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Celebrating Shakespeare:
Shakespeare's Festivities

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CONTENTS

Introduction <i>Kirsten Sandrock and Lukas Lammers</i>	1
Charismatic Gluttony: Celebrity in the <i>Henriad</i> <i>Katrin Bednarek</i>	3
The Rejection of Falstaff – The Rejection of the Festival? <i>Martina Pranić</i>	12
Shakespeare’s ‘Tempestivity’: <i>Veritas Filia Temporis</i> and <i>The Tempest</i> <i>Sarah Briest</i>	23
Fortune and Caskets: Necrophilia in <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> <i>Christian Smith</i>	37
Call for Statements <i>Shakespeare Seminar</i> at the <i>Shakespeare-Tage</i> 2015	48

INTRODUCTION

LUKAS LAMMERS AND KIRSTEN SANDROCK

Strike Up, Pipers. – Shakespeare’s Festivities

Festivities in Shakespeare seldom come along trouble-free. As Benedick’s last words in *Much Ado About Nothing* indicate celebrations are frequently inextricably linked to the more problematic issues of a play. Thus, his order “Strike up, pipers!” (5.4.126) follows immediately after a messenger tells him that his brother John has been captured on his flight from Messina. Benedick is by no means unaffected by the message and promises that he will “devise thee brave punishment for him” – but not until “tomorrow” (5.4.125-126). In the meantime, he wants everyone to celebrate, wherefore he calls for the musicians to play in the final words of the drama. The comedy thus ends on a seemingly happy note with the stage instructions “*Dance. [Exeunt]*” (5.4.127). Yet, this call for merriment seems tainted by the anticipation of postponed punishment. This combination of celebration and castigation can be considered symptomatic of Shakespeare’s treatment of festivities in general.

More often than not, celebrations in Shakespeare are overtly connected to the exclusion of characters – think not only of Benedick’s brother, John, but also of Caliban or Falstaff. Festivities are therefore also closely linked to power politics and function to throw the central conflict of a play into stark relief. Thus, Prospero abruptly ends the merriments of the masque in Act 4, Scene 1 without apparent reason, thereby demonstrating his power to rule over time and people. In *Titus Andronicus*, the protagonist stages a mock feast in order to take revenge on Tamora, the Queen of Goths, by feeding her the corpses of her own sons in a meat pie. And in *Measure for Measure*, marriages are not so much a happy occasion as a punishment for both Angelo and Claudio, devised to chastise them for past slanders and general character faults. All of this indicates that festivities in Shakespeare hardly ever come without their problems. They are frequently indicative of or function to reinforce a moment of crisis in the plays. Thus, while we turn to merriment and celebration in 2014 in order to commemorate Shakespeare’s 450th birthday, this issue of *Shakespeare Seminar* is interested not only in the joyous aspects of festivities in Shakespeare – which undoubtedly exist – but also in the more twisted manifestations of festivals, feasts and times of gaiety in Shakespeare’s works.

The contributions to this issue of *Shakespeare Seminar* explore the complex layers of festivities in Shakespearean drama. In her article “Charismatic Gluttony: Celebrity in the *Henriad*” Katrin Bednarek discusses the special role that celebrations and times of merriment play in the *Henriad*. Drawing on Max Weber’s theory of charismatic authority, she traces the source of that authority back to Prince Hal’s participation in the festive world of Eastcheap and the promise for future celebration. Martina Pranić, too, concentrates on the relationship between Henry V and Falstaff, but makes a significantly different case about festivity in the *Henriad*. According to Pranić, the by-

now common conception of Henry's friendship with Falstaff must not be read as a period of carnival in the Bakhtinian sense. Rather, she suggests that Falstaff functions as an example of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of *assemblage*, and that his rejection at the end of *2 Henry V* does not mark the end of a carnivalesque period but in fact "reveals the dark underbelly of Hal's machinations". The following article by Sarah Briest explores the significance of time – both as a concept and as an allegory – in *The Tempest*. It shows how Prospero and Miranda can be read as figurative expressions of the popular early modern *veritas filia temporis* motif, with Miranda and Prospero embodying 'Truth' and 'Time' respectively. The final article by Christian Smith proposes to reconsider Freud's essay "Das Motiv der Kästchenwahl" and his reading of Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice* as a character who in choosing Portia chooses death. Smith suggests that while Freud's essay ultimately fails to resolve the question it implicitly poses, Erich Fromm's notion of the necrophilious character can help us understand why the wedding celebrations at the end do not resolve the crisis of the drama but, in fact, typify the its sense of discomfort in the face of emerging capitalism.

CHARISMATIC GLUTTONY: CELEBRITY IN THE *HENRIAD*

KATRIN BEDNAREK

Henry V has frequently been described as “charismatic,” although in most of these instances the term has been used in a rather undefined way (cf. Baumann 53; Calderwood 175; Evans 13; Greenblatt *Negotiations* 58, 63). My aim with this paper is to show how drawing on the concept of charismatic authority as introduced by the sociologist Max Weber in the 19th century changes our understanding of Henry’s rise to power and helps to explain the difference between his rule and that of his father, Henry IV, as portrayed in Shakespeare’s second tetralogy. Two interrelated aspects are key to Weber’s definition of charismatic authority. First, there must be no strict hierarchy between the members of the group or community (Weber 141); second, hitherto unchallenged rules are suddenly called into question and often overthrown during the rise of a charismatic leader (142). The charismatic leader creates a community which is united by a common cause, a “charismatic mission” (141), and which is marked by a strong emotional bond between its members (141).

While it is generally accepted that Hal acquires the ability to disregard and thus to overcome boundaries set down by social status during his time with Falstaff in the two parts of *Henry IV* and that this ability contributes to his success as king in *Henry V*, the precise nature of the charisma gained is still poorly understood. I want to argue that his participation in the festive world of Eastcheap has a significant impact on Hal’s understanding of the importance of community and that this understanding eventually serves as one source of his charisma. This paper will therefore revisit the relevant scenes and discuss the trajectory of Hal’s/Henry V’s charisma in order to show that his experiences in Eastcheap help Henry to unite his soldiers and gain their support for his charismatic mission in *Henry V*.

Charismatic Authority

Max Weber introduced the idea of charisma most prominently as one of three types of legitimate leadership in his classification of authority (“Herrschaftssoziologie”) (124). However, Weber wrote on charisma and charismatic authority at various stages of his career, and in connection to different issues, which makes it difficult to establish a fully coherent definition of the phenomenon. For the purpose of this paper I will draw mainly on Weber’s classification of authority as depicted in the first part of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (published posthumously in 1922) and focus on Weber’s analysis of the structure of charismatic leadership.

Weber develops three types of authority in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*: rational-legal, traditional and charismatic authority. Each of these types depends on a specific form of legitimacy, namely on the rationality of law, on the sanctity of customs and on the extraordinary personal qualities – the charisma – of an individual (Dow 91-92). According to Weber, charismatic leaders characteristically present unexpected solutions in times of crisis: they offer, in Weber’s terminology, a “charismatic

mission” aimed at solving a crisis. If this charismatic mission is recognized by the people he takes over power and a charismatic leadership is established (Weber 140). While both rational-legal and traditional authority are designed to remain in charge for a long period of time, charismatic authority is characteristically unstable because the charismatic leader constantly has to prove himself in order to remain in power (140). Since charismatic authority is born out of extraordinary circumstances, it is especially volatile and tends to transform into one of the other types of authority once the crisis from which it arose has been solved (141). Due to its special status as a transitional type of leadership, charismatic authority differs markedly from the other two types in terms of its structure. Both rational-legal and traditional authority are underpinned by long-established hierarchies with clearly defined positions and responsibilities. Charismatic authority, on the other hand, generally overthrows existing rules and traditions in order to create new ones; it therefore only truly exists in *statu nascendi* and tends to take on characteristics of one of the other types of authority once it becomes established as a long-term leadership (141-143).

It is important to note that the three types of legitimate authority that Weber defines are ideal types, which means that, in actuality, they never appear quite as pure as Weber’s classification seems to suggest. Consequently, a specific leadership, such as that of Shakespeare’s Henry V, may only show certain elements of the ideal type of charismatic authority. However, I am convinced that Weber’s concept offers a way of reconsidering his development from the wayward Prince Hal to the successful leader Henry V. What is more, I believe, it helps to explain the difference between the successful rule of Henry V and the hapless rule of his father Henry IV.

Hal’s “Charismatic Gluttony”

In order to understand the source of Henry’s charisma it is important to consider the significance attributed to his indulgence in the festive world of Eastcheap in the *Henry IV* plays and particularly to his “festive relationship with Sir John Falstaff” (Ruiter 43). One important aspect of this world is the fact that social status is of no apparent relevance in the interaction between Hal and the other characters. An example for this is the way in which Falstaff and Poins address Hal, which ranges from very personal and affectionate nicknames to the ironic use of his royal title as heir apparent (Candido 62). This inappropriate mode of address is established as early as Act One, Scene Two. In his very first remark to the Prince, and indeed throughout the two plays, Falstaff uses the informal name “Hal” and calls him “lad” (*1 Henry IV*, 1.2.1). In the following banter between the two he uses several affectionate nicknames such as “sweet wag,” “mad wag” (1.2.15, 22 and 42) and “sweet young prince” (1.2.77-78). Likewise, Poins calls the prince “sweet Hal” (1.2.107) upon entering the scene and later “good sweet honey lord” (1.2.152), which shows that the familiarity between Falstaff and Hal is not exclusive to these two characters, but rather a feature of the specific space these characters inhabit. And it should be noted that this way of address is not one-sided: Hal, too, jokingly calls Poins “sweet Ned” (2.4.20).

The familiarity between these characters is established not only through the way they address one another; Falstaff in particular disregards all rules of conduct in his interaction with the prince (Poole 109). As Tim Spiekerman notes

[t]he two apparently insult each other with loving regularity, and we come to see that much of their relationship consists in witty attempts to berate one another and defend themselves from attack. (“Education” 112-113)

The way Falstaff and Hal react to one another during their banter serves to underline the closeness of these characters on a verbal level; in Act Two, Scene Four Falstaff, for example, responds to Hal’s final insult “this huge hill of flesh” (236-237) with the corresponding insult “you starveling” (238), which shows how well acquainted he is with Hal’s metaphors, as David Ruitter points out (78). Furthermore, the relationship between the Prince and his companions is not only restricted to merrymaking, which becomes apparent when Hal takes responsibility for the robbery at Gadshill and helps Falstaff by covering up for him (2.4.499-505). He does this even though, only moments before, he had rejected Falstaff – however playfully. This indicates that it is not as easy to end this relationship as critics such as McGuire (50) claim. Rather, it implies a deeper involvement of Hal in the world of Eastcheap and thus underlines the impact this world has on him.

It has been noted that in *2 Henry IV* Hal shares only few scenes with his friends from Eastcheap and that he continues to distance himself from them (Spiekerman *Political Realism* 114; Candido 68). This is obviously true, but even in this play there are scenes that underline the close relationships he formed with these “low-life” characters. This applies especially to Act Two, Scene One, which Spiekerman describes as “uncharacteristically personal and confessional” (“Education” 111). At the beginning of this scene, Hal enters into a conversation with Poins which offers some interesting insights into the relationship between the two. First of all, Hal seems to know Poins very well; his knowledge even stretches to the number of items in his closet (2.2.14-18). Arguably, Hal mentions this only to show how disgraceful it is for him to know these things (2.2.12-13). At the same time, and that is my second point, both characters talk very frankly to each other. Poins criticises the Prince for not being more concerned about his sick father and Hal confides in him the truth about his feelings and the reason for his behaviour (2.2.28-60). This conversation shows clearly that even if Hal’s participation in the festive world of Eastcheap is part of a larger scheme, there are true relationships being formed in which the social status of the characters involved does not seem to matter. Apparently, his participation in this world allows Hal to interact with characters that do not belong to his social class and thus provides insights that will later allow him to gain support for his charismatic mission.

One could argue, of course, that the familiarity Hal establishes between himself and his companions is simply a sign of their friendship. However, this interpretation falls short of the complexity and trajectory of Hal as a character. In *1 Henry IV*, at the beginning of Act Two, Scene Four, Hal tells Poins about his encounter with a group of tapsters in the tavern, and the interaction that he describes shows features very similar to the communication between Hal and his friends. Hal calls the tapsters by their Christian names (2.4.7) and they refer to him as “a Corinthian, a lad of mettle, a good

boy” (2.4.11-12). Especially the recurrence of the term *lad*, which Falstaff frequently uses to refer to Hal, reveals a connection between Hal’s interaction with his friends and that with the tapsters. Even if Hal accepts this familiarity rather reluctantly the scene reinforces the sense that Hal has a way of ignoring social status and of speaking to people from different social strata in their “own language” (2.4.18). This habit draws people to him, not only his friends but also random people he meets in the taverns. Stephen Greenblatt views this aspect as part of Hal’s political interests and notes that the community that emerges from this interaction with the tapsters is a “human fellowship of the extremest top and bottom of society in a homely ritual act of drinking together” (“Bullets” 36).

The question of possible ulterior motives on the side of Hal concerning his participation in the world of Eastcheap does not contradict my claim. It is essential to note that the term *charismatic* in Weber’s sense is not synonymous with *charming*. Weber explicitly states that it is irrelevant how those character traits or qualities that serve as a source of charisma are to be judged from a moral or ethical point of view (Weber 140). Consequently, Hal does not have to be a consistently likeable character in order to be deemed a charismatic personality. Certainly, Hal rejects Falstaff and his other friends at the end of *2 Henry IV*, and Joseph Candido notes that he tries to disentangle himself from the familiarity that existed between them throughout both plays (68); yet, his ability to overcome the boundaries of social hierarchy remains an essential feature of this character. Hal rejects the world and the companions of his “festive youth” (Barber 12), but he does not reject the experiences he made and the insights he gained during this time. What is relevant in the scene referred to above, then, is that Hal is successful in creating a moment of community with the tapsters and that this success is explicitly linked to his ability to speak their language (2.4.14-16).

Henry V’s Celebrity

When critics comment on Henry V’s ‘celebrity’ they often refer to the idealistic image of this character created by the chorus. The term, however, can also serve to draw our attention to the connection between Hal’s time in the festive world of Eastcheap and the success of Henry’s St. Crispin’s Day speech and, at the same time, allows us to link the success of this speech to Henry’s experiences in Eastcheap. I am drawing on two definitions of the term *celebrity* that were in use in Shakespeare’s time and that are both connected to Henry’s charisma. The first of these definitions understands *celebrity* as “[a] solemn rite or ceremony, a celebration” (*OED* def. 2) and the second as “[t]he condition of being much extolled or talked about; famousness, notoriety” (*OED* def. 3). While the relevance of the second definition for a discussion of Henry V as a potentially charismatic leader is immediately apparent, the significance of the first definition is probably less obvious. Nevertheless, I would like to argue that the promise of such a ritual celebration stands at the centre of Henry’s charismatic appearance to his soldiers and helps to unite them in the common cause of his charismatic mission. In order to achieve this, Henry makes use of his ability to overlook the boundaries of social status that he gained in Eastcheap. This process of

familiarising with his soldiers is depicted in three significant moments and climaxes in his St. Crispin's Day speech at the eve of battle at Agincourt.

The first of these stages is Henry's speech to his army at the gates of Harfleur in Act Three, Scene One. In this speech it is noteworthy that Henry addresses not only the noblemen fighting on his side (3.1.17), but also the common soldiers (3.1.25). Of course, one cannot speak of the dissolution of hierarchy at this point because Henry, on the contrary, clearly emphasises this hierarchy by addressing both parts of his army separately. Still, he employs the rhetoric strategy of repetition in order to establish a connection between the aristocrats and the common soldiers. The first group is addressed by Henry as "you noble English" (3.1.17) and only a few lines later, while addressing the rest of his army, he says of his soldiers "For there is none of you so mean and base / That hath not *noble* lustre in your eyes" (3.1.29-30, emphasis added). By repeating the adjective that he used to address the aristocracy in connection with the common soldiers, only a few lines later, Henry creates a sense of community, and thereby an experience which serves as the foundation for the success of his speech.

The second stage I want to point to in connection with Henry's charismatic ability to disregard hierarchy is his encounter with the soldiers in Act Four, Scene One. At first glance, it might appear difficult to convincingly integrate these scenes into my argument. After all, Henry does not appear before the soldiers as king but in disguise. Still, I believe that these scenes show how perfectly Henry is able to interact with all people in their "own language," as no one doubts his performance.

The first noteworthy aspect of this scene is the fact that Henry refers to himself as "friend" whenever he meets one of his soldiers (4.1.36 and 4.1.93). This already indicates a bond very different to the one that normally exists between a king and his subjects. In his conversation with Bates and Williams, Henry claims that the king is not different from his subjects in terms of perceptions and emotions (4.1.101-110), thus explicitly contradicting the notion of any natural hierarchy. The fact that the soldiers argue with him does not diminish his charismatic quality, it rather supports my argument concerning the bond that Henry tries to establish between himself and his soldiers. Robert C. Tucker points out that it is not unusual for a charismatic leader to enter into a discussion with his followers, precisely because there is no strict hierarchy that forbids such discussions (736). By coming to his soldiers in disguise, Henry enables them to enter into a debate with him, which is something they would never dare to do otherwise. Nor does the fact that Henry displays absolute confidence in the justice of his war in front of his soldiers and then raises doubts about the same issue in the following soliloquy interfere with his classification as a charismatic leader. Tucker points out that

[t]he charismatic leader typically radiates a buoyant confidence in the rightness and goodness of the aims that he proclaims for the movement, in the practical possibility of attaining these aims, and in his own special calling and capacity to provide the requisite leadership. Needless to say, in the lives of most of these leaders – even those who do achieve success – there are moments of discouragement and despair when they and their cause seem fated to fail. But it is not characteristic of them to display such feelings in public. (749)

The soldier scene does not only show that Henry still has the ability to talk to all of his subjects in their "own language"; it also serves to create a sense of crisis that typically

allows for the emergence of a charismatic leader. Furthermore, the fact that Williams questions the justice of the war (4.3.122) seems to make Henry realise that it is necessary to find a way of uniting his soldiers in order to lead them to victory. The concluding lines of this scene point to the crucial role that he himself and the impact of his personality play in this endeavour: “The day, my friends, and all things stay for me” (4.3.296).

The final stage of Henry’s charismatic impact on his soldiers is to be found in his St. Crispin’s Day speech (4.3.20-67). It is in this speech that we see Henry asking for support for his charismatic mission at a moment of severe crisis – a charismatic mission which first needs to be recognised as such by his followers. Rather than forcing his soldiers to fight, Henry wants them to embrace his cause and follow him freely. For those who decide to fight with him he creates a vision of the future after their success (4.3.41-60), and then, at the climax of his speech, finally proclaims the famous “band of brothers” (4.3.60). At this moment, Henry truly establishes a “charismatic community” in which the social hierarchy dividing his army is temporarily dissolved and in which soldiers and nobles alike are united by the common cause of the charismatic mission. Revealingly, the vision that Henry evokes is that of “the *feast* of Crispian” (4.3.40 emphasis added), a yearly celebration with feasting and “flowing cups” (4.3.55). This links the festivity and community of his youth spent in Eastcheap to the battlefield of Agincourt – and to this speech, which I claim to be Henry’s most obviously charismatic moment. The effectiveness of his speech can be seen in Westmoreland’s reply, who now no longer wishes for more men from England but rather wants to fight the battle with only the King by his side (4.3.74-75). Another indicator for Henry’s success in creating a “band of brothers” are York and Suffolk, who die in each other’s arms and can be seen as representatives of this community (Ruiter 164). Of course, the hierarchy in Henry’s army is not really overcome in the long run, but this is typical of charismatic authority, which is by definition a transitory phenomenon. What matters is that the soldiers perceive Henry as a charismatic leader in this decisive moment and that they support his charismatic mission.

Popularity vs. Charisma

In this last section I would like to turn from Henry V to the kingship of his father, Henry IV, to show how Weber’s terminology can help us grasp important differences in the representation of these two kings. The main difference, I will argue, lies in the treatment of their subjects and in the fact that Henry IV lacks those charismatic qualities that help his son to his success in France.

Interestingly, Henry IV, too, has been described as a charismatic character by Raphael Falco and Kristin Bezio (*Charismatic Authority* 65-100; Bezio 35-37). I agree that there are aspects that seem to qualify Bolingbroke’s rebellion in *Richard II* as a force initiated by a reaction to Henry Bolingbroke personality. However, there are certain fundamental elements missing in order to convincingly describe Bolingbroke as charismatic leader, above all a distinct charismatic mission. Bolingbroke never openly verbalises his decision to challenge Richard’s rule and thus does not have an

explicit cause, which is the prerequisite for a charismatic mission. I rather agree with Jeffrey Doty in the assumption that Bolingbroke's success in his interaction with the common people is based on the conscious fashioning of a certain public persona (194). In Doty's view, Bolingbroke manipulates the way he is perceived in order to gain support: "In the broader scheme of the play, Bolingbroke turns popular discontent into public opinion; with him, the people can effect change in the state" (198-199). The notion and the possibility of change mentioned by Doty could be seen as an argument for, rather than against, Bolingbroke's status as a charismatic leader, because charisma is a revolutionary force that typically fosters change. However, Bolingbroke's rebellion never takes on the qualities of a charismatic movement, because he does not aim at changing the existing order and simply wants to replace Richard as king. Furthermore, the course of events in the succeeding plays shows that Bolingbroke's promises were empty promises, as Doty points out (199). The assumption that Bolingbroke intentionally manipulated his public appearance is further underpinned by the fact that, after his coronation, "his courtship of the common people" (*Richard II* 1.4.24) quickly wanes. This provides a marked contrast to Hal and later Henry V, who is shown interacting with his subjects and who is thus able to connect with them – an ability that his father clearly lacked (Tiffany 371).

In fact, Henry IV himself identifies the interaction with their subjects as the main difference between himself and his son, as can best be seen in their interview in *Henry IV*. Here Henry openly criticises Hal for his familiarity with the common people and explains the stratagems he used in order to gain public support (3.2.39-59). Henry not only admits that he manipulated the public; he also compares his son's behaviour to that of Richard II which, according to Henry, led to Richard's downfall (3.2.60-87). Henry IV's reasoning in this scene indicates that he does not recognise the political usefulness of the sort of community that Hal establishes with his Eastcheap companions and the tapsters he meets in the tavern. The difference between the two can be further illustrated by pointing to the ways they act when faced with a battle. While Henry IV tries to protect himself by having "many marching in his coats" (5.3.25) his son fights alongside his soldiers and explicitly defines himself as one of them (*Henry V*, 3.2.5-6). In contrast to his father, Hal truly learns how to speak and interact with all strata of society, as the preceding sections of this paper have shown. He creates the sensation of a community that reaches out to his subjects in the face of crisis and thus in *Henry V* manages to form a sense of unity that his father could never have established.

Conclusion

I have argued that the definition of charisma and charismatic authority put forth by Max Weber can be utilised to describe Henry V and his approach to leadership. By mingling with the common people throughout the two parts of *Henry IV* Hal learns to overcome the boundaries of social status, albeit temporarily, and talk to his future subjects as equals. As a king, he uses this ability in order to create the sense of a charismatic mission for himself and his soldiers when they go to war against France. At the climax of his charismatic appearance he evokes the vision of a ritual celebration

which suggests a connection between the festivity of his youth and his most charismatic moment. The resulting community can be described as a charismatic community and it is this bond that allows Henry to be successful at Agincourt. In conclusion, it can be said that although Hal rejects Falstaff and the festivity connected to him at the end of *2 Henry IV* the abilities he developed during this time and the knowledge he gained remain with him and provide an important source of his charisma.

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Zusammenfassung

Shakespeares Henry V ist wiederholt als charismatisch bezeichnet worden, allerdings ohne dass der Begriff *charismatisch* näher definiert wurde. Unter Rückgriff auf Max Webers Ausführungen zu Charisma und charismatischer Herrschaft lässt sich dieser Eindruck konzeptionell nachvollziehen und ein Zusammenhang zwischen den Eastcheap-Szenen und Hals Erfolg als König herstellen. Es zeigt sich, dass Hal durch seine Jugend in den Tavernen lernt, die Grenzen des sozialen Status zu überwinden und mit seinen Untertanen auf Augenhöhe zu kommunizieren. Diese Fähigkeit behält er als König bei und ist in der Lage, das Gefühl einer Gemeinschaft herzustellen, das im Zentrum einer charismatischen Bewegung steht und das maßgeblich zu seinem Erfolg beiträgt. Er erreicht dieses Gemeinschaftsgefühl durch das Versprechen auf zukünftige Feierlichkeiten, was zeigt, dass er zwar Falstaff zurückgewiesen hat, sich der gemeinschaftsstiftenden Funktion von Festivität jedoch weiterhin bewusst ist.

THE REJECTION OF FALSTAFF – THE REJECTION OF THE FESTIVAL?

MARTINA PRANIĆ

The mere mention of Shakespeare's Falstaff of *Henry IV* triggers connotations of mirth and foolery, typically associated with festivals. Falstaff is commonly perceived as embodying the values of the festive realm of the tavern in the two plays, a realm removed from the chivalric historical action. He is one of the greatest creations of Shakespeare's comic genius and is adored by audiences and critics alike; "the apostle of permanent festivity," as François Laroque dubbed him in *Shakespeare's Festive World* (236), for many, Falstaff is festival incarnate. A great thespian, Falstaff breaks and bends all the rules in order to entertain his audience within the play, whereas the scope of his role continues to attract actual audiences into the theatre.

One of the major developments in the narrative of Falstaff is the fact that at the end of *2 Henry IV* his once boon companion, the newly crowned King Henry V, rejects him. In order to solidify his sworn "reformation" (*1 Henry IV*, 1.2.203), the Prince concludes his transformation in an act of exorcism against the "old, white-bearded Satan" (2.4.451) and finally banishes "plump Jack" (2.4.467). Given that Falstaff as a sole character has on occasion been awarded more attention than the work itself,¹ his final dismissal may be perceived as a tragedy within the *Henriad*. When seen in this way, the rejection of Falstaff may also be implicitly understood as a rejection of the festival in favour of a rational, orderly rule of an absolute monarch.

By outlining the festive character of Falstaff, this paper, on the one hand, sets out to question the suitability of a position that would imply Falstaff's rejection carries with it a rejection of festival culture and, on the other, offers an alternative view of the significance and the success of the fat knight's rejection. The paper will argue that discussions of Falstaff and festivity are frequently based on an unstable temporal polarity between work time and holiday time. It will foreground Falstaff's paradoxically wise folly and not so much his festive character and propose a way out of dualistic readings of the *Henriad* by employing a Deleuzian notion of assemblage.

Falstaff, Festivity and Character Criticism

Dealing with the dismissal of Falstaff is a fairly common critical agenda. In earlier criticism it was framed as coming to terms with the unfairness of the plot towards the character. Writing in 1902, in the eponymous essay, A.C. Bradley argued that "the rejection of Falstaff" is a literary problem worthy of serious consideration. Bradley

¹ In Harold Bloom's view, for instance, Falstaff, along with Hamlet, is "a miracle in the creation of personality" (53), a master of language unparalleled in Western literature, whom "we need [...] because we have so few images of authentic vitality and even fewer persuasive images of human freedom" (55).

conceived of this “most unfortunate of Shakespeare’s famous characters,” who suffered being “degraded by Shakespeare himself” (247), as an artistic achievement so great that even the plotline that envelops him in the end could not curb his potentialities. Ever since these ruminations in the tradition of character criticism, the rejection remains a puzzling narrative closure, one that Warren M. Howe deemed “[t]he most frequently debated critical issue in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* plays” (217). Whether the rejection is a festive dethronement of a mock king, a sacrificial gesture meant to prepare the ground for the new monarch, an aesthetic cancelling out of gratuitous laughter that Falstaff represents, or the utmost example of radical subversiveness that is allowed in order to be contained, the rejection of Falstaff, and the character more generally, remain profoundly ambiguous forces within the *Henriad*.

Rejecting Falstaff implies rejecting the multiple facets of the character, one among which is markedly festive. On several occasions, the text of the plays explicitly links Falstaff with festival imagery. At the start of *1 Henry IV*, the Prince presents Falstaff’s advanced age and lustfulness as “All-hallow’n summer” (1.2.150-1), and the second play equates him with the exuberant fall festival of Martinmas in Poins’s inquiry “And how doth the Martlemas, your master?” (1.2.94-5). The drama also relates Falstaff to carnivalesque overindulgence in drinking and meat eating during festival season. His fleshiness is so pronounced that he becomes the festival meat, being explicitly addressed as a “roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly” (2.4.440) or a “Bartholomew boar-pig” (2 *Henry IV*, 2.4.227). *Henry IV* is heavily laden with allusions to the size of his body, so that the language that paints him never lets one forget his corpulence.

Apart from the irrepressible hilarity of his scenes and recurrent festive imagery, the play points to a wealth of cultural and textual input, likewise connected with festival culture, that informs Falstaff’s character. As “that reverend Vice” (1 *Henry IV*, 2.4.441), Falstaff is associated with medieval morality plays. Alfred Ainger speaks of the connection between Falstaff and the recurrent figure of festive performances, the Vice, who “was invariably a comic character; not at all with any view to make light of sin, but in order thereby to make sin contemptible. Just so the fat knight [...] would be sure to be made as ridiculous as possible for popular presentation” (129). This line of descent is brought to the fore by Falstaff himself, identifying with the Vice through his weapon of choice, in his characteristically pompous bluster: “If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild geese, I’ll never wear hair on my face more” (1 *Henry IV*, 2.4.130-33). The complexity of Falstaff is, however, a far cry from these generally one-sided characters.

One of the well-known facts about Falstaff is that he was originally known under the moniker of Oldcastle, the name that connects him to the proto-Protestant martyr and complicates his connotations.² Taking religious influences into account, Phebe Jensen points out that “Falstaff’s original complexities include, then, a contradictory

² Falstaff as Oldcastle would have been recognized by his amused audience as emerging from a tradition of farcical figures caricaturing the Puritan in the polemical responses to the Martin Marprelate pamphlets. Kristen Poole explains that, since Lollardy in the late 16th century became increasingly connected with religious extremism, what such an approach in fact conveyed was a parody of the Puritan rhetoric. In Poole’s words, “Falstaff does not, therefore, parody the self-styled saints in a determined, wilful way. Rather Falstaff – in and of himself – is a parodic representation of a ‘Puritan’” (37).

devotional relationship to festivity. As Oldcastle, he participates in the stage-Puritan tradition, but he is also a Lord of Misrule whose association with the Vice links him to the theatrical past of the late medieval Catholicism” (156). Through the Oldcastle lineage, Falstaff was once recognized on stage as a satirical image of a gluttonous and hypocritical Puritan, the type that evoked a festival of comedy in itself. At the same time, he brought to mind traditions of the old religion, which is nowadays usually seen as being deeply connected with carnival. Intentionally or not, the comic composition of Falstaff shows clear connections to various strands of festivity.

Rereading the Carnavalesque

C.L. Barber, one of the most prominent advocates of the festive image of Falstaff, contends that “the Falstaff comedy, far from being forced into an alien environment of historical drama, is begotten by that environment, giving and taking meaning as it grows. [...] Shakespeare dramatizes not only holiday but also the need for holiday and the need to limit holiday” (219). Instead of simply reading Falstaff’s narrative thread in *Henry IV* as a satirizing mirror-image of the historical events, Barber sees the dynamic relation between the historical and the comedic action as saturnalian: Falstaff’s misrule functions as a safety-valve, and his subsequent banishment as a consolidation of the newly established rational rule of Hal as king. Such a saturnalian interpretation of Falstaff’s festive character corresponds with the Bakhtinian carnivalesque. Falstaff easily becomes a representative of carnival in the Bakhtinian sense, that is, of carnival that “celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions” (*Rabelais and His World*, 10). Such carnival is a wishfully radical moment in time when authority is ridiculed and misrule licenced, the moment when exuberant topsy-turveydom celebrates newly-found liberties, which are potentially present at all times, but otherwise persistently subjugated by the powers that be. “Carnival, like the king, never dies,” concludes Laroque in his largely Bakhtinian analysis of the Falstaff-Hal dichotomy (“Shakespeare’s ‘Battle of Carnival and Lent’” 95).

The carnivalesque interpretation of Falstaff, however, suffers from several instabilities. As popular and enduring as Falstaff may be, he can hardly be construed as a representative or a voice of the people. He is a profoundly self-reliant and detached comic commentator, who ruthlessly pursues his own interests, unperturbed by damage he might inflict on others. In the soliloquy that uncovers how he “misused the King’s press damnably” (*1 Henry IV*, 4.2.12-13) and exposes the unfairness of the Elizabethan recruiting system, Falstaff employs the rhetoric of excess to ridicule the lowly, those who are “good enough to toss; food for powder, food for powder” (4.2.64-65). His enlisted ragamuffins are purely linguistic creations, never appearing before the audience, or being given a voice in the text. Soon enough they will all have perished, save the three whose fate is reportedly to end up as crippled beggars. Furthermore, Falstaff’s solipsism is evident in his thespian singing of his own praises. He famously indulges in bragging:

I was as virtuously given as a gentleman need to be: virtuous enough; swore little; diced not – above seven times a week; went to a bawdy-house – not above once in a quarter – of an hour; paid money that I borrowed – three or four times; lived well and in good compass. And now I live out of all order, out of all compass. (*1 Henry IV*, 3.3.12-17)

His self-praise has the aim of producing humorous incongruity; he is a character who skilfully utilises mendacity and excess to show off the folly of play, never voicing communal interests.

Falstaff's laughter is similarly incomparable with the communal, carnivalesque laughter that Bakhtin analysed in *Rabelais and his World* as timeless in nature, rather than directed towards isolated events.³ Falstaff uses laughter precisely to ridicule individuals and situations, to gain personal advantage. Falstaff's laughter is often an end in itself and his satirizing antics express what Indira Ghose calls "the danger inherent in any satire – that of spilling over into sheer entertainment" (158). Falstaff hardly ever fails to try and turn things to his comical advantage – up until his final failure to win over Hal's heart – since his jesting consists in nimble changes of topics, in delivering unexpected turns. "By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye," (*1 Henry IV*, 2.4.259-260) he will finish off his long parade of lies as soon as he discovers that Hal and Poin are perfectly aware nothing he reported of the Gadshill robbery is true.

Falstaff's drinking, another seemingly carnivalesque quality of his, has a purpose more instrumental than merely festive. His praise of sack is a compact mock-encomium, employing the irony Erasmus championed in his 1511 *Praise of Folly*, a jocoserious oration in which institutions, discourses and values of the officialdom are refracted through the prism of folly, and truths are delivered without laying claims to wisdom. Falstaff invests the alcoholic drink with transformative properties and portrays it as an antidote to the crisis of authority the play dramatises. His praise puts to test the notions of wit and courage, which, as he reasons, dissolve into "nothing without sack" (*2 Henry IV*, 4.3.112-113). It gestures towards the fact that pretensions – wisdom and valour, in this case – hardly ever respond to reality. Concluding his praise, Falstaff reveals that Hal's courage is fuelled by his indulgence in drinking. It is because the young Prince is given to drink that "he is become very hot and valiant" (*2 Henry IV*, 4.3.120-121), unlike his father, who regarded it as one of his failings that his "blood hath been too cold and temperate, / Unapt to stir at [...] indignities" (*1 Henry IV*, 1.3.1-2). Falstaff, therefore, points to Hal's susceptibility to folly and the deception behind his transformation that is expected to "show more godly and attract more eyes / Than that which hath no foil to set it off" (*1 Henry IV*, 1.2.204-205).

Festive readings of Falstaff that follow the Bakhtinian model of the carnivalesque are based on a specific interpretation of time. It is a dual conceptualization that underlines the division of the workaday time and the festive time, when official powers relax their control and laughter is allowed to roar.⁴ What is problematic here is the insufficient distinction between these two kinds of time. Martin Procházka

³ See Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, esp. chapter "Rabelais in the History of Laughter" (59-144).

⁴ For a full discussion of Bakhtin's thought on the nature of time, see his chapter "Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel" in *The Dialogic Imagination* (84-259).

criticizes the Bakhtinian notion of unifying time, pointing to the “rash generalization [that] ignores the deep gulf between the sacred and the profane, festivity and everydayness. It is based on a backward-looking romantic utopia, idealizing the life of the folk community and identifying it with natural rhythms” (136-7). Bakhtin emphasizes the connection of the carnival with an idealized time of labour that looks back to a lost age when man and nature existed in harmonious unity. This, in turn, influences interpretations of certain characters of early modern folly commonly perceived as carnivalesque – Falstaff being a case in point – that cannot be adequately connected to such an idealising vision.

Approaches that rely too heavily on Bakhtinian concepts often fail to acknowledge how ill-fitted Falstaff can be for such celebratory accounts, both because of his individualistic tendencies, and because his world is incongruous with the idealised, unified time on which Bakhtin bases his carnivalesque. As an illustration of such a reading, we may consider Laroque’s discussion of time in *Henry IV*. Laroque recognises a

pendulum-like concept of time, the very same that we also find in the alternation between the figures of the court and the battlefield, on the one hand, and Mistress Quickly’s tavern on the other, in *Henry IV*, where the only way of establishing the firm foundations of historical time is to exclude Falstaff and his permanent festivity. And until that linear time can be established, history trips and stumbles in its progress: the altercations between Falstaff and Hal [...] have the ring of an almost direct echo of ritual oppositions between Carnival and Lent. (*Shakespeare’s Festive World* 204)

This view again presumes that Falstaff emerges from an idealised past in which time was unified and festivals came and went as naturally and regularly as nature’s seasons. In such a view, the banishment of Falstaff functions as a clear tipping point into orderly linearity and the disorder that has always been implicit in this order, with or without Falstaff, is ignored.

Aside from his erroneous correlation with the popular spirit of the carnival, Falstaff’s festive character may be viewed as un-carnivalesque on yet another level. Falstaff is not an embodiment of the carnivalesque in the Bakhtinian sense, or a pure festive figure, as he is sharply disconnected from all romanticized utopian festivals. He is a representative of a fallen festival that occurs in a world in which profit out-prizes labour and holiday is as commercialised as the everyday. If Falstaff is conceptualised as such, the regular and orderly image of symmetrical dualism that structures *Henry IV* is destabilized. This opens up a possibility to question a rigid dichotomy that, in the Bakhtinian concept, presupposes order can exist as a given, untainted state.

Justice Shallow’s ruminations in 3.2. of *2 Henry IV* look back to a time that still supposedly saw the carnival spirit in its uncorrupted form. Falstaff does not belong to such a time and merely concurs with Shallow briefly, in the deliberately vague line “We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow” (*2 Henry IV*, 3.2.154). The line supposedly expresses wistfulness, as Orson Welles’s largely sentimental film interpretation of the *Henriad* that takes the “chimes at midnight” as its title, evidently suggests. Yet, reading Falstaff’s lines a bit more closely reveals a different sentiment

and the play's far more complex treatment of the time for festivals, play and folly. Leaving the hapless Justice, old Jack ruminates: "Lord, lord, how subject are we old men to this vice of lying!" (2 *Henry IV*, 3.2.275-6). Paradoxical as ever, Falstaff himself alludes to the constructedness of the past when viewed through rose-tinted spectacles. He is, therefore, far from wistful. When he sees Shallow again, he pragmatically follows his selfish interests and cheats the Justice out of a thousand pounds. This deed belongs to a time that values profiteering more than communality and one that is able to produce festivals merely as a form of temporally conditioned heterotopias.⁵ Foucault defines heterotopias as different spaces, as "actually realized utopias" (178) that link a specific fictitious projection with actuality and start functioning fully once a break with traditional time is established. The heterotopic festival is bound by what Foucault sees as "time in its most evanescent, transitory, and delicate form" (182).

In his politically programmatic monologue of *1 Henry IV* (1.2.185-207), Hal confesses to the audience that he rejects the realm where "all the year [is] playing holidays" (1.2.194). This confession determines the agonistic relationship of Hal and Falstaff as seeming emblems of work and play, of battling Lent and carnival. However, as the two plays unfold, the characteristically Shakespearean simultaneity of multiple perspectives begins to show that everyday time is just as permeated with play as holiday time is. Hal's mission to redeem time, that echoes Saint Paul's "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, for the days are evil" (*KJV*, Ephesians 5.15-16), will not emerge as successful as it might appear and he will carry the mark of folly long after Falstaff is gone. Once the dualism between work and play in *Henry IV* is cancelled, no strict separation between the two is possible. Falstaff and his folly, instead of his straightforward equation with festivity, are instrumentalized in the *Henriad* to paint a picture of a world falsely conceived of as a polarised compound of dichotomies: between the holiday and everyday, the tavern and the court, Falstaff and Hal.

Rather than being a festive character opposed to Hal's officialdom, Falstaff is the voice of early modern folly in the *Henriad*. Folly was undeniably ubiquitous in the culture and literature of early modernity. Expressed equally in comic as in serious discourses, it postulated alternative visions of the world. What a Renaissance figure of folly, such as Falstaff, would do was offer a version of reality, one that usually stood in a specific relation to truth. And the message delivered by these means was never overly straightforward, as it made use of folly's traditional trademarks of suspended rationality and intensified theatricality. Folly was used to contest the truth of man's knowledge and orderly systems by pointing to their constructedness and occasional absurdity. In this way Falstaff's presence in the *Henriad* brings to the fore the fact that things are rarely what they seem and people who they profess to be.

⁵ See Foucault's full description of the concept of heterotopia in "Different Spaces" (175-85). Heterotopias would include places like the cemetery, nursing home, asylum, or prison, but also libraries and museums. The heterotopia of the festival is set apart from the other kinds with respect to its relation to the concept of time. Unlike, for example, museums and libraries that function as accumulators of time, the heterotopia of the festival is characterized by ephemerality; it is absolutely chronic and absolutely embedded in time.

In his self-fashioning schemes Hal requires the lie of Falstaff, just as much as history requires the tavern. The serious realm seeks to appropriate the comedy as a counterpoint that will establish the truth of kingship and the legitimacy of the historical narrative, by making themselves appear true in contrast. James Calderwood perceives the relationship between the two plots of the *Henriad* as one of a structural metaphor that, through correlating Gadshill with Shrewsbury, “suggests that the English rebels are merely history’s cutpurses” (54). In this type of correlation, Falstaff is unmasked as a criminal element used by Hal as an instrument for attaining a new order whose truth he can manipulate. However, he is far from a simple, comic relief. Foolish and multifaceted, Falstaff is a necessary component in a complexly assembled world. Rather than serving to redeem the rule, Falstaff’s folly reveals the dark underbelly of Hal’s machinations.

Falstaff as Assemblage

Given his inexhaustible dimensions, Falstaff functions well as an example of Deleuze and Guattari’s assemblage. Assemblages are instances of multiplicities, which is one of the key heuristic concepts Deleuze uses in his own work and the parts of it he produced with Guattari. Assemblages are complex structures without prior unity. They are irreducible – like Falstaff – to single transcendent unities. “An assemblage,” Deleuze and Guattari say, “in its multiplicity, necessarily acts on semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously” (25). Falstaff, changeable and adaptable in his propensity to constantly perform, moves along these flows and mocks them, just as he mocks the ostensibly serious world around him and uncovers its inherent folly.

Multiplicities are understood as rhizomatic. In Deleuze and Guattari’s vocabulary, a “rhizome” is a way of thinking and being that is alternative to the “arborescent” way. By calling their rhizomatic way of understanding “a process that challenges all [arborescent] models” (22) they establish an alternative way of looking at knowledge. An arborescent model of thought shows a tendency to look for origins and trace out chronologies of things. It pertains to hierarchical organisations and establishing beginnings and conclusions – it grows like a tree would, from root to the smallest leaf. Conversely, rhizomes resist chronology and organization; they are distinguished by multitudes of offshoots and movements in various directions. In their own words: “[a] rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb ‘to be,’ but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, ‘and...and...and...’” (27).

Early modern folly can be understood as a form of rhizomatic thought. It does not simply invert the arborescent notions of order, symmetry, unity and hierarchy: it provides a way out of them. As a rhizome subverts the arborescent assumption, namely that all growth means establishing some hierarchy, an early modern figure of folly such as Falstaff would postulate alternatives without pretensions to certainty or his own wisdom.

Since “[m]ultiplicities are rhizomatic, and expose arborescent pseudo-multiplicities for what they are” (Deleuze and Guattari 8), we may notice this process occurring in the relationship of Falstaff and Hal. The Prince, ambitious to acquire a status of multiplicity for himself, claims to be “so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour that I can drink with any tinker in his own language” (*1 Henry IV*, 2.4.28). Similarly, Warwick maintains that he is

[B]ut stud[ying] his companions
 Like a strange tongue, wherein, to gain the language,
 ‘Tis needful that the most immodest word
 Be look’d upon and learn’d; which once attain’d,
 [...] comes to no further use
 But to be known and hated. (*2 Henry IV*, 4.4.68-73)

Hal is surely a representative of an arborescent hierarchical system, and his efforts to learn the languages of his future subjects are motivated not by a striving for plurality, but by his desire to categorise the subjects and establish a proto-disciplinary society. Falstaff, who proclaimed only a couple of scenes before to “have a whole school of tongues in this belly of mine” (4.2.18), is an unruly element, unfit for Hal’s vision of the future kingdom. His petty criminality, together with his histrionic, multifarious nature can be located at the intersection of Deleuze and Guattari’s “‘discursive multiplicities’ of expression” and “‘nondiscursive multiplicities’ of content” (74), that is, of forms of expression irreducible to mere words and forms of content irreducible to one thing. Falstaff – mendacious in expression and evasive in his actions – presents a threat to Hal’s hierarchical, arboreal dream and simultaneously reveals the impossibility of that dream: the very mendacity that is at the heart of history and its authoritarian creation. Given that they incorporate Falstaff and so often foreground folly, the *Henry IV* plays can be said to implicitly criticise this authoritarian creation of history represented by Hal and offer an alternative version, one sensitive to decentred, unstable meanings and the vision of folly.

Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of delinquency, based on Foucault’s work *Discipline and Punish*, is likewise fitting for a further description of Falstaff’s location at the juncture of these two types of multiplicities. In Deleuze and Guattari’s view, in order to curb the multiplicities of Falstaff’s kind, “words and concepts such as ‘delinquent’ and ‘delinquency’” are introduced to “express a new way of classifying, stating, translating, and even committing criminal acts” (74). Because Hal’s new order requires discipline, Falstaff needs to be banished from the official discourse. In the words of Prince John, he and Hal’s other “wonted followers” (*2 Henry IV*, 5.5.98) are removed until their language will “appear more wise and modest to the world” (5.5.101). Falstaff thus becomes a labelled criminal, a delinquent. Once crowned King, Hal *proclaims* Falstaff “[t]he tutor and the feeder of my riots” (5.5.62). He disciplines and punishes him by ordering the Lord Chief Justice “[t]o see perform’d the tenor of my word” (5.5.71). Falstaff’s banishment, in my view, does not affirm or constitute order; it uncovers its inherent folly of establishing new truths on blatant lies.

The ultimate rejection of Falstaff is far from absolute. In the two plays, Shakespeare favours neither the flawed politics of the crown, nor the steamy lechery of Eastcheap. Falstaff's folly is the folly of play – the stage-play, but also the incessant playing of authority. Such folly of play will continue even after Falstaff is removed from the stage. Hal will persist in playing, but his performance will appear suspect to spectators, tainted by the ubiquity of folly that Falstaff revealed. Far from being introduced simply to be discarded by the new state power, Falstaff's comedy in *Henry IV* is integral to the world of the history plays, where crisis has its dominion. Falstaff is a constant companion in the exchanges in the world of history proper, but he neither transcends this world, nor is completely absorbed by it. What emerges as his role and his importance is to incessantly remind us, in his self-serving banter – the banter that debases all value, even the word of Scripture – that man is but “foolish-compounded clay” (2 *Henry IV*, 1.2.6).

Having established Falstaff as foolish rather than festive, his final banishment, I further contend, should not be read as a banishment of folly. His folly and his crime may be seen as results of his nature of multiplicity, made manifest in his overindulgence in jest and a tendency to protract the time-for-laughter to the point of gratuity, where it reaches a stage in which festivities threaten to replace the everyday. But his rejection is not clean-cut and the comedy in *Henry IV* is not introduced simply to be discarded by the new state power. Falstaff's folly is, paradoxically, also his wit. And since, as he knows, he is “not only witty in [him]self, but the cause that wit is in other men” (2 *Henry IV*, 1.2.8-9), Falstaff's foolish wit uncovers the folly of the system that presages a disciplinary society, one that is reliant on linguistic labelling.

At home “out of all order, out of all compass” (1 *Henry IV*, 3.3.19-20), Falstaff perpetuates the play of folly until law is employed to restrain him, but even then his influence remains, to a point, inscribed in the new structures that seek to re-establish a firm hierarchy. In the end, Falstaff's folly remains perennial. It casts a large, unpleasant shadow over the events that follow in the conclusion of the second *Henriad* and the audience remains far from immune to his appeal. In its obstinate ambiguity and ambiguous obstinacy, Falstaff's folly – perhaps like all folly – is quite like what Auden says of poetry: it “makes nothing happen: it survives” (34).

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Zusammenfassung

In Auseinandersetzung mit traditionellen Lesarten des festlichen Charakters von Falstaff schlägt dieser Aufsatz eine Neuinterpretation der vielfach diskutierten Gegensätze zwischen den politischen und festlichen Räumen in Shakespeares *Heinrich IV* vor. Es wird untersucht, inwieweit die Verbannung Falstaffs am Ende von *2 Heinrich IV* gleichbedeutend ist mit der Verbannung von Festlichkeit. Zeit wird dabei als Schlüsselkonzept im Umgang mit Falstaff und Festlichkeit betrachtet, wobei Falstaff ausdrücklich als Teil des Textes verstanden wird, nicht als überlebensgroße Schöpfung, die über den Text hinausgewachsen ist. Der Schluss bietet eine neue Perspektive auf die Funktion von Festlichkeit

in Shakespeares Henriade, indem er nicht Bakhtins Konzept des Karneval zu Grunde legt, sondern Falstaff und dessen Verhältnis zu *Heinrich IV* mit Deleuze und Guattaris Konzept der 'assemblage' neu liest.

SHAKESPEARE'S TEMPESTIVITY

VERITAS FILIA TEMPORIS AND THE TEMPEST

SARAH BRIEST

D.S. McGovern has pointed out that there is significance in the fact that Prospero, instead of conjuring a storm, calls up a tempest. While *storm* has Old English roots, the more literary *tempest* derives from Latin *tempestas* which could refer to time/season as well as weather/storm (McGovern 2). Already, then, its meaningfully connotative title establishes *The Tempest* as a play that is deeply concerned with the concept of time. At a time that witnessed a fashion in borrowing Latin words into English and, notably, in using these terms in their original etymological senses, four derivations of *tempestas* entered the English language: “*tempestive* (first recorded in 1611), *tempestively* (1621), *tempestivious* (1574) and *tempestivity* (1569)” (McGovern 2).¹ At least two of these, McGovern notes, predate the first staging of *The Tempest*. While Shakespeare himself, so far as can be established, never used these forms, there is every reason to suppose that he would not have been ignorant of their meanings and etymology (McGovern 3-4).² Thus, the argument McGovern puts forward in support of a deliberate dual meaning of the play's title is convincing. He only errs in remarking that, while the theme of time is always prevalent, the “active personification [of Time] must await the opening of Act V” (8). Anthropomorphous Time is present in the guise of Prospero throughout the entire play, from the initial raising of the tempest to his final, stern confrontation with the shipwrecked crew. Extending the allegory, Time's daughter Truth finds expression in “harsh” Prospero's “gentle” daughter Miranda (3.1.8-9). Soji Iwasaki has argued that in the evocative stage tableau of Cordelia dead in Lear's arms, father and daughter embody a tragic variant of the *veritas filia temporis* motif (*The Sword and the Word* 228). Correspondingly, Prospero and Miranda are its romantic expression.

¹ The OED gives the following definitions of *tempestivity*: “1. Seasonableness, timeliness. 2. A season, a time of a particular character.” Examples of use are: “1576 T. Newton tr. L. Lemnie *Touchstone of Complexions* i. ix. f. 77, Apoyncing to ech function his proper turne, and tempestiuitye. [...] 1569 T. Newton tr. Cicero *Olde Age* 21 b, To euery part of a mans life and age, are geeuen hys conuenyente tymes and propre tempestiuytyes.”

² McGovern notes that “[t]he apparent thoroughness of his grammar school training in Latin makes it more than likely that he was familiar with the noun *tempestas* and its adjective *tempestivus* in the senses of ‘time; season’ — they occur in these senses in both the *Metamorphoses* and *Georgics*, for example” (3). Further, the deliberately connotative use of *tempest*, McGovern asserts, “would demand little more acuteness from an audience than the use of *capricious* in both its derived and etymological senses in *As You Like It*” (5).

Iconography of Time

Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries the allegorical personifications of Truth and her father Time made frequent appearances in English emblem books, civic pageantry and more exclusive stage productions. Not least, a plethora of material works of art and craft also featured them, separately or as a duo. A case in point is Hans Holbein the Younger's design for a medallion showing Time as an old man who is reaching down to a naked young woman, his daughter Truth, emerging from the darkness of a cave (fig. 1). The image encompasses a number of features associated with the allegorical duo of Time and Truth. Time appears as a bearded old man, Truth a beautiful young woman, dependent on Father Time for her ultimate and supreme triumph over the belligerent forces of darkness and sin. Traditionally, the attributes of old Father Time were wings on his back and a scythe in his hand, to which could be added an hourglass or even a mechanical clock in later renditions. Truth generally appeared in the nude or dressed in garments so scanty as to allow her to keep nothing hidden, visualizing her pure candour. Hearts or crystals sometimes served to emphasize her immaculateness as did the sun, either carried in her hand or suspended above her head, simultaneously expressing the close association of truth and light. The triumph of Truth over malignant forces was a frequently encountered trope, realized, for example, in renderings of Truth conquering falsehood – variously embodied – by resolutely stepping on it.³



Fig.1: Holbein, Hans, the Younger. *Time bringing Truth into the Light*. Ca. 1532-43. From: British Museum. Collection online. Museum no. SL,5308.2.

³ One example is a drawing by Peter Paul Rubens, dating from the 1620s, which shows Truth stepping on the “dragon of Error” (British Museum description). In a 1579 print after Maerten de Vos, Truth is depicted with one foot resting on the skeletal legs of a half decomposed, partly reptilian man who represents falsehood.

Time's vindication of Truth, after a period of oppression by the forces of sin, often took the form of a triumphant unveiling or sudden display of her. In Holbein's medallion Truth is brought forth from a cave where the gaze of the curious could not have penetrated. Brought to light, spectators can finally feast their eyes on what had hitherto been a mystery.⁴ The emergence of truth from a dark place also has roots in Psalm 85:10-11 (King James Version) which declares that, "Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven."



Fig. 2: Whitney, Geoffrey. *Veritas temporis filia/Truth, the daughter of Time*. 1586. From: *A Choice of Emblemes and other Devises* (London).

An example of the visualization of personified Time, often cited and of contemporary relevance, is the fourth emblem in Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes and other Devises* (1586), bearing the motto "Veritas temporis filia/Truth, daughter of Time" (fig. 2). The emblem picture shows Time – winged, bearded, naked, holding a scythe – liberating Truth from a cave. Into this, the verse explains, she had previously been banished by Envy, Strife, and Slander. Yet, there is comfort in the thought that "Time will comme, and take this ladies parte, / And break her bandes, and bring her foes to foile" (Whitney 93). In late 1611 the figure of Time also took to the streets of London in Munday's Lord Mayor's Show *Chruso-thriambos*. Here Time relates past events and is invested with the power to resurrect from the dead a previous lord mayor. Though he is not initially happy to do Time's bidding, the newly resurrected must obey regardless, a scenario that recalls Ariel's less than total gratitude

⁴ The idea of the revelation of Truth from a hidden place would have found an echo in neoplatonic thought. As Edgar Wind has pointed out, truths were perceived as wrapped in mysteries: the higher the truth, the bigger the mystery and, consequently, the more select the circle of those privy to it (21).

toward Prospero for liberating the spirit from a tree in exchange for a period of servitude. In Munday's pageant Time surveys "what ever deedes are done, / Abridges, or gives scope, as likes me best; / Recalling to the present sight of Sunne / Actions, that (as forgot) have lien at rest" (B3).⁵

At the same time as the realms of art and literature were peopled with anthropomorphous Times and Truths, the motto *veritas filia temporis* gained currency as a slogan of political justification as well as rallying cry for religious recusants of both Protestant and Catholic outlooks (Massey 146-75).⁶

Prospero and Miranda as Allegorical Time and Truth

The attributes and significance of allegorical Time and Truth are reflected in myriad ways in Prospero and Miranda. In *The Winter's Tale*, composed shortly before *The Tempest*, Shakespeare lets the traditional personification of Time take centre stage as chorus. There, with bold confidence, Father Time notes his own absolute authority over worldly things, then announces a jumping forward in the play's narrative by sixteen years:

I that please some, try all, both joy and terror
 Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error,
 Now take upon me (in the name of Time)
 To use my wings. Impute it not a crime
 To me, or my swift passage, that I slide
 O'er sixteen years, and leave the growth untried
 Of that wide gap, since it is in my pow'r
 To o'erthrow law and in one self-born hour
 To plant and o'erwhelm custom.
 [...] Your patience this allowing,

⁵ The following year, in Thomas Dekker's 1612 Lord Mayor's Show, *Troia-Nova Triumphans*, Time also had a part to play. Wearing wings and equipped with hourglass and scythe, he is described as "the first, the Begetter and Bringer forth of all things in the world" (B3). In Middleton's 1613 pageant, *The Triumphs of Truth*, Truth is seen in a close-fitting dress of white satin which is intended to make her seem naked and express "her simplicity and nearness of heart to those that embrace her" (971). Serpents have been placed under her feet, expressing the idea that she "treads down all subtlety and fraud" (ibid.). On her forehead Truth wears a "diadem of stars, the witness of her eternal descent," and on her breast "a pure round crystal, showing the brightness of her thoughts and actions." In her right hand she holds a sun – "than which nothing is truer" (ibid.). In Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* the vows of the eponymous male hero echo the motif of Truth's plain candour: "I am as true as truth's simplicity, / And simpler than the infancy of truth" (3.2.170-71).

⁶ The slogan had been associated with European Protestantism before its first documented use, in 1535, as a political motto in England. Both Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I were associated with it (Massey 147, 151).

I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing
As you had slept between. (4.1.1-9, 4.1.15-17)⁷

In his speech personified Time acknowledges his power to casually skip through the decades, at any moment determining the temporal coordinates of the story world as it suits him. In this he does not differ markedly from Prospero, who, in structuring his own narrative, is not in need of a chorus to ‘slide swiftly’ over time. It is in his own power to reclaim past events out of “the dark backward and abysm of time” (1.2.50) and, thereby, to give them significance in the present – the course and shape of which he determines also. To Soji Iwasaki – in his 1973 monograph on *Shakespeare’s Tragic Sense of Time* – “the Chorus Time [in *The Winter’s Tale*] appears as the Mover watching the play-world from above,” a description that fits Prospero perfectly (6). Both he and Chorus Time watch the events unfolding from a position of detachment while simultaneously controlling them.

Tom F. Driver has pointed out that Prospero forces the memory of past events on both Miranda and Ariel, supporting his theory of Prospero’s lordship over time. In this context Driver counts four uses of the word *forget* and eight uses of *remember* or related forms in act 1, scene 2 alone (38). Time in *The Winter’s Tale* associates the unnoticed passage of time with sleep: “I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing / As you had slept between” (4.1.16-17). With a turn of his hourglass he puts to sleep and reawakens the collaborating audience. Prospero’s art, too, is concerned with sleeping and waking and the distribution of these states over the survivors of the shipwreck and Miranda. For both Father Time and Prospero, control over sleep is a facet of their control over time. The hourglass, attribute of Father Time, also features prominently in Prospero’s life. His attention to the instrument, “twixt six and now” (1.2.240), ensures the success of his plan of retribution. Like the “never-resting,” “swift-footed” time of Shakespeare’s sonnets, moving in “continual haste,” Prospero has to keep alert and in motion to steer all men on the island toward the realization of his final, triumphant tableau (sonnets V l. 5; XIX l. 6; CXXIII l. 12).

Shortly before the culmination of his scheme, Prospero remarks that,

Now does my project gather to a head:
My charms crack not; my spirits obey; and time
Goes upright with his carriage. (5.1.1-3)

His reference to personified Time as entity external to himself, however, does not contradict his own allegorical embodiment of it. Father Time in *The Winter’s Tale* also cites Time in this manner, while simultaneously explicitly personifying it. The invocation of Time, in both cases, establishes its double presence rather than negating its physical manifestation in the shape of the speakers.

Prospero describes his power over the elements with the same unabashed confidence as Time, the chorus, does:

⁷ Chorus Time’s speech echoes the prologue of the anonymous interlude *Respublica* (1553), which states that “tyme trieth all and tyme bringeth truth to lyght, / that wronge may not ever still reigne in place of right” (qtd. in Iwasaki 184).

[...] I have bedimm'd
 The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
 And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault
 Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder
 Have I given fire and rifted Jove's stout oak
 With his own bolt; the strong-based promontory
 Have I made shake and by the spurs pluck'd up
 The pine and cedar: graves at my command
 Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth
 By my so potent art. (5.1.41-50)

He declares his influence over sun, wind, sea, sky, the earth, and all that grows therein. Even resurrection is part of his repertoire, a skill used by Father Time in Munday's *Chruso-thriambos*, and also associated with Time through his presence in depictions of the raising of the Christian dead on Judgment Day. In Peter Pett's poem *Time's Journey to Seeke his Daughter Truth* (1599), Father Time is equally far removed from the constraints of ordinary lives, claiming that life itself attends on him in the capacity of a servant (B4).

While Prospero in many ways echoes the contemporary conception of personified Time, Miranda naturally assumes the role of Truth, Time's innocently persecuted, yet ultimately triumphant offspring. "[T]he nature of Miranda," notes Ricardo J. Quinones, is "all pity and love" (Quinones 351). Prospero's daughter is defined primarily through her candour and capacity for empathy, traits implied by numerous references in the play to the state of her heart – an organ also associated with Truth. The force of Miranda's empathy, the goodness of her heart, is already apparent in the first lines she utters, on witnessing the ship and crew in peril:

If by your art, my dearest father, you have
 Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
 [...] O, I have suffered
 With those that I saw suffer: a brave vessel,
 Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,
 Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
 Against my very heart. (1.2.1-9)

Prospero comforts his daughter with the words,

Be collected:
 No more amazement: tell your piteous heart
 There's no harm done. (1.2.13-15)

Miranda feels her heart affected by the suffering she witnesses; Prospero recognizes his daughter's heart as "piteous" and "dear" (1.2.14; 1.2.306). When confronted with her father's suffering, caused by his expulsion from Milan, she exclaims: "O, my heart bleeds" (1.2.63-64). Later her empathy leads her to intervene on behalf of Ferdinand:

O dear father,
 Make not too rash a trial of him, for
 He's gentle and not fearful.

[...] Beseech you, father. (1.2.470-72, 77)

The shipwrecked prince immediately notes Miranda's compassion, calling her "[t]en times more gentle than her father's crabbed" (3.1.8). His comment not only highlights the virtue of his beloved but also acknowledges the way father and daughter depend on each other for a definition of their identities. Where Miranda is gentle, Prospero is "composed of harshness" (3.1.9), yet father is defined against daughter, daughter against father.

Not only is Miranda the good heart opposite and complementary to Prospero's severity, she is also beautiful to look at. It is this glowing outward beauty which captivates Ferdinand in his first vision of his future bride. Prospero's exhibitions of beautiful Miranda to select audiences echo Time's poignant revelation of Truth. The first of the two principal visions of Miranda is Ferdinand's alone, arranged by Prospero to take place shortly after the prince has been washed ashore. "O you wonder," Ferdinand exclaims in reverence, believing himself to be in the presence of "the goddess / On whom these airs attend" (1.2.430, 1.2.425-26). Later, undergoing the mild trial of labour set for him by Prospero, Ferdinand, with a pun on her name, calls the object of his growing affection:

Admired Miranda!
Indeed the top of admiration! worth
What's dearest to the world! (3.1.37-38)

"So perfect and so peerless" she seems to him to be "created / Of every creature's best!" (3.1.47-48). "[G]reat perfection" is also exhibited by Truth in Peter Pett's poem. Here the heroine is "a pure virgin of unblemisht name: / Whose great perfection (though some dare to blame) / Is admirable, and beyond compare, / Most excellent, most exquisite, and rare" (C1). Furthermore, "(though wicked men she live among) [...] shortly shall her beauty be admired" (C1). Even Caliban is not immune to admirable Miranda's charms although they fail to inspire virtue in him. In his attempt to prompt Stephano to murder Prospero, he tells the would-be assassin:

[...] most deeply to consider is
The beauty of his daughter; he himself
Calls her a nonpareil [...] (3.2.93-95)

The setting of the final vision of Miranda, in the company of Ferdinand, is Prospero's rocky cell, outside of which he has positioned the passengers of the shipwrecked vessel. To Alonso the sight at first seems like "a vision of the island" (5.1.176), while to Sebastian it is "[a] most high miracle!" (5.1.177). Prospero's use of a cave for his display of Miranda recalls Whitney's emblematic depiction of Time guiding Truth out of a cave – taking her part, breaking her bands, and "bring[ing] her foes to foile" (Whitney 93). This, indeed, is the climax of Prospero's triumph: his revelation of Miranda, her miraculous appearance out of darkness, and the simultaneous correction of past and ongoing wrongs (perpetrated by Alonso, Antonio, Sebastian, Trinculo, Stephano, and Caliban). In Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*, "Time's glory is to calm contending kings, to unmask falsehood and bring truth to light" (l. 939-40). In *The Tempest* Prospero's glory is to dominate dukes and kings, to unmask treason and

bring Miranda to light. Incidentally, when brought to light Miranda and Ferdinand are engaged in a game of chess, a game which not only alluded to strategic military or romantic pursuits but in the early 17th century still carried its medieval meaning as an allegory for life itself: When the game is up, all pieces, whether pawn or king, end up in the same bag together (Yachnin 322-23). The shared fate of mortality awaits all, notwithstanding the differentiated roles played in life. Thus, for the spectators, the vision of Miranda in Prospero's cave, the centre of power and control, coincides with a brief glimpse of the game-like mechanics of existence.



Fig. 3: Bonasone, Giulio. After Giulio Romano. *Father Time*. 1531-76. From: British Museum. Collection online. Museum no. H,7.89.

McGovern has argued that when Prospero announces his intention of returning to Milan at the end of the play, “a cycle will have been completed [...]: the place of error will become the place of enlightenment” (10). Regardless of whether a new and improved duke will rule in Milan or previous events repeat themselves, in cyclical fashion, the play ends on a note that visually emphasizes the theme of time. When Prospero assembles Alonso, Antonio and their company within a circle he has himself drawn on the ground, he executes a symbolically charged gesture, demonstrating not only his rule over his captives but over time itself. The circle, traditional symbol of eternity, is listed by Erwin Panofsky as an occasional attribute of Father Time in Renaissance art, often in the form of a snake or dragon biting its own tail (74). The tail-biting snake (ouroboros) is depicted alongside personified Time in a 16th century composition by Giulio Romano (1531-76), an artist certainly known to Shakespeare. The image (fig. 3) shows Father Time in a rural space, leaning on his scythe as on a staff. By his side is a snake biting its tail and encircling a globe. That Shakespeare was impressed by the artist around the time of composing *The Tempest*, a decade into the 17th century, is suggested by the fact that a gentleman in *The Winter's Tale* names Romano as “that rare Italian master” (5.2.99) who allegedly sculpted the lifelike statue of the (presumed) dead queen.

The shape of the circle, at the same time, recalls the wheels of life and fortune, both also associated with personified Time (Iwasaki 30). Prospero's circle, drawn on the ground with his staff, is the equivalent of Time's "bending sickle's compass" (sonnet CXVI l. 10): while he himself remains outside of it, inevitably, all the rest are subject to Prospero's influence and come within it.

Time in *The Tempest*

The interpretation of Prospero and Miranda as Time and Truth is bolstered by the play's illustrative treatment of time in general. Cedric Watts has called *The Tempest* "a perennially transformable play of transformations" (20). And, after all, what is time but transformation? Drama is characterized by its status as a temporal art and therefore, stipulates Driver, "few approaches to a given play reveal its form and its view of reality as quickly as a study of its treatment of time" (363). He goes on to say that in *The Tempest* "past, present, and future are treated very schematically, as concept instead of actuality" (369). While critics usually observe the fact that *The Tempest* adheres to the unity of time, this is generally regarded as mere academic trivia "rather than as a clue to the meaning of the play" (Watts 364). If the unity of time is perceived as a deliberate and meaningful choice worthy of interpretive consideration, however, an identification of Prospero with Time itself gains even more ground. It is unlikely to be coincidental that a considerable number of scholars have noted the play's approach to time to be an emphatic and unusual one.

In *The Tempest* "we are funneled into a strictly measured present" asserts Richard Hillman (142), and McGovern is in agreement, arguing that "[t]he word *now* is spoken emphatically again and again during the course of the play to express a heightened awareness of the present moment and a sense of crisis" (7). According to Driver the sense of present expressed in the play contains within itself both the past and the future. It is, furthermore, a present that lies entirely within Prospero's power: "He knows what did happen, he knows what is now happening, and he can arrange the future. He is lord of time" (Driver 369).

Beyond the present, the conceptual triad of past, present, and future also finds expression in the play. Prospero's words to Ferdinand that, in giving him his daughter's hand in marriage, he has given him "a third of mine own life" (4.1.3), have been variously interpreted. The most usual reading of the line, according to Driver, sees Prospero himself and his dukedom of Milan as the remaining two thirds of the whole (369). This explanation is proposed, too, by Franke Kermode (93), who also comments that "third" may have referred to or punned on "thread" and further cites the possibility that Prospero himself, his late wife, and Miranda together make up the three parts of the fraction. Yet, an alternative reading is put forward by the editors of the 1942 New Cambridge anthology of Shakespeare's works who prefer to read the line as a reference to "past, present, and future" (Neilson and Hill 558). As the 'life' of Time may be understood as the complex of past, present, and future, when Prospero/Time gives Miranda to Ferdinand he is making him a gift of the future. Past and present cease to matter in comparison as Prospero, with "[e]very third thought" (5.1.312),

muses on his demise. Correspondingly, in Peter Pett's narrative poem, personified Time explains:

[T]hough her foster-father *Time* must dy,
 When once his race appointed is expired,
 Yet *Truth* shall ever live immortally.
 And shortly shall her beauty be admired. (C2)

It is by drowning his books that Prospero signals the expiration of his own "race appointed" and the start of Miranda's future.

From Saturn to Prospero

The iconography of Father Time is linked to and derives from earlier representations in Roman and Greek mythology of Saturn/Kronos, a deity likewise depicted as an old man carrying a scythe. In Richard Linche's free translation of Vincenzo Cartari's *The Fountaine of Ancient Fiction* (1599) Saturn is described as

framed with a hooke or syth in his hand, demonstrating thereby (as they meant it) the invention of tilling the ground, because with that the corne recovering his maturitie, is cut downe. Other writers there are, that would have him signifie Tyme, as that with his sythe he should measure and proportionise the length of Time, and therewith to decurtate and cut away all things contained therein. (qtd. in Iwasaki 14-15)⁸

Conceptualizing the scythe as an instrument not only for harvesting grain but also for the metaphorical harvesting of souls is supported by the biblical memento mori-motto that "all flesh is grass," an idea that Time echoes in Pett's poem when he explains to the narrator that "all flesh is like to fading grasse" (B4). This is relevant here as not only do the iconographical genealogies of Saturn and Time overlap, Prospero and Saturn also share a similar fate: overthrow and exile. The exile of Saturn/Kronos was associated with the concept of a past and future golden age:

In Greek thought Kronos had predated Zeus and the reign of Kronos (Saturnus in Roman terms) was equated with a happier state of existence. Out of this belief arose in the Roman literature of the Augustan and post-Augustan periods the concept and phrase of the 'golden age' – the mythic recollection of a happier past state and the promise of a return to this state in the future. (Baldry 83-84)

In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Jupiter, son of Saturn, dethrones his father and confines him to Tartarus which causes the end of the first golden age (Segal 83). Ovid's Jupiter is a raging tyrant but characterizations of the gods vary and Saturn, frequently, is a highly negative figure who employs a dietary means to secure his continued power: devouring his own children. In iconographical correspondence between Saturn and anthropomorphous Father Time, "Devouring Time" of Shakespeare's sonnet XIX makes "the earth devour her own sweet brood" (l. 1, 2). Multiple narratives of the

⁸ To add to his ancient, time-bent appearance, Saturn was also often represented with a staff, crutch or peg leg (Iwasaki 16). Correspondingly, "[m]isshapen" and "[e]ater of youth" are epithets bestowed on personified Time in *The Rape of Lucrece* (l. 925, 927).

overthrow of Saturn coexist and the character of Saturn – much like Prospero – oscillates between the poles of good and evil. In an account by Euhemeros, Saturn is not only overthrown by his son Jupiter – whom he had failed to kill – but had been displaced by his brother previously. In stark contrast to this, in the *Aeneid*, Virgil's Saturn is not a cannibal but a vegetarian and benefits humanity by bringing agriculture and civilization to Italy, the place of his exile (Johnston 59; Baldry 89).

Prospero, certainly in possession of some saturnine character features, is reminiscent of Saturn/Kronos not only as both suffer overthrow and consequent exile, but also in his ambiguity of characterization. A golden age motif also clings to both personages. As the reign of Saturn is expected to recommence in a second golden age, so Prospero envisages a glorious return to his place of origin and expulsion. In his millenarian and alchemical interpretation of the play, Michael Srigley explores the golden age analogy of Prospero's exile, whom he sees as "inspired by a noble dream, the dream of a restored Golden Age to be ushered in by Miranda" (115).⁹ The original golden age he identifies as the Milan of Miranda's infancy, a "paradisial world [...] destroyed by the intrusion of sin in the persons of Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian" (Srigley 66). The golden age comes to an abrupt end when Prospero and his infant daughter are abandoned at sea by these 'men of sin' and left to the mercy of the elements. For personified Truth in Pett's 1599 poem, too, worse things happen at sea: On Mary Tudor's ascension to the throne she is forced to flee England and endure a precarious exile in a small vessel, tempest-tossed on the ocean, only to be welcomed back in great style on the succession of Elizabeth I. In Miranda, Srigley sees the representation of man's "loss of truth, his long search for it, and his final recovery of his forgotten divinity" (66). In this reading Miranda also stands in for the biblical Woman of Revelation, driven into exile by the apocalyptic Man of Sin and awaiting her divine vindication there: "The appearance of this heavenly wonder, her persecution by Antichrist, her flight to a place prepared of God in the wilderness, and her emergence to lead in the Millenium became [...] the symbol of a new regenerated human society being born from the ashes of the old" (Srigley 164). Prospero's overthrow thus echoes Saturn's, while Miranda is the harbinger of a new golden age.

Considering what the *veritas filia temporis* allegory was used to convey – a sense of justification or consolation – it is not surprising that it should echo in one of Shakespeare's romances, with their strong themes of regeneration and redemption following trials and losses. E.M.W. Tillyard opined that the omission of the destructive phase of the tragic pattern in *The Tempest* was a necessary sacrifice on the playwright's part (qtd. in Potter 114). However, a phase of destruction and persecution is inherent in the *veritas filia temporis* motif and by its employment there is less need to show the hardships of Prospero and Miranda on stage than there would have otherwise been. Recognizing the motif means recognizing story elements connected to

⁹ Srigley reads the play as an alchemical allegory constituted by the ritual dissolution and reunification of impure matter into gold, the philosopher's stone, or a new golden age. This new golden age, Srigley points out, was imminent in cultural expectations of Europe in the early 17th century – amid apocalyptic speculations about living in the Christian end times.

it – the vindication of Truth is preceded by adversity – and what Tillyard saw as a sacrifice is, thus, merely avoiding redundancy.

To those familiar with the allegory, the culminating vision of Miranda in Prospero's cave is the vision of Truth brought about by Time. Prospero may use a staff where Father Time employs a sickle, yet both old men exhibit power over the elements, move lesser beings according to their stratagems from a place of detached superiority and even announce their ability to resurrect the dead. Prospero's lordship over time is ultimately symbolized by the circle, token of eternity, which he draws on the ground to encompass those he wishes to chastise for their faults and to confront with the vision of Miranda/Truth, whose admirable qualities are suddenly displayed for all to see. This is a variation of the triumph of Truth as depicted in Whitney's emblem, in which, after the forces of sin are vanquished, Time leads his daughter out of the darkness of a cave and into the light of final victory.

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Illustrations

Fig. 1. Holbein, Hans, the Younger. *Time bringing Truth into the Light*. Design for a medallion in the Jewellery Book. Pen and ink drawing. Ca. 1532-43. British Museum. Collection online. Museum no. SL,5308.2.

Fig. 2. Whitney, Geoffrey. Picture part of Whitney's fourth emblem. *Veritas temporis filia/Truth, the daughter of Time*. Engraving. 1586. From: *A Choice of Emblemes and other Devises*. Eds. Peter M. Daly, and Anthony Raspa. *The English Emblem Tradition: Index Emblematicus*. Vol. 1. Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 1988. 79-337.

Fig. 3. Bonasone, Giulio. After Giulio Romano. *Father Time*. Engraving. 1531-76. British Museum. Collection online. Museum no. H,7.89.

Zusammenfassung

Shakespeares Entscheidung Prospero eine *tempest* heraufbeschwören zu lassen und eben keinen bloßen *storm* (ein deutlich gebräuchlicherer Begriff), lässt darauf schließen, dass der Autor sich bewusst für das lateinstämmige *tempest* entschieden hat, wohl wissend, dass die Etymologie des Begriffes für ein zeitgenössisches Publikum Assoziationen mit *tempestas/Zeit* hervorrufen würde. Soweit argumentiert D.S. McGovern in seinem Artikel "Tempus' in *The Tempest*." Begründet werden kann Shakespeares titelgebende Wortwahl durch eine – meines Wissens hier erstmals vorgeschlagene – Lesart des *Tempest*, die in Prospero und Miranda allegorische Personifikationen der Zeit und der Wahrheit erkennt. Diese Figurenkonstellation erfreute sich im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert in England großer Popularität, sowohl im Sprachgebrauch, in der Literatur, als auch in der materiellen Kunst. Somit ist es keinesfalls überraschend, dass sich signifikante Parallelen zwischen Prospero und Miranda, einerseits, und dem Duo Zeit/Wahrheit, andererseits, aufzeigen lassen. Die grundsätzliche Konzeption von Zeit im Stück entspricht ebenfalls einer derartigen Lesart.

FORTUNE AND CASKETS

NECROPHILIA IN *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*

CHRISTIAN SMITH

The casket scene (3.2) in the *The Merchant of Venice* is the fulcrum point over which the play tilts. In this scene, Bassanio, the play's protagonist, acquires his desired goal, the right to marry Portia. The wedding follows, but the celebration and consummation is interrupted by the news of Shylock's claim over Antonio's life. Although deferred throughout the fourth act while the protagonists work to free Antonio from his debt to Shylock and the first half of the fifth act where they negotiate their first fight, the celebration finally occurs and the couples leave the stage to consummate their marriages. However, the comedic closure, which gives this play its membership in the genre of comedy, is problematic. Many critics have contested this generic attribution (Drakakis 48-5; Halio 10-11, 18; Mahood 9-12; Bate 414). In this paper Sigmund Freud's problematisation of the play's comedic closure will first be explored and then critiqued using Erich Fromm's notion of the necrophiliac character.

Das Motiv der Kästchenwahl

Sigmund Freud, in a 1913 paper titled "Das Motiv der Kästchenwahl", attempts an interpretation of the casket scene that inverts Bassanio's manifest comedic intentions to marry Portia and reveals a latent unconscious desire. Instead of a celebration of marriage and life, Bassanio, in Freud's reading, is seeking death. The first English translation of Freud's essay by C. J. M. Hubback in the 1925 *Collected Papers* is titled "The Theme of the Three Caskets". James Strachey keeps that title in his 1958 *Standard Edition* translation (*SE* 12 290). The translated title is clearly and significantly wrong. *Das Motiv der Kästchenwahl* means: the theme/motif or motive of the casket choice. *Kästchenwahl* refers to the choice that Bassanio has to make between the caskets. The emphasis of Freud's title is on the choice, the verb performed by the character. The emphasis of Hubback's and Strachey's English title is on the caskets themselves, the noun. The German word *Motiv* translates both as theme/motif and as motive. Freud's essay supports *both* meanings, as will be seen below.

Freud writes that there is a similarity between the three caskets in *The Merchant of Venice*, the three daughters in *King Lear*, and the three goddesses in *The Judgement of Paris*. The two scenes with which Freud opens his essay are the choice between the three caskets in *The Merchant of Venice* and Lear's choice between his three daughters in *King Lear*. Freud does not accept Bassanio's explanation for choosing the lead casket, claiming that, "what [Bassanio] finds to say in glorification of lead as against gold and silver is little and has a forced ring," and that, "if in psycho-analytic practice we were confronted with such a speech, we should suspect that there were concealed motives behind the unsatisfying reasons produced" ("The Theme of the Three Caskets" 291). Freud quibbles on the word *Motiv*, slipping between its meaning as

theme and its meaning as *motive*. About the theme of the caskets he writes, “es behandelt ein menschliches Motiv, die Wahl eines Mannes zwischen drei Frauen” (*Gesammelte Werke. Zehnter Band* 26).¹ Here he means *theme*. About Bassanio’s choice he writes, “Stünden wir in der psychoanalytischen Praxis vor solcher Rede, so würden wir hinter der unbefriedigenden Begründung geheimgehaltene Motive wittern” (*Gesammelte Werke. Zehnter Band* 24).² Here he means *motive*. In the title of the essay, the word *Kästchenwahl* suggests a reading of the word *Motiv* as *motive* as well as *theme*. The essay is about the theme of the three caskets, which Shakespeare borrowed from the medieval text *Gesta Romanorum* (Drakakis 32), but there is also the issue that Freud argues of another motive hidden underneath Bassanio’s conscious thoughts about the caskets.

Freud applies psychoanalytic dream analysis to the imagery in the casket scene. He writes: “if what we were concerned with were a dream, it would occur to us at once that caskets are also women, symbols of what is essential in woman, and therefore a woman herself – like coffers, boxes, cases, baskets, and so on [...] we see that the theme is [...] a man’s choice between three women” (*SE* 12 292). According to Freud, in all stories that feature a choice between three women the correct choice is the third. In the narratives that Freud lists, one quality that all the women in the third position share is muteness. When King Lear asks his daughters to tell him which one of them loves him most, the third daughter, Cordelia, says, in an aside, “What shall Cordelia speak? Love and be silent” (*King Lear* 1.1.62). When he turns to Cordelia and asks for her to speak, she responds by saying: “Nothing, my Lord” (*King Lear* 1.1.87).³ When, in *Cinderella*, the prince seeks Cinderella, she hides and remains silent. When Eros arrives to save Psyche after she returns from Hades, she is immersed in an eternal sleep because she had opened the box purporting to contain Proserpina’s beauty which actually contained a sleeping poison. Finding Aphrodite’s muteness in *The Judgment of Paris* is not as obvious until one considers the version of the story that Freud read – Offenbach’s libretto for *La Belle Hélène*, where Paris describes Aphrodite’s behaviour in this manner: “La troisième, ah! la troisième [...] / La troisième ne dit rien. / Elle eut le prix tout de même” (*SE* 12 294).⁴ Freud then states, “we may perhaps be allowed to equate concealment with dumbness” (*SE* 12 294), and then, in the next and final step, “if we decide to regard the peculiarities of our third one as concentrated in her ‘dumbness’, then psycho-analysis will tell us that in dreams dumbness is a common representation of *death*” (*SE* 12 295 emphasis added).

¹ “It treats of a (has to do with a) human theme, a man’s choice between three women.” (translation by author)

² “If we stood in psychoanalytic practice before such a speech, we would suspect that behind the unsatisfactory reasons are kept secret motives.” (translation by author)

³ Cordelia is, of course, not silent. She says that she loves her father, but will not participate in the flattery contest that he has set up. Flattery contributes to Lear’s downfall, and by not participating in it, Cordelia, similar to Kent and the Fool, work for the benefit of Lear. She will love him and her future husband, who is there at court awaiting marriage to her, in equal parts, as she is bound to do.

⁴ “The third one, oh, the third one, the third one *said nothing*, but she got the prize all the same.” (translation by author; emphasis added)

Thus Freud solves the riddle. When the men choose the third woman they choose death. According to Freud, Bassanio's words betray his unconscious motive when he says to the lead casket, "Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence" (3.2.106).⁵ Paleness alludes to death. Its competing quality in the sentence, eloquence, alludes to speech. Eloquence can be read as another version of flattery: the flattery that Morocco and Aragon read for themselves into the gold and silver caskets and the flattery that Regan and Goneril heap on Lear. It is also the outward appearance of gold and silver, the fine dresses of Cinderella's stepsisters, and the great house of which Psyche's sisters were so jealous. Freud supports his conclusion with the help of two folktales from the Brothers Grimm in which the good girl is supposed to be silent. His search through the mythology leads him to the root of the theme in Greek myth.

The three women are the Fates or Moerae. The third Fate is Atropos, the inexorable. She is the representation of Death who cuts the thread of one's life. Atropos cannot be persuaded or entreated in any way to change her enactment of one's death. The Moerae represent the "ineluctable severity of the Law and its relations to death and dissolution [...] though men had only perceived the full seriousness of natural law when they had to submit their own selves to it" (*SE 12 298*). Bassanio's choice – the third casket – and Lear's hope – his third daughter – represent Atropos, Death.

Freud then points out that there is the appearance of contradiction in this interpretation. Every one of the three women chosen in the stories represents the opposite of death. Choosing the lead casket gets Bassanio the "fair and wise Portia,"⁶ Cinderella is the most beautiful girl at the ball, Cordelia is the most loyal daughter, Psyche is so beautiful that she rivals and angers Aphrodite, and Aphrodite is the Goddess of Love. How can any of these women represent death? Freud moves towards a resolution of this contradiction by pointing out that the beautiful love goddess "has kept certain characteristics that border on the uncanny" (*SE 12 300*). A close reading of the casket scene reveals its uncanny death imagery. When Bassanio is about to choose, Portia calls for musicians from her train to perform a song and explains that the accompaniment will allow for a "swan-like end" if he loses. She says that her "eye shall be the stream / And wat'ry death-bed for him" (3.2.44, 47). The words to the song call for ringing "Fancy's knell" (3.2.70). There is an unconscious state of denial and dramatic irony to this notion that Portia and Bassanio endorse Fancy's death, since the first act of the play made it clear that Bassanio is *nothing but* fancy. His appearance as a gentleman is based on the borrowed money that will almost lead to Antonio's death. If Fancy's knell is being rung, then, in Freud's reading of this play,

⁵ Shakespeare connects paleness and lead to death in *Romeo and Juliet*. When Juliet is impatient for the Nurse to come with the news from Romeo, she complains that, "old folks, many feign as they were dead, / Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead" (*Romeo and Juliet* 2.5.16-17) All references are to the Arden edition of the play, Drakakis 2010.

⁶ Portia is not described as fair and wise in *The Merchant of Venice*. Bassanio describes her as fair and wealthy ("a lady richly left" 1.1.161) and A. W. Schlegel translates this as "*reich an Erbe*" and "*schön*" (1.1.164, 165). When she is acting as Balthazar in the court scene, Shylock calls Balthazar "a wise young judge" (4.1.220) when the judgment sways in his favour and Gratiano calls Balthazar "learned judge" (4.1.308) when the judgment swings to Antonio's side. Her status as fair and wise seems to exist uniquely in Freud's mind.

that would be for Bassanio who is about to choose the Goddess of Death. Finally, Bassanio describes the effect that Portia's portrait, which he finds inside the casket, has on its viewer in this manner: "The painter plays the spider, and hath woven / A golden mesh t'entrap the hearts of men / Faster than gnats in cobwebs" (3.2.121-3). The gnat, of course, dies, eaten by the female spider. These hints of death contribute uncanniness to the scene which provides the bridge between the two seemingly contradictory wishes – love and death.

According to Freud, Bassanio's drive to choose death is repressed when he expresses the opposite, a drive to choose marriage and life. Freud calls this *reaction-formation*, the defense mechanism by which the repressed wish is converted into its opposite (*SE 12* 299). In this case it converts the wish for dissolution and death into the wish to marry the fair Portia, live and procreate.⁷ The uncanniness of death imagery in a scene that should be a celebration of the comedic victory of Love arises when the repressed death-drive, which seems strange to the comedic celebration, is sensed as strangely familiar because it resides in the character's unconscious.

Freud explains the historical development of this specific reaction-formation:

The Moerae were created as a result of a discovery that warned man that he too is a part of nature and therefore subject to the immutable law of death. Something in man was bound to struggle against this subjection, for it is only with extreme unwillingness that he gives up his claim to an exceptional position. Man, as we know, makes use of his imaginative activity in order to satisfy the wishes that reality does not satisfy. So his imagination rebelled against the recognition of the truth embodied in the myth of the Moerae, and constructed instead the myth derived from it, in which the Goddess of Death was replaced by the Goddess of Love. (*SE 12* 299)

Towards the end of the essay, Freud switches plays and discusses reaction formation in Lear's reasons for choosing Cordelia – Atropos. He is an old man who wants an "unburdened crawl toward death" (*King Lear* 1.1.40). He knows that he is dying, but, Freud writes, "the doomed man is not willing to renounce the love of women; he insists on hearing how much he is loved" (*SE 12* 301). He will die in the arms of Cordelia – Atropos the Goddess of Death, the Valkyrie who will carry the warrior from the battlefield. Lear hints at this end early in the play when he says about Cordelia, "I loved her most, and thought to set my rest / On her kind nursery" (*King Lear* 1.1.123-4).⁸ Freud interprets the three women of the myths as the three relationships that men will have with women – "the woman who bears him, the woman who is his mate, and the woman who destroys him" – and as the three forms of

⁷ Note Gratiano's bet, "We'll play with them the first boy for a thousand ducats" (3.2.214).

⁸ Freud's third daughter, Anna Freud, served as the third woman in Freud's life. After Freud's daughter Sophie announced her engagement and intentions to leave the house he felt very sad. During this time he wrote the *Kästchenwahl* essay, and said to his colleague Ferenczi that with both his older girls married, "[his] closest companion will be [his] little daughter" (qtd. in Young-Bruehl 63). He called this the "subjective condition" of his *Kästchenwahl* essay (Freud to Ferenczi 9 July 1913; qtd. in Young-Bruehl 63). Freud asked Anna to nurse him as he was dying of cancer. Anna never married and never left home. As the nurse during his sixteen-year descent into death, she became that earth mother into whose arms he would die. And for that he called her his "Cordelia" (qtd. in Young-Bruehl 63).

the mother – “the mother herself, the beloved one who is chosen after her pattern, and lastly Mother Earth who receives him once more” (*SE 12* 301). Freud’s last line of the essay is: “But it is in vain that an old man yearns for the love of woman as he had it first from his mother; the third of the fates alone, the silent Goddess of Death, will take him into her arms” (*SE 12* 301).

However, there is a flaw in the logic of this essay. Freud interprets Bassanio’s (and Shakespeare’s) replacement of a death-drive with a life-drive for love and beauty as *reaction-formation*. He writes that this process whereby a wishful reversal has occurred and choice (life) stands in the place of destiny (death) is a *wish fulfilment*. However, these are not the same processes in psychoanalysis. It is wish fulfilment for Lear to wish that he was a man who is loved by young women instead of an old man who is dying, but this *is not* a reaction-formation. A reaction-formation is a defence mechanism that serves in the repression of an unconscious drive or desire. It is used for blocking or withdrawing libido, by intensifying its opposite (Freud “Repression,” *SE 14* 157). If Lear uses his conscious desire to choose the daughter who loves him best as a reaction-formation, then the repressed desire should be something that he *wants* to do and that certainly would not be *to die*. John Fletcher, writing about the *Kästchenwahl* essay, says that “if one was going to relate Freud’s essay to the theory of drives, it would not be to the death-drive, but rather to its opposite, the life drive or Eros” (personal communication April 2011). One might ask why Freud switches to Lear’s wishes and does not finish interpreting Bassanio’s reasons for choosing death – the third casket, Atropos. Bassanio is not an old man and is not dying. He is a young spender who is easily walking into a great deal of wealth at the casket scene. If he chooses death at this point then it would be an irrational, unconscious choice – exactly the kind of drive that one might want to repress through the use of reaction-formation. Freud does not discuss Bassanio’s reasons for having a *drive to choose death* because in 1913 Freud has not yet developed this theory, the theory beyond the pleasure principle, the theory of the death-drive (*Todestrieb*).

The *Kästchenwahl* essay provides a theoretical spark from which one could write a general psychoanalytic theory of comedy. Comedy (Eros) could be seen as a reaction-formation that represses tragedy (Thanatos). The life-drive that powers the comedic plot could be interpreted as a defensive inversion of the death-drive that powers the forces of the unconscious. Shakespeare presaged this notion by weaving many tragic fibres into the fabric of his comedies. It is significant that Freud uses a comedy, *The Merchant of Venice*, (albeit a problem one) in his attempt to work out what he will later call the death-drive. He does not correctly work it out with the tragedy that he talks about in the *Kästchenwahl* essay – *King Lear*. He could have found a great deal of material for a theory of the relationship between Eros and Thanatos in *Romeo and Juliet*, a tragedy that includes a comedy – the joining of the two families in peace – which is possible only through the tragedy – the death of the two lovers. He could have also found much to work with in the Sonnets, where Eros defies death (“So long lives this and this gives life to thee” Sonnet 18, line 14). Freud could not have worked out this theory of comedy as reaction-formation in 1912-13 because he had not yet

even understood that this is what he was writing about. There is a huge gap, in this essay, between what is on Freud's mind and his capacity to theorise it.⁹

The Necrophilious Character

Frankfurt School critical theorist Erich Fromm offers a theory that can be used to understand Bassanio's relationship to death from a psychoanalytic-Marxist perspective – the theory of the necrophilious character. Fromm writes that “man's nature cannot be defined in terms of a specific quality, such as love, hate, reason, good or evil but only in terms of fundamental *contradictions* that characterize human existence and have their root in the biological dichotomy between missing instincts and self-awareness” (*Anatomy* 304). Fromm holds that there are existential psychic needs such as overcoming the horror of separateness, powerlessness, and lostness and the need to find new forms of relating oneself to the world to enable one to feel at home that “are rooted in the very conditions of human experience. They are shared by all men, and their fulfilment is as necessary for man's remaining sane as the fulfilment of organic drives is necessary for his remaining alive” (*Anatomy* 305). The different ways of satisfying these existential needs manifest themselves in passions such as love, tenderness, striving for justice, independence, truth, hate, sadism, masochism, destructiveness, and narcissism. Fromm calls them character-rooted passions. Character, according to Fromm, is “the relatively permanent system of all non-instinctual strivings through which man relates himself to the human and natural world” (*Anatomy* 305). This character structure is historically-specific; each set of social conditions acting through biologically-given conditions of human existence constructs a different type of character. Contradictions between social conditions and human needs set up contradictions in the human strategies to fulfil those needs. One of these contradictory strategies leads to “the passion to destroy life and the attraction to all that is dead (necrophilia)” which “seem[s] to develop in the new urban civilization” (*Anatomy* 226).¹⁰ He defines necrophilia as: “the passionate attraction to all that is dead, decayed, putrid, sickly; it is the passion to transform that which is alive into something unalive; to destroy for the sake of destruction; the exclusive interest in all that is purely mechanical. It is the passion to tear apart living structures” (*Anatomy*

⁹ Even though Freud did not coin the term until 1920, the development of the theory of the death-drive spanned the length of Freud's writing life. He began writing about the drive for quiescence and death in his unpublished 1895 *Project for a Scientific Psychology*. In his metapsychological works in 1915, especially “On Narcissism”, Freud constructs the theoretical basis for his notion of the death-drive which he first names in his 1920 book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Freud's interpretation of *The Merchant of Venice's* casket scene in the 1913 *Kästchenwahl* essay offers a glimpse of the manner in which Shakespeare's plays influenced the development of psychoanalytic theory. This influence was mediated through Freud's personal use of Shakespeare's plays to handle his own psychological trauma. This matter is discussed in my thesis: *Shakespeare's Influence on Marx, Freud and the Frankfurt School Critical Theorists* (Smith 2013).

¹⁰ The point has been made throughout post-Freudian psychoanalytic scholarship that Freud's *Todestrieb* should be considered to be a drive and not an instinct (see Jean Laplanche's and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*), but that Freud himself has created confusion through an universalisation and biologisation of his theories.

441).¹¹ This conceptualisation of the death-drive differs from Freud's, who holds that the death-drive is universal. It is not a product of history; instead, history is a product of the universal death-drive. In Fromm's critical theory, the death-drive is historically-specific and socially-constructed.

Fromm reformulates Freud's death-drive as "necrophilia", a socially-constructed love of death and destruction – a historicised death wish. While Freud's notion of the death-drive can be used to read the inverse in Shakespeare's comedic celebrations, it posits an *a priori* death-drive and this makes it less useful for critical theory. Fromm inverts Freud's essentialism into historical-materialism. Fromm's theory can be used to historicise the inversion of Bassanio's motives. His notion of necrophilia, a critique of Freud's theory of the universal death-drive, features the actions of the "marketing character" for whom "everything is transformed into a commodity" (*Anatomy* 464). For the necrophilious marketing character:

only the past is experienced as quite real, not the present or the future. What has been, i.e., what is dead, rules his life: institutions, laws, property, traditions, and possessions. Briefly, things rule man; having rules being; the dead rule the living. (Fromm *Anatomy* 451)

Applying Fromm's notion of the marketing character, which could also be called the merchant character, to *The Merchant of Venice*, one can yield a reading of the play through a psychoanalytic-Marxist synthesis that historicises the death-drive through Karl Marx's theory of commodities.¹² Freud has already inverted Bassanio's motives from choosing life to choosing death. Using Fromm's critical theory, one can complete the analysis as a dialectical-materialist interpretation.

A central claim in the first chapters of Marx's *Capital Vol. 1* is that commodities are composed of crystallised labour that has already been spent in the making of them. Capitalists purchase commodities and the labouring power of workers, which is used to add value to the commodities. The commodities are then sold and a profit is made from exploiting the new living labour that has been added to the commodities. Capitalists accumulate profit by transforming living labour into dead labour and crystallising the labour in their commodities. The basis of capitalist wealth is the dead precipitate of living labour. Through the fetishism of commodities it appears on the surface that the death-containing commodities, like vampires, seek living labour to valorise themselves. People under the sway of the fetish love and worship the dead

¹¹ Fromm holds that Adolf Hitler is exemplary of the necrophiliac character. His reaction-formation could be witnessed in the contradiction between his love of architecture and the high amount of building that he ordered to be done – Fromm calls this "nothing but a cover for his wish to destroy" (*Anatomy* 528) – and his destruction of cities. Hitler ordered Paris destroyed, and, as he was about to be defeated, he ordered Germany destroyed (*Anatomy* 528).

¹² The libertines in the Marquis de Sade's *Juliette*, the text on which Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer focus in their second excursus in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, are almost all necrophiliacs. Murder fuels their sexual excitement and, in some cases, they are sexually excited by corpses. As an allegory of capitalism, *Juliette* is a story of necrophilia. Juliette's sexual excitement, which she causes by banishing empathy, is a form of reaction-formation against empathy. She fears dissolution of her *self* into the *other*. The resulting drive is her sexual love of murdering people – her necrophilia.

labour-containing commodities, especially the god of commodities, money. Capitalism makes the historical subject into a necrophiliac.

While Fromm does not do a reading of *The Merchant of Venice*, applying his critical theory to the play allows one to read Bassanio as a necrophiliac who is in love with death, but not in the way that Freud sees it. Instead, Bassanio is the market-character necrophiliac. He loves commodities. He is a prodigal spender who has wasted all of Antonio's former loans.¹³ When he receives the loan from Antonio through Shylock he immediately hands Leonardo a shopping list for all that is to be bought for feasting and preparations to meet Portia (2.2.159). The feast and the preparations (for example, the new liveries) are part of the investment: it is the use of dead-labour containing commodities to fetch more living labour. Fletcher writes that Bassanio's mindset at the casket choice scene is "ironically [...] exactly that of the fortune-hunting gold-digger that [Portia's] father set up the casket test to protect her from" (personal communication April 2011).¹⁴ This is clear from the reasons that Bassanio gives Antonio for his pursuit of Portia. He says: "[...] my chief care / Is to come fairly off from the great debts / Wherein my time, something too prodigal, / Hath left me gaged" (1.1.127-9). He will seek his fortune with the lady "richly left" (1.1.161). There are also clues in the *confessing treason* conceit in the casket choice scene that Bassanio is looking for something other than love. When he says that he lives "upon the rack", Portia asks him to confess "what treason is mingled with [his] love" (3.2.25-7). Indeed there is a treason, Bassanio's wealth-seeking motive, which is alluded to when he says, "Confess and love / Had been the very sum of my confession" (3.2.35-6). John Drakakis writes that "very sum" is an idiom of "computation" (*Merchant* 293). It is the language of commodity value. This commodity conceit continues after Bassanio opens the lead casket and finds that he has won the gamble. He pulls out the piece of paper he finds inside and says, "Here's the scroll, / The continent and summary of my fortune" (3.2.129-30). Drakakis indicates that *continent* means both container and "a continuous tract of land associated with a voyage of exploration for profit" (*Merchant* 302). Bassanio has found his profit. He invested Antonio's money well and struck it rich on his new tract of land, Belmont. In the process, Shylock, the source of the value (the loan) is estranged from his religion and his wealth. Bassanio's love talk to Portia is indeed a reaction-formation. It serves to repress his necrophiliac commodity-seeking. At the end of the play, Portia distributes commodities and wealth to the men: she gives merchant ships back to Antonio, Shylock's wealth to Lorenzo, Nerissa's virginity to

¹³ Significantly, Antonio never gets what he wanted from Bassanio in return for his loans – love. The first line of the play, spoken by Antonio, "In sooth I know not why I am so sad" (1.1.1), signals Antonio's tragic lack of love. When the last lines of the play are spoken by Gratiano, in which he sends the newlyweds to the marriage bed, Antonio stands alone, unloved, for he loves a necrophiliac who cannot love the living.

¹⁴ He is described by Fletcher as "the well set-up, alpha male member of the *jeunesse dorée*, the darling of his culture – from Claudio in *Much Ado* to Bertram and Cassio – whom Shakespeare is both drawn to but clearly distrusts and makes the butt of his ironic exposures (and his sonnets)" (personal communication, April 2011).

Gratiano – with all the privilege to wealth that it contains, and her own virginity with its rich inheritance to Bassanio.

The last lines of the play, spoken by Gratiano, express the love of the necrophiliac for the death-laden commodity he now possesses: “I’ll fear no other thing / So sore as keeping safe Nerissa’s ring” (5.1.306-7). The words “no [...] thing” and “ring” allude to Nerissa’s and her wealthy mistress Portia’s virginity. In a play that is partly set in the financial district of Venice, the originating space of merchantilism and the root of capitalism, and in which all love is commodified,¹⁵ Gratiano’s¹⁶ statement, that the most important task of his life now is to keep safe his new possession, is quite fitting to the overall economic conceit sustained throughout the play. As in capitalism, which this play has prophetically depicted, Eros is subsumed under economics. And if economics are the love of death-containing commodities, then, in *The Merchant of Venice*, Eros is subsumed under Thanatos.

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¹⁵ The interesting exception to this is Shylock’s love for his wife Leah. He would not sell her ring for a wilderness of monkeys (3.2.110-111).

¹⁶ Gratiano’s name makes sense in the economic conceit of the play. While Bassanio had to invest money – to the near peril of Antonio – in order to get Portia, Gratiano did not have to invest anything. He rode on Bassanio’s friendship for free. Hence his name, Gratiano – gratis (L, free).

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Zusammenfassung

In seinem Essay „Das Motiv der Kästchenwahl“ (1913) entwickelt Sigmund Freud eine alternative Deutung der Kästchenwahl in *Der Kaufmann von Venedig*. Nach Freud sucht Bassanio nicht die Liebe, sondern den Tod. Demnach verdrängt Bassanio in einer sogenannten Reaktionsbildung den Todestrieb durch den Lebenstrieb. Um diese Interpretation zu stützen bezieht sich Freud auf das Motiv der drei Frauen in Mythologie und Sage, macht dabei jedoch einen signifikanten Fehler in seiner Theorie, weil er zu diesem Zeitpunkt die Theorie des Todestriebs noch nicht vollständig

entwickelt hatte. Die Aporie in Freuds Essay wird in diesem Artikel zu einer marxistisch-psychoanalytischen Deutung von *Der Kaufmann von Venedig* weiterentwickelt. Mit Hilfe von Erich Fromms Theorie der Nekrophilie lässt sich Bassanio nicht als Todsuchender im physischen Sinn lesen sondern vielmehr als nekrophiler Charakter, der den Tod in Form von vergegenständlichter Arbeit, also Kapital und Reichtum, sucht. Shakespeare, so wird hier argumentiert, hat in seinem Drama bereits die Nekrophilie des Kapitalismus beschrieben, und zwar zu einem Zeitpunkt, in welchem sich das neue Wirtschaftssystem an seinem historischen Ursprung befand.

CALL FOR STATEMENTS – SHAKESPEARE SEMINAR 2015

Shakespeare's Unsung Heroes and Heroines

Without Paulina and Antigonus there would be no reunion, however tainted, between Leontes and Hermione, and there would be no union of Perdita and Florizel in *The Winter's Tale*. In a sense, then, Paulina and Antigonus are the unsung heroine and hero of the play. Undoubtedly, Antigonus' exit pursued by a bear is not typical of a tragic hero. Taking Antigonus' melodramatic exit as an example, Sir Walter Raleigh, then Professor of English Literature at Oxford, famously complained in 1907 that Shakespeare disposed of his minor characters "in the most unprincipled and reckless fashion." In this seminar we would like to explore heroic qualities in Shakespeare's 'minor' characters, and thus equally revisit preconceived notions about the status of these minor characters as well as traditional concepts of the (tragic) hero. What did Shakespeare's contemporaries make, for example, of Enobarbus deserting Antony and then dying of grief when confronted with Antony's generosity and Octavius' cynicism? Was Enobarbus a tragic hero in the eyes of contemporary audiences of Antony and Cleopatra? Do we see him as a tragic hero? What about the minor female characters? Are Ophelia and Lady Anne, for instance, the tragic heroines of *Hamlet* and *Richard III*? Considering heroic qualities in Shakespeare's minor characters can help bring into focus changing attitudes to heroism and hero worship. At the same time, this perspective also allows for probing into more fundamental dramatic and literary conventions: how 'minor' are minor characters in Shakespeare's plays? Does poetic justice only appertain to the great? Which concepts of heroism can we use to take account of marginal characters in the comedies and romances? Which role do categories such as gender and race play in our / the early modern conception of what is 'heroic'? Which methods (genre theory, network theory, New Historicism) are productive tools to analyse Shakespeare's minor characters? How have theatrical and filmic adaptations dealt with Shakespeare's unsung heroes and heroines?

Our seminar plans to address these and related questions with a panel of six papers during the annual conference of the German Shakespeare Association, Shakespeare-Tage (23-26 April 2015 in Berlin), which will focus on "Shakespeare's Heroes and Heroines." As critical input for the discussion and provocation for debate, panellists are invited to give short statements on the basis of pre-circulated papers presenting concrete case studies, concise examples and strong views on the topic. Please send your proposals (abstracts of 300 words) and all further questions by **30 November 2014** to the seminar convenors:

Felix Sprang, University of Hamburg: felix.sprang@uni-hamburg.de
Christina Wald, Humboldt University of Berlin: christina.wald@hu-berlin.de

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