a product of the Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment, a hugely influential social and intellectual movement that emerged in Berlin in the 1770s." Its supporters, the Maskilim aimed to quicken Jewish absorption into Western European culture hoping for eventual assimilation and integration of the Jewish population into the wider one. A consequence of this aim was a focus on traditional educational reform, and somewhat ironically "the creation of a modern literary culture in Hebrew"—Hebrew was not then an everyday spoken language (1).

Given this context it is therefore to be expected that given Shakespeare's preeminence especially in Germany there should be an attempt to translate his work into Hebrew and fragments from *Henry IV Part Two* were translated from German to Hebrew as early as 1816. Again there were attempts during the first half of the nineteenth century to translate excerpts from *Hamlet.* Salkinson's translation of *Othello* published in Vienna in 1874 heralded the start "of a new era in the story of Shakespeare in Hebrew because it was the first rendition of a complete play to appear in the language and the first to gain widespread

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critical attention in Maskilic literary circles" (3). Also it represented the initial Hebrew version of Shakespeare that was translated directly from the English rather than via the German.

Who was the translator Isaac Edward (Elizer) Salkinson? He is not to be found in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and it is a tribute to Kahn's detective skills that she is able to provide the most comprehensive account of this important figure to date. Information about his early years is difficult to find but it appears that he was born in 1820 in a small village in what is today Belarus, then part of the Russian Empire. His father apparently an impoverished scholar had three children from his first marriage: Salkinson was the youngest. His father remarried and Salkinson was mistreated by his stepmother forcing him to leave home to seek his fortune when he was sixteen or seventeen. He spoke Yiddish and received a conventional education that included the study of Hebrew, the bible, the Mishnah or inquiry into the bible and the Talmud, commentary by Rabbinic authorities on the Five Books of Moses. He acquired a reputation as a very bright scholar but seems to have moved around Jewish areas in order to avoid enforced marriages. In Vienna he fell in love but his sentiments were not returned: he was rejected in favor of a Rabbinic student who wrote Hebrew poetry addressed to her. "Apparent jealousy of his competitor spurred Salkinson to make his first attempt at literary translation into Hebrew" (5) by translating the initial act of a drama by Schiller. This did not have the desired effect and it appears that while he was working at the port in order to make money for a trip to Berlin he encountered a converted ship's captain of Jewish origin who offered him a free passage to London where he arrived in the late 1840's.

In London Salkinson became involved with the London Missionary Society and organizations converting Jews to Christianity. He himself converted and following courses he became a Presbyterian minister in Scotland. Following his friendship with another convert Christian David Ginsberg (1831-1914) an eminent Hebrew scholar in his own right, he began work on a Hebrew version of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* published in 1870. Six years later he was sent to Vienna where he spent a good amount of time with members of Hebrew literary circles rather than engaged on his missionary activities. Whilst in Vienna he met a distinguished exponent of Hebrew prose fiction Peretz Smolenskin (1842-1885) who encouraged him to prepare an edition of Shakespeare's plays in Hebrew. This led to Salkinson's Hebrew translation of *Othello* which appeared in Vienna in 1874 accompanied by a lengthy Smolenskin introduction. In this he "analyzes Shakespeare's significance as a playwright and provides a psychological assessment of the characters appearing in the play, with particular focus on Ithiel (Othello), Doeg (Iago), Phichol (Brabantio) and Aenath (Desdemona)." Additionally he discusses the relevance of the drama's "themes for a Jewish audience, and argues for his vision of good literature as a vehicle for the

depiction of human nature in all its moral complexity" (7). Why *Othello* should have been chosen is unclear.

Hanna Scolnicov in her "The Hebrew Who Turned Christian: The First Translator of Shakespeare into the Holy Tongue," argues that Salkinson, as a convert and an outsider was attracted to Othello's situation. In 1878 Salkinson's translation of *Romeo and Juliet* appeared. But why did he choose this play? Devorah Gilulah in an article published in Hebrew "From *Ithiel the Cushite* to Alterman's *Othello*," proposes that Salkinson's choice of Shakespearean plays focusing upon love and jealousy might be related to his unrequited love in Vienna.

Following these translations Salkinson moved on to translating the New Testament into Hebrew, a task unfinished at his death in Vienna in 1883 and completed by Christian David Ginsburg and published in 1885.

The third section of Kahn's "Introduction" concentrating on "Salkinson's Shakespeare translations" (9-23) is divided into several sections. It begins with a discussion of "Publication and reception" (9-13). Salkinson's translation was not designed for stage performance but private reading. The print run of *Ithiel*, published in 1874, was a thousand, and as a "standalone volume" (9), it was well received. *Ram and Joel* appeared four years later in a similar print run and was also positively received. Both provided the inspiration for subsequent late-nineteenth-century translations of Shakespeare into Hebrew. Salkinson's translation of *Ithiel* was reprinted in 1930 in Tel Aviv, Salkinson's use of "biblicized names for the characters" being "replaced by the English originals" (12) and it was performed as *Othello* in Haifa in 1936. Nathan Alterman's 1950 *Othello* translation into Hebrew, acknowledging its indebtedness to Salkinson's replaced it. Interestingly in 2015/16 *Ithiel* was reissued by an Israeli publisher as a fine illustration of neglected Hebrew literary translation and even was the subject of an article in one of the main Israeli daily newspapers *Ha'aretz* 2 August 2016.[1]

In short Salkinson's translations are a landmark in the history of Hebrew literature, and provide the foundation for subsequent Shakespeare translations. "They are of particular relevance for translation studies specialists in that they constitute some of the only examples globally of Shakespeare adaptations in a largely unspoken language"—Hebrew. Additionally they provide "insight into the reception of plays in a nineteenth-century European minority society" (13).

In her discussion of Salkinson's translation style, Kahn indicates that the translations are not necessarily literal, lines are not omitted and the sense of individual speeches is retained but a lot of paraphrase occurs. The reason for this is due to problems of finding Hebrew equivalents for Shakespeare's wording, the difficulty of finding Hebrew rhymes that will be equivalent to those rhymes

[1] www.haaretz.co.il/literature/prose/.premium-1.3024895

found in Shakespeare's text: *Romeo and Juliet* in particular with its high incidence of rhyming couplets provided a problem in this respect.

Salkinson's translation was a product of the ideological orientation of its time and his own predilections. In spite the fact that he was working in his capacity as a Christian missionary, there is no overt attempt at conversion in these translations, a reflection perhaps that in Vienna he had close Jewish contacts. Six elements can be isolated in his translation style: his treatment of the names of characters; his translation of Christian "rituals, institutions, and oaths; Classical mythology; other non-Jewish cultural references; ...the insertion of biblical verses and phrases into the composition; and foreign-language elements in the source text" (15-16). Kahn's introduction discusses each of these at some length (16-20).

She indicates that the translation removes the distinction between prose and verse and that everything in the Hebrew translation appears in verse form. Lines are formally distributed corresponding on the whole to Shakespeare's and the text contains vocalization. Salkinson's poetry lacks iambic pentameter although the rhyme schemes are equivalent to Shakespeare's with ABAB, ABA, ABBA occurrence with variations of course. In terms of language usage, post-biblical Hebrew is used as well as biblical Hebrew. Unfortunately Salkinson fails to indicate which edition of Shakespeare he used for his translation.

The fourth and final part of Kahn's fascinating introduction discusses her specific edition. This is a reproduction of the translations with the original spelling and vocalization, and the original footnotes are retained. The Hebrew is on the right side of the page with an "English back-translation" on the left (23). The purpose of this is to make the Hebrew text accessible to readers who do not know the Hebrew language. Biblical or postbiblical citations and allusions appear in bold with an explanatory footnote. There is a running commentary too. Kahn's references are to the third Arden editions of *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

In conclusion let me provide instances of how useful Kahn's work is to students of both plays. At the opening of *Othello* there is a street scene in Venice in which Iago (Salkinson translates as "Jago") enters with Roderigo ("Raddai"). In Salkinson's Hebrew version "Raddai" is accompanied by "Jago" or "Doeg." In a footnote Kahn notes the source as *1 Sam* 22:18 and *Psalms* 52:2 and observes: "Doeg was an Edomite and chief herdsman to King Saul who carried out the execution of a large number of priests. Edom was an enemy nation for biblical Israel; in rabbinic literature, it became a symbol of the Jews, Roman conquerors and of Christianity in general." Salkinson possibly used the name "Doeg as the equivalent of Iago in order to highlight the character's murderous proclivities and to mark him as a Christian enemy in contrast to the Jewish Ithiel" or Othello (78, n. 4).

Kahn's footnote observation on the significance of the name "Jael" for Juliet in *Ram and Jael* (*Romeo and Juliet*) is equally fascinating and instructive. Apart from the "sound correspondence" the name also "has symbolic connotations." Jael is the central figure in the biblical story found in *Judges* 4 and 5 where she enticed Sisera the enemy general into a tent, killed him consequently and saved her people from certain defeat and conquest by the Canaanites. In post-biblical Jewish tradition and in the Babylonian Talmud Jael/Juliet is considered "to be more meritorious than even the four biblical matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah." Consequently by giving her the name Jael "Salkinson has chosen to cast her unambiguously in the model of the strong, independent biblical figure who is unafraid to risk death in defense of her beliefs": or in the instance of Jael/Juliet, love (341-42).

In short this is a fascinating volume from which much can be learnt about translation, differing perceptions of Shakespeare in eclectic cultures and traditions. Kahn and the publishers are to be congratulated. Hopefully their volume will receive the wide circulation and attention that it deserves.

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Bi-qi Beatrice Lei, Judy Celine Ick and Poonam Trivedi, eds., *Shakespeare's Asian Journeys: Critical Encounters, Cultural Geographies, and the Politics of Travel* (New York: Routledge, 2017. Pp. xix+271).

Reviewed by ***Elena Yuan****

Shakespeare's Asian Journeys seeks to reclaim Shakespeare from European perspectives and a universal essentialism that tars all Asian manifestations of Shakespeare with the same brush—an essentialism that fails to recognise the individual differences between different countries and one that focuses on what Shakespeare has done to Asia rather than what Asia in its multiplicities has done to Shakespeare. This collection of essays alludes to the post-colonial debates that have dominated intercultural performance and scholarship about Shakespeare in Asia for the last three decades but offers up instead a fresh, more nuanced reflection of the same. It focuses on championing the myriad and distinct ways that Shakespeare has been planted, grown and borne fruit in Asia. And it does so without succumbing to a pan-Asian or "totalizing Asianist ideology" (4), offering instead an understanding of the individual "historical and cultural affinities among Asian communities as well as their immense differences" (4).

The collection is divided into four sections: Redefining the Field, Shakespeare and Asian Politics, Shakespeare and Asian Identity**,** and finally Asian Shakespeare and Pop Culture. In the first section, contributions challenge previous discussions of Shakespeare in Asia that relied on discrete geographies, national theatres and a strict bifurcation of hierarchical relationships between Shakespeare source and local receivers. Judy Celine Ick's essay on "The Augmentation of the Indies: An Archipelagic Approach to Asian and Global Shakespeare," offers a new geographic paradigm for looking at Shakespeare. This paradigm emphasises the fluidity of Shakespearean performance, the inter-connectedness and blending of cultures and countries along maritime routes, as opposed to the fixed homogeneity of bordered nation-states. Subsequent chapters on the introduction of Shakespeare into Japan, Hamlet and the Bhagavad-Gita, and Japanese translation of Shakespeare, emphasise the active reception and reconstruction of Shakespeare in local terms.

Part 2 on Political Shakespeare examines four different cases: Taiwan, mainland China, Korea and Indonesia, demonstrating the range of roles that Shakespeare has played in Asia: from authority to protest, and bulwark of establishment to provocateur—as in Shen Lin's analysis of Lin Zhaohua's production of *Coriolanus* with Beijing People's Art Theatre. Part 3 looks at the use of Shakespeare to reflect Cultural Capital in the Philippines, the

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"glocalization" of Shakespeare through production, translation and adaptation of his plays in Malay and Korean performances. It is a refreshing look at how Shakespeare forms part of local efforts to preserve, shape and re-shape Asian identities through the pressures of colonialism, post-colonialism and the subaltern's claiming of voice. The final section on Asian Shakespeare and pop culture offers insights into how Shakespeare has been fragmented and reinvented in Indian film and Japanese Anime and Manga. In both, Shakespeare has been appropriated and re-purposed to complement new indigenous visions and cultural purposes at the same time that local artists further the spread of Shakespeare to audiences world-wide.

In many ways this collection of essays responds to and expands upon a range of traditional scholarship from the body of work inspired by Jan Kott's *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, through to the post-colonialist discourses of Homi Bhabha, the concerns of intercultural performance around globalisation, and cultural geography's explorations of identity and place. Where its real value lies, however, is in the reclaiming of Asian Shakespeare for and by a plurality of Asias—each with their own history, culture and future. This is a fascinating, varied and welcome addition to the fields of Shakespeare Studies, Cultural Geography and Intercultural Performance.

Hiroshi Seto, *A History of Chinese Reception of Shakespeare* 瀬户宏, 中国のシェイクスピア(Osaka, Japan: Matsumotokobo, 2016); Chinese translation 莎士比亚在中国：中国人的莎士比亚接受史, trans. Linghong Chen (Guangzhou, China: Guangdong People's Press 广东人民出版社, 2017. Pp. 377).

Reviewed by ***Sun Yanna***[*]

The history of China's reception of Shakespeare has been discussed from distinctive perspectives in book form by many researchers, including Shujun Cao and Fuliang Sun (1989), Xianqiang Meng (1994), Xiaoyang Zhang (1996), Ruru Li (2003), Murray J. Levith (2004), Alexa Alice Joubin (2009), Yanna Sun (2010), and Hiroshi Seto (2016). As a specialist of modern Chinese drama based in Japan, Seto offers a unique cross-cultural perspective on the topic in his monograph, *Shakespeare in China: A History of Chinese Reception of Shakespeare*, which was published in Japanese in 2016. The book was subsequently translated into the Chinese language and published by Guangdong People's Press to mark the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death. This review is based on the Chinese edition which may differ from the Japanese original due to regulations within the mainland Chinese publishing industry. I do not read Japanese, and therefore limit my comment to the Chinese edition.

The book consists of nine chapters and an informative prologue. In the prologue, Seto divides the history of Chinese reception of Shakespeare into three stages. The book offers a comprehensive overview of each phase. For each phase, Seto covers the history of translation, performance, and dramatic criticism. In the first phase (from the late Qing Dynasty to the May Fourth era), Shakespearean dramas were introduced as legendary stories. Next comes a phase (the May Fourth Movement to the late 1980s) that focuses on preserving the authenticity of Shakespeare. The third phase (1990 to the present) witnesses creative interpretations of Shakespeare's plays. Seto also briefly introduces the reception history in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

To illustrate the history of Shakespeare in China, Seto offers cases studies of five types of performances. The first approach focused on localizing Shakespeare's characters and plays. For example, several early twentieth-century performances were based on Lin Shu's translation of Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* which reframes Shakespearean narratives as Chinese folklores and fairy tales. In *The Woman Lawyer* (an adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice*), Bassanio borrows money from Antonio to help Portia, his younger sister, to establish a women's school. Staged during China's New Women

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Movement, this adaptation localized key elements in Shakespeare's play to address a local agenda. In contrast, the second commonly deployed approach imposed Western theatrical realism on the productions, such as Shanghai Drama Society's (Shanghai xiju xieshe) 1930 *The Merchant of Venice*. The 1937 *Romeo and Juliet* production by the Shanghai Amateur Experiment Troupe (Shanghai yeyu shiyan jutuan) is another good example, as it adopted Stanislavsky's system of acting. The third approach, which also emerged in the early twentieth century, brought Shakespeare's plays and traditional Chinese opera forms (*xiqu*) together. Seto diverges from current scholarly consensus regarding the viability of adapting Shakespeare to *huaju* (Western-influenced realist, spoken drama theater) and *xiqu* (stylized Chinese opera theater). Scholars such as Shujun Cao, Ruru Li, and Alexa Alice Joubin have written extensively on the aesthetic and political agency of Shakespeare in Chinese opera. Seto does not think it desirable to adapt Shakespeare to Chinese operatic styles. He argues instead that staging Shakespeare in *huaju* (spoken drama) or "any other modern theater forms" can better vitalize Shakespeare's plays (229; my translation). I believe traditional Chinese opera theater has historically played an important role in popularizing Shakespeare in China. The fourth approach, in Seto's account, involves more artistic license and liberty. It highlights the adaptor's and the director's personal styles. Prominent mainland Chinese director Lin Zhaohua's works exemplify this approach. He does not see himself limited to any one particular theatrical style. Last but not least, the fifth approach takes a hybrid form by mixing spoken drama with Chinese opera.

Of special interest is that beyond the Chinese reception history, Seto offers a full and detailed account of Japan's reception history of Shakespeare. While Seto does not bring the two parallel histories to bear on each other as Alexa Alice Joubin does in her forthcoming book *Shakespeare and East Asia* (Oxford University Press), Seto's book – now available in Chinese – could pique Chinese readers' interest in the history of globalization of Japan through the tangible case of Shakespearean reception. Japan is a country that has played important roles in the rise of modern East Asia.

Hiroshi Seto's book is a compelling work that traces China's reception history of Shakespeare from the late Qing Dynasty to 2016, covering well over 170 years. This great achievement can be attributed to his rigorous scholarship. Seto has carried out solid archival research in Beijing, Shanghai, and Jiang'an, and his research is supported by interviews he conducted. His attention to detail is shown in his treatment of his primary sources. He not only cites his sources, but he also provides spelling variants and differences between various editions. Seto has made several contributions to the field. His research shows hitherto unknown details of the history of reception. Tian Han may have consulted Tsubouchi Shoyo's version of *Hamlet* when he translated it into Chinese. Lin Shu's rewriting of Shakespeare's history plays in classical Chinese prose is

partly based on A. T. Quiller-Couch's *Historical Tales from Shakespeare*. Historically there are multiple pathways through other countries, such as Japan, for Anglo-European canonical writers to be introduced into China.

There are a few issues that prevent Seto's arguments from coming through clearly. For example, Seto argues that Shakespeare was first introduced into in China in 1844. Among others, Hao Tianhu (1999, 2012) and Alexa Alice Joubin (2009) have established elsewhere that Shakespeare was first mentioned in 1839 in a Chinese compendium of world cultures compiled by Lin Zexu. Further, Seto suggests in the prologue that the Chinese Shakespeare Society has ceased to organize academic activities since the early 1990s. In fact, the Society organized the 1994 Shanghai International Shakespeare Festival, which stands out as a notable milestone in the history of Chinese Shakespeare. And four years later, the Society co-organized the International Shakespeare Conference with the Shanghai Theater, the Hong Kong Shakespeare Society, and the Australian Shakespeare Society. As far as Stanislavsky's system of acting is concerned, Seto is full of self-contradiction in demonstrating its beginning in China. In one instance, he remarks that psychological realism was first adopted by the Shanghai Amateur Experiment Troupe in their production of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1937. In another section of the book, however, he points out that the system was first employed by National Modern Drama School (Guoli juzhuan) between 1938 and 1939 when the famous director Huang Zuolin and his wife Danni taught there. Further, the chapters do not seem to be interconnected. Instead of functioning as integral chapters in a monograph, the chapters read like essays that sometimes contain the same information. The repetition unfortunately breaks the continuity of the work. There are some typos. It is unclear whether these typos were introduced by the Chinese publisher and translator, or from the original Japanese version. For instance, the title of Lin Shu's *Yao Meng* was misprinted on page 94.

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Theatre Reviews

***A Floresta que Anda (The Moving Forest)*. Dir. Christiane Jatahy. Teatro Nacional Dona Maria II, Lisbon, Portugal.**

Reviewed by ***Francesca Rayner***[*]

In Act 5 Scene 5 of *Macbeth*, a startled Messenger informs Macbeth: "As I did stand my watch upon the hill / I looked toward Birnam and anon methought / The wood began to move" (5.5.32-34). Hearing this, Macbeth realizes that his sense of infallibility is misplaced: "If this which he avouches does appear, / There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here" (5.5.46-47). In Christiane Jatahy's adaptation, Birnam Wood morphed into a technological forest and the fear that Macbeth senses when it comes towards him created the basis for a collective challenge to the global disorders unleashed by very contemporary tyrants.

When the audience entered the performance space, there were no comfortable seats from which to watch the tragedy of *Macbeth* unfold. Instead, the audience climbed onto the stage itself, where there were four viewing screens and a bar in the corner. The screens projected the stories of four individuals: Igor, a Brazilian political prisoner, Michele, a working-class Brazilian black woman who saw her uncle murdered by the police in a Rio de Janeiro slum, Aboud, a refugee from the Syrian civil war currently living in Germany, and Prosper, a war refugee from the Congo now living in São Paulo, Brazil. These stories of political persecution and exile were not filmed in conventional documentary style. While the characters narrated their experiences to camera, the visual images focused not on their faces but on fragments of arms, legs, eyes, tables, parakeets, flights of stairs. Their testimonies were interspersed with apparently random comments by mothers, friends and children who strayed into the film. Audience members chose how long they stayed with each of these stories and in which order. They could supplement the viewing with visits to the bar or engage in private conversations.

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Some of the members of the audience had been given headsets through which the absent director gave instructions during the performance. While the testimonies in the video installation continued, verbal instructions were relayed to these men and women who played out a series of micro-performances at the bar. These included a man putting his hand greedily into an abandoned black handbag and then removing the hand covered in blood, a woman washing away the blood on her hands in an aquarium full of water and a man attempting to give away money covered in blood to other members of the audience. In these examples of what Jatahy has referred to as 'invisible performance', the stories were almost imperceptible to those members of the audience who were not wearing headsets, and even those wearing them probably missed some of them. The combination of video installations and micro-performances updated but also fragmented *Macbeth* into a series of apparently random events around the themes of murder, corruption and ambition, rather than engaging in a linear retelling of the story.

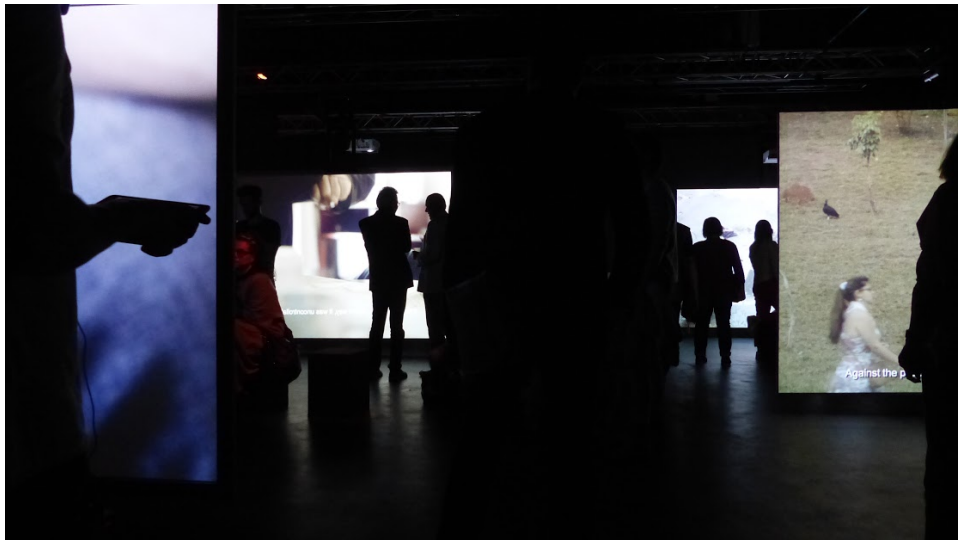
Suddenly, the four screens came together into a long line as images of hybrid insects, animals and skeletons were projected onto this extended screen. Then, to everyone's surprise, the screens started moving towards the audience, forcing them back towards the bar. As members of the audience read excerpts from *Macbeth*, the images on the screens became those of the audience itself, who had been filmed in real time throughout the performance. What had seemed then playful experiments in audience participation now became compromising footage of complicity in the bloody story of a tyrant and the elimination of those standing in his way. Particularly forceful in this respect were the filmed attempts of one of the men mentioned above to give away the money covered in blood. Members of the audience who had accepted the director's instructions as part of the game of performance figured, under the scrutiny of the filmed footage, as unscrupulous in the extreme, while those who had spent their time simply watching the performances at the bar were cast as unwilling witnesses.

With the audience still reeling from their casting within rather than outside *Macbeth*, an actress narrated a series of statistics about global war and tyranny to contextualize the individual stories on the screens. These ranged from the fact that one adolescent dies every hour in Brazil to the innumerable victims of war and mineral exploitation in the Congo. These global stories of births and deaths ended with the birth of the current Brazilian President Michel Temer, whose undemocratic impeachment of his predecessor, Dilma Rousseff, and constant dodging of charges of corruption made him a very contemporary Macbeth figure. The actress then asked a member of the audience to read with her the exchange between the Messenger and Macbeth in 5.5 about the approach of Birnam Wood. She ended her intervention with the question "How do we change things?" and indicated that the moment when Macbeth learns about the approach of Birnam Wood and first senses his own fear is a pivotal moment in

the play and in forging an opposition to the various social, political and ecological catastrophes that characterize the world at the moment. As the screens moved forward towards the audience once again, they dared the audience to retreat or stand their ground. As such, the moving technological forest represented not only the encroachment of political reaction on private and public, local and global spaces, but also the force of a possible resistance to that encroachment by a newly-energized collective made conscious of its power.

The performance ended as it began, with the four stories once more looping on the individual screens. This circular ending was undercut, however, by the lights coming up on the director and her camera crew behind a mirror by the bar, deconstructing the illusion which the performance had itself created. The audience decided whether to watch the testimonies again or leave the theatre. Personally, I found that watching the images had become intolerable by this time and left the theatre almost immediately. In the Q and A session after the performance, Jatahy cast herself and her camera crew as contemporary witches, provoking the audience into behaving in ways they might not outside the theatre and then making them responsible for their actions on camera.

There have been many performances of *Macbeth* in recent years, reflecting the general political atmosphere of war and terror. However, this performance stood out for me in its implication of the complicity of those who witness or take part in such events and in its call for urgent social, political and theatrical transformation.



***Romeo and Juliet*. Dir. Jenny Sealey. Graeae Theatre Company, United Kingdom, in association with the National Theatre of Dhaka, Bangladesh.**

Reviewed by ***Arnab Chatterjee***[*]

"[A Different] *Romeo and Juliet*": Staging Shakespeare in Bangladesh

William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* has been performed endlessly on the stage and in motion pictures. In Jenny Sealey's radical re-enactment of the story in her "[A Different] *Romeo and Juliet*" the play was performed by an entire troupe of differently abled people from Bangladesh, with little or no access to the study of the Shakespearean canon. Sealey explains how she had to battle linguistic as well as other related barriers with the troupe to stage one of the most performed plays of the Bard. A part of an initiative of the British Council, Graeae Theatre Company and the National Theatre of Dhaka, the play was an effort to fight off the marginalization of disabled people in Bangladesh and the stigma associated with them. Graeae Theatre Company, based in London and founded in 1980, has been in the creative process of bringing in marginalized and disabled actors on the stage and thereby battling audience preoccupations as regards disability and any other form of bodily deformity. Sealey's seventy-five-minute play was an effort to make Shakespeare more accessible to the masses, to create a counter-discourse of resistance to the oppressive politics applied on this 'Other'. Thus, the play by Sealey addresses the question of marginality vis-à-vis the politics and the related mechanics of exclusion connected with the dramatization of a canonical writer on stage and his subsequent reception.

"[A Different] *Romeo and Juliet*" was an attempt by Jenny Sealey to stage Shakespeare's classic love tale while working with a group of differently abled but talented young boys and girls in Bangladesh. Such an experiment had never been attempted before at the Dhaka National Theatre, and Sealey, the founder of Graeae Theater Company, in collaboration with Nasiruddin Yousuff, attempted an experiment on a scale perhaps not reached before. Funded by the British Council, the goal of the project was to bring these talented but differently abled people on the stage in a country where disability is shunned, depriving disabled people of any purpose in their lives. The play was staged in 2016 as part of the celebrations of the 400th death anniversary of the Bard. Thus, the primary question that can be raised vis-à-vis the staging of the play is its reception by the audience and how this politics of exclusion of the 'Other' was deconstructed by the inclusion of handicapped players. The re-enactment of

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Romeo and Juliet by physically challenged players is one of the many ways in which a counter-discourse of the staging of the play as an adaptation was created. This is particularly important keeping in mind that, in a country like Bangladesh, physical deformities are looked down upon and often attributed to religious reasons, excluding disabled people from collective activities.

Sealey's experience during the staging of the play is worth noting. Initially, she had a tough time acquainting the crew with a play generally performed within an Anglophone setting and in a language that is not the official language of Bangladesh. The players had a difficult period wondering if they would be well received after acting in one of the most discussed of the Bard's plays at the National Theatre in Dhaka, the capital city of the country and a high-brow place of local intellectual tradition. Coupled with this were concerns regarding the radical re-enactment of Shakespeare's play with recourse to different physical, linguistic and cultural possibilities in the Bangladeshi setting. The first challenge that Sealey had to face was language. Many of the people in the troupe admitted that it was an altogether different experience for them, and that they even feared failure on the 'big day'. Along with such issues, there were audience expectations vis-à-vis the adaptation of a 'canonical' text that had to be transmitted by the narrative strategies that govern differently abled people in day-to-day life. Thus, the questions that were of paramount importance were how an adaptation can strive to create a different cultural discourse of its own and yet, at the same time, not go outside the 'adaptation continuum', a parameter that has been already pointed out.

Sealey, along with her group, auditioned hundreds of young people in Bangladesh. The BRAC funded the auditions that took place in a small town called Savar, very near the capital city of Dhaka. Sealey was assisted by the sign language interpreter Jeni Draper, and they were joined by people who were meticulously chosen for their unique way of responding to situations in real life despite being physically challenged. For instance, Lady Capulet was played by Parvin, a homemaker with house organizing qualities. She was considered to be more attuned to the role of Lady Capulet, who has a wide range of ideas as to what is good for her daughter and what is not. Sadam, who walked on all fours owing to a severe disability that did not allow him to stand, played the role of Mercutio. Montague was played by Sajal, a little older than most of the troupe members, a calm and graceful person, the leader of his house. Shakila and Sriti played the role of Juliet, as one of them was flirtatious in everyday life and the other one had been in love and was therefore more suitable for the role of a romantic heroine.

The script was prepared both in the native Bengali and in English. Yet, as one of the troupe members pointed out as regards the problems of staging a foreign play in a non-Anglophone setting:

> One of the hardest aspects of *Romeo and Juliet* is that it is written in a foreign language. I mean, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is in a language that is foreign to us. Translating that from Shakespeare's language into historical Bengali vocabulary is a tough job which we don't really understand these days. ('Video')

As regards the issue with some troupe members with hearing impairment, sign language was used, and, after the play was enthusiastically received, Sealey talked with the spectators and the reporters via signs (as she is deaf herself) coupled with actual speech.

The issue of the politics of exclusion of the 'Other' caused many problems to the staging of the play –not only the setting in which Shakespeare was to be performed, but also the level of education of the troupe members. Unlike India, where the physically challenged even have job reservations, in countries like Bangladesh these people lack education, and the stigma of being physically challenged is endured by many of them in day-to-day life. Instances may be provided by the performers themselves: One of the physically challenged actors reported that, during a trip to a town called Narshindi, he was allotted a seat near a man who objected to this and shouted to the bus conductor to complain and change his seat. To this, he was plainly told that physically challenged people were humans as well and that the proposed change of seat was out of the question. In a similar vein, one of the disabled female troupe members once went to a marriage party and was not let in, because her disability could supposedly bring ill luck to the lives of the bride and groom.

As regards the reception of the production, the words of Valerie Ann Taylor, associated with the Center for Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP), seemed very relevant:

> I want to say words fail me because I find it very difficult to sum up in words what a wonderful performance we've seen tonight. I feel particularly proud of three wheelchair users who've come from CRP. We are so grateful to be allowed to be part of this very unique and very special evening. ('Video')

Similarly, one of the male members of the audience reported that he actually shed a tear. Alison Blake, the British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, who was in the audience, summed up her experience in the following words:

> I thought it was an amazing and inspirational performance to see the most extraordinary talented young actors bringing Shakespeare alive and also giving an amazing Bangladeshi flavor to it. I think it was one of the best performances I have seen in my life. It was moving and you could tell the audience were amazed. Something really historic. And I hope it will showcase Shakespeare, Britain and Bangladesh and just the sheer talent. ('Video')

However, the prime question that remained to be answered was how *exactly* this mechanics of exclusion was battled by these actors and how Sealey brought Shakespeare closer to the masses in Bangladesh—in other words, what were the literary and paralinguistic techniques that were followed to add a distinctive Bangladeshi flavor to this re-enactment of Shakespeare's play. One of the ways this rather difficult mission was achieved was through the use of familiar situations that common people could be more at home with and relate to their everyday life. The actors wore plain clothes; the marriage, for instance, was conducted in the Islamic manner, using the relevant familiar vocabulary; musicians (visually challenged themselves, except one) used traditional flutes and tambourines. Mamoon al Dhali, the set designer, who has worked for the *Shilpakala* academy, used a round stage to facilitate all-round vision for the audience. Jeni Draper helped Sealey with the rather difficult job of familiarizing the text using sign language for the actors who had hearing disability and Sealey also used signs during the rehearsals.

In an interview, when asked about her own experience with the staging of a play with an entire troupe of disabled actors, Sealey enthusiastically pointed out that she had never worked with a whole group of physically challenged actors before, and that she would not forget the enthusiasm they had shown on-stage. The mission of performing the play with an entire troupe of disabled actors was undertaken with the aim to fight the notion of marginalization that is faced by such actors and to change discriminatory attitudes. Though performing the play meant climbing a very 'high mountain', Sealey said that she employed two actors in place of a single one, one physically disabled and one deaf, on purpose, so that the entire text was also in sign language:

> In my career as a director, I have never worked with an all non-disabled cast. Working with deaf and disabled people is what I do and what I know. It's a world I feel very at home in, as I am deaf. Our job is simply to put on the best play we can and to use what we have to inform the process. For example, one of the actors playing Tybalt has short, crossed legs, which he can wrap around the legs of a standing actor to completely floor them. Who needs daggers when you have such powerful legs? (Sealey)

The play received several critical comments. A critic, referring to Juliet's dying scene, humorously pointed out that she should have died faster, for the action to proceed further, while the lights needed to come back more promptly after this scene ('Video'). However, Sealey felt that the play would definitely be able to strike a chord in the hearts of the spectators, as love is a universal phenomenon, and connecting a Shakespearean play set in Verona with them should not be an issue. Bacchu Yosuf, who saw the final production of the play, was of the opinion that "they can do anything [...] translating

Shakespeare is a big challenge; it's all poetry" ('Video'). Yet, at the very end, the question remained whether these troupe members would ultimately come out of their obscure lives thanks to their involvement with the play and its adaptation, or whether they would be compelled to go back to their selfsame routine again.

The differently abled musicians of the play. Photograph by Tareque Mehdi.

Jenny Sealey leads the cast. Photograph by Tareque Mehdi.

The re-enactment of a 'different' *Romeo and Juliet* by the physically challenged actors of Bangladesh radically questions the issue of bodily disability as perceived in current Bangladeshi society and produces an alternative reactionary discourse within this canonical paradigm and its potential for re-telling. It questions and raises a voice against this oppressive politics enacted on this 'Other'. The play has tried to bring into limelight the question of marginality vis-à-vis the politics and the relevant mechanics of exclusion connected with the dramatization of a canonical writer on stage and its subsequent reception by a group of physically challenged actors in a non-Anglophone setting.

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