

Shakespeare Seminar

William Shakespeare



Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft

Ausgabe 14 (2016)

Shades of Green:
Shakespeare's Green Wor(l)ds

Shakespeare Seminar 14 (2016)

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The *Shakespeare Seminar* is published under the auspices of the Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft, Weimar, and edited by:

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PUBLICATION FREQUENCY

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

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD SERIAL NUMBER

ISSN1612-8362

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INTRODUCTION

LUKAS LAMMERS AND KIRSTEN SANDROCK

Shades of Green – Shakespeare’s Green Wor(l)ds

It is a critical commonplace that Shakespeare’s green worlds are rarely just random settings. They frequently take on complex symbolic meanings: they define, determine or change the characters that move in (or into) them. Shakespeare also uses the colour green metaphorically to refer to a range of human conditions. Thus, some of his characters are “troubled with the green sickness”; some escape “green-eyed jealousy” whereas others fall victim to the “green-eyed monster.” The colour may connote immaturity, youth, or foolishness, as when “orators are too green.” In other cases, like the green sickness, the reference is rather literal. More recently, ecocriticism has drawn attention to ethical concerns in Shakespeare’s green worlds, and it has added a new theoretical dimension to the study of nature in early modernity more generally. Gabriel Egan’s book on *Green Shakespeare: From Ecopolitics to Ecocriticism* (2006) was one of the ground-breaking texts in its alignment of ‘new’ ideas on animal rights, grass-roots politics, and environmentalism with ‘old’ ideas about human-nature relationships in the early modern period and especially in Shakespeare’s oeuvre. Other ecocritical readings of early modern literature and culture were to follow, such as Todd Andrew Borlik’s *Ecocriticism and Early Modern English Literature* (2011), the collection *Early Modern Ecostudies* (2008), edited by Thomas Hallock, Ivo Kamps, and Karen L. Raber, or Jennifer Munroe’s and Rebecca Laroche’s edited collection *Ecofeminist Approaches to Early Modernity* (2011) as well as Gwilym Jones’s study of *Shakespeare’s Storms* (2015). As Simon Estok reflects in *Ecocriticism and Shakespeare: Reading Ecophobia* (2011), ecocritical approaches have at times met with strong resistance. These debates have had the benefit of raising critical controversy not only about ecocriticism itself but also about Shakespeare and his manifold green worlds.

For the present issue of *Shakespeare Seminar* we invited papers on these and other related aspects of Shakespeare’s works. In his article “All that Glisters is Green – The Dialogic Relationship between Belmont and Venice,” Felix Schulz explores how the seemingly clear opposition between the green world of Belmont and the mercenary, violent world of Venice dissolves when we focus on aspects of money, patriarchal control, otherness and religion. The green world of Belmont then emerges not so much as an escape but a critique of proto capitalist developments of Shakespeare’s time. Taking an ecofeminist approach, Julia Libor, in “The Gendered Forest? Exploring Relations of Cross-Dressing and Nature in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*,” reads Rosalind’s cross-dressing as a symbol of the subordination of both women and nature. Cross-dressing is thus seen not as an act of subversion but rather as an act that ultimately reaffirms male power. It is only through Rosalind’s performance of an aggressive masculinity that she temporarily enjoys freedom and power in the clearly masculinist domain of the forest. Drawing on ecofeminist theory, Libor illustrates how, ultimately, both nature and woman remain subordinate positions in the play. Katrin Suhren’s article

turns our attention to yet another group of Shakespearean plays, the histories. In “The ‘Green’ Land as Political Metaphor in Shakespeare’s *Richard II* and *Richard III*” she explores changing connotations of ‘green’ in the context of the political upheavals portrayed in the so-called second tetralogy. Drawing attention to two rather inconspicuous mentions of the word ‘green,’ she shows how metaphors of growth and gardening are central to the debates about the right kind of government in the plays. Finally, in “‘Minded Like the Weather, Most Unquietly’: Inquietude, Nature, and *King Lear*” Johannes Schlegel investigates inquietude as a concept not new but newly discovered in the early modern period. It argues that in *King Lear* “nature is used to fathom and to negotiate restlessness.” The restless nature in the play is shown to stand metonymically for the condition of inquietude, which some have regarded as a hallmark of Western modernity.

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ALL THAT GLISTERS IS GREEN – THE DIALOGIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BELMONT AND VENICE

BY

FELIX SCHULZ

Introduction

In the beginning of *The Merchant of Venice* we are introduced to two melancholic characters in two different locations who speculate about the source of their sadness. In Venice, we encounter the merchant Antonio, “In sooth I know not why I am so sad. / It wearies me; you say it wearies you” (1.1.1–2). In Belmont, on the other hand, Portia tells us, “By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world” (1.2.1–2). Shakespeare presents us with symmetrical points of departure (i.e. Portia’s and Antonio’s melancholy) and thus establishes a suggestive link between Belmont and Venice in the very beginning of the play. And yet, “feminine, lyrical, aristocratic” and beautiful Belmont (Belsey 41) and its protagonists seem to be very different from masculine, competitive and commercial Venice and its characters. Based on this contrariness of the play’s two settings, one could argue that Shakespeare employs a binary opposition between the seemingly green world that is somehow closer to nature and Venice, or what Northrop Frye calls the red and white world of history. Sigurd Burckhardt, for example, describes the opposition between the two locales as follows:

[T]he world of *The Merchant* consists of two separate and mostly discontinuous realms: Venice and Belmont, the realm of law and the realm of love, the public sphere and the private. Venice is a community firmly established and concerned above all else with preserving its stability; it is a closed world, inherently conservative, because it knows that it stands and falls with the sacredness of contracts. Belmont, on the other hand, is open and potential; in it a union—that of lovers—is to be founded rather than defended. The happy ending arises from the interaction of the two realms: the bond makes possible the transfer of the action to Belmont, which then reacts upon Venice. (243)

However, to assume a simple binary opposition, or a dialectical relation between Venice and Belmont would be misleading. Neither does the world of *The Merchant* consist of two separate and discontinuous realms, nor is the green world of Belmont an alternative to, or a negation of, the red and white world of Venice. The *relationship* between Venice and Belmont gains special force from the *dialogic* nature of that relation (cf. Skovmand 81) and unfolds against the backdrop of money, patriarchal control, otherness and religion.

Let us first take a look at the two settings. On the one hand, Venice was regarded by many as an example for Elizabethan England, and in particular for London, in terms of commerce, trade and financial dealings. The development of mercantilism and the banking system in the Italian city, at that time among the richest cities in Europe, were well ahead of that in England in the sixteenth century. Moreover, the city was known for

its sophistication, democratic institutions, multiculturalism and sexual permissiveness, each of which “entered the Elizabethan popular imagination and were interpreted according to the demands of an ideology struggling to contain its own social, political and economic contradictions” (Drakakis 6). In addition, Venice was the gateway to civilizations in the East and a cosmopolitan meeting place for tradesmen and travellers from various countries. The prosperity of the city increasingly depended on merchants’ services and, consequently, Venetian merchants gradually gained influence. Thus, Shakespeare’s play offered Elizabethan audiences a fascinating perspective on the dynamics of economic, social and cultural change. On the other hand, early modern Venice was a place of exotic wonder. Shakespeare’s Venice certainly captivated his contemporary audiences, because it was very different to Elizabethan England. Here, the ‘Other’ is omnipresent. Beyond its functions as a comic vehicle and as a means to explore otherness, it also acted as a signifier for collective national identity. Therefore, the setting of Venice served as a rich source for inquiry into questions of identity politics both in terms of otherness and Elizabethan identity.

Located in the proximity of Venice, we find imaginary Belmont, the fairy-tale home of Portia. In Venice, everyone seems to be in the pursuit of money. In Belmont, in contrast, characters seem to be in pursuit of love. Set in the countryside, Belmont appears to be an idyllic place of domestic peace and harmony. It is reminiscent of an aristocratic retreat from the commercial whirl of the city. Moreover, it is a music-filled world where women take centre stage and where the symbolic value of gold seems to be more important than its monetary value. Belmont seems to be a “green world” (Frye) as well as a golden world: it reconciles plenitude, exuberance, simplicity and order (cf. Tanner 51). However, the green world setting can be just as deceiving as the golden casket. Belmont is neither a *locus amoenus* that welcomes strangers, nor is it a pastoral refuge, where runaways free themselves from the constraints of society. As Karoline Szatek has suggested, Belmont in all its green world finery is rather a “borderland contact zone” that is characterized by both anti-pastoral and post-pastoral elements (349).

Money Matters and the Economy of Desire

The very first words of Antonio, “In sooth I know not why I am so sad. / It wearies me; you say it wearies you,” (1.1.1–2) are very puzzling, because the royal merchant does not seem to live up to our expectations. Venice was the hub for trading between Asia and Western Europe, where vast riches were accumulated (and lost). It was frequently seen as a city of profit-seeking merchants and sharp financial dealings. Ironically, Shakespeare’s merchant of Venice is not a sharp opportunistic capitalist, a thrusting entrepreneur or a repository of commercial confidence (Holderness 58). On the contrary, Antonio is a melancholic figure who does not know why he is so sad. The gentlemen Salanio and Salarino try to cheer him up and show understanding for his despondency, because they are certain that money and the risks of sea venture are the reasons for Antonio’s sadness: “Your mind is tossing on the ocean, / There where your argosies with portly sail / Like signors and rich burghers on the flood / [...] Do overpeer the petty traffickers” (1.1.7–11); “And every object that might make me fear / Misfortune to my

ventures / [...] would make me sad” (1.1.19–21); and “I know Antonio is sad to think upon his merchandise” (1.1.38–9). His friends’ two speeches evoke images of trade, mercantilism and money. Tony Tanner notes, “in their two speeches, Shakespeare – breathtakingly – manages to convey a whole sense of mercantile Venice” (46). For thirty-two lines (1.1.8–40), Salanio and Salarino (who are, by the way, not merchants themselves) elaborate on mercantilism and the dangers of mercantile investment, but Antonio rejects their explanation, “my merchandise makes me not sad” (1.1.44). Salanio then concludes that Antonio must be in love (1.1.46), but the merchant rejects this idea as well. On the one hand, the opening lines of the play show that money lies at the core of Venetian culture: “The proportion of 32 lines to 1, weighting commerce so heavily over love, is the first evidence of Venice’s obsession” (Janik 58). Furthermore, despite Antonio’s inexplicable sadness, he is fully caught up in the world of commerce: he trades with foreign countries and he deals with luxury goods; and as the play unfolds, he becomes both debtor and creditor, and he wants to preserve the “trade and profit of the city” (3.3.30). On the other hand, we recognize that money is not the only driving force of existence in Venice. Antonio, the only merchant in the play, is not preoccupied with mercantile affairs. He is primarily presented a selfless merchant, who lends money gratis.

Whereas Antonio’s preoccupation with money is obscure, Shylock seems to personify the ethos of a world in pursuit of money. His very first words are about money, “Three thousand ducats, well” (1.3.1). In addition, Salanio’s mockery of Shylock’s grief suggests that the loss of the ducats hurts Shylock more than the loss of his daughter, “My daughter! O, my ducats! O, my daughter! / Fled with a Christian! O, my Christian ducats!” (2.8.15). However, when we look beyond Shylock’s mercenary profession and Salanio’s mockery, we notice that Shylock is not in pursuit of money: he does not charge interest on the three-thousand ducats (1.3), and he rejects money in the courtroom several times (4.1).

In fact, when we see Shylock on stage, he does not desire money, but he desires Antonio’s flesh; he wants vengeance. Peter Grav argues that Shylock, in comparison to the other characters of the play, is least motivated by economic imperatives,

[I]t is his single-minded desire for revenge, not financial gain, that drives him in his dealings with Antonio [...] The only instance in *Merchant* when Shylock seems to privilege monetary concerns is Solanio’s account of him running through the streets bemoaning his loss of ducats and jewels following Jessica’s elopement (II.viii.15–22). Yet, even in this instance, much deeper issues are at play. Shylock’s subsequent desire to see his daughter “hearsed at [his] foot and the ducats in her coffin” (III.i.85) betrays more a blind need for vengeance than a wish to recoup his monetary losses. Interestingly, in a society in which material wealth and the discourse of finance consistently supplant intangible human values, it is Shylock who effects a rare reversal of that trend when he learns from Tubal that Jessica has traded his turquoise ring for a monkey. (85)

Shylock is, of course, deeply enmeshed in the web of financial dealings, but the driving force behind his actions (in the play) is his desire for vengeance. Paradoxically, then, Venice’s protagonists, Shylock and Antonio, are not primarily preoccupied with money as we have seen. In fact, their desire goes beyond material gain. Antonio is on a tragic quest for self-knowledge, and Shylock longs for revenge.

Nevertheless, commerce and exchange is front and centre in Venice; and Venice's social life is intricately linked to economic affairs. The Venetian characters are perpetually concerned with money matters: Bassanio is a spendthrift; Shylock is a moneylender; his daughter Jessica execrates her father's manners, but steals his money and jewellery; and Lancelet jestingly chides Jessica for inflating the price of pork. Thus, the Venetians' obsession with money is omnipresent. Furthermore, in the very end, Shylock and Antonio resort to a financial and mercantile spirit. Shylock and Antonio are bewilderingly inconsistent characters indeed. When Shylock is finally defeated, he states that life without money is no life at all,

Nay, take my life and all, pardon not that.
You take my house when you take the prop
That doth sustain my house. You take my life
When you take the means whereby I live. (4.1.370–73)

Similarly, Antonio's words echo those of Shylock when he learns that his ships have returned:

Sweet lady, you have given me life and living,
For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road. (5.1.286–8)

At last (the last impression counts, does it not?), Shylock and Antonio define their lives by their profession, i.e. their living, and they both affirm the importance of financial dealings and mercantilism. Or, in the words of Nuttall,

It is typical of Shakespeare's genius that in his great comedy of economic reality he finds the single point where language most powerfully asserts the interdependence of economics and humanity, in the etymological affinity between a person's life and a person's living. (129–30)

In fact, money matters pervade interpersonal relationships on every level in *The Merchant*. For the Venetian nobleman Bassanio, love and money are aspects of the same thing, "To you Antonio, I owe the most in money and in love" (1.1.130–1). Money is mentioned first, of course. Similarly, Antonio echoes Bassanio's words a few lines later, "My purse, my person, my extremest means / Lie all unlocked to your occasions" (1.3.138–9). In this view, human beings (person) are related primarily through their property (purse) – purse and person, life and living ("means whereby I live"), and love and money are inseparably linked. Simon Critchley and Tom McCarthy argue that there is an "economy of desire" at work in the play, which links commerce and love (or person and purse),

[I]n and around Shakespeare's Venice, desire is an economy, to be both experienced and expressed in purely economic terms. More precisely, what is going on in the drama of *The Merchant of Venice* is the transformation of the language of courtly love into commerce, where the supposedly natural economy of eros is broken open by the chrematistic logic of money-making. (9)

Bassanio travels to Belmont in order to win person and purse. Therefore, he is on a quest for love and for money. However, when he tells Antonio about Portia, he talks about financial motives first, "How to get clear of all the debts I owe" (1.1.134). Not her beauty or her virtue, but Portia's wealth occupies the first place in his praise, "a lady richly left"

(1.1.161). In addition, his description is full of economic references: “nothing undervalued / To Cato’s daughter” (1.1.165–6), “Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth” (1.1.167), “a golden fleece” (1.1.170).

In the second scene, the plot takes us from Venice to Belmont, and the shift from money matters to matters of romance is obvious. On the one hand, there is no motivation or ambition for commerce and financial dealings in Belmont, because Portia is wealthy enough already, “You shall have gold / To pay the petty debt twenty times over” (3.2.304–5). There is no need for further acquisition of wealth, and as a result, profit and mercantilism, pervasive forces in Venice, are absent in Belmont. Whereas Venice is a world of want and scarcity, Belmont is a world of bounty and surplus (cf. Grav 99). Furthermore, the symbolic values of the caskets are more important than their monetary value. It seems as if the values of Belmont are incompatible with those of mercantile and commercial Venice.

However, we can discover economic structures and commercial language in the romantic narrative of Belmont, which reinforce the commonality between the two settings. The very first words of Portia, “my little body is aweary of / this great world” (1.2.1), show her state of mind. Here, the human microcosm of Portia (“my little body”) is confronted with the tremendous macrocosm (“this great world”). She seems to anticipate the suitors who come from all lands in order to win her, and the focus of the world seems to be on the small insular world of Belmont. Interestingly, Belmont, instead of Venice, seems to be the cosmopolitan meeting place of the world. Furthermore, the suitors’ quest for Portia mirrors Antonio’s mercantile adventures, because both ventures involve risk-taking and promise great rewards. Gratiano and Salerio refer to this parallel when they speak of the fleece,

GRATIANO. How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?

I know he will be glad of our success:

We are the Jasons; we have won the fleece.

SALERIO. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost. (3.2.237–241)

Antonio’s argosies set sail to seek fortunes. Similarly, Portia is turned into a female prize that men set sail for: “the lady and the Golden Fleece, the treasure-laden argosy with portly sail, prove in this culture to be indistinguishable objects of desire” (Holderness 65). Money matters pervade interpersonal relationships in Belmont as well. Indeed, the lexicon of finance is omnipresent in *The Merchant*. After Bassanio has chosen the correct casket, he “come[s] by note to give and to receive” (3.2.140; one may wonder what he has to give) and tells Portia to “confirm, sign, and ratify” (3.2.149) his success. While it is not surprising that Bassanio resorts to a commercial terminology, it comes as a surprise that Portia joins in,

I would be trebled twenty times myself,
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich,
That only to stand high in your account
I might in virtues, beauties, livings friends
Exceed account. But the full sum of me
Is sum of something: which to term in gross [...] (3.3.153–8)

Interestingly, Portia wants to be “ten thousand times more rich”, but only “a thousand times more fair”. Her purse, not her person, seems to be the primary objective. In addition, Portia’s speech brims with financial terminology: “rich”, “account”, “full sum” and “term in gross”. “In the words of betrothal that pass between Bassanio and Portia,” Grav observes, “the vocabularies of love and money undergo a marriage of their own” (97). Thus, the ‘economy of desire’ is a pervasive force in Venice as well as in Belmont.

“Fie Upon Your Law:” Patriarchal Control

The source of Portia’s sadness seems to be the will of her dead father, because it explicitly disclaims her free will, “the will of a living daughter [is] curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?” (1.2.23–25). Obviously, Portia feels uncomfortable in the role of passive female prize. She is (concerning her choice of a husband) not independent and bound to the lottery of the caskets, but feels bound by the law of Belmont. “Belmont (in the form of Portia),” notes Tanner, “is as much under rule of (male) law as Venice” (52). Furthermore, Belmont is steeped in the past, because the “experience of the present is framed within that strong sense of responsibility of the past, and present conversation echoes the language of those who are no longer there” (Holderness 64). The themes of obedience and patriarchal control are echoed in two instances in Venice.

First, Shylock tries to exercise control over his daughter Jessica. However, he fails and Jessica (as well as his servant Lancelot) try to escape from his control, because “[o]ur house is hell” (2.3.2) and “what heinous sin is it in me / to be ashamed to be my father’s child! / But though I am a daughter to his blood, / I am not to his manners” (2.3.16–18). Jessica disobeys and denounces her own father and detests his “manners,” but she does not hesitate to steal money and jewellery from her father. In contrast to Portia, Jessica is disobedient. She flees from her father and all family bonds dissolve. In Shylock’s family, the resolution for the father-daughter conflict is deceit.

Second, the Venetian law seems as questionable as the lottery of the three caskets. Neither Portia’s father nor the duke of Venice intend to harm Portia and Antonio, but in both instances the patriarchal control seems to be flawed. Shylock insists on the law: “If you deny me, fie upon your law [...] I stand for judgment” (4.1.100) and it seems as if the adherence to rules and contracts, not only on Shylock’s part but on the city and Antonio’s part as well – (“[l]et me have the judgment, and the Jew his will” (4.1.82)) – will end in tragedy. In Belmont, too, the law of the dead father could be a potential cause for misery. Indeed, there is a parallel between the will of Portia’s dead father and the law of Venice, which is embodied in the duke of Venice.

However, there are remarkable differences in the contracts as well. In Belmont, the will, i.e. the lottery of the caskets, was conceived by a wise father, who certainly anticipated a happy end. In this sense, the lottery is designed to govern the succession and to keep the wrong suitors out. The patriarchal will of Belmont is founded on virtues that may lead to (patriarchal) happiness after all – only a virtuous man who is able to interpret the substance of the will is worthy of Portia. In fact, Portia’s waiting-woman Nerissa predicts the very outcome of the game of caskets immediately after Portia’s lamentation, “Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men at their death have good

inspirations. Therefore the lottery [...] will no doubt never be chosen by any rightly but one who you shall rightly love” (1.2.26–31). Burckhardt argues,

[T]he law of Belmont, then, demands submission quite as much as that of Venice; it too disallows mere feeling. But it differs in one decisive point: it permits, in fact (as the result shows) requires interpretation by substance rather than by letter.

In Venice, on the other hand, adherence to the law is more important than its consequences, and the substance of the Venetian law is both flawed and revealing. In order to preserve “the trade and profit of the city” (3.3.30), all Venetians are willing to sacrifice the life of the royal merchant Antonio (including himself). The law protects the prosperity of the state instead of the life of its citizens.

Nevertheless, in the end all turns out well for one group of principal characters. Multiple suitors are dismissed or stay away from the game of the three caskets, and only Bassanio, the man who Portia desires, succeeds. In Venice, the outcome of the lawsuit is “positive” as well, because Antonio is rescued and Shylock is forced to convert to Christianity.

Moreover, I argue that Portia’s sadness is not as excessive as she states. First, one could claim that Portia actively chooses to obey her father’s will. Drew Daniel argues,

Portia’s execution of her father’s will, with its chastely modest fulfillment seasoned by wisecracking asides, prepares the audience for this troubling identification with an absent yet all-powerful authority by modeling an obedience which is both humorously subversive and yet faithful to the very letter. Portia is compelled from without by her father’s will, but what the play shows us in the Belmont scenes is that each moment of obedience to that will is an active moment of choice. (232)

She does not simply obey her father’s will but she internalizes the law and makes it her own, “If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father’s will” (1.2.101–103). Second, some critics (cf. Drakakis 96) have pointed out that Portia is not completely passive in the game of the caskets. On the one hand, she tells Nerissa to place some “deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket” (1.2.91) in order that the German suitor would make a wrong choice. On the other hand, the song that is played while Bassanio is making his choice includes a subtle indirect hint due to the end-rhymes of each line, “Tell me where is fancy *bread*, / Or in the heart, or in the *head*, / How begot, how *nourishéd*” (3.2.63–65; emphasis added); all three rhyme with ‘lead’.

What distinguishes the ethos of Belmont from the ethos of Venice? Portia adheres to her father’s will, because she realizes that family means obligation. She feels the heavy burden of responsibility, but she is willing to carry this burden, because she has internalized the concern for fate and well-being of her household. Antonio and the Venetians adhere to the city’s laws as well, but apparently for other reasons. In Venice, profit instead of family lies at the core of human existence. In fact, in Venice, family is only valued by Shylock: Jessica flees from her father and trades her father’s precious ring for a monkey, and the other Venetian characters, except Lancelet, do not have a family. In the city, we find an aggregate of individual actors, who are not subject to personal patriarchal power but to institutionalized patriarchal control (i.e. laws). Furthermore, Portia (in disguise of Balthazar) manipulates the result of Antonio’s

lawsuit and construes the contract between Shylock and Antonio to her advantage. Paradoxically, Portia faithfully obeys patriarchal will *and* is able to exert patriarchal control (in Belmont as well as in Venice). The ethos of Venice seems to fail as it takes Portia (Balthazar) and the ethos of Belmont to rescue Antonio.

“Mislike Me Not for My Complexion:” The Others

In the sixteenth century, Venice was a cosmopolitan city and full of foreigners. The city was renowned for its unusual tolerance and diversity, but its tolerance, argues Maus, was “intimately linked with the city’s wealth: its legal guarantees of fair treatment for all were designed to keep its markets running smoothly” (1081). Thus, Antonio accepts his seemingly inevitable punishment in order not to undermine the Venetian law and threaten Venice’s business,

The Duke cannot deny the course of law;
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of the state,
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. (3.3.26–31)

On the one hand, it shows that adherence to patriarchal will and the success of the republic are more important to the Venetian merchant than his own life. The forces of economic change, it seems, stop at nothing and devour, like Saturn, its own children. On the other hand, it demonstrates the importance of ‘others’ for mercantile Venice, for Venice’s prosperity depends on them. Otherness, of course, is a major source of conflict in *The Merchant*. Surprisingly, there are not many ‘others’ besides the Jewish moneylender Shylock (his daughter Jessica and Tubalt) in Shakespeare’s Venice.

In Belmont, on the contrary, we see suitors from many different parts of the world, but they are not welcome. In fact, they are ridiculed. In Belmont, the ‘other’ poses a threat to Portia. The mockery of Portia’s stereotypical suitors is a comic element in the play, but it also foretells that there is no place for ‘others’ in Belmont. Xenophobia was an issue in Elizabethan England, too. Yungblut argues that

[A]ctual or planned attacks on aliens occurred in almost every decade of Elizabeth’s reign. Their frequency increased as time passed, indicating a sustained or even mounting degree of some sort of animosity, again possible linked to societal and/or economic stress [...] the increased presence of strangers during Elizabeth’s reign was accompanied by a rising tide of anti-alien expressions. (31)

It is important, of course, to differentiate between historical reality and theatrical representation, and we have to bear in mind the comical structures of the play, too. Nevertheless, the increased presence of strangers in Elizabethan England called the Elizabethans’ attention to intercultural issues. In an age of (economic) expansion, contact with other cultures was inevitable. The exchange of goods and money across cultural borders, then, opened up the country for cultural exchange (cf. Hall 100). Shakespeare deals with xenophobic sentiments in *The Merchant*, but he does not contrast Belmont with Venice. Critics often refer to Belmont’s hospitality, but it is

limited to a small circle of characters. In the end, it seems as if both Belmont and Venice are intolerant towards ‘others’, because otherness is stigmatized in both locales.

Portia’s account of her non-Venetian suitors is telling in terms of Elizabethan perception of otherness. The English baron “is a proper man’s picture” (1.2.67), but he cannot speak Latin, nor French, nor Italian and he is oddly dressed; the German is “a little better than a beast” (1.2.84) and he drinks too much; the Neapolitan “doth nothing but talk of his horse” (1.2.38–39); and the County Palatine “doth nothing but frown” (1.2.44). Otherness, it seems, is something amusing, and no one seems to be flawless. On the one hand, Portia’s initial uneasiness about her father’s will shines through. On the other hand, it is not difficult to sympathize with her. We do believe, of course, in real love as well, do we not? Instead of a drunk German or a monolingual Englishman, we want her to marry a charming prince, with whom she can fall in love.

The deprecation of the prince of Morocco seems even more disturbing, because of the “negative relationship between aristocratic femininity, otherness, and race” (Sokolova 46) which is present in the play. Morocco’s very first words spell this out, “Mislike me not for my complexion, / The shadowed livery of the burnished sun” (2.1.1–2), and Portia joins in, “If he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me” (1.3.124–126). In both cases, the colour of Morocco’s skin causes discomfort in the characters. In fact, Shakespeare endows the prince of Morocco with uneasiness about his own skin colour and projects the Elizabethans’ perception of otherness on the ‘other’ (i.e. Morocco). In addition, Gratiano and Lancelet comment jestingly about interracial relationships later on in the play as well,

LORENZO. I shall answer that better to the commonwealth
than you can the getting up of the negro’s belly; the
Moor is with child by you, Lancelet!

LORENZO. It is much that the Moor should be more than
Reason; but if she be less than an honest woman, she is
indeed more than I took her for. (3.5.34–39)

Their conversation hints at anxieties about miscegenation and they taunt the (unseen) black woman. Hall writes that “in 1596 [...] Queen Elizabeth expressed concern about the presence of black in the realm [...] and demand[ed] that blacks recently brought to the realm to be rounded up and returned ” (95). Even though this effort was not very successful, it shows that there is very strong a ‘subtext’ of racial politics in *The Merchant* (ibid.).

Nevertheless, in Belmont the conflict of otherness is much less intense than in Venice. It is not hard to smile about the drunk German or oddly dressed Englishman. In Venice, on the other, it is difficult to identify comical elements that are not burdensome. Oliver Lubrich suggests that Venice is the realm of tragedy and that Belmont is the realm of comedy. In the realm of tragedy, we find Shylock, who is very different indeed: his religion, his ethos, and even his language are different. According to Greenblatt, Shylock above all represents the “abstract principle of difference”, and he is the antithesis to Belmont, “as he is of the Christian mercantilism of Venice” (295). In Belmont, as we have seen above, the foreign suitors are rejected, they must leave and go home. In Venice, in contrast, Shylock is allowed to live and do business in the city, “I will buy

with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you and so following” (1.3.31–33). In fact, Shylock’s financial dealings are crucial to Venice’s (and Bassanio’s) success. However, Venice’s tolerance is hypocritical. The Venetians treat Shylock badly, “I am as like to call thee so again, / To spit on thee again, to spur thee too” (1.3.125), “faithless Jew” (2.4.38), “cur” (3.3.19). Shylock is an outsider and he is excluded from Venetian society. Therefore, he inhabits his own realm. The Christians refuse to acknowledge a common brotherhood, and, vice versa, Shylock rejects the Christian community, “But I will not eat with you, drink with you nor pray with you” (1.3.33–34). Thus, Shakespeare’s Venice is not one homogeneous realm. To conclude with Tanner’s words, who differentiates between ‘Rialto Venice’ and ‘Ghetto Venice’, “Shylock lives in a very different Venice from the Venice enjoyed by confident Christian merchants” (45).

“The difference of our spirit:” Old Versus New

The reciprocal hatred between Christians and Shylock in Venice is a disturbing and problematic issue of the play. In Shakespeare’s play, the clash of religions looms large in Venice. Animosity between Shylock and the Christian Antonio is omnipresent, “I hate him for he is a Christian” (1.3.38), and “He hates our sacred nation” (1.3.44). Both parties treat each other badly, but Elizabethan audiences predominantly would have sympathized with Antonio. For example, the title-page of the First Quarto (1600) reads: “With the extreme cruelty of Shylock the Jew towards the Merchant”. From Shylock’s perspective, the Christians are cruel, “For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe. You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog, / And spit upon my Jewish gabardine” (1.3.108–109), and Antonio’s reply seems not less alarming (at least to a modern audience) when he says, “I am as like to call thee so again, / To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too” (1.3.125–126). For the Christians, on the other hand, Shylock is the devil incarnate, “Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnate” (2.2.24).

Indeed, they hate each other and it is not hard to identify their wrongdoings; but what is the difference between their animosities? Shylock says, “Tell me not of mercy” (3.3.1), and “I stand for judgment” (4.1.100), and Jessica says about her father, “he would rather have Antonio’s flesh than twenty times the value of the sum that he did owe him” (3.2.285). Revenge is more important to Shylock than forgiveness. He objects to the Christian concept of mercy, and strictly follows the doctrine of ‘an eye for an eye’. In his famous speech “Hath a Jew not eyes?” (3.1.53) he appeals to his sameness (cf. Greenblatt 295), but it is undermined by Shylock’s own conclusion only a few lines later, “The villainy you / teach me I will execute, and I shall go hard but I / will better the instruction” (3.1.64). Thus, Shylock promotes Old Testament justice. For Shylock, mercy is a sign of weakness, “cursed be my tribe / If I forgive him” (1.3.47), and therefore he refuses any form of reconciliation. The conflict of the Christians and Shylock is built around the opposition of Old Law versus New Law and Justice versus Mercy (cf. Greenblatt 295). In direct opposition to Shylock we find Portia from Belmont, who says, “I stand for sacrifice” (3.2.57) – a reference to God’s mercy and the sacrifice of Jesus for mankind’s salvation. Kitch argues that Portia tries to “assimilate Shylock within a model of universal Christian brotherhood” (151) by appealing to this mercy. But Shylock is eager for revenge and his pound of flesh. Knowing that the

Venetian Republic relies on the consistency of its legal system, he insists on the bond, “If you deny me, fie upon your law” (4.1.100). Shylock uses Venice’s judicial system for purposes of private revenge in an opportunistic manner. Antonio formulates his supposedly last words and adheres to law, because he knows that the integrity of Venice is at stake in the trial as well. With a knife in his hand and his scales ready, Shylock anticipates cutting a pound of flesh from Antonio’s body. In fact, his performance and his words “I stand for justice” are reminiscent of a parody of Lady Justice, who represents moral virtue. Indeed, it takes Portia to overcome Shylock. Her first question, when she enters the court in disguise, is, “Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?” (4.1.170). According to Tanner, this is an astonishing question,

[W]e know that Shylock would have been dressed in a “gabardine”, because, we are told, Antonio habitually spits on it. This was a long garment of hard cloth habitually worn by Jews who, since 1412, had been obliged to wear a distinctive robe extending down to the feet. Shylock would have been literally a ‘marked’ man [...] Antonio, a rich merchant who we are again told, habitually comes “so smug upon the mart” [...] is more likely to have been dressed in some of the silk in which he trades. (45)

In other words, it is obvious that Shylock is the Jew and Antonio the royal merchant. It is a hypocritical question, because it deceitfully implies impartiality. Portia counters Shylock’s parody in the courtroom: she seems to be as blind-folded and as objective as the Roman goddess of justice. (Ironically, Portia disguises herself as a man, only to then represent Lady Justice in the court. In a sense, male Venice has failed; they rely on Portia to challenge the bond between Antonio and Shylock. The Venetians follow the law only by letter and are blind to substance or spirit of law. Similarly, the suitors in Belmont are blind to the substance of the lottery and fail to interpret it. The Venetians as well as the suitors lack the perspicacity to balance the scales. Portia, on the other hand, is able to balance the scales and to achieve justice, because she follows the law by letter *and* by spirit. “Portia squeezes new life and salvation out of the dead letter and deadly law,” writes Tanner, “– and not by extenuation or circumvention or equivocation” (58). She does not only insist on the bond, but, more importantly, she imposes a new interpretation on the contract whereby it becomes practically null and void (cf. Leinwand 18). Furthermore, Portia argues that mercy is a divine quality,

The quality of mercy is not strained:
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the places beneath, It is twice blest:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes [...]
But mercy is above the sceptered sway;
It is enthroned in the heart of kings;
It is an attribute to God himself. (4.1.180–4;189–191)

Mercy, says Portia, is superior to mundane sovereignty (“the sceptered sway”). “She goes on to assimilate the freedom of the state,” states Kitch, “to the theology of Christian universalism” (151). Indeed, the Lady of Belmont intervenes with the masculine and political world of law in Venice (cf. Belsey 46). Portia, on a more obvious level, implements the prevailing values of Belmont into the courtroom of Venice: mercy seems to prevail over justice and love over revenge. Shylock, who rejected mercy, now has to

beg for it, “Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke” (4.1.359). Moreover, the duke of Venice spares the life of Shylock, and argues that there is a moral difference between Christians and Jews. Ironically, the Duke speaks of “the difference of our spirit” (4.1.364) – a reference to the spirit of the law (to which, as I have shown above, the Venetians are blind until Portia reinterprets the law). O’Rourke elaborates on the Duke’s quote,

[T]his “difference” secures the Christian mythos of the relative wrongs of Jews and Christians. As the Christian story goes, they may harass the Jews a bit, confiscate their property from time to time (as a punishment for their greed), and sometimes force them to convert, but they don’t (usually) just kill them, whereas the Jews killed Christ. Jewishness functions as the “index of badness” in Christian world-history, so that whatever lapses Christians exhibit from doctrinal ideals, the scapegoating of Jews allows them to believe that at least they are not as bad as the people who murdered the son of God. (385–6)

Case closed? Let us consider Shylock’s perspective. In the end, Shylock is defeated, “give me leave to go from hence. I am not *well*” (4.1.391–2) – echoing his first words “Three thousand ducats, *well* [...] For three months, *well* [...] Antonio shall become bound, *well*” (1.3.1–5; emphasis added). Shylock is broken by his own bond, forced to convert to Christianity, and must give up his stigmatized identity. Shylock is assimilated, but not within Portia’s “model of universal Christian brotherhood” (Kitch 151). Belmont’s model of Christian brotherhood is not universal. On the contrary, it is very restricted. Portia implements the values of Belmont in the courtroom of Venice in order to rescue Antonio. However, she does not show mercy to Shylock, because she advises that he must lose his goods by invoking a Venetian law that protects citizens against “an alien” (4.1.345), and hands over the power over life and death to the Duke, “the offender’s life lies in the mercy / Of the Duke only, ‘gainst all other voice” (4.1.351–2). Daniel argues that mercy is as alien to Venice as Shylock,

Portia’s celebrated excursus upon mercy would suggest that there is a principle prior to law which stands ready to rescue us from the choking grasp of the literal, yet her own merciless application of Venetian law against Shylock places mercy outside the text. (231)

Indeed, a forced conversion can hardly be called mercy (cf. Leimberg 203). Thus, Shylock is not accepted as a brother, but he remains the ‘other’. In addition, when we take a closer look at the “happy end”, we cannot deny the hypocrisy and xenophobia of the Venetian Christians: they keep slaves, they hate Jews, and Gratiano (the irony behind his name is obvious) mocks Shylock after the Duke has declared his judgement, telling him that he should hang himself, “A halter gratis, nothing else, for God’s sake” (4.1.375). Therefore, the moral distinction between Christians and Jew, put forward by the Duke, is undermined. Hypocrisy looms large when Christian values of tolerance and mercy are claimed, but then not even half-heartedly lived by.

Conclusion

At first glance, Venice and Belmont seem to be very different: Belmont may appear a green, music-filled world of bounty run by women, whereas Venice is a mercenary, male-dominated world of laws. However, when we take a closer look at Venice and

Belmont, we realize that both locations are also very similar on various levels: the dynamics of desire, the stigmatization of others, and patriarchal will are pervasive forces in both locales. The message of Belmont's golden casket spreads throughout the play: "All that glisters is not gold" (2.7.65). Shakespeare uses the green world of Belmont to critique early modern capitalism and its persistent undermining of spiritual and moral values, family unity and business structures.

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Zusammenfassung

Die scheinbar grüne, idyllische Welt von Belmont unterscheidet sich von der proto-kapitalistischen Welt Venedigs. Was auf den ersten Blick wie eine Negation oder ein Gegensatz erscheint, entpuppt sich aber vielmehr als Spiegelbild oder zwei Seiten einer Medaille, denn die Beziehung zwischen Belmont und Venedig ist von dialogischer Natur. Wie eine Analyse unter Berücksichtigung von wirtschaftlichen, patriarchalischen, kulturellen und religiösen Strukturen und Faktoren verdeutlicht, wirken an beiden Orten die gleichen Mechanismen.

THE GENDERED FOREST? EXPLORING RELATIONS OF CROSS-DRESSING AND NATURE IN SHAKESPEARE'S *AS YOU LIKE IT*

BY

JULIA LIBOR

Introduction: Toward an Ecofeminist Reading of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*

Cross-dressing plays a central part in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. It is important not only for the stage performance but also for the gender relations in the play. In this article I wish to explore the relationship between cross-dressing and nature, focusing particularly on the Forest of Arden and Rosalind's female to male cross-dressing in order to travel through the forest. I shall argue that her cross-dressing transforms the forest into a performative landscape, which is connoted as male-dominated environment. In order to investigate the interrelations of Rosalind's female to male cross-dressing with the environment I wish to examine the play from the theoretical background of ecocriticism and, more specifically, ecofeminism.

Ecocriticism as a discipline arguably still suffers from identity issues to some extent. Perhaps this is due to the fact that definitions tend to be very broad. As the ecocritic Cheryll Glotfelty explains, "[s]imply put, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" in which "ecocriticism takes an earth centred approach to literary studies" (xviii). Such a definition may seem to reduce ecocriticism to a mere thematic approach. However, Greg Garrard notes that "ecocriticism is an avowedly political mode of analysis," like feminist and Marxist analyses (3). Moreover, he argues that "[e]cocriticism is unique amongst contemporary literary and cultural theories because of its close relationship with the science of ecology" (Garrard 5). Such a connection creates new perspectives and makes the invisible visible: ecocriticism is able to detect and name explicitly what affects the relationship between humans and nature. As Cheryl Lousley concludes, ecocriticism not only deals with the "representation of nature, but the politicization of environment; or in other words, how to make complex socio-ecological interactions socially visible as political concerns" (Lousley 156).

The increasing interest in ecocriticism also affected Shakespeare Studies. However, while representations of nature in Shakespeare's works have always been of great interest, ecocriticism in Shakespeare Studies had to face certain difficulties at first. In 2005, Simon Estok noted that "[t]o many Shakespeareans, ecocriticism seems not to be new and instead to be like old thematicism and nature studies" ("Introduction" 109). However, the connection between Shakespeare Studies and ecocriticism has recently gained greater prominence. As Estok states in his 2011 *Ecocriticism and Shakespeare: Reading Ecophobia*: "[g]iven what is happening in the field, we can assume now that a Shakespearean ecocriticism is unquestionably useful to contemporary environmental discussions" (1) as it helps us understand our relationship to the environment today.

Estok also notes that “[d]oing ecocriticism with Shakespeare means opening up radical challenges in the plays” (“Doing Ecocriticism” 83). The same can be said about ecofeminism, which detects and exposes oppressive discourses, circumstances and ideologies that both nature and women have to face. Greta Gaard and Patrick D. Murphy define ecofeminism as “a practical movement for social change arising out of the struggles of women to sustain themselves, their families, their communities” (2). As Karen Warren further explains, ecofeminism “claim[s] that there are important connections between the unjustified dominations of women, people of color, children, and the poor and the unjustified domination of nature” (1). This also shows that “nature is a feminist issue” (Warren 1). Ecofeminism requires numerous interconnections with “[r]acism, classism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, anti-Semitism, and colonialism [...] because understanding them helps one to understand the subordination of women” (Warren 1).

Like ecocriticism, ecofeminism has found its way into literary studies. Starting in the 1970s as a political movement, ecofeminism established itself within literary studies from the 1990s onwards (Gaard and Murphy 5). One of ecofeminism’s greatest achievements to date is the discovery of numerous texts about nature by women writers, thus contributing to a revision of the Western literary canon (Gaard and Murphy 5). Gaard and Murphy suggest that reading literary texts against an ecofeminist background should involve the following questions as guidance: Firstly, “[w]hat previously unnoticed elements of a literary text are made visible, or even foregrounded when one reads from an ecofeminist perspective?” (Gaard and Murphy 7). Secondly, “[c]an this perspective tell literary critics anything new about a text in terms of style and structure [...]?” (Gaard and Murphy 7). Finally, “[h]ow might an ecofeminist perspective enhance explorations of connections and differences among ‘characters’ in a text? [C]onnections and differences that affect our relationships with nature and with each other?” (Gaard and Murphy 7). These questions have also become important in Shakespeare Studies, as works by ecocritics such as Simon Estok, Lynne Bruckner, Gabriel Egan and Daniel Brayton show. Similarly, Sylvia Bowerbank’s *Speaking for Nature: Women and Ecologies of Early Modern England* (2004) and *Ecofeminist Approaches to Early Modernity* (2011) by Jennifer Munroe and Rebecca Laroche demonstrate an increasing interest in ecologies of early modern England. While specific ecofeminist readings of Shakespeare’s works are still scarce, Munroe’s and Laroche’s forthcoming work *Shakespeare and Ecofeminist Theory* suggests a shift of interest. In the following, I wish to show both the benefits and the limits of an ecofeminist approach to Shakespeare’s comedy *As You Like It*. While there are different ways to apply ecofeminism to literature (in particular since there are different branches of ecofeminism), I wish to focus on Rosalind’s cross-dressing and its symbolic meaning for the subordination of both nature and women in the play.

Performing Gender: Rosalind’s Cross-Dressing

Before looking at Rosalind’s cross-dressing, I would like to consider Rosalind’s family relations. Arguably, they influence her gender performance throughout the play. Rosalind lives with her cousin Celia and her uncle, Duke Frederik, who usurped the

place of Rosalind's father, the rightful Duke, and banished him. Soon the duke also banishes Rosalind without stating his reasons, leaving Rosalind and her father in a similar situation.

As Sharon Hamilton notes, "[b]ecause her father is not dead but merely exiled [...] we get to see his influence at firsthand" (142). The bond between Rosalind and her father initially continues as she seeks him in the 'Forest of Arden' together with Celia. According to Hamilton, Rosalind's cross-dressing signifies a transition from daughter to son (142). Arguably, in her performance of her new gender role, we see the impact of her father's own performance of masculinity. Diane Elizabeth Dreher furthermore argues that, "Shakespeare's daughters often mention their fathers and future husbands in the same breath" (119). The same is true for Rosalind when she says to both Orlando and her father "To you I give myself, for I am yours" (5.4.113). Dreher suggests that the daughters in Shakespeare's works "[u]nconsciously [...] seem to recognize an intrinsic correlation between the two most significant men in their lives and anticipate the necessary transition" (119).

If family relations help to situate Rosalind's cross-dressing in a patriarchal context of early modern society, the significance of gender hierarchy is even more visible in Rosalind's female to male cross-dressing as she travels through the Forest of Arden. As a conversation between Rosalind and her cousin Celia reveals, both women are well aware of the dangers they would have to face as female travellers in that forest. Rosalind's remark "Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold" (1.3.108) implies that as women they run the risk of being abused in the male-dominated sphere of the forest. In a way, the comparison of women and gold implies a view of women as a resource or commodity to be owned and traded by men. At the same time, the forest seems to threaten the women's femininities in different ways: the patriarchal environment of the forest appears to imply an even more thorough subordination of women as well as an objectification that entails a limitation of the expression of their lives and femininities.

For instance, in order to protect themselves from those dangers Rosalind decides to cross-dress, while Celia plans to dress up like a shepherdess in "poor and mean attire" (1.3.109) to travel safely through the forest. The women's new costumes imply that different femininities such as disguised femininities and altered femininities can move differently in the forest's hierarchical structure and conventions. This becomes clear when Rosalind describes that she will carry a "curtle-axe" and a "boar spear" to support the appearance of a "martial outside" (1.3.115–117). The armour helps her to fully disguise her identity and perform a privileged masculinity that aligns with the male-dominated forest. Moreover, the women's new names contribute to their new identities: Celia becomes *Aliena*, a name that clearly signals her *alienation* from her former self, and Rosalind becomes *Ganymede*, echoing the name of a Trojan prince in Greek mythology. As James Neill notes, "[p]robably the best-known mythical example of homosexual love among the gods was the love of Zeus for the youthful Ganymede" (148). Ganymede was abducted by Zeus because of his youthful and handsome appearance. He "became an immortal, frozen in immortality as the eternal *eremenos*" and became Zeus' lover (Neill 148). In reference to this myth, I shall suggest that Rosalind's male identity as Ganymede consists of two components. Firstly, her new name indicates the significance of a same-sex relationship. Secondly, this new gender

identity connotes the role of a son, as Ganymede was a prince. Rosalind's cross-dressing therefore can be said to imply not only a male to female cross-dressing, but also a transition of daughter to son. This also relates back to the father-daughter relationships as discussed earlier and supports Hamilton's argument of Rosalind performing a change from female to male child. Rosalind appears to gain more power through her male appearance than Celia does with her choice. While both women share a similar status in the city, they achieve a significantly different status in the forest. Rosalind's male appearance grants her more freedom, whereas Celia is forced into a subordinate position, as can be seen in her arranged marriage.

The new roles also raise questions about the women's friendship: Rosalind's new male gender role appears to overwrite her role as a close female friend. Instead, Rosalind as Ganymede can now be seen as a close male friend. In arranging Celia's marriage, Rosalind effectively performs male authority, making her a kind of father figure for Celia. Judith Butler states that "[p]erformativity is [...] not a singular 'act' for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms" (241). This is reflected in Rosalind's new male gender role as she picks up familiar norms and performs them accordingly. Thus, Rosalind does not so much challenge traditional gender roles as re-enact and appropriate them for her own ends. Butler also stresses the importance of speech acts for gender performance (241). This is reflected in both Rosalind's choice of a male name and her ability to marry Celia to another man, as she performs male authority in conducting a wedding.

As previously observed, the forest in *As You Like It* is constructed as a male-dominated environment by human actions. However, this does not mean that it is protected from exploitation and general harm. As I have shown, Rosalind's cross-dressing is a way of avoiding exile and danger in the forest. Performing this new masculinity, Rosalind as Ganymede is now able to exercise unprecedented power and ultimately experiences more freedom than in the city, a position she would never have been able to experience in her usual environment and most importantly original gender role. Her armour now empowers her and enables her, for example, to purchase a farm (2.4.89). It is a topic frequently addressed in Shakespeare's plays: women are often empowered by means of cross-dressing and new gender roles.

However, in this article I would like to propose an alternate interpretation of the described scenario, one more in line with the ecofeminist approach presented earlier. Rosalind pays a high price for the experience of perceived freedom in moving through the forest. It seems problematic to interpret Rosalind's cross-dressing as a liberating action. How can the female to male cross-dressing be a liberating tool when it is merely used to adapt to a male space? Looking at cross-dressing as a tool for such an adaptation shows it to be part of a mechanism to ensure the continuing male influence and oppression of women. Ultimately, Rosalind's need to cross-dress can be interpreted as a result of men speaking for both women and nature.

From a feminist point of view, it would have been significantly more empowering if Rosalind did not have to cross-dress to enter and travel through the forest, but had been able to use martial arts and weapons to defend herself if needed. Indeed, if she took such action she would experience some aspects of the freedom commonly experienced by men in the forest. By adapting to the male sphere, Rosalind unwittingly reinforces

patriarchal structures while at the same time presenting herself as a subordinate being in disguise to the audience and Celia. Her female identity is consistently oppressed by the very armour and weapons she carries.

The cross-dressing ultimately reinforces the patriarchal rules in early modern England as well as serving as a playful and comedic characteristic of the play. Moreover, the theatre itself becomes a crucial element as a metatheatrical space in *As You Like It*. The early modern audience experiences a double cross-dressing of Rosalind on the stage – first male to female, then female to male. A closer look at the tradition of cross-dressing quickly reveals problematic implications. The more aspects we consider here, the more problematic the tradition appears. Cross-dressing was not only common in early modern English drama, it was also part of life outside the theatre where it was everything but light-hearted or romantic. Cross-dressing in early modern England was part of a dominating discourse that was seeking the oppression of women on multiple levels. In a comprehensive survey about cross-dressing in the Shakespearean age, Michael Shapiro concludes: “lower class women were accused of cross-dressing, rightly or not, in order to conceal their identities while they conducted illicit sexual liaisons” (16). Cross-dressing is here linked to prostitution, which leads to the oppression and exploitation of women. Shapiro states: “whether or not most prostitutes cross-dressed, most women in male attire were accused or suspected of prostitution or fornication” (16). Such information throws a different light on Rosalind’s female to male cross-dressing and also makes the cross-dressing in the comedy appear problematic: while in the play Rosalind can freely move through the forest as a man, in real life she would have to face consequences when caught in male attire by authorities. However, while female to male cross-dressing was interpreted as a threat to social norms, Rosalind has to cross-dress in order to escape from threats herself.

Who Speaks for Women? Who Speaks for Nature?

Who speaks for women? Who speaks for nature? To answer these questions is among the most important matters in ecofeminism. In this section I attempt to answer them in regards to Rosalind and the Forest of Arden in *As You Like It*. As illustrated in the previous section, Rosalind’s female body is disguised with male attire in order to travel safely through the forest. Similarly, I shall argue, nature in the play is subordinated and exposed to violence. As Patrick D. Murphy notes, “[n]on-human others can be constituted as speaking subjects, rather than constituted merely as objects of our speaking, although even the latter is preferable to silence” (14). Of course, in a literal sense, nature cannot speak for itself. Instead, nature relies to a large extent on human actions, which may include nature conservation and protection of natural resources. Similarly, the forest in early modern England was also influenced by many political and societal changes. As Edward Berry notes, “[f]orest settings of virtually any kind would have carried a high political charge for contemporary audiences” as “[t]hroughout the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, the forests of England were sites of social, economic, and political conflict” (167). An early modern audience would have been familiar with a forest inhabiting such conflicts as the legend of the outlaw Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest was amongst the popular forest narratives at the time. It has “mobilized the hybrid

understanding of the forest as a site for romance, legend and myth, but also as working woodland” (Sanders 68). In fact, we find a reference to Robin Hood at the beginning of the play when Oliver asks Charles where Rosalind’s father is going to live. As Charles explains, “he is already in the Forest of Arden, / and a many merry men with him; and there they live / like the old Robin Hood” (1.1.108–110). It becomes clear how both literary texts and real-life accounts shaped and constructed an understanding of what a forest is.

The forest in *As You Like It* can be interpreted as having multiple layers. While it shows characteristics of a pastoral landscape, it also functions as an extended court, where those in power outside of the forest are also in power inside (Sullivan 193). Most importantly for the play, however, the forest is used to express an understanding of culture, which includes hunting. Hunting as a cultural practice conventionally performed by men brings out once more the gendered nature of the Forest of Arden. It takes on a symbolic function as imitating early modern gender and court culture, where women and animals are both in danger of being hunted down. However, the character of Jaques in the play shows that the forest can harbour different masculinities. He is an exception to the dominant masculinities in the play as he embodies a melancholic character, which contrasts the hunters in the forest and other male characters. As Susanne L. Wofford explains:

[T]he humour of melancholy was thought particularly to typify women, so that [...] Jaques can be seen overtaken by a female mood. Jaques, then, becomes the closing example of the play’s penchant for mixed gender, of its structural reliance on an undecidability of gender to pull off its conclusions and to perform them in society. (169)

Moreover, Jaques’ attitude is in line with his criticism of hunting, a practice he rejects as animal cruelty pursued for pleasure. Moreover, it is striking that Jaques’ criticism is connected to the deer, an animal with a strong symbolic character in literature and the arts until today. As Jaques asks who killed the deer and the First Lord admits that it was he who did it, Jaques demands: “Let’s present him to the duke like a Roman conqueror; and it would do well to set the deer’s horns upon his head, for a branch of victory” (4.2.3–5). In early modern England, the deer and its blood primarily symbolised “honor, nobility, and authority” (Beaver 11). Hunting was therefore recognised as “a symbol of social superiority” (Steinhart 146) in which “the deer [was] a symbol of gentility” (Beaver 11). Moreover, in early modern England, “the deer was still considered to be the most worthy quarry” hunted primarily by the aristocratic society (de Belin 6), which shows how precious this animal was to hunters, just as Rosalind would be a precious subordinate being for men in the forest if her femininity was not disguised. It is also interesting to note that stags were more valuable than female deer as they were “prized for their size, their magnificent antlers, their power, and their stamina in the hunt” (Berry 17). While both male and female deer were hunted, I suggest that the hunt of the more valuable male deer correlates with the powerful masculinities presented in the forest.

Hunting has always been an important part of humans’ lives and consequently turned into a recurring theme in the literary tradition. Shakespeare’s use of the conflicting image of a pastoral landscape in *As You Like It* appears to be difficult to interpret and the hunt in such a setting can have several meanings. Firstly, it can be interpreted as

criticism of hunting by emphasising the contradictory character of the pastoral setting. Such a reading is supported by Jaques' criticism as discussed earlier. Secondly, it is possible to perceive the hunt in such a pastoral setting as a comic or somewhat bizarre element in the play. This is reflected in the diverse flora and fauna of the forest, which could not exist in an English forest. For example, Oliver asks where to find olive trees in the forest and tells Celia about a lioness which he describes as a "beast" (4.3.18) with "catlike watch" (4.3.116). Additionally, we do not only find olive trees in the play, but also palm trees into which Rosalind's name is carved (3.2.170). Such a diverse flora and fauna with origins from all over the world contributes to the construction of the forest as a bizarre, comic and possibly even mystic environment. Arguably, such characteristics lead to the assumption of the forest as a wild space, a space with its own rules. As Edward Berry notes, "Shakespeare's Arden is not a realistic locale but a landscape of the mind" (167), which is in line with my argument about the forest's fictional character. Moreover, Berry argues that "[a]t some level Shakespeare surely wants to disrupt expectations of social realism and to create a world in which the imagination is given free rein" (167). I argue that Shakespeare creates more than this. He is also able to embed characteristics of a real forest as we can see from the forest's cultural and societal importance within the pastoral setting. The forest's imaginative and wild component remains prominent as its transitional character, creating a forest similar to the well-known Sherwood Forest of Robin Hood. This also gives the Forest of Arden a utopian characteristic, an aspect suggested by the fact that the forest seems to exist in a time zone of its own. As Orlando explains "there's no clock in the forest" (3.2.292). In the forest, the only orientation is provided by nature itself through songs about the harsh winters (2.7) and the change of seasons (5.3).

Conclusion

Rosalind is often described as a heroine based on her actions in a male gender role. In contrast, an ecofeminist approach suggests that such interpretation of *As You Like It* is debatable and that an alternative reading of Rosalind as a subordinated part in the patriarchal gender games of the Forest of Arden is also possible.

While ecocriticism has become an important part of early modern studies, ecofeminist approaches are still underrepresented, particularly in Shakespeare Studies. However, this is changing as current contributions to this field show. As I have argued, cross-dressing in Shakespeare's play can be productively approached with a view to such questions. An ecofeminist approach reveals how politics of gender and environment are closely connected in *As You Like It*. In this context, I have argued that Rosalind's cross-dressing can be seen as a symbol of the subordination of both women and nature. Rosalind can travel safely through the Forest of Arden in male attire, but only thanks to her performance of a seemingly aggressive masculinity. This ultimately reinforces male privilege in the forest as the performance of masculinity in conducting a marriage and purchasing property shows. The subordination of nature is enacted through hunting practices in the forest. It leads to an exploitation of the forest and its animals. This constructs the forest as a male-dominated environment in which

Rosalind's femininity would be in danger. Applying an ecofeminist approach thus reveals the significant interdependencies between gender and nature in the play.

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Zusammenfassung

Cross-dressing ist ein bedeutsamer Bestandteil in vielen Werken Shakespears – so auch in *As You Like It*. Dieser Beitrag beleuchtet das *Cross-dressing* von Rosalind mit dem theoretischen Hintergrund des Ökofeminismus, der eine wesentliche Verbindung zwischen der Unterdrückung von Frau und Natur konstatiert. Im Mittelpunkt dieser Diskussion steht Rosalinds Tarnung als Mann, die ihr ermöglicht problemlos durch den Forest of Arden zu reisen um ihren Geliebten Orlando zu finden. Ihre Cousine Celia hilft ihr dabei und entscheidet sich, sich als seine Schwester zu tarnen. Durch die Verkleidung ihrer weiblichen Identität sind sich die beiden jungen Frauen sicher, dass sie keinerlei Gefahr in dem Wald ausgesetzt würden. Dieser Beitrag argumentiert jedoch, dass die Verkleidung auch als Unterdrückung alternativer Feminitäten interpretiert werden kann und der Wald folglich als männlich konstruiert wird. Problematisch ist auch, dass Rosalind im Laufe ihrer Reise als männlich gelesene Person, wenn auch unterbewusst, männliche Privilegien erfährt und verstärkt. Die Natur und Tiere im Wald sind ebenso Mechanismen der Unterdrückung ausgeliefert wie das Beispiel der Jagd zeigt, welche als gewaltvolle

Praxis des Patriarchats interpretiert werden kann. Die ökofeministische Perspektive auf *As You Like It* kann somit wichtige Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Geschlecht und Natur aufdecken.

THE “GREEN” LAND AS POLITICAL METAPHOR IN SHAKESPEARE’S *RICHARD II* AND *RICHARD III*

BY

KATRIN SUHREN

Taking its cue from the title of this year’s conference, this paper engages with references to a “green” land in Shakespeare’s histories. For this purpose, it focuses on the metaphorical quality of the adjective *green* rather than on the literal meaning of the word. From this vantage point, the “green” land is an image that characterises the condition of England rather than the description of a setting (like the Forest of Arden in *As You Like It*). Reading the references to the “green” land metaphorically allows us to utilise this image for our understanding of political questions raised in the history plays. There are two instances in Shakespeare’s histories where the metaphor of the “green” land is used in a political sense. The plays in question are (in order of composition) *Richard III* and *Richard II* and in both cases the metaphor points to a power vacuum which makes the land vulnerable to political turmoil. Obviously, the notion that Shakespeare’s histories can be understood as political plays that pursue the question of what constitutes an effective government is a critical commonplace.¹ It has been repeatedly pointed out that Shakespeare weighs different approaches and options concerning leadership against each other, thereby tracing “the decline in the political legitimacy of warrior and priestly castes, and the rise of government as a specialised sphere serving utilitarian, worldly purposes” (Schulman 1). From this perspective, it is not surprising that Shakespeare seems especially interested in those moments of history where changes of power occur. As Louis Montrose observes, his plays typically focus on times of transition “where discontinuities arise and where adjustments are necessary to basic interrelationships in the family, the household, and the society at large” (33). Of course, Shakespeare refrains from giving a straightforward answer or solution to the questions he raises in these contexts. Instead, he offers possibilities and images that are more often than not ambiguous and encourage an active engagement with the issues at hand. One example for the complexity of Shakespeare’s imagery is his use of the metaphor of the “green” land.

In this context, the following paper illustrates how Shakespeare’s use of this metaphor can be connected to questions of leadership and political change raised in *Richard II* and *Richard III*. Obviously, these plays both deal with changes of power and in both instances the respective power shift is brought about by violence. This paper argues that

¹ Cf. for example Larry S. Champion, “The Noise of Threatening Drum”. *Dramatic Strategy and Political Ideology in Shakespeare and the English Chronicle Plays* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990); Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Renaissance Politics* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2004); and Alexander Leggatt, *Shakespeare’s Political Drama. The History Plays and the Roman Plays* (London: Routledge, 1988).

the metaphor is used in a similar way in both plays but that its significance is substantially expanded in *Richard II* where it becomes the expression of one of the play’s central issues. Thus, the metaphor of the “green” land gains a twofold meaning, which underpins the complexity of this image. First, the metaphor points to the regulating force that a strong government should exert in order to be effective. Second, the interference with unspoiled nature is likened to a process of political change brought about by violence, thereby challenging the means through which such change is achieved.

***Richard III* and the Promise of the “green” Land**

In *Richard III* the metaphor of the “green” land is used in a fairly straightforward way. It occurs in the second act, shortly after the death of King Edward IV has been announced and while plans for the succession are being made. When asked why the young Prince Edward is to be accompanied only with “some little train” (*Richard III*, 2.2.120) on his journey to London, Buckingham provides the following answer:

Marry, my lord, lest by a multitude
The new-healed wound of malice should break out,
Which would be so much the more dangerous
By how much the estate is green and yet ungoverned. (124–127)

In these lines Buckingham points to the danger of violence against the uncrowned prince and therefore advises to attract as little attention to him as possible. This quote already draws attention to two important aspects connected to the metaphor of the “green” land. On the one hand, Buckingham refers to the instability of the peace brought about by Edward. As we know from the play’s opening soliloquy, not much time has passed since the coronation of Edward ended the war between the houses of Lancaster and York. On the other hand, Buckingham points to the vulnerability of the presently ungoverned state in between the death of King Edward and the coronation of his successor. Accordingly, the situation described by Buckingham is one of political instability and this instability is evoked through the use of the adjective *green*.

Aside from these two rather obvious interpretations of the “green” land I would like to introduce one more understanding of this image that sheds light on the way Richard manages to secure his claim on the throne. This reading broadens the impact of the metaphor to the play’s overall plot and understands the “green” land as a (politically) hitherto uncultivated land which can be shaped according to the wishes of whoever takes the initiative to do so. As such, the land can be understood as being “unripe”, a condition that applies both to the young age of the appointed successor and to the state of his rule, which, of course, has not yet begun. This condition of immaturity bears promises as well as dangers, which is an observation made by two citizens of London as they discuss the future of the realm after King Edward’s death:

3 CITIZEN. Woe to the land that’s governed by a child.
2 CITIZEN. In him there is a hope of government,
Which in his nonage, council under him,
And in his full and ripened years, himself,
No doubt shall then, and till then, govern well. (2.3.11–15)

While the third citizen points to the dangers that might emerge from the reign of a child, the second citizen clearly sees hope and possibilities in this circumstance. Interestingly enough, he even phrases his argument by using the imagery of ripeness (14) introduced by Buckingham's lines in the earlier scene. By taking up this imagery and referring to the maturation of the prince as a process of ripening the second citizen underlines the promise inherent in the condition of the "green" land. Nevertheless, it is the third citizen who shows political insight and very sound judgement in his verdict on the prince's counsellors (Kaegi 99). In his objection to the rather hopeful assessment of the situation brought forth by the second citizen he very bluntly points out the threat posed by Richard: "O, full of danger is the Duke of Gloucester" (27). Of course, this observation will prove correct, as it is indeed Richard himself who takes the initiative to shape the presently "green" land.

One reason for Richard's outstanding success in the first half of the play is his ability to manipulate how a certain situation is perceived by others. Stephen Marche understands this as the main source for his power: "Richard is able to dominate political events because of his ability to control how political events are represented" (43). One aspect of this scheme is to establish himself as the opposite to his brother, King Edward, by pretending to offer stability after the king's death. The success of this strategy is, at least in parts, due to the fact that Edward only appears in one scene of the entire play. This lack of presence provides Richard and his supporters ample opportunity to create a picture of the king that strengthens their position. Moreover, the one scene Edward actually makes an appearance in serves to confirm the picture provided by Richard rather than to challenge it. In the first scene of the second act the king tries to secure the hard-won peace by forcing his followers to swear not only their allegiance, but also their mutual love (*Richard III*, 2.1.1–40). Björn Quiring points to the paradox of enforcing a feeling like love. He understands Edward's attempt of securing the peace through such means as an obvious sign of his powerlessness (89). This, then, can be understood as an example for the depiction of Edward as a weak king; a fact that is further underlined by his illness. Richard uses this circumstance to his own advantage and has Buckingham present him as a stronger alternative (however ironic this may seem). The most obvious example for this strategy occurs in the third act, when Buckingham prepares the mayor of London to be persuaded in Richard's favour. Here, he explicitly presents Richard as superior to the dead Edward:

Ah ha, my lord, this prince is not an Edward.
He is not lulling on a lewd love-bed,
But on his knees at meditation;
Not dallying with a brace of courtesans,
But meditating with two deep divines;
Not sleeping, to engross his idle body,
But praying, to enrich his watchful soul.
Happy were England, would this virtuous prince
Take on his grace the sovereignty thereof. (*Richard III*, 3.7.70–78)

This is of course only one example of Richard's manipulations. By executing his murderous scheme and at the same time controlling the way the situation is perceived by other characters, he creates a sense of crisis that paves the way for his ascent to power.

The orchestration of a crisis culminates in 3.7, where he has Buckingham insinuate that Prince Edward is an illegitimate child with no valid claim to the throne of England. These accusations leave the Mayor and the citizens of London in a situation where Richard himself suddenly seems the best choice for the succession of King Edward. In other words, Richard deliberately frames the situation according to his needs and the possibility for this is already preconceived in Buckingham’s reference to the “green” estate. From this angle, the image of the “green” land designates a blank canvas caused by the neglect of a weak king, which sets the scene for someone who is willing to take control of the situation. Thus, it calls for a strong and effective government while simultaneously pointing out the danger of exploitation inherent in this condition. Of course, in *Richard III* the image of a politically vulnerable – “green” – land appears only at the margin. However, the use of this image points to an issue of great relevance for the plays of the second tetralogy, namely to the effective exercise of leadership. With this in mind, I would like to turn to *Richard II* where the metaphor of the “green” land is not only further differentiated but more importantly used in an explicitly political context.

The Overgrowing “Green” Land in *Richard II*

In *Richard II* it is Henry Bolingbroke who invokes the image of the “green” land. In the confrontation between Richard and Bolingbroke in the third act the latter instructs his supporter Northumberland to deliver his claims to the king. Should these claims be denied and should the king not yield to his force, he adds the following threat:

..... I’ll use the advantage of my power
 And lay the summer’s dust with showers of blood
 Rained from the wounds of slaughtered Englishmen –
 The which how far off from the mind of Bolingbroke
 It is such crimson tempest should bedrench
 The fresh green lap of fair King Richard’s land. (*Richard II*, 3.3.42–47)

At first glance, the imagery used in this second example might seem rather obscure, but Bolingbroke’s threats of violence again foreground the vulnerability of the land, which – again – suffers under a weak king. This observation establishes a link to the use of the metaphor in *Richard III*, where the adjective *green* also pointed to a condition of insecurity and vulnerability. While the connection between the “green” land and a weak government is only of minor significance in *Richard III*, it undoubtedly gains priority in *Richard II*. This play concentrates in large parts on the opposition between two different approaches to leadership, embodied in Richard and Bolingbroke respectively. In this context Richard, who can be understood as representative of the medieval understanding of the king as god’s deputy on earth, is insistently portrayed as a weak leader whose weakness severely harms the commonwealth, as Hamilton points out (9).

This weakness in Richard’s government is apparent right from the beginning of the play. In the first scene he is unable to end the dispute between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, which is a fact that he himself points out in all clarity:

We were not born to sue but to command;

Which since we cannot do to make you friends,
 Be ready as your lives shall answer it
 At Coventry upon Saint Lambert's Day. (*Richard II*, 1.1.197–199)

Aside from this obvious lack in assertiveness, Richard is also clearly marked as a neglectful ruler who spent too much money for his private pleasure (again a fact that he himself observes). The most drastic complaint about Richard's negligence is of course John of Gaunt's speech at the beginning of the second act in which Gaunt laments the loss of past glory and blames Richard for the current, bleak condition of England. This speech draws a connection between England as state and nature, referring to it as "demi-paradise" (2.1.42), "fortress built by Nature" (43) and "precious stone" (46). These allusions already foreshadow the image of England as a garden that needs proper care and tending. It has already been noted that Richard fails to accomplish this task and the first scene of the second act gives final proof of this. Here, Richard deals very harshly with his uncle and "proceeds to reject Gaunt's dying advice with shocking disrespect" (Tromly 73). To make matters worse, Richard finally takes Bolingbroke's inheritance to fund his war against Ireland, thereby violating the very principle which secures his own power (Harrier 91).

These illustrations of Richard's shortcomings as an effective leader seem to have taken us far away from the metaphor of the "green" land, but in fact, both aspects are closely connected. After all, Richard's neglect has led England into a state of vulnerability; a condition that had already been captured by the metaphorical use of the adjective *green* in *Richard III*. On another level, Richard's attitude towards leadership and the resulting chaos is embodied in the characters of his flatterers, who again provide a connection to the metaphor. The fact that he has surrounded himself with flatterers is one major accusation brought forth against Richard. To listen to flatterers, as opposed to reasonable advisers, is a further indication of Richard's inadequacy as a leader. As Renate Schruoff points out, the willingness to listen to reasonable advisers is an important characteristic of good leadership (87–89). Of course, Richard is indeed surrounded by counsellors, like his uncles York and Gaunt, and he does seek their counsel in the first act in order to decide how to proceed with the quarrel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray (*Richard II*, 1.3.121–124). By the second act, however, he has dismissed the counsel of his advisers entirely and refuses to listen to Gaunt. Moreover, he allows flatterers to replace his experienced counsellors, as the following exchange between Gaunt and York makes apparent:

GAUNT. Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,
 My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.
 YORK. No, it is stopped with other, flatt'ring sounds,
 As praises, of whose taste the wise are fond; (2.1.15–18)

Here we clearly see a development to the worse, which is directly bound to Richard's reliance on flatterers, who do not only pose a threat for the aristocracy but who are also repeatedly portrayed as "malicious informers" (Kehler 118). The extent of Richard's infatuation is first pointed out to the king himself by Gaunt: "A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown" (*Richard II*, 2.1.100) and later confirmed by Northumberland in a conversation with other noblemen: "The King is not himself, but basely led / By

flatterers” (241–242). Notably, the names of two of these followers are Green and Bushy and it is through these names that a linkage is established between Richard’s shortcomings as a ruler and the metaphor of the “green” land. Obviously, the names Bushy and Green evoke the image of an untamed wilderness which can again be linked to the condition of the land under Richard. The tremendous relevance of Richard’s flatterers is revealed in the third act, which shows the king’s return to England from the war in Ireland. Although Richard is met with dire news right at the beginning of the scene, it is not until he suspects that Bagot, Green and Bushy have joined ranks with Bolingbroke that he loses his composure. When Aumerle delivers the news of their execution, Richard falls into ultimate despair and delivers one of his bleakest speeches of the play, at the end of which he concludes: “Subjected thus, / How can you say to me I am a king?” (3.2.176–177). The scene ends with Richard discharging what is left of his military force, thereby effectively accepting his defeat and once again displaying his unfitness to rule.

The connection between Richard’s rule (or rather the lack thereof) and an uncultivated green world is, of course, made explicit in the garden scene, which is placed right at the centre of the play. Here, England is referred to as a “sea-walled garden” (3.4.43), which harkens back to John of Gaunt’s speech in the second act, where Gaunt called England “[this] other Eden, demi-paradise” (2.1.42). Furthermore, the gardener establishes a connection between Richard’s shortcomings as a king and the deaths of his flatterers Bushy and Green, by introducing the imagery of execution with regard to the exercise of government:

Go thou, and, like an executioner,
Cut off the heads of too fast-growing sprays
That look too lofty in our commonwealth.
All must be even in our government. (3.4.33–36)

While at this point the gardener is referring to the act of cutting back flowers and thus regulating and controlling their growth, the imagery of overgrowth and execution is explicitly linked to Bushy and Green a few lines later. When the assistant enquires why order and control should be kept in the garden when the kingdom itself seems entirely out of balance, the gardener retorts with a direct reference to King Richard and his unchecked followers:

He that hath suffered this disordered spring
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf.
The weeds which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter,
That seemed in eating him to hold him up,
Are plucked up, root and all, by Bolingbroke –
I mean the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green. (48–53)

On the one hand, the “disordered spring” (48) mentioned by the gardener is another reference to Richard’s neglect. On the other hand, however, it also refers to the protection he granted his flatterers which ultimately undermined his own strength as king. Consequently, the gardener and his assistant lament Richard’s failings while simultaneously voicing a demand for a strong government:

..... O, what a pity is it
 That he [Richard] had not so trimmed and dressed his land
 As we this garden! We at time of year
 Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit trees,
 Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,
 With too much riches it confound itself.
 Had he done so to great and growing men,
 They might have lived to bear and he to taste
 Their fruits of duty. Superfluous branches
 We lop away that bearing boughs may live.
 Had he done so, himself had borne the crown,
 Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down. (55–66)

Most obviously, these lines point to the regulating force an effective government should exercise; however, the imagery used by the gardener also refers to the possibilities of shaping the land through such an exercise of power. Seen from this angle, the gardener describes the sort of *realpolitik* that will come to thrive under the rule of Bolingbroke, as Dorothea Kehler convincingly argues (125).

Whereas the “green” land referred to a state of immaturity in *Richard III* it apparently contains a quality of excess in this later play. The metaphor no longer refers to possibilities that lie ahead but rather points to an abundance created through Richard’s neglect. This neglect, in turn, enables the development of an alternative political force represented by Bolingbroke. The connection between Richard’s lack of attention and Bolingbroke’s rise to power is supported by the gardener’s reference to a “disordered spring” (*Richard II*, 3.4.48) tolerated by Richard – spring is now past and the result of Richard’s neglect is overgrowth and chaos. In marked contrast to this, Bolingbroke asserts his power by ridding himself of his enemy Richard (albeit indirectly with the help of Exton). This difference in attitude towards effective leadership is already foreshadowed in the gardener’s use of imagery that refers to the one exerting control as “executioner” (33).

Conclusion

Turning back to the image evoked by Bolingbroke of the “fresh green lap of fair King Richard’s land” (3.3.47), it seems that he is explicitly criticising Richard’s neglectful attitude as a leader while at the same time pointing out the opportunities related to this circumstance. These possibilities, albeit less prominent and less clearly pronounced, were already identifiable in the way the metaphor of the “green” land was used in *Richard III*. Whereas the metaphor only appears marginally in the earlier play, it gains both significance and prominence in *Richard II*. In both plays, however, it is essentially charged with the same meaning, which can be seen as evidence for the consistency of Shakespeare’s use of this image. Although the impression of immaturity predominates in *Richard III* in contrast to the image of overgrowth in *Richard II*, both plays place a significant emphasis on the possibility of shaping the “green” land – either as a promise or as a necessity arising out of neglect. By tracing the development of the metaphor of the “green” land and Shakespeare’s use of this image from *Richard III* to *Richard II* we

can see how the political aspects of this image move to the foreground as Shakespeare starts to focus on the issue of effective leadership in the plays of the second tetralogy.

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Zusammenfassung

Dieser Artikel untersucht Shakespeares Verwendung der Metapher des „green“ land in *Richard III* und *Richard II* vor dem Hintergrund der politischen Dimension dieser Stücke. Obwohl die Metapher im früheren Stück *Richard III* nur eine untergeordnete Rolle spielt, lassen sich bereits hier diejenigen politischen Implikationen dieser Bildlichkeit nachvollziehen, die in *Richard II* ins Zentrum des Interesses rücken: die Möglichkeit, ja sogar der Bedarf nach regulierender und explizit gestaltender Herrschaft. Während die Metapher des „green“ land in *Richard III* – wenigstens kurzfristig – mit durchaus hoffnungsvollen Untertönen ausgestattet ist, wandelt sich das Bild im späteren Stück und findet seinen deutlichsten Ausdruck im Gleichnis der Gartenszene 3.4, in der England unter der Herrschaft Richards II mit einem von Unkraut überwucherten Garten gleichgesetzt wird. Die Beständigkeit, mit der Shakespeare die Metapher des „green“ land verwendet, unterstreicht sein Interesse an der Frage nach effizienter Herrschaftsausübung, die im Verlauf seiner Karriere immer stärker in den Vordergrund rückt.

‘MINDED LIKE THE WEATHER, MOST UNQUIETLY’: INQUIETUDE, NATURE, AND *KING LEAR*

BY

JOHANNES SCHLEGEL

Introduction

Time, both as subject matter and as dramatic form, has been a more or less constant feature of Shakespeare criticism at least since the 1960s (cf. Lewis). It is only recently, however, that critics have started to investigate changes in temporal ratios, that is to say: acceleration. In her introductory essay to the sonnets, Dymphna Callaghan, for instance, argues that while Shakespeare’s lyric poetry is structured by a “coherent pattern of tone, pace, and tempo” (115), conceiving of speed as perpetual and intellectual, the sonnets themselves display a need to challenge life’s brevity.

A similar “temporal urgency,” to borrow a phrase from David Houston Wood (8), is described by Howard Marchitello. In his reading of *Macbeth*, Marchitello draws upon the theories of Paul Virilio and contends that

Macbeth displays a kind of terminal velocity that cannot entirely be explained by the status of the text as (editorially) ‘stripped for action.’ In other words, there are ways in which this speed is proper to the play’s subject matter of rebellion, war, and murder—what Virilio would call the play’s investment in logistics. (432)

What is more, Kara Northway analyses challenges of acceleration and possible responses to them in her most recent article on “Speed-Making and Motion Sickness in *Hamlet*,” in which she claims that

Hamlet attests to Shakespeare’s fascination with the processes of manipulating and perceiving speed, especially for artistic, emotional, and visceral effects in the theatre. [...] But Shakespeare’s attitude toward speed appears to have been conflicted. *Hamlet* expresses doubts about the possibility of agency over the application of speed with decorum or precision, the desirability of speed to produce profitable outcomes, and accurate perception of other’s or one’s own speed. (284)

Speed and acceleration are, in other words, “a hallmark of Shakespeare’s work” (284). An additional aspect that these studies do not address, however, are notions of restlessness, which, as this article argues in the following, can be observed as both the signature and the trace of speed and acceleration. As David Carnegie has shown, this can be seen in the common theatrical convention of fast running, which is often explicitly evoked by the stage direction ‘in haste.’¹

¹ Cf. also Dessen and Thomson, 111 and 185. The relation between acceleration and restlessness is also put forward by Konersmann, *Wörterbuch*, 31-37.

Restlessness, quite literally, means the absence of an ability or of a will to stand still, which, in the Early Modern period, could refer to mental as well as to physical activities. Both of these collide in the word *quietude*, which Randle Cotgrave, in his *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (1611), defines as ‘rest, calmnesse, tranquillity, peacableness’ (n.p.). This is also stressed in Edward Phillips’s *The New World of English Words* (1658). Here, *quiet* means ‘at rest, peacable, peaceful, calm; also Rest or Peace’ (n.p.). Not surprisingly, then, the absence of quietude is a state that should be avoided, as several Shakespearean plays remind us. “Unquiet meals make ill digestions,” the Abbess instructs a hapless Adriana in *The Comedy of Errors* (5.1.74), thus linking restlessness to Early Modern humorism. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, it is clearly gendered when Don John wonders “What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?” (1.3.37).

Restlessness is also of key importance to *King Lear*. Here, however, it seems to address something more profound than in the plays just mentioned. When banished Kent encounters a Knight in 3.1, the play establishes, in a ‘pathetic fallacy’ of sorts, a relation between storm and character:

KENT. Who’s there, besides foul weather?

KNIGHT. One minded like the weather, most unquietly. (3.1.1–2)

In an often quoted explanatory note in his 1972 Penguin edition of *King Lear*, G.K. Hunter (213) put forward that this scene establishes a connection between the exterior world of the tempest and the inner one of the disturbed mind, both of which, we have to add, are constitutively structured by unquietness. In addition to a general disturbance, in other words, the Knight here expresses a fundamental restlessness – weather, like mind, cannot come to rest, they cannot stand still.²

In his book *Shakespeare’s Storms*, Gwylim Jones recently proposed to read the storm in *King Lear* as an event. He states that the event “seems strange, occupying the real and the imaginary: the ‘occurrence of’ the ‘contemplated’ suggests that the event is a basic condition of human thought. A more obscure usage – one present in Early Modern English – sees event defined as ‘What “becomes of” or befalls (a person or thing): fate. Thus, the event bears finality” (60). If, however, we understand the storm to be both the manifestation of restlessness and a veritable event, it becomes obvious that restlessness, its experience, and representation, has to be understood as fundamental cultural category. As such, it is of course by no means exclusive to the Early Modern period. Quite the contrary, in the Old Testament, God sentences Cain to a life of restlessness – “a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth” (Gen. 4:12) – upon which Cain eventually founds the city Enoch in the Land of Nod.³ In a way, restlessness here is a primal scene of civilisation and as such, albeit in inversed meaning, it resurfaces in late 19th century *Kulturkritik*. Friedrich Nietzsche claims, in the first part of *Human, All-too-Human*, that “The agitation [Bewegtheit] of modern life becomes ever greater if we go westward [...]. This agitation [Bewegtheit] has become so great that higher culture can

² Significantly, Johann Heinrich Voß uses “unruhevoll”, i.e. full of unrest or restlessness, in his translation from 1806.

³ Strong’s Concordance points out that in Hebrew, Nod (נֹד) connotes meanings of vagrancy, thus further emphasizing Cain’s restlessness.

no longer let its fruits ripen; it is as if the seasons followed one another too swiftly. Due to its lack of tranquility [Mangel an Ruhe], our civilization is heading toward a new barbarism” (285, p. 191–92). Restlessness, in other words, is not something new that is ‘invented’ by early moderns, but rather something that is discovered. What is new, however, is its revaluation and the way in which it became the foundation for a new world view. This paper suggests that in *King Lear* nature is used to fathom and to negotiate restlessness. In order to illustrate this, the paper investigates the restlessness of nature itself, which stands metonymically for a world that is increasingly understood to be restless itself. While the myth of Cain offered a narrative of the origin of restlessness, which is marked as standing in stark contrast to a stable, quiet world, from which Cain is hence excluded, in the Early Modern period such assurances start to lose their appeal. Lear’s question, “What is the cause of thunder” (3.4.151) thus does not only introduce “a sense of naturalistic meteorological inquiry” (Jones 60), but also enquires about the causal relation between phenomena of both the weather and restlessness.

In his numerous studies on the relation between a society’s structural differentiation and the accompanying changes in its cultural semantics, Niklas Luhmann has repeatedly argued that, since reorganizations of autopoietic systems need to operate within themselves and on themselves, cultural semantics serve as an experimental laboratory of sorts, in that they are able to both (temporarily) test innovations and to guarantee a continuity of ideas, words or concepts that are already obsolete. These relations, however, are by no means causal ones: “Der Strukturwandel der Gesellschaft selbst entzieht sich der Beobachtung und Beschreibung durch die Zeitgenossen; und erst nachdem er vollzogen und praktisch irreversibel geworden ist, übernimmt die Semantik die Aufgabe, das nun sichtbar Gewordene zu beschreiben” (Luhmann 8).⁴ The Early Modern period is notoriously rich in semantic plurality. While it still depends on medieval parameters, it simultaneously generates the conditions for a transition towards modernity (cf. Müller et al.; Höfele, *Die frühe Neuzeit*),⁵ thus witnessing the emergence of new or alternative (cultural) knowledge as well as an increase in relevant representations of reality.⁶ It is in this conflicted intellectual climate that the early modern negotiation of restlessness takes place, which not only affects numerous aspects of culture, including the arts and philosophy. First and foremost, it also introduces a new experience of restlessness itself and thus a novel relation between restlessness and the subject. This is precisely what I seek to describe as inquietude.⁷ While the term can be used synonymously with restlessness and unrest, it also transcends them in that it signifies, as I will demonstrate in the following, modes of restlessness on a larger scale.

⁴ “A society’s structural change is hidden from observations and descriptions by its contemporaries; and only after it is executed and is practically rendered irreversible, semantics are tasked with describing what has now become apparent” (my translation).

⁵ To borrow Foucauldian terminology, the early modern period finds itself between two distinct epistemes. Cf. Foucault (3-85).

⁶ Cultural knowledge is the total quantity of propositions that members of a given socio-cultural system accept as true. Cf. Richter et al. The concept of cultural knowledge thus acknowledges and maintains the notion of a constitutive pluralisation.

⁷ For conceptual considerations of the term see Konersmann, *Unruhe*, 46-86.

Moreover, an advantage of the term is its close resemblance to the Early Modern (*un*)*quiet* as described above. In the following paragraphs, Early Modern experiences of the shift from restlessness to inquietude are roughly sketched. This development is of crucial importance to understand the totality of the phenomenon and subsequent, specific reactions of the theatre both to speed, restlessness, and inquietude – and their problematization, as described above. These ultimately collide in the inquietude of nature in *King Lear*.

The Early Modern Discovery of Inquietude

In 1503, the scholar and monk Gregor Reisch published his encyclopaedic *Margarita Philosophica*: twelve volumes purportedly containing the sum of medieval human knowledge. Many of the articles are introduced by full-page woodcuts, allegorically summarizing the content of the respective chapter.⁸ The second book, for instance, *De principiis logicae*, is prefixed by an illustration which is entitled *Typus Logice* (see Figure 1). Observed by a sceptical Parmenides, Logic, resembling the mythical Artemis, appears to be a female hunter going deerstalking. Blowing her hunting horn (*sonus vox*) and equipped with bow, arrow, and sword (*argumenta*, *queastio*, and *sylogismus* respectively), she chases the hare-like *problema*, while the medieval scholastics argue over their non-solvable paradoxes in the impenetrable undergrowth (*insolubilia*).

The hunt is thus established as a metaphor for emergent processes of actively acquiring knowledge, replacing dominant ones of contemplation.⁹ Regardless of its potentially satirical intentions, Reisch's woodcut thus marks the transition from one metaphor to the other – and this, of course, also means from one conceptual framework to another. The will to knowledge, in other words, is driven by – and has to submit to – a restless curiosity.¹⁰

⁸ On Reisch's illustrations, see Büttner; Siegel.

⁹ This, of course, resonates with contemporary negotiations of and shifts within concepts of *vita active* and *vita contemplative*, respectively. How these relate to learning and how learning is increasingly seen as an activity, is described by Jennifer Summit (2010).

¹⁰ The continuation of this observation can be seen, for instance, in Blumenberg, who, regarding Galilei, claims that curiosity becomes the symptom of the hectic restlessness of the scientific process itself ("Merkmal der hektischen Unruhe des wissenschaftlichen Prozesses selbst.") (208).



Fig. 1: Reisch (1503, n.), "Typus Logice"

The incipient reception and increasing distribution of the hunting metaphor, however, leads not only to an increase of its acceptance (cf. Konersmann, *Unruhe* 26): the logic of innovation subverts notions of timeless knowledge and thus demands a constant hunt for the new, the next, and the better.¹¹ This culminates in Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*, where a principle of general restlessness is astutely observed as the driving force of a new science: "The human understanding is unquiet, it cannot stop or rest, and still presses onward, but in vain. Therefore it is that we cannot conceive of any end or limit to the world; but always as of necessity it occurs to us that there is something beyond" (196–97). At least in scientific endeavours, one never rests, but realizes that the search continues.

What is more, restlessness is increasingly seen as a distinctive part of the human condition, as Blaise Pascal claims in his *Pensées*, which he wrote towards the end of his life and which were published posthumously in 1670, thus somewhat summarizing the outlined development: "Man's condition: Inconstancy, boredom, anxiety" Pascal asserts, and continues that "our nature exists by motion; perfect rest is death" (10). Just as in Reisch, restlessness experiences a remarkable revaluation, which is, to some extent, owed to the influence of St. Augustine (cf. Konersmann, *Unruhe* 225–27). In *Confessions*, St. Augustine claimed that unrest is the means to regain divine rest, which can be found solely in God: "But you, the Good, in need of no other good, are ever at

¹¹ However, this does not contradict the fact that *innovation* in itself was a problematic concept for the early modern period, deeply embedded in the religious tensions that shaped the epoch. On this, cf. Höfele "John Foxe, *Christus Triumphans*," who states that for John Foxe, innovation is "almost a synonym for anarchic disorder" (128). Rather, it serves as yet another instance of pluralisation.

rest [quietus] since you yourself are your own rest.“ (321). Because unrest here fulfils a specific eschatological purpose, it is still tolerated within a Christian framework. While the reference to Augustine again reveals that restlessness as such is everything but a new concept, with Pascal the extent to which its cultural semantics have changed becomes obvious. Restlessness now is understood to be a totality that not only affects a symbolic order, but which is, rather, an expression of a symbolic order that is in itself restless. This is the state of inquietude and the *Pensées* can, therefore, be read as the first philosophical account that seeks to describe a world that has totally surrendered to its regime.

According to Pascal, it is characteristic of this state that human beings experience a general lack, or rather a fear of nothingness, which, however, they hide from themselves. Diversion then functions as an umbrella term for those phenomena, in which both the primal deprivation and its misjudgement become manifest. In Pascal, we can see, in other words, that diversion is simultaneously both motor and product of inquietude. Here, Pascal ultimately differs from St. Augustine as unrest loses its transcendental telos. Without constant distraction, humans would have to realize and face the desolation and bleakness of their existence. Pascal describes various ways in which possible distractions exist – prominent among them, echoing Reisch, the hunt:

That is why play and the conversation of women, war, and high offices are so sought after. Not that in fact they bring happiness, or that we imagine true bliss to consist in money won at games or in the hares that are hunted; we would not accept these if they were given to us. We do not seek that easy and peaceful life that allows us to think about our unhappy condition, nor the dangers of war, nor the burdens of office, but the bustle that turns our thoughts away and diverts us. (39)

Regardless of what participants may claim, it is not the prey that is crucial for the hunt, but the distractions we can find in chasing it.

Since the structure of diversion is deeply embedded in the cultural texture, Pascal is able to identify a culture for which it is essential to be incessantly busy and distracted. This has grave consequences: as soon as it is subjected to the regime of inquietude, human activity loses its purposefulness. Rather, it becomes an action which is solely justified by always already being better than doing nothing at all and which is driven by an anxiety that ‘something else,’ something more interesting could be found elsewhere.¹² In the approximately 170 years from Reisch to Pascal, then, inquietude is first introduced as an ambivalently revaluated state, which is then solidified as cultural structure.

This transition, or the transformation of its cultural semantics, is, of course, by no means an unproblematic or uncontested one. Just how intricate this development is becomes obvious in Elizabethan Puritan attacks on the theatre. Both John Northbrooke’s *Treatise Against Dicing, Dancing, Plays, and Interludes* (1577) and Stephen Gosson’s *The School of Abuse* (1579) condemn the theatre precisely because it is seen as a diversion, distracting from pious obligation to work.¹³ While these attacks single out players and their associates, they ultimately aim at redefining the nature of human action. The theatre becomes the predominant target, as it more often than not serves as

¹² This notion has become, of course, both a trope in popular culture and, as a defence reaction of sorts, in critical theory. Cf. Horkheimer & Adorno, p. 94-136.

¹³ For a recent discussion of distraction and the Shakespearean stage see Karremann, 123-52.

a self-reflexive medium in which restlessness, its experiences, representations, and implications for human action and activity are negotiated. *Hamlet* is probably the prime example, as the question about action and the restoration of tranquillity are at the centre of its tragedy: “Rest, rest, perturbed spirit. [...] / The time is out of joint. O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right” (1.5.190–97), Hamlet exclaims at the end of the first act when he swears to avenge the death of his father. This, then, sheds new light on *Hamlet*’s negotiation of speed: the ambiguous reaction towards it that Karen Northway identified is further expressed in the paradoxical effect of unrest and inquietude, which seems to be simultaneously necessary and hindering for Hamlet’s revenge.

Inquietude in *King Lear*

By now, it has become commonplace to state that the 16th century was a time of many social and intellectual dislocations brought about, first and foremost, by an unclear succession to the Crown and religious pluralisation. When Hamlet claims that ‘the time is out of joint,’ this may very well have reverberated with an Elizabethan audience that was reminded, as Benjamin Bertram suggested, of the “tumultuous changes brought about by the Reformation, the emergence of capitalism, and state-formation” (13). No surprise, then, that not only *Hamlet* but Shakespearean theatre in general is overtly concerned with the restlessness and inquietude of early modern life. *King Lear*, however, is exceptional, as its portrayal of inquietude is directly related to the problem of sovereignty, or rather, its loss.

The opening of the play thoroughly establishes Lear’s majesty: Kent addresses him as “Royal Lear / Whom I have ever honoured as my king” (1.1 140–41), while Lear’s first appearance on stage is emphasized by his processional entry. What is more, in his introduction to the Arden edition, R.A. Foakes points out that a “striking feature of productions of *King Lear* from David Garrick in 1756 to F.R. Benson in 1904 is the tradition of dressing Lear in scarlet trimmed with ermine, not only in the opening scene, but throughout most, if not all, of the play” (13). The play thus clearly references the royal politics of Shakespeare’s own age. The fact that the theatre is able to produce and to stage signifiers of majesty and sovereignty, that is, to exhibit their theatricality, seems to subvert them at the same time as it inevitably illustrates the extent to which they depend on theatrical spectacles themselves.¹⁴ In this regard, it does not come as a surprise that the self-fashioning of King James I, for instance, which obviously aims at apotheosis, was much debated and criticized:

Kings are iustly called Gods, for that they exercise a manner of resemblance of Diuine power vpon earth: For if you will consider the Attributes to God, you shall see how they agree in the person of a King. God hath power to create, or destroy, make, or vnmake at his pleasure, to giue life, or send death, to iudge all, and to iudged nor accomptable to none: To raise low things, and to make high things low at his pleasure, and to God are both soule and body due. And the like power haue Kings; they make and vnmake their subiects: they haue power of raising, and casting

¹⁴ Kastan has argued precisely this for the Histories. His argument, however, can be applied to *King Lear* just as well.

down: of life, and of death: Iudges ouer all their subiects, and in all causes, and yet accomptable to none but God onely. (James I, 307–8)

In his book on *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Walter Benjamin suggests that the growing tendency towards monarchical absolutism and centralization of sovereign power in the early modern period needs to be read less as a positive attribution of power than as a negative limitation that responded to the fear of its absence.¹⁵ That is, rather than simply reflecting an augmented sovereign agency or a localizing of the power to act, absolutism can usefully be seen as a response to a state of emergency, whereby the sovereign appears as the only power able to hold at bay the spectre of inquietude, of a generalized collapse of the social world:

Whereas the modern concept of sovereignty amounts to a supreme executive power on the part of the prince, the baroque concept emerges from a discussion of the state of emergency, and makes it the most important function of the prince to avert this [...]. For as an antithesis to the historical idea of restoration it [i.e. the baroque] is haunted by the idea of catastrophe. And it is in response to this antithesis that the theory of the state of emergency is devised. (Benjamin 65–66)

Inquietude, thus, is integral to the state of emergency and the sovereign guarantees the stability of cosmological order by providing stability and continuity. In dividing his kingdom, Lear, however, fails to provide this function and gives away his land and – both symbolically and literally – his power, which is tied to it:

LEAR. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champaigns riched,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady. (1.1.63–66)

By doing so, Lear falls out of the cosmological order that he is supposed to represent and to guarantee and thus lets the world succumb to the chaos of inquietude.

In fact, inquietude can be seen as a cause for Lear's division of his power in the first place: "Reserve thy state" Kent admonishes Lear, "and in thy best consideration check / this hideous rashness" (1.1.150–53). While the accusation of hastiness refers to Cordelia's disownment, it also identifies one of Lear's central flaws of character. Inquietude, therefore, is not something that befalls Lear, but it is always already a constitutive part of him and leads to his subsequent downfall into madness, which finds its embodiment in his being exposed to the forces of nature. As a "storm and tempest" (2.2.472) set in, the audience – and Lear – becomes aware that his expulsion is total, as his daughters Regan and Goneril openly turn against him:

CORNWALL. Let us withdraw; 'twill be a storm.
REGAN. This house is little; the old man and's people
Cannot be well bestowed.
GONERIL. 'Tis his own blame; hath put himself from rest

¹⁵ In *Der Einbruch der Zeit*, Andreas Höfele discusses the influence of Carl Schmitt on Benjamin's notion of sovereignty (11–12). From a different angle, the problem of sovereignty is also addressed by Laurie Shannon, who sees Lear's unaccommodated man as a negative exception to a pre-Cartesian rule of animal sovereignty.

And must needs taste his folly. (2.2.476–80)

As Foakes notes, the phrase ‘put himself from rest’ is ambiguous, meaning that Lear removed or turned himself away from both a place to sleep and peace of mind (257). Metaphysical and concrete, localized unrest thus coincide.

Interestingly, not only Lear himself, but also those around him are well aware of the fact that he lacks patience, i.e. the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, or, in other words, to resist restlessness.¹⁶ Patience is, after all, as Hoeniger puts it, “the virtue that alone can offer effective medicine to cure intemperate passion” (325). In this regard, the fourth scene of the first act in the Folio edition offers a significant addition:¹⁷

LEAR.
 Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend
 More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
 Than the sea-monster.
 ALBANY. Pray, sir, be patient.
 LEAR. Detested kite thou liest. (1.4.251–54)

Albany's interjection, which Lear tellingly ignores, is not only the first reminder of the need for patience in the play, but it disrupts the metrical flow of Lear's speech, thus illustrating verbally Albany's attempt to interrupt Lear and to bring him to pause.

The impression of Lear's impatience is intensified when Lear himself realizes his lack thereof:

LEAR. Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
 Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But for true need –
 You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need! (2.2.458–60)

Here, Lear's need for patience transcends mere bodily needs and becomes the expression of a metaphysical deprivation. As Hannibal Hamlin has recently argued in *The Bible in Shakespeare*, the motif of patience in *King Lear* offers a contrastive reading of the Book of Job: where Job's patience is enduring, Lear is passionately impatient.

Inquietude in *King Lear*, therefore, marks a metaphysical problem: It does not so much describe a positive religious programme as the Book of Job does, but rather the primal scene of “a singular tear in the social fabric” (Lupton 181), i.e. an understanding of the deep structure of inquietude which crystallizes in the 16th and 17th centuries. This not only affects the individual, but indeed the social fabric as a whole.¹⁸

The Inquietude of Nature

Rüdiger Ahrens, among others, has pointed out that in Shakespeare's cosmology human beings and nature are directly connected: “So entsteht, wenn der Mensch aus dem vorgegebenen moralischen Gefüge ausschert, eine Welt des Chaos und der Gewalt”

¹⁶ On the general relation between delay and restlessness see Konersmann, *Wörterbuch* p. 226-229.

¹⁷ On the different versions of *King Lear*, see Foakes 110-146; Taylor and Warren.

¹⁸ The importance of the concept of the King's two bodies for *King Lear*, which the play itself discusses from the outset (cf. 1.1.1-30), was recently emphasized again by Raman (2015). The concept itself was, of course, introduced by Kantorowicz (1957).

(372).¹⁹ The inquietude of nature, therefore, signifies an all-encompassing rupture in the order of things.²⁰ Nature, thus, is a living world that has to accommodate the traumas of the plot (cf. Parr). It is, in other words, not merely a symbolic representation of Lear's madness, but, first and foremost, an expression of the inquietude of the world as a whole.

Unlike the sea in *The Tempest*, the storm in *King Lear* lacks any comprehensible (albeit supernatural) forces. And unlike Prospero, Lear, the failed sovereign without power, has to acknowledge that he cannot command the weather:

LEAR. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire, spout rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters;
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness.
I never gave you kingdom, called you children;
You owe me no subscription. Why, then, let fall
Your horrible pleasure. Here I stand your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak and despised old man. (3.2.14–20)

In *Ecocriticism and Shakespeare*, Simon Estok argues that *King Lear* dramatizes what he coins 'ecophobia': a particular early modern fear of nature and "environmental unpredictability" (19). In fact, the second half of the 16th century experienced a climatic crisis. As Brian Fagan puts forward in *The Little Ice Age*, "throughout Europe, the years from 1560 to 1600 were cooler and stormier, with later wine harvests and considerably stronger winds than those of the twentieth century" (90). These, however, are not Lear's concerns. In fact, after the division of his kingdom, he remains engaged with nature, but neither with 'plenteous rivers' nor with 'wide-skirted meads.' Instead, nature represents a concept of unpredictable mutability that is intrinsically restless.

The world, as experienced by Lear, is an entirely unstable one. What Shakespeare's play portrays, then, is a natural system in a state of dis-equilibrium, the condition of which is imbalance, and hence constant change and contingency. Steve Mentz argues that for Aristotle, and consequently for most early modern meteorologists, winds dominate the weathers and represent the basic mutability of the natural world: "They are less symptoms of the weather than its cause: winds even cause earthquakes. When Lear commands the winds he thus attempts to govern change itself" (143).

As can be seen, this endeavour is futile. The weather, and, by extension, nature, cannot be forced into a coherent and stable system:

LEAR. First let me talk with this philosopher:
What is the cause of thunder? (3.4.150–51)

Lear's question, however, remains unanswered and he is unable to make sense of nature, which eludes dominant modes of 'reading.' In Lear's rage, these modes are metaphorically described as two buildings that are about to be flooded: "You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout / Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!" (3.2.2–3). Mentz puts forward that "church steeples and weather cocks represent two broad discourses the culture of emerging modernity used to insulate itself from violent

¹⁹ 'Thus a world of chaos and violence arises when man sheers from a predetermined moral structure' (my translation).

²⁰ "This world to me is like a lasting storm," Marina exclaims in *Pericles* in a similar vein (4.1.20).

weather: the steeple stands for the Church and its Providentialist master-plot, and weathercocks for human technologies to measure (and perhaps predict) the wind” (145). Neither mode, however, provides sufficient restriction for the forces of nature and both are mocked by the Fool, echoing Feste’s song from *Twelfth Night*:

FOOL. He that has and a little tiny wit,
With heigh-ho, the wind and the rain,
Must make content with fortunes fit,
Though the rain it raineth every day. (3.2.74–77)

The apocalyptic inquietude of nature destroys all visions of order, without returning to an equilibrated state. All that Lear finds in nature is what Cordelia offered him at the beginning of the play: nothing.

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Zusammenfassung

Während Untersuchungen der Darstellung(sweisen) von Zeit und Temporalität spätestens seit den 1960er Jahren zu den Dauerbrennern der Shakespeare-Forschung gehören, werden Phänomene der Geschwindigkeit und Beschleunigung erst in jüngster Zeit näher betrachtet. Hieran anschließend diskutiert der vorliegende Beitrag die Verhandlung von Unruhe. Es wird gezeigt, wie diese als ein konstitutives Konzept der frühneuzeitlichen Kultur entdeckt, erfahren und reflektiert wird. In *King Lear* zeigt sich schließlich die Unruhe der Natur als Ausdruck einer fundamentalen Krise.

CALL FOR STATEMENTS – SHAKESPEARE SEMINAR 2017

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In the year of the 500th anniversary of the publication of Luther's theses, the Shakespeare Seminar 2017 calls for papers that address ideas of reform and reformation in Shakespeare's works. We invite papers on the literary and cultural repercussions of the two major early modern reformations – the one prompted by Martin Luther and the one initiated by Henry VIII. Taking our cue from Hamlet's famous charge to the players to "reform it altogether" (*Hamlet* 3.2.36), the seminar seeks to address both questions of religious reformation and of more widely conceived notions of personal, political, cultural, or literary reform in Shakespeare's poems and plays. Topics may include, but are not restricted to the reform/reformation of

- religious rites and iconography
- characters in Shakespeare's plays
- religious language
- performance practices and venues
- genres
- history
- gender roles in the context of the Reformation
- costumes that carry religious connotations
- appropriations of Shakespeare and his work in the service of religious agendas

The Shakespeare-Seminar is part of the annual conference of the German Shakespeare Association, which will take place in Weimar, Germany, from 21 to 23 April 2017. As critical input for the discussion and provocation for debate, we invite papers of no more than 15 minutes that present concrete case studies, concise examples and strong views on the topic. The seminar provides a forum for established as well as young scholars to discuss texts and contexts. Please send your proposals (abstracts of 300 words) by 30 November 2016 to the seminar conveners:

Lukas Lammers, lukas.lammers@fau.de
 Kirsten Sandrock, ksandrock@phil.uni-goettingen.de

See also: www.shakespeare-gesellschaft.de/publikationen/seminar.html