

**WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(1564-1616)**

Henri VI and the Piccola Familia

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In France the main event of this Shakespeare anniversary year is a marathon staging of the three plays of *Henry VI* by a very young cast, La Piccola Familia, a company created by Thomas Jolly (now aged 32) and some of his friends after they graduated from Rennes Drama School in 2006.¹

The project started in 2010 with six or seven actors playing the first two Acts of *1Henry VI*, a performance lasting two hours, so already a lengthy enterprise for a short text. Their ultimate aim was to perform the whole of the trilogy in a few years - the idea of adding *Richard III* was soon abandoned. So they were ready to embark on a completely oversized theatrical “saga”, as they call it².

They won the support of the National Theatre of Cherbourg, in Normandy (Le Trident, www.trident-sn.com), and thus “Cycle 1”, premiered in Cherbourg on January 17th 2012, then toured in Normandy and Brittany, sometimes playing in very small venues, or at best in regional theatres, where they received unanimous acclaim. Due to favourable reviewing in the local and then the national press, and the “likes” of many Facebook Friends (the number growing by the day), the play has now reached the Parisian stage with equally great success.

For the time being, “Cycle 1” is staged split into episodes 1 and 2. Each episode is in fact a full play of over three hours with an interval, the average norm in France for a performance. At week-ends the two episodes are staged in continuity with a longer interval of an hour (indeed this project also involves the catering arrangements for a few hundred people), showing that the spectators are most willing to attend a seven-hour theatrical experience.

“Cycle 1” corresponds to *1Henry VI* and *2Henry VI* Acts 1 to 3. “Cycle 2” will include the end of *Henry VI* and the whole of *3Henry VI*, split into yet another two episodes³. So the integral version of the trilogy should last for over fifteen to sixteen hours in all.

As in 2009 they had won a prize for one of their first productions⁴ at Odéon-Théâtre de l’Europe in Paris, “Cycle 1” was originally scheduled there by the director, Olivier Py. However, it was cancelled when Py’s mandate came to a sudden end. It was a hard blow for the company; nevertheless, they went on with their project even in the absence of this national perspective. Exactly two years after “Cycle 1” was premiered in Cherbourg, and although they wanted to keep away from the “pressure of Paris”⁵, they

¹ See their site: www.lapiccolafamilia.fr The Company is based in Rouen, in Normandy. The Drama School was run by Stanislas Nordey, the then director of the National Stage of Brittany (Théâtre National de Bretagne) in Rennes.

² Thomas Jolly, Q&A session organized by Delphine Lemonnier-Textier, University of Rennes 2, 7 November 2013.

³ Episode 1 of “Cycle 2” (including the scenes of civil war with Jack Cade) was premiered in November 2013 at the Théâtre National de Bretagne in Rennes.

⁴ *Toâ*, a comedy by Sacha Guitry.

⁵ Thomas Jolly, Q&A session organized by Delphine Lemonnier-Textier.

were programmed as part of the winter season of Les Gémeaux , a theatre in the southern suburbs of Paris⁶. In July 2014, they will perform the complete two cycles in the brand-new indoors venue, “La FabricA”, during the 64th Avignon Official Festival, commissioned by Olivier Py, now newly appointed Director of the Festival. (www.festival-avignon.com). For Thomas Jolly and his company, this is now an official, national and international recognition, and also a great personal success.

From a small group of long-standing school and college friends, the cast has expanded to a company of eighteen actors playing several roles, and a team of eight technicians working in shifts due to the working-hour regulations. So it has become a heavy set-up to manage, even if the actors are willing to work overtime just for pleasure.

Since January 2014 Thomas Jolly has been director in residence at the National Theatre of Brittany in Rennes. A large enough rehearsal room could not be found in Rennes, so they work in Cherbourg, in a disused hospital refurbished as cinema studios, now empty. Before that, they were allotted an old church in Rouen, Saint-Ouen, a venue which left its mark on their creative process, as we will see.

They chose the translation of the prestigious bilingual collection of La Pléiade⁷. Still in the process of translating and editing the text, Line Cottagnies was in contact with them, but made it clear that a translator was not an assistant director, nor a dramaturg. In her translation, she chose not to reproduce the archaic phrases of the 1590s, but to write a blank verse or prose text in modern French which, while keeping as close as possible to the original, could be easily voiced by the actors and understood by the spectators⁸.

They followed the text fairly closely, cutting only a few cues here and there. Why did they choose a historical trilogy, relating troubled events of a distant past, starting with sound French-bashing⁹?

There have been just a few attempts at performing the full cycle in France. During the 1966-67 season Jean-Louis Barrault staged his own adaptation at Odéon-Théâtre de France, the three plays being compacted into one (www.lesarchivesduspectacle.net). Denis Llorca used the material of the trilogy and *Richard III* to produce *Kings (Henri VI and VII)*, a three-part affair subtitled “Summer”, “Autumn” and “Winter” or a twelve-hour performance, which premiered at the Carcassonne summer Festival in 1978 and then toured France the following season¹⁰. In July 1994, Stuart Seide directed his own translation/adaptation, split into two parts, which premiered at the Avignon Festival. When performed as a whole, the cycle lasted over eight hours (www.ina.fr/video/CAC94071209). Considering the success of these three ventures, we can deduce that long performances do not deter potential audiences; on the contrary they seem to become the mark of summer festivals¹¹.

⁶ Les Gémeaux, 49 avenue Georges Clémenceau, 92330 Sceaux. Director : Françoise Letellier. (Site: www.lesgemeaux.com), from Friday, 10 January to Wednesday, 22 January 2014.

This is the theatre in which Declan Donnellan usually gives his productions, such as *Ubu*, last year.

⁷ Line Cottagnies 2008. *Henri VI*. In Jean-Michel Déprats et Gisèle Venet (eds), *Histoires - Shakespeare*, tome 1, Collection Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris Gallimard.

⁸ Line Cottagnies, Q&A Session, organized by Delphine Lemonnier-Textier, cited.

⁹ Thomas Jolly mentioned that a workshop he attended at the drama school in 2004 impressed him so much that during a summer of idleness after his graduation, he re-read the plays again and started to work on the dramaturgy. Q&A session, cited.

¹⁰ See Michael Hattaway (ed.) 1990. *First Part of Henry VI*, Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, Introduction, p. 49.

¹¹ The average two-hour performance given as the norm in *Romeo & Juliet*'s Prologue, and followed by English tradition, does not apply in France. Let us only consider Antoine Vitez's 6-hour *Hamlet* in 1984, or Ariane Mnouchkine's Shakespeare Cycle, 1981-84 (www.theatre-du-oleil.fr/thsol/IMG/pdf/Shakespeare.pdf).

More experienced directors usually premiere their productions in a summer Festival, and then embark on national or international tours. But for Thomas Jolly and his company, success came from very small, provincial stages, and from the enthusiasm of their early spectators; only after such popular success will they play in front of the Avignon audiences of the Official Festival: this young man is really changing established habits.

For Thomas Jolly, the kingdom that Henry VI inherited when he was nine months old, at the mercy of rival factions or powerful warlords and relatives, is very similar to our times. Just like Talbot, for instance, some characters regret the chivalric values of the past, but some, like him, would like to have an impact on how the present is shaped. Jolly further states that Henri VI was a magnificent king, righteous, benevolent, and striving for peace, but in spite of his moral stand, his reign was extremely bloody, and he himself was assassinated by Richard of York¹². This is why Jolly chose a very distinguished actor for the part (Thomas Germaine) who strives to keep his peaceful line among his dissembling courtiers.

The start of this saga on the stage was Henry V's burial. The shape of a church, with deep blue and red stained-glass windows, reminiscent of Saint Ouen Church (Rouen), was projected on the back cloth; on each side three beige cloth-shapes descended from the flies to form the gothic pillars of the choir. Some organ music completed the tone of bereavement during this religious scene. An apparent scene of grieving for the untimely death of a heroic king, this was also the start of internal intrigues.

Shakespeare made sure to name all the descendants of Edward III, his seven sons, and the pretenders in order to clear up the origin of the War of the Roses to his contemporaries. In this production, instead of a fastidious quick naming, this very short sequence of text gave way to a fairly long stage business. In Period 1, a vast piece of beige cloth on which all the names were written in huge letters was dropped down from the balcony of the wooden set facing the audience. The actors went up and down the central steps to point to the names given in the text. In Period 2, almost the same device was used again: the cloth went down, but this time, there were no steps, an actor, wearing heavy black and white make-up and a top hat like a circus master, listed the heirs to the lines of succession from the stage floor. The members of each House held a white or a red ribbon according to their allegiance.

These passages took much longer to perform than simply delivering the few lines of the text which are usually quickly dismissed as confusing and boring. This device added clarity in such an otherwise complex set-up, so that the framework of the War of the Roses became familiar to all the members of the audience, whether they had read the plays before or not. It also provided further stage business which was received as comical relief by the audience.

Confusion also arises from the numerous names of locations in the play, as the action shifts from one place to another, especially in the first episode of the Hundred-Year War. Orléans, Rouen: the names of the towns were stuck in huge black letters on top of the central set, representing the façade of a fort above the ramparts. A further piece of stage business provoked laughter from the audience, when a soldier wrote Bordeaux: he stuck the letters in a disorderly manner, starting with B, leaving out a blank and sticking

This trend is not limited to Shakespeare; see *Le Mahabharata*, directed by Peter Brook in the 1985 Avignon Festival, Carrière Boulbon lasting for nine hours (www.ina.fr/vidoe/CAB85033).

¹² Brochure of the play, Les Gémeaux, p. 3.

an E, to the confusion of the soldiers down below on the stage floor. It also produced a sense of suspense when a few more letters were added, and the name was made clear, as if it was a TV game or some giant crossword. The same device was used for the castle of the King of Anjou. However it did not read King René, but a very familiar “chez René” (“at René’s”): a funny parody of the previous sequence, indicating that King René lacked material means, authority, and dignity, and that he was ready to give up/trade his daughter Margaret in exchange for the land he had lost in battle, and had not the means to marry her off with a dowry.

Defeats and victories follow each other at a very quick pace, especially in *I Henry VI*. On stage, war was dealt with in an unglamorous manner devoid of heroism. The knights came from the wings in single file, straddling a wooden chair for a horse, hopping around the stage to take their stand in front of the gates, and banging on the imposing metal doors (reminiscent of *Lord of the Rings*) as they charged with cheerful shouts, but were soon thrown out, helmet and chair falling on top of them¹³. The Dauphin, a big-bellied, bad soldier, only took advantage of the courage and expertise of the army, and also of Jeanne. He was once thrown out with his trousers down, as proof that instead of fighting, he had been involved in sex. In the town of Orleans, the citizens managed to bypass the siege imposed by the English troops: this was suggested by a cart bringing big red boxes across the enemy lines to the bottom of the city walls. The boxes were then thrown to the citizens lined up on the ramparts, and passed from hand to hand to the tune of a lively song, before disappearing within the city

This war scene really belonged to the code of a comic strip. However it was transformed by the beautiful lighting effect coming from the stage-floor, which produced varied shades of golden reflections and darker shadows on the surface of the doors according to the irregularities of the metal.

With her short, bright-blue hair and her tight armour enhancing the shape of her breasts, Jeanne la Pucelle (actress Flora Diguët) was far from the traditional representation of the saviour of France and liberator of Orleans¹⁴. Even if this portrayal does not glorify the people of Orleans, her interpretation mirrors the fascination of younger generations for cartoon heroes. The young woman warrior seemed like an alien bound on an impossible mission - that of supporting a worthless pretender. It was made obvious that the voices she heard were not taken as a serious call from God, but manifested her psychological unbalance. She strode up and down the stage as a kind of super-human power, endowed with a task which left her alone to face the enemy, a figure seemingly taken straight from one of the cartoon series of Enki Bilal¹⁵ or a Japanese manga. Her magic weapon was a very long white ribbon attached to a stick. When she moved about, her ribbon swirled round and round forming circular, kinetic images taking possession of the space, as if she were victorious over invisible armies. She was soon followed by her allies and enemies who were holding their ribbons, and so, the stage became a place of intense commotion of red and white circles to the sound of loud

¹³ The chairs were the only props they had at hand during their rehearsal in Saint-Ouen Church in Rouen. They decided to keep using them as symbolic horses, thinking that during their tours, it would always be possible to find about fifty wooden chairs. (Interview, Delphine Lemonnier-Textier, Monday, 20 January 2014). It reminded me of Simon McBurney’s *The Master and Margarita* by Bulgakov: the horse on which the two heroes take their flight is composed of all the chairs used in the performance that the actors move about on the stage-floor. Projected on the back wall, the horse thus composed gave the impression of galloping. Complicité, Cour d’Honneur of the Papal Palace, Avignon 2012 (see: www.festival-avignon.com/fr/Archive/Spectacle/2012/3358)

¹⁴ As Jean Seberg in Otto Preminger’s film (*Saint Joan*, 1957, script by Graham Greene after the play by G.B.Shaw) or Florence Delay [Carrez] in Bresson’s film (*Procès de Jeanne*, 1962)

¹⁵ Enki Bilal, *La Croisière des Oubliés*, *La Femme Piège* (bilal.enki.free.fr)

metallic music and stroboscopic lighting. There was none of the usual sanctification of the part, and no hint that the fate of Joan would be tragic, but one must take into account the fact that in France Joan of Arc has become the symbol of nationalist, extreme-right parties. The future was not foreshadowed in this production; the ribbon sequence was a feast for the eyes and ears with its catching sights and rhythms.

Shakespeare dismisses Joan of Arc promptly as a witch or a whore. However in this production, her burning in Rouen was staged in a dramatic manner. The chairs used earlier as horses by the knights were now piled up in a huge heap. Jeanne, a prisoner in this wooden structure, disappeared behind the cloud of smoke coming from below. At that very moment, despite the completely unrealistic setting, the emotion was palpable among the audience, and the silence intense.

To show his total lack of concern for holy matters in spite of his position as the leader of the church, Cardinal Winchester (Bruno Bayen) held his white dog as a pet throughout, even in church. The actor produced a number of pieces of incongruous stage business: rushing to an official meeting, he carried an imposing suitcase, but when it burst open, the only thing in it was the dog.

The most inventive feature was certainly a character called 'la Rhapsode' (Manon Thorel), who appeared at the end of each part. In a text she made up herself (even improvising with great gusto and self-control the night when a fire broke out) she addressed the audience to sum up the action, enquire about their well-being, and pass funny comments on the cast and the process of creation, as a kind of link between the stage and the audience. She was received with renewed pleasure each time she appeared in front of the drawn curtains.

In order to promote their venture, Thomas Jolly and his company have made up a short, forty-five minutes' play, entitled *H6M2*, that contains the whole saga, but is performed by four actors only (Damien Avice, Bruno Bayeux, Flora Diguët and Manon Thorel) on a surface of six square meters. This small format is conceived as a parody of the whole cycle, and can be performed outdoors or indoors, in public or private spaces to the great pleasure of audiences who otherwise would not go to the theatre.

Thomas Jolly and his company represent a new generation of actors and directors: "I am an actor who gathers others together"¹⁶, Jolly says simply. Their rehearsal period being so short, the actors taking part in a particular unit work autonomously, so all of them play an important role in the creative process. Their narrative structure represents the heavy drama of a society at war, but the mode of acting favours irony and buffoonery, reminiscent of television series, cartoons, or even rock concerts.

All reviews (and there were many, a very unusual feature nowadays) were unanimous in their praise of this production¹⁷, just as there were very mixed audiences, from middle-aged theatre goers to school parties or artists, who all gave a standing ovation to the cast.

"This young man is really promising". Brigitte Salino, the theatre reviewer from *Le Monde*, started her article introducing Thomas Jolly and his Shakespearean project in February 2012 with these words¹⁸. Two years later and after many successful performances, this prophecy has really come true¹⁹.

¹⁶ Thomas Jolly, Q&A Session organized by Delphine Lemonnier-Textier, cited.

¹⁷ From conservative *Le Figaro*, with two articles, *Les Inrockuptibles*, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, *L'Humanité*, *Le Monde*, several blogs...

¹⁸ Brigitte Salino 2012. *Quelques chose de Peter Pan*. *Le Monde*, Tuesday, 14 February: "Ce garçon est une promesse", p. 22.

¹⁹ Thomas Jolly was invited to "Shakespeare 450", seminar 8 "The Construction of the Character", co-conveners: Delphine Lemonnier-Textier, Estelle Rivier, Isabelle Schwartz-Gastine, Paris, April 2014 (www.shakespeareanniversary.org).

Manga-fying Shakespeare. “You must translate. ‘Tis fit we understand [it].” (*Hamlet* IV.1.2)

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Prompted by the words uttered by King Claudius in *Hamlet* (4.1.2), this article aims to explore the ever-increasing popularity of a fairly new (for westerners) form of Shakespeare transmediation – *manga*, while also looking at two *manga* versions of the Bard’s work.

In his book on *Shakespeare and Modern Popular Culture*, Douglas Lanier (2002:16) argued that any translation of the Bard’s work into pop culture presupposes “an interplay between two cultural systems”, each with its own “bodies of reference, sets of cultural institutions, canons of aesthetic standards, [and] modes of constructing cultural authority”. Any form of “Shakespop” – as Lanier labels this kind of translation – thus becomes a negotiation between the values of high culture and low culture. Moreover, ever since Harold Bloom irremovably placed Shakespeare at the core of the Western canon, turning him into “a mortal god” (Bloom 1998:3), we should make a clear-cut distinction between, on the one hand, Shakespeare as “a complex symbol with cultural value”, “a token of cultural worth and significance” (Bristol 2005), and on the other, the “Bardbiz”, i.e. “the mobility of Shakespeare’s work in the commercial market for cultural goods and services” (Bristol 2005); in other words, between highbrow and lowbrow Shakespeares.

However, Grande (2010:4) convincingly explains that any interpretation of Shakespeare is influenced by the reader’s “positioning through high or popular culture, or indeed through a ‘double access’ to both”. The author draws our attention to the paradox that Shakespeare is actually linked to both highbrow and lowbrow, and, although he stands for a prime marker of high culture, his work is not readily accessible. Therefore, in order to encourage mainstream youth culture to read and (better) understand Shakespeare, there has been a plethora of translations and transmediations, whose main purpose is to highlight the relevance and accessibility of the Bard’s work. Thus, films and teenage spin-offs, or the (in)famous 1990s cartoon series “Shakespeare: The Animated Tales” make Shakespeare interesting for a teen audience who has generally lost the ability to read closely and/or critically.

Although over time Shakespeare has been widely adapted and appropriated, recycled and reinvented, recent years have seen new ways of translating his work into new and various media, giving birth to a whole series of what Grande (2010:1) calls “graphic Shakespeare”. Among these, a widely appreciated form of graphic adaptation of Shakespeare’s high-culture into pop-culture terms is *manga*, popularly known as the Japanese version of comic books.

In a digital age marked by the intensification of visual culture and a growing influence of the visual arts, the fact that manga has come to enjoy a booming popularity in western countries should come as no surprise. Representing the fastest growing sector not only of the western comics market (Grande 2010:1), but also of the global book industry in general (Hayley 2010:267), manga is enjoying a phenomenal success worldwide as well as returning a profit of billions of dollars (Ingulsrud and Allen 2009:3).

Although it seems to focus more on visual language (i.e. images) rather than on the text itself, since the textual does not double the visual information (Rommens 2000), manga happily marries linguistic and visual language (Unser-Schutz 2011:1), offering the younger audience (and not only) the possibility of combining the two main types of reading: for knowledge enhancement *and* for pleasure and recreation (O’English et al. 2006:175). Recent years have also witnessed an ever-increasing body of scholarly and

academic research on manga in general, and on manga Shakespeare in particular (cf. Ingulsrud and Allen 2009, Johnson-Woods 2010, Grande 2010), with journals dedicating whole issues to Shakespeare and graphic novels, especially now that the 450th anniversary of the Bard's birth is approaching. For example, volume six of the online journal *ImageText*, edited by Shaeffer and Burt (2013), contains articles which compare and contrast various versions of Shakespeare-inspired comics and manga.

Manga thus allows Shakespeare to be made new yet again, simultaneously introducing a new aesthetic identity and giving new value to his work. Blending the early modern verbal information and the modern-day visual culture, manga highlights not only the importance of actually seeing/ watching Shakespeare's plays (on stage), but also their main purpose, as Shakespeare mostly wrote for entertainment. However, according to Shaeffer and Burt (2013), this new aestheticism seems to stem rather from what is *not* actually Shakespeare, as it is the artist – or *mangaka* – who provides something new, different and interesting through the visual support s/he brings to Shakespeare's text. Furthermore, manga encourages emotional involvement, as the reader responds emotionally to whatever the characters experience and discuss. Yet emotion is not only conveyed through the rendition of characters' behaviour, but also – as Myklebost (2013) explains – through the placement and orientation (downward, lateral or upward) of word balloons on the page; a certain feeling is conveyed without the more personal touch of an actor's voice, the mangaka thus being able to replace an entire troupe of actors. A few years before, Sexton (2008:2) similarly posited that “manga is potentially more visual than a stage production of one of the plays of Shakespeare”, since “[u]nbound by the physical realities of the theater, the graphic novel can depict any situation, no matter how fantastical or violent” through the creativity and expertise of its artists.

As shown elsewhere (Şerban 2013:337), the mangaka may also be perceived as the operator of a reversed ekphrasis, i.e. of a partial intersemiotic translation. Thus, the manga artist acts as a mediator between two different sets of codes, or, in other words, as a very visible translator, whose task is to render linguistic information into visual information, after having selected, described and interpreted the linguistic input. Although drawings come to complete the text, helping the message to come across more easily, the only drawback would be that the reader remains biased by the mangaka's subjective interpretation. To avoid this, the editorial teams responsible for the creation of the Shakespeare manga versions discussed below include not only Shakespeare experts and textual advisors, but also teachers and educationalists (Cha 2008, the *Manga Shakespeare* website 2009).

But what makes manga so special? Reading manga presupposes a combination of linguistic knowledge and visual literacy, which Ingulsrud and Allen (2009) labeled as “manga literacy”. A theatrical or cinematographic experience captured in stills in the format of a book, manga requires its own set of skills, as it challenges the notion of “cultural competence” (Grande 2010:8, 9). Yet, unlike the Japanese manga aficionados, who develop the necessary visual literacy from a very early age (cf. Ingulsrud and Allen 2009:95-108, 122; Johnson-Woods 2010:6), the beginner Western manga reader will find it a visual, textual and intellectual challenge. Unlike comics, whose styles can vary so widely, especially in the United States, manga represents a visual language with an internationally easily recognizable style (Cohn 2010:190). This engenders the formation of “a community of visual language speakers” who share a common graphic vocabulary”, a “visual grammar” established by its own rule system (Cohn 2010:187), which I am going to explore below.

Although there are variations depending on the more precise genre and target readership, manga basically implies drawings in black and white, characters with (incredibly) large eyes, perfect long hair, elongated limbs and pointy chins, feminized

male characters, and “chibi” characters, whose deformed features are meant to show very intense and usually negative feelings like anger or annoyance; the focus is on emotions, while movement is shown statically, with lines streaming behind/next to characters (Johnson-Woods 2010:5-12, Cohn 2010:192-194). Ingulsrud and Allen (2009:27-31) further point out that the eye-shape and quality of the characters’ eyes reveal their personalities and narrative roles; onomatopoeic sounds complementing the action are rendered graphically in the background, while the varying number, size and shape of the frames that compose the narrative arc are arranged in various ways on the page. Nevertheless, the focus lies on the character rather than on the scenery and – perhaps most importantly – in order to make the reading experience easier for the Western reader, manga is read the European way, i.e. from left to right, as opposed to the traditionally Japanese way from right to left (Hayley 2010:270).

The “visual grammar” mentioned by Cohn (2010:194) highlights the sequential role of visual language, as its real power comes from the way the panels are arranged on the page to make a cohesive story. As early as 2000, Rommens emphasized the cinematographical narrative technique used in manga only to conclude that manga resembles a film rather than a theatrical performance, since it allows for cinematic viewpoints such as aerial or (extreme) close-up points of view, which come in contrast with the predominantly lateral viewpoint used in theatre. Comparatively, Cohn remarks on manga’s use of a combination of such different panels as “macro” (depicting several characters or an entire scene), “mono” (picturing individual character) and “micro” (showing less than a whole character), which confers visual energy to the story and “windows the reader’s attention onto different parts of the narrative representation” (Cohn 2010:197). As several scenes may be drawn on one page, the reader may easily feel s/he is in more places at the same time.

Nevertheless, in addition to its entertainment role, but not immediately evident, manga does have its own educational value. Examining several Japanese mangas whose main purpose is to educate the masses economy-wise or corporate-culture-wise, in a vulgarization of science sort of process, Bouvard (2011:190, 200) looks at the links between educational manga, the cultural legitimacy of this form of culture and the specificity of the manga medium in the transfer of knowledge. He argues that educational manga as a genre is generally perceived as the extent of an original made up exclusively of texts; the purpose of the manga version would therefore make the product more accessible to the general public. Bouvard (2011:203) further contends that the peculiarities of the manga narrative structure affect not just the form of the story, but also the nature of knowledge which is available there, encouraging a more emotional approach to the matters presented. Primarily conceived so as to explain complex economic terms and ideas, for example, for averagely educated individuals, educational manga draws the reader into the story, making him/her emotionally take part in it.

We may thus infer that manga versions of Shakespeare’s plays contribute to the increase of the reader’s emotional intelligence with respect to characters, their conflicts and plights, particularly if we consider three main ways of expressing basic emotions: facial expression, touch and body posture (cf. Feng and O’Halloran 2012:2070-2073). These indicators of emotive behaviour can reveal valuable information about the character’s personality and motivation, as well as provide clues for the social networks within the play.

Having explored the inherent characteristics of manga, let us now briefly compare two highly successful western manga adaptations of Shakespeare’s work, a British and an American one, each of which has profited from the manga boom in the West. At the same time, each venture boasts to have made the greatest of classics more accessible, while

retaining the Bard's original language, despite the cuts that needed to be made in order to fit each play's plot into approximately 200 pages.

On the one hand, the UK-based SelfMadeHero publishing house launched the *Manga Shakespeare* series, with 14 manga transmediations of the Bard's plays between 2007 and 2010, cashing in on an opening in the British book market observed in 2005 (Hayley 2010:268). The *Manga Shakespeare* website (2009) boasts many international awards (e.g. British Council, Young Creative Entrepreneur, The London Book Fair) and critical recognition, presenting the series as a valid teaching tool, and advertising teaching resources as well as workshops for students and teachers alike. The website homepage also presents the editorial team as led by a Shakespearologist and educational editor (the experienced adaptor Richard Appignanesi and textual consultant Nick de Somogyi), and highlights the fact that the plays in the series "are abridged to allow teachers to focus on key scenes, while following Shakespeare's text." All volumes of the series share the same format: eight to nine introductory, character pages; the odd 200 pages of the plot proper; followed by a page-long summary of the plot, an outline of Shakespeare's life, as well as some information about the editorial team). Despite the fact that *Manga Shakespeare* recontextualizes each and every play (moving, for instance, the action of *Macbeth* to a post-apocalyptic sky-scraper-dominated Japan), the back cover of each manga volume advertises the educational quality and potential of the series, not restricted to teenage students:

"[...] is part of Manga Shakespeare, a series of graphic novel adaptations of William Shakespeare's plays. Drawing inspiration from Japan and using Shakespeare's original texts, this series – adapted by Richard Appignanesi and illustrated by leading manga artists – brings to life the great Bard's words for students, Shakespeare enthusiasts and manga fans."

On the other hand, the US-based *Shakespeare: The Manga Editions* only features four manga adaptations of Shakespearean plays (*Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*), all published in 2008. This venture capitalizes on an idea from 2006 (Cha 2008) that "[m]anga is not merely a new medium for the plays of William Shakespeare, but one that is distinctly different from anything to have come before." (Sexton 2008:3) Just like in the case of *Manga Shakespeare*, the format is the same for the entire series, with the same introductory two text pages on the legitimacy of manga as a cultural medium and reading instrument, followed by a few more paragraphs on the plot of the individual play. This particular team includes Adam Sexton, a university professor and Shakespeare expert, who makes the significant point that "[o]verall, turning the pages of a manga version of one of Shakespeare's plays is something like reading the text of that play while attending a performance", with the very important addition that this happens at the reader's own pace (Sexton 2008:3). We may, therefore, conclude that reading manga versions of Shakespearean plays allows for a continual return to the original text, while at the same time maintaining visual contact with the characters.

While both manga versions resort to Shakespeare's original, although abridged, text, the main difference between them lies in the use of the equivalent of the "dramatis personae" section in *Manga Shakespeare*, i.e. eight or nine pages of colourful drawings illustrating the characters in social interactions that are representative for their personalities and roles in the plays. These colour images are accompanied by a quotation from the play, whose purpose is to give readers an insight into the true nature of the character. For example, in *Manga Shakespeare: Macbeth*, a dark-haired green-eyed, purse-lipped and frowning Lady Macbeth is drawn half behind her brawny husband, but her hands, which touch his chest in a very intimate gesture, resemble claws. Her body

posture and the way she touches Macbeth clearly play on the (in)famous saying that behind each powerful man there is an even more powerful woman, while also revealing her determination, ambitious nature and manipulative skills. The words quoted above her head – “But screw your courage to the sticking-place and we’ll not fail!” (1.7.60-61) – further stress her power of persuasion together with her role as the driving force behind Macbeth. On the other hand, Macbeth himself is given the appearance of a valiant warlord: bare-chested and scarred, he holds a sword in his left hand, whereas his right hand protectively covers the hand of his wife over his heart. His indecisiveness is subtly suggested by his body orientation: he is looking right, away from his wife, yet his only visible left eye turns backwards towards her, as if seeking her approval. All these details, coupled with the caption below him – “I dare do all that may become a man.” (1.7.46), – reveal Macbeth as a warrior who, despite having already proved his valour and manhood on the battlefield, needs to do so again in front of his ambitious wife.

Contrastingly, *the Manga Editions* have retained the five-act division of the original play and feature a representative scene on the page announcing each act. For instance, act I of *Shakespeare’s Macbeth: The Manga Edition* shows us in black and white a fair-haired, but blood-drenched and evil-smiling Macbeth, a crown being placed on his head. It is impossible to say whether the dark hands holding the crown are his own or whether they belong to one of the witches, who are also cleverly represented by three eyes in the faded background. The ambiguity of the hands’ owner ingeniously illustrates the debate over the role of the witches in relation to Macbeth, as – similar to all oracles and agents of the fate – they only predict *what* will happen, leaving the *how* unanswered. Moreover, the extreme close-ups – albeit faded – on the three eyes in the background, suggest the witches are the driving force behind Macbeth’s actions, just as Lady Macbeth was given this role in the British version. Similarly to *Manga Shakespeare: Macbeth*, however, Lady Macbeth does appear to take this role over from the witches, as on the page announcing the second act, she is shown behind Macbeth, in an enlarged macro frame representing the scene immediately following the murder of Duncan. In a close-up, we see Lady Macbeth’s head and bloody arms emerging from behind a terrified Macbeth and touching his bloody cheek and neck, in a half-strangling half-embracing gesture. Her large eyes but pea-shaped irises creatively convey her determination and her annoyance at her husband’s cowardice. Macbeth, on the other hand, faces right, as if pushed by his wife’s right hand, but simultaneously looks down at his bloody and shaky hands. Overall, unlike the warrior Macbeth shown by the British manga, the American version focuses more on Macbeth’s role as a puppet, first at the hands of the witches, and then of his wife.

A further comparison of *Manga Shakespeare: Macbeth* to *Shakespeare’s Macbeth: The Manga Edition*, both published in 2008, exposes a striking difference in setting and, consequently, in the costumes given to characters. Thus, the British manga relocates Macbeth’s reign to a post-apocalyptic Japan, where the characters’ modern costumes echo traditional Japanese outfits, particularly with samurai-inspired armours for men, and wide-sleeved kimonos and sashes for women. Lady Macbeth’s costume, for instance, is a mixture of grey, pale pink and red; her sensually feminine body is emphasized by a revealing, low-neckline kimono-inspired blouse, a short skirt to which long stocking-like boots are attached by a suspender girdle. By contrast, the American manga preserves the Scottish hilly background sprinkled with stone castles, whereas the characters wear costumes inspired from various epochs: long modern trousers and a medieval tunic for men – in addition to the royal ermine robe – or a body-flaunting Regency-inspired high-waisted dress, but with medieval elbow slit sleeves for women. Here, Lady Macbeth wears a long, tight-fitting dress, whose pattern reminds of a spider web; the low neckline of the dress only creates the illusion of cleavage, as a kerchief covers her up to her neck. We may infer that both types of costume serve as a disguise (an otherwise recurrent

theme with Shakespeare), highlighting the character's femininity and sensuality only to bring it in sharp contrast with her evil scheming. Nonetheless, while the British manga seems to encourage the reader to look at Lady Macbeth's sexualization as a means of manipulating her husband, the American version resorts to more symbolic details, such as the pattern on her dress, to suggest her murderous mind. What is also interesting to note is that both manga versions make Lady Macbeth resemble the witches even in terms of looks, most likely inspired by the critical claim that she may be one of them, especially due to her early modern deviant femininity, manipulative skills and ability to invoke the dark spirits.

To conclude, I would like to point out that manga adaptations of Shakespeare's plays definitely provide a fresh and insightful approach to canonical texts, while also making them more visual and accessible. All things considered, not only can manga adaptations combine recreational and educational reading, but they can also provide their reader with a cinematic experience of Shakespeare's work, since the happy complementarity of image and text facilitates a better understanding of the plays, at the same time allowing the reader to move through the story at his/her own rhythm and/ or to return to the written *original* text whenever s/he wishes.

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'Unnatural hags'¹: Shakespeare's Evil Women in Titus Andronicus, King Lear and Macbeth

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In Shakespearean England the social status of women had declined: both Protestant theology and the teachings of ancient philosophers and physicians re-discovered by the Humanist scholars, considered women weak and sinful, lesser than men. Sixteenth century theologians and scholars saw women as weaker than men both in reason and in physical strength; moreover, they were more likely to prone to irrational fears and figments of their over-active imagination. As he was made in the image of God, the man was perfect, while the woman was created from his rib, to be his companion and helper. As the woman was to blame for the Fall, her duty by nature and by law was to obey her husband, as well as her God. Only if the husband strayed from the righteous path was the wife allowed to disobey him; even then, she was expected to be loyal and bring her husband back to virtuousness (Klein 1980: 240).

Kristina Leon Alfar (2002: 15) says that "woman in the period is frequently represented by evil, sickness and death", as can be seen in the works of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton. In the sixteenth and seventeenth century medical treatises, the female body is treated as an imperfect, 'mutilated' version of the male body. Therefore, the woman is physically and, by implication, mentally inferior to the man. Still, scholars and theologians agreed that, if women were quiet, industrious and devoted, their sinful

¹ *King Lear*, II.4.277

nature could be controlled; if left unchecked, they were certain to stray. This view can often be found in Shakespearean tragedy: when Juliet protests against the arranged marriage, her father curses her, calling her “green sickness carrion” (III.5.156); Tamora is a “bestly creature”, (II.3.181), a disgrace to all women. Lear calls Goneril “a disease that’s in (his) flesh” (II.4.221), and he denounces both elder daughters as “unnatural hags”, (II.4.277); Lady Macbeth calls on evil spirits to “unsex” her (I.5.38) and “take (her) milk for gall” (I.5.45).

This paper will analyse the characters of evil women in *Titus Andronicus*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, their common features and the ways they are presented. Several common features are immediately recognizable: all these women attempt to win male prerogatives, such as the power to rule the land or make decisions; they fight the constraints of gender roles and behaviour patterns; they exhibit either ambition or desire for vengeance, which jeopardizes male authority; finally, their sexuality escapes the male control. Consequently, their power is ascribed (by the male characters) to the supernatural and demonic forces. While studying the characters of Goneril, Regan, Lady Macbeth, and (in some cases) Cleopatra, many Shakespearean scholars

“have taken the denunciations of male characters at their word. Because Lear, Albany, Macbeth, Caesar and Antony accuse their women variously of monstrosity, manliness, salaciousness, and betrayal, scholars have assumed that Goneril, Regan, Lady Macbeth and Cleopatra are in fact unnatural women, manipulative deceivers, and by association ‘evil’.” (Alfar 2002: 15-16)

Other critics have claimed that, by describing the evil deeds of these women, Shakespeare himself exhibits his mysogyny and fear of female power, and resolves this by eliminating the female characters which jeopardize the masculine identity and rule². Therefore, this paper will try to explain how the characters of evil women simultaneously reflect and undermine the traditional view of women in the early modern period.

Titus Andronicus is a traditional revenge tragedy in which the titular protagonist, Titus, a Roman general, who had lost twenty one of his sons in the wars against the Goths, seeks vengeance. In the beginning, he is determined to execute the eldest son of Tamora, queen of the Goths, to appease his sons’ spirits. Tamora is first seen pleading for her son’s life:

*Victorious Titus, rue the tears I shed,
A mother’s tears in passion for her son;
And if thy sons were ever dear to thee,
O, think my son to be as dear to me!*
...
*But must my sons be slaughtered in the streets
For valiant doings in their country’s cause?
O, if to fight for king and commonweal
Were piety in thine, it is in these.*
(I.1.105-108, 112-115)

² See Peter Erickson 1985. *Patriarchal Structures in Shakespeare’s Plays*. Berkeley: University of California Press; Madelon Gohlke 1980. ‘I Wooed Thee with My Sword’: Shakespeare’s Tragic Paradigms. In Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene, and Carol Thomas Neely (eds.), *The Woman’s Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 150-170; Marilyn French 1983. *Shakespeare’s Division of Experience*. New York: Ballantine.

Although Tamora tries to arouse Titus's mercy by identifying his fatherly feelings with her motherly love, and then arguing that her sons were only fighting for their country, it is to no avail: Tamora's is the losing side, and the rules are different for winners and losers. Titus replies: "To this your son is mark'd, and die he must / T' appease their groaning shadows that are gone." (I.1.125-126). Tamora is often called "beastly", "barbaric" or "cruel", but Roman customs are no less barbaric. Rome's "cruel, irreligious piety" (I.1.130) demands a sacrifice. From then on, Tamora also pursues vengeance. Significantly, in patriarchal Roman culture the vengeance exacted by Titus as a man and soldier is considered to be "piety", while Tamora's vengeance is seen as barbaric and brutal. Tamora is denied both mercy and justice because she represents the "Other", alien to the Roman culture: she is a foreigner, a barbarian and a female monarch who dared to defy Roman rule. In the Roman (and Elizabethan) society, any authority was vested in men, while women belonged to the domestic sphere; in their view, Tamora violates the boundaries of her feminine role: she is a ruler, engaged in battle, and exacts revenge. Tamora makes a transition from the private sphere of home and family to the public sphere reserved for men, which is an unpardonable sin in the male characters' eyes (Kahn 1992: 213).

Tamora is also demonised for her sexuality: obviously, she is very attractive because she has caught the eye of the young Roman emperor, despite being a prisoner. However, she uses her sexuality to her own ends: she marries the young emperor so that, as an empress, she would rule both him and Rome, and punish Titus and his family. She manipulates her spouse using her sexuality, a well-known method women resort to in order to make their husbands obey them. This is something that "evil women" in Shakespearean tragedy have in common: their husbands are usually weak, not manly enough, and unable to control them. Tamora's affair with her coloured manservant, Aron, as well as her openness in expressing her feelings towards him ("Ah, my sweet Moor, sweeter to me than life!", II.3.51) was supposed to make her character even more alien and repulsive to Shakespeare's audience: female sexuality is sinful and deplorable, especially in a mother. Tamora's sons are appalled to discover their mother's affair. However, Tamora also violates her role as a mother: she tries to arrange the murder of the child she bore to Aron. Kahn (1992: 211-212) refers to Tamora as "the avenging mother", claiming that Tamora's injured pride as a mother is the source of all the savagery that will take place later in the play. The avenging mother is out of patriarchal control, and Titus, representing patriarchy and the father figure, has to bring her to heel. He does that by adding insult to injury: he makes her womb or stomach the site of her power, "swallow her own increase" (V.2.191).

Like other "evil women", Tamora violates her own femininity and female roles. She uses her sons as instruments of revenge; has no compassion for her own sex; instead of caring for her home and family, she plots vengeance and cheats on her husband. Similarly, in *King Lear*, Goneril and Regan defy the patriarchal social order, personified by their father. The first scene reveals the crisis of patriarchy: the old king asks his three daughters, 'Which of you shall we say doth love us most?' (I.1.51). As Rosslyn (2002:134) notes, "here already is the audible counterpoint between the assumption of power (the royal 'we') and his advancing impotence (the reason he is asking the question)". Lear silently (and unwillingly) admits his growing impotence by deciding to divide his realm, and even more so by promising to give the best part "where nature doth with merit challenge" (I.1.53). Lear's question is a thinly veiled blackmail: he is trying to bribe them, to have them compete for his affection. However, he has already decided to present Cordelia, the youngest and unmarried, with the "largest bounty" (I.1.53), in return for her care in his old age: "I loved her most, and thought to set my rest / on her kind

nursery” (I.1.123-124). Goneril and Regan, however, are aware of Lear’s schemes and decide that they too could use some cunning to get their father where they want him.

At first, Goneril and Regan can be considered duplicitous, but not evil; to be honest, they are the only ones who see through Lear and criticize his actions. Goneril says:

*You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made
of it hath not been little. He always lov'd our sister most; and
with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.*
(I.1.294-296)

while Regan replies: “he hath ever but slenderly known himself” (I.1.292-293). They have little doubt that, in such disposition, Lear could make a lot of trouble, especially considering his intention to “retain / The name, and all th’ addition to a king” (I.1.134-135). Though their point of view may be valid, it is soon lost in Shakespeare’s “pursuit of sympathy for Lear” (Rosslyn 2000: 135). Although Goneril and Regan are right about Lear, their cold-hearted portrayal of him does not inspire understanding: the audience feels that “daughters who can take such tone are unnatural enough for anything.” (idem,134)

Subsequently, the characters of Goneril and Regan are demonised in two ways: they are portrayed as women attempting to seize the power that rightfully belongs to men; at the same time, they are loose women, whose sexuality has escaped their husbands’ control. They are called unnatural, because they display characteristics typically perceived as male, such as ambition, ruthlessness and hunger for power. However, Hoover (1984) notes that, unlike Greek and Roman heroines, they do not assume these masculine characteristics in order to defend a just cause; it is apparent from their initial dialogue that such characteristics are innate.

The double standards regarding “evil women” are apparent from the fact that they are being condemned for actions that would have been expected from male rulers. Goneril is understandably concerned about Lear’s decision to keep a hundred knights in his service; Regan and her husband punish Kent for assaulting Goneril’s servant; both sisters encourage their husbands to raise an army and fight the French forces. Any monarch would be expected to think ahead and prevent any threat to his authority, to punish the rebellious and to defend his country; however, such deeds are deplorable in women. Although Goneril and Regan demand absolute power like Lear did, what they do is unforgivable in patriarchy: they disobey their father. One sin leads to another: bad daughters cannot be good wives. They are married to weak men who obey them; however, they both lust after Edmund, and begin plotting against each other to win him over. “This sexual savagery is only a step away from savagery pure and simple, and Regan plays an exhilarated part in torturing Gloucester, while Goneril invites Edmund to deliver her of the ‘loathed warmth’ (IV.5.265) of her marital bed by killing Albany.” (Rosslyn 2000: 136) As mentioned above, female sexuality is not only deplorable, but also deadly: Goneril will poison Regan to win Edmund, and then commit suicide.

Goneril and Regan are stigmatized for daring to enter the public sphere, for avoiding the duties of good daughters and good wives and for exhibiting ambition to rule. What is interesting is that, unlike Tamora, these characters are not punished by men: Goneril’s last words in the play are “Ask me not what I know”(V.3.162). The “evil woman” is unrepentant and wants no mercy: her motives, like those of well-known villains such as Iago, remain mysterious. Goneril commits suicide in an attempt to rule her own destiny, rather than suffer the punishment for disrupting the patriarchal order.

Lady Macbeth is undoubtedly the most notorious villainess in the Canon. Yet her character has a lot in common with the “evil women” in other tragedies. She too defies the patriarchal order, not embodied in a father or a husband, but in a king. By inciting Macbeth to commit regicide, she too violates her role of a good wife. What is more, she suggests that he should commit the murder while the king is their guest, thus violating the ancient tradition of the host being responsible for protecting the guest’s safety. At first, Macbeth seems to be a weak man, whom she can manipulate. Lady Macbeth seems more determined and ambitious than her husband: she often rebukes him for his unmanly conduct: “Are you a man?” (III.4.57); “What, quite unmann’d in folly?”(III.4.74).

However, looking at other aspects of this character, Lady Macbeth appears as a loyal wife above all else. Unlike other “evil women”, she is not ambitious or power-hungry; at least not for her own sake. She in fact helps Macbeth satisfy his own ambition (Klein 1980: 243). She never attempts to leave her sphere, and faithfully awaits Macbeth to return from the battlefield. Despite her invoking the evil spirits to “unsex” her (I.5.38) and “take (her) milk for gall” (I.5.45), Lady Macbeth is never able to separate herself completely from womanhood – “unlike her husband, who ultimately becomes less and worse than a man”(I.5. 243). It is Lady Macbeth that says that she knows “how tender ’tis to love a babe that milks [her]” (I.6.55); it is she who cannot kill the king because he reminds her of her father. Lady Macbeth is the one who retains some of “th’ milk of human kindness” (I.5.15) that has not turned to gall. This is evident in the sleepwalking scene, where she appears half-mad with guilt, and in her subsequent suicide. Unlike Goneril, Lady Macbeth does not commit suicide to escape being punished by patriarchy, but as an act of repentance.

It appears that female characters in Shakespearean tragedies can only too easily be divided into two camps, the criterion being their sexuality, which implies that Shakespeare’s own view of it was quite traditional. On the one hand, there are the ideal, pure, virtuous women (Ophelia, Desdemona, Cordelia, Lavinia); on the other, the demonic, promiscuous women (Goneril and Regan, Tamora, Gertrude), or as Rosslyn (2000:130) calls them, “girls in their shrouds” and “women in their marital beds”. The ultimate cause of this division is that “the biological basis of the legal arrangements we call patriarchal is the need of a father to know that his offspring are his own”(ibid.). Thus female chastity and obedience were idealized, while sexual and any other liberties had to be prohibited and stigmatized. Consequently, Shakespeare’s ideal heroines sometimes seem unrealistic and hollow, while “evil women” are more true to life. It is important, therefore, to regard them as not simply evil, but as female characters who try to find a way to break with the restrictions imposed upon women in the early modern period.

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Antifeminism in William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra

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Antony and Cleopatra has been studied from various perspectives, including a feminist one. The feminist approach has not revealed any antifeminist acts present in the play. The current paper is an attempt to present the play as intrinsically anti-feminist. The analysis of the play is divided in three sections. In the first section, various definitions of antifeminism are presented so that the concept of antifeminist writings may be better understood. The second section details antifeminist acts in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. The third is the conclusion of the entire discussion about the play.

1. Definitions of antifeminism

The *Feminist Dictionary* defines antifeminism as “[t]he conviction that women are not entitled to the same moral and legal rights as men, or to the same social status and opportunities. ‘All antifeminist thinkers hold in common the thesis that there are innate and unalterable psychological differences between women and men, differences which make it in the interests of both sexes for women to play a subordinate, private role, destined for wife-and-motherhood. . . . [it] involves ‘the idea that women ought to sacrifice the development of their own personalities for the sake of men and children.’” (Kramarae et al. 1985: 54). An antifeminist is, therefore, a person who “[is] opposed to women or to feminism; a person (usu. a man) who is hostile to sexual equality or to the advocacy of women’s rights” (Oxford English Dictionary 1989: 524).

According to Hope Phyllis Weissman (1975: 94) an “antifeminist writing is not simply a satirical caricature of women but any presentation of a woman’s nature intended to conform her to male expectations of what she is or ought to be, not her own . . . Indeed the most insidious of antifeminist images are those which celebrate with a precision often subtle rather than apparent, the forms women’s goodness is to take”. Audrey Bilger (2009) thinks that antifeminist persons oppose feminism; therefore, their opinions are projected against equality of women at work, home, society and culture. In her words (2009: 27) “Antifeminism may be simply defined as the opposite of feminism. Like feminism, anti-feminism focuses on the role of woman at work, at home, in society, and in the culture. And, like feminism, antifeminism promotes a complex political, social, and cultural agenda. Antifeminists often take their cues from feminists, speaking out against current feminist platforms and against feminists themselves”. Valerie Sanders (1996) vividly describes antifeminist acts. She thinks that the term ‘anti-feminist’ itself is problematic as is the original designation of ‘feminist’, which was not officially used until 1894. In her opinion, the term ‘antifeminist’ emerged thirty years after 1894, in the preface to Bernard Shaw’s *Saint Joan* (1924). She thinks that it is difficult enough to define antifeminism in the twentieth century, but in the nineteenth, the definition suffered from additional complications. In her view (1996: 5), antifeminism is “a conviction that women were designed (whether by ‘God’ or ‘Nature’) to be first and foremost wives and mothers, and that their social and political subordination is the proper corollary of that position”. Describing the different traits of antifeminism, she writes:

The definition of anti-feminism naturally hinges on how we perceive feminism, and a specific anti-feminist upsurge generally arises in response to a specific feminist campaign, such as for the suffrage or legalization of abortion. . . . [a]nti-feminism, as

implied by its name, is usually a resistance movement against the advancement of women's rights. It tries to halt the development of new liberal attitudes towards the boundaries between the sexes, insisting that there are fundamental differences in sexual characteristics and roles which women should accept. Like feminism, it tries to envisage a better society, but one based on tradition or status; it tries to put the brake on change, unless it is a return to family values. (Sanders 1996: 3)

The above definitions of the feminist scholars make it clear that antifeminists oppose the idea of equal rights of for women. They discriminate between the sexes on the basis of gender, which makes them see women as subservient to men. They think that women are emotional, graceful, meek, submissive, and passive. They use derogatory terms against women to maintain their dominant status. They consider women competitive to men; hence, they oppose their equality in every walk of life. The purpose of their protest against women is to maintain their subordinate status within and outside home.

2. Antifeminist acts in Shakespeare's play

Shakespeare's belief that women were tricksters is one of the antifeminist acts which occur in *Antony and Cleopatra*. He depicts Cleopatra as a woman who plays tricks on Antony and betrays him. For instance, when she asks Alexas to convey her message to Antony, she says: "See where he is, who's with him, what he does. / I did not send you. If you find him sad, / Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report / That I am sudden sick. Quick and return" (I.3.2-5). Cleopatra wants Antony to live with her forever. But Cleopatra's male counterparts view her as a fraud and even Antony treats her with contempt. He has doubts about her and thinks that she is playing tricks on him by siding with Caesar. He considers her a flatterer: "To flatter Caesar would you mingle eyes / With one that ties his points?" (III.13.160-161). In Mark Antony's opinion, it is Cleopatra who has robbed him of his nobility and ruined his fortune:

ANTONY. O thy vile lady!
She has robbed me of my sword.
MARDIAN. No, Antony,
My mistress loved thee, and her fortunes mingled
With thine entirely.
ANTONY. Hence, saucy eunuch, peace!
She hath betrayed me and shall die the death. (IV.14.22-26)

L. T. Fitz (1977: 298) makes an appropriate remark when he writes that "Cleopatra is seen as the archetypal woman: practicer of feminine wiles, mysterious, childlike, long on passion and short on intelligence - except for a sort of animal cunning". Fitz's argument exposes Shakespeare's projection of various antifeminist acts against Cleopatra.

Cleopatra believes in male supremacy, consequently, she sacrifices everything for the sake of her desire to live with Mark Antony. Throughout the play, her desire maintains her subservient to him. She likes Antony to be known as 'The demi-Atlas of this earth' (I.5.24), and '[her] brave Mark Antony' (I.5.40), 'the brave Antony' (I.5.71) and '[her] man of men' (I.5.74). In the words of Cleopatra, Antony is: "Lord of Lords, / O infinite virtue, com'st thou smiling from / The great world's great snare uncaught?" (IV.8.16-18). She treats him as her 'lord' (IV.12.31) and likens him to Mars, who loved Venus. Even after Mark Antony's death, Cleopatra wants spiritual union with him: "Husband I come" (V.2.281).

Antony blames Cleopatra for his defeat on the battlefield. In his opinion, Cleopatra is a 'foul' woman who is responsible for his downfall: "All is lost! / This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me. / My fleet hath yielded to the foe, and yonder / They cast their caps up

and carouse together / Like friends long lost” (IV.12.10-13). Antony’s downfall evokes the story of the Fall in the *Bible*, where Eve is responsible for Adam’s downfall. By conflating Cleopatra’s role with Eve’s, the playwright depicts Cleopatra as a sinner. Harold Fisch (1980: 64) also admits Shakespeare’s analogy: “The man who believed what the woman said of the serpent (worm) but could not be saved by what she had done is of course Adam; just as Cleopatra is Eve, no longer the eternal feminine principle of fertility, goddess of love and nature, but the erring female who leads man into sin and consequently forfeits the gift of immortality”. Besides this, Antony’s contempt for Cleopatra as a false and faithless woman echoes throughout the play. For example, he blames her for his noble ruin:

ANTONY. Betrayed I am.
O, this false soul of Egypt! This grave charm,
Whose eyes becked forth my wars and called them home,
Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,
Like a right gypsy hath at fast and loose
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.
What, Eros, Eros!. (IV.12.24-30)

Furthermore, Antony treats Cleopatra as a whore. In his opinion, she is “Triple-turned whore! ’Tis thou / Hast sold me to this novice, and my heart / Makes only wars on thee” (IV.12.13-15). He repeatedly accuses Cleopatra of being a ‘false soul of Egypt’ and ‘grave charm’ (IV.12.25), ‘a right gypsy’ (IV.12.28), ‘spell!’ and ‘Avaunt!’ (IV.12.30) and ‘The witch’ (IV.12.47). These terms are imbued with misogyny and are derogatory towards Cleopatra’s personality, therefore, they are simply antifeminist traits projected against her. Besides this, these terms are binary oppositions used by the playwright. On the one hand, Cleopatra is depicted as an extremely beautiful woman; on the other hand, she is treated as a gypsy and false creature. The love-hate binary encourages readers to recognize the Madonna / Whore image of Cleopatra in the play. Janet Adelman vividly comments on Cleopatra’s role in *Antony and Cleopatra*. In her view Egypt is a place where there is no respect for women. Egypt is described as a place of sexual *concourse* and Cleopatra is treated as a “whore” and “mother” in Egypt:

For a generation of Romans that has successfully excised the female—in which there are no wives, in which mothers are apparently necessary only for the production of illegitimate children in Egypt—Egypt is the only place of sexual concourse, Cleopatra the only mother there is. For these unwomaned sons, she carries the taint of the whore-mother, site of the father’s contamination, and through his liaison with her, Antony restages that contamination, becoming the focus both of longing for the father who might be exempted from woman and of disgust at the father who is not. (Adelman 1992:179)

Like Mark Antony, Caesar also declares Cleopatra to be a whore who has spoiled Antony’s social position: “No my most wrong sister, Cleopatra / Hath nobbed him to her. He hath given his empire/ up to a whore . . .” (III.6.67-69). Ania Loomba (1989: 75) associates Cleopatra’s role with that of the goddesses and whores described in mythical stories. She writes: “The figure of Cleopatra is the most celebrated stereotype of the goddess and whore and has accommodated and been shaped by centuries of myth-making and fantasy surrounding the historical figure. In Shakespeare’s representation of her, we can identify several different strands of contemporary meaning which intertwine with connotations attaching to her from earlier stories”. It is obvious from the above description that Cleopatra’s various images are created and celebrated by her male counterparts in the play.

Shakespeare describes Cleopatra as a woman of artifice. In his views, she uses her feminine wiles against Antony when she hears he has married Octavia. For instance, pretending to faint is merely an artifice: "I am paid for't now. Lead me from hence; / I faint. O Iras, Charmian! – 'Tis no matter. . . . / Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon, / The other way's a Mars" (II.5.111-118). In the beginning of the play, Philo introduces her as 'a strumpet' (I.1.13). Similarly, Enobarbus describes Cleopatra's artifice when he talks of her as of a woman who uses her 'sighs and tears' (I.2.144) in order to dupe Antony. Enobarbus adroitly admires Cleopatra's seductiveness: "she makes hungry / Where most she satisfies" (II.3.47-48). His remarks are also projected against Cleopatra's sexuality. In Jyotsna Singh's view (1990: 422), Enobarbus displays a good understanding of the psychology of the main protagonists: "In revealing these entanglements of sexuality and power in a complex interplay of appetites embodied by the rulers, Enobarbus' vision reveals the causal networks underlying the larger tragedy of the war between Rome and Egypt". On the other hand, Fitz (1977: 306) describes Enobarbus as "a boringly conventional antifeminist who voices such a view in the play, [and] is almost always taken to be a mouthpiece for Shakespeare". Further, Pompey treats Cleopatra as a woman who uses her physical charms to attract men. He abuses her for her lustful nature: "But all the charms of love, / Salt Cleopatra, soften thy waned lip! / Let witchcraft joined with beauty, lust with both . . ." (II.1.20-22). All the above terms are imbued with contempt for Cleopatra's personality. The male characters treat her as an inferior creature.

In the play, the beauty contest between the female characters is another antifeminist means which the playwright uses to present them as the intellectually weaker sex. For example, Cleopatra views Octavia as one of her rivals in matters of physical and sexual charms. She tries to learn every detail about Octavia's physical beauty, sweetness of voice, height from the Messenger:

CLEOPATRA. Didst thou behold Octavia?

MESSENGER. Ay, dread queen. [...]

CLEOPATRA. Is she as tall as me?

MESSENGER. She is not, madam.

CLEOPATRA. Didst hear her speak? Is she shrill tongue or low?

MESSENGER. Madam, I heard her speak. She is low-voiced.

CLEOPATRA. That's not so good. He cannot like her long. (III.3.6-13)

Shakespeare's antifeminist discourse finds reflection in the subservient roles of female characters. In the play, Octavia is very faithful, meek, graceful, devoted, submissive and subservient to Antony. She treats him as her good lord and husband: "O my good lord, / Believe not all, or, if you must believe, / Stomach not all. . . . / When I shall pray, 'O, bless my lord and husband!'" (III.4.10-16). Similarly, Cleopatra remains meek, graceful and subservient to Antony. She views him as her lord and master: "O my lord, my lord, / Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought / You would have followed" (III.11.53-54). For Cleopatra, Antony is everything. She finds infinite virtues in Antony when she says, "Lord of lords, / O infinite virtue, com'st thou smiling from / The world's great snare uncaught?" (IV.8.16-18). She is ready to 'Dissolve [her] life!' for the sake of Antony.

Shakespeare disregards women's intellectual capacity. He discriminates between home and the outside world. He depicts man as mature both within and outside his home, while woman appears so only? within the four walls of her house. This is another example of antifeminist ideology which finds reflection through the mouthpiece of Mark Antony. In the play, Antony laughs at Cleopatra's intellectual capacity when he tries to put on his armour and leave for the battlefield. He emphasizes that Cleopatra does not know about worldly affairs, therefore, she does not know how to put on the armour of a

soldier. When Cleopatra tries to fit his armour, he says: “Ah, let it be! Thou art / The armourer of my heart. False, false; this, this” (IV.4.6-7). Besides this, he tries to show off his intellectual superiority and his masculine power over Cleopatra: “O love, / That thou couldst see my wars today, and knew'st / The royal occupation, thou shouldst see / A workman in't” (IV.4.15-17).

Antony's relationship with Cleopatra discloses the fact that he uses her merely for the purpose of his sexual desires: “Come, my queen, / Last night you did desire it” (I.1.55-56). He treats her as an object of his sexual gratification, therefore, he observes Cleopatra's physical and sexual charms. He admires the sweetness of her voice and he compares her voice to that of a nightingale: “My nightingale, / We have beat them to their beds” (IV.8.18-19). At the beginning of the play, Antony's attitude towards Cleopatra is obvious when he wants nothing but some pleasure: “. . . There's not a minute of our lives should stretch/Without some pleasure now. What sport to night” (I.1.45-46). Philo describes in clear terms Antony's falling in love with Cleopatra: “And is become the bellows and the fans/To cool a gypsy's lust” (I.1.8-9). Cleopatra is simply treated as a lustful woman by her lover. Similarly, Enobarbus sees Cleopatra as a woman of boundless sexuality: “Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale/Her infinite variety. Other women cloy/The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry/where most she satisfies. For vilest things/Becomes themselves in her, that the holy priests/Bless her when she is riggish” (II.2.245-250). Furthermore, Enobarbus uses plenty of sexual innuendoes and puns. For instance, he uses a pun on dying (death and orgasm) when he says: “Cleopatra, catching but the least noise of this, dies instantly; I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer moment. I do think there is mettle in death, which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such a celerity in dying” (I.2.136-140). Agrippa sides with Enobarbus and he also views Cleopatra as a passionate and lustful woman who aroused Caesar to have sexual intercourse with her: “Royal wench!/She made great Caesar lay his sword to bed; / He ploughed her, and she cropped” (II.2.225-227). In Agrippa's speech, the words like ‘ploughed’ and ‘cropped’ are sexual innuendoes, which are projected against Cleopatra to describe her sexuality. Agrippa's criticism of Cleopatra is another example of antifeminism in the play.

For centuries, women have been considered a lottery prize for men, taken as a gift by them. The study of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* reveals the same attitude of the male characters: they want to possess women either as a prize or as a gift. For example, Maecenas views Octavia as a gift to Antony: “If beauty, wisdom, modesty can settle / The heart of Antony, Octavia is / A blessed lottery to him” (II.3.251-253). Maecenas' attitude towards Octavia shows that he treats woman merely as a thing. Discussing men's attitude towards women in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Cristina León Alfar (2003:143) opines, “Julius Caesar (...) Marc Antony conquer Cleopatra simultaneously as monarch and as a sexual body. When Cleopatra refuses to be conquered by Octavius Caesar, she both resists and succumbs to the violence of conquest”. Thus, the female characters are forced to be subservient to male characters.

Cleopatra gives up Egypt and follows Mark Antony. Consequently, her social status is no longer equal to that of men. Describing her social status, Ania Loomba (1989: 75) writes, “. . . Cleopatra's social status places her in a contradictory position. Status, wealth, class are refracted in their operation through the prism of gender, and do not work in the same way as for men”.

Philip J Traci (1970) opines that the whole play is structured in imitation of the sex-act, starting with foreplay in the first several scenes, proceeding to pre-sex drinking and feasting, and finally culminating, after the significant entrance of the character Eros. According to Tracy, twenty one uses of the word ‘Eros’, twenty-three uses of the word

'come' and sixteen puns on 'dying' (1970: 81), make it clear that the playwright depicts sex-acts:

CLEOPATRA. Give me some music; music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.
ALL. The music, ho!
CLEOPATRA. Let it alone. Let's to billiards. Come, Charmian.
CHARMIAN. My arm is sore. Best play with Mardian.
CLEOPATRA. As well a woman with an eunuch played
As with a woman. Come, you'll play with me, sir?
MARDIAN. As well as I can, madam.
CLEOPATRA. And when good will is showed, though't come too short,
The actor may plead pardon. I'll none now. (II.5.1-9)

The cross-dressing scene of the play is simply a joke on Cleopatra. By dressing herself like Antony, Cleopatra cannot be a man or she cannot achieve masculinity. It is therefore, a satirical caricature of Cleopatra and Elizabethan women in general. In her book *Women and the English Renaissance*, Linda Woodbridge (1984: 291) rightly argues: "On the personal level, the misogyny that must be overcome in the plays may represent adolescent fears – fears of sex, fears of women and their mysterious ways, fear of the murky unknown that is the adult world . . . while dwelling upon women's sexual appetites, a man turns against his mother and against women in general". The dramatist is trying to extinguish the existence of the entire womankind. By giving preference to male dressing, the playwright values maleness and promotes the idea that women are inferior to men.

The discrimination between male/female and Rome/Egypt is maintained in the play, which marginalizes Cleopatra. When Antony is seen with Cleopatra, he is "not Antony" (I.1.57). Antony's "sport" in Egypt makes him "not more manlike/Than Cleopatra, nor the queen of Ptolemy/ More womanly than he" (I.4.5-7). Therefore, ". . . if Antony is to remain the Roman hero, Cleopatra must be marginalized as the temptress, witch, adulteress" (Singh 1990: 100). Furthermore, Harris (1994: 405) points out that "What is perhaps most notable about many past accounts of the Rome / Egypt opposition, however, is the extent to which these accounts have also elaborated an absolute gender polarity or, more accurately, a gender hierarchy. Rome has been characterized as a male world, presided over by the austere Caesar, and Egypt as a female domain, embodied by a Cleopatra who is seen to be as abundant, leaky, and changeable as the Nile".

In the play, the dramatist presents his gender discrimination between the two rulers by associating them with the two different territories. He describes Rome in association with masculinity and Egypt with femininity. Rome is perceived as a heroic and masculine empire and Egypt as a kingdom of women and eunuchs. Rome is described as the locus of politics and power, reason, restraint, and tragedy, while Egypt is equated with love and desire, art and imagination, and comedy. Antony represents Rome, while Cleopatra represents Egypt. The playwright equates Antony with Mars and Cleopatra with Venus. He is depicted as masculine and aggressive, on the contrary, while Cleopatra is depicted as obeying, submissive, irrational and fickle minded. Linda Charnes (1996 273) identifies this gender gap between the two rulers, and counts their characteristics when she writes, "'Naturally' Antony loves Cleopatra - she is exotic, mysterious, capricious, charismatic, charming, earthly - the characterological equivalent of the imagined terrain of Egypt, with which she is always synecdochized. 'Naturally' Cleopatra loves Antony—he is magnanimous (in the Aristotelian sense), expansive, aggressive, powerful, manly, famous 'in the word's report', like the imperial Roman terrain he both extends and is extension of". Similarly, this discrimination can also be understood in the words of Michael Payne (1973: 265-66): "Throughout *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare develops a series of

interrelated polarities — Rome-Egypt, masculinity-femininity, space/time boundary-space/time transcendence, death-love — which at first appear to be mutually exclusive or dualistic concepts but which are finally shown to be polar concepts instead”. Payne’s statement is obviously helpful in order to understand the discrimination between man and woman on the basis of these binary oppositions.

3. Conclusion

The entire discussion about Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra* reveals that Cleopatra is presented as secondary to Antony. In the play, antifeminism manifests itself in various ways. Cleopatra is described as a woman who chases Antony to satisfy her sexual desires; she is presented as frail, faithless and false; she uses her feminine wiles to regain her kingdom by any means. She is associated with Egypt, seen as a female domain. Male characters consider her a prostitute, a ‘strumpet’ and a ‘witch’ who has ruined Antony’s fortune, his social position, prestige and dignity. All these terms are derogatory to her personality. She is a slave to Mark Antony, emotionally and physically. Both Cleopatra and Octavia are described in the play as the intellectually weaker sex. The discrimination between sexes is also obvious in the Rome/Egypt opposition: Rome is associated with masculinity, valour, virility and manhood and the Romans are considered brave and superior to the Egyptians; Antony is the embodiment of this superiority. On the contrary, Egypt is seen in relation to femininity, weakness, and romance. Cleopatra is the embodiment of femininity, associated with romance and beauty, and is described as belonging to the weaker sex. The discrimination between the sexes is present throughout the play, where male characters are superior to female characters.

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The Philosophy of Music in Shakespeare's Drama

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In his dramatic works, Shakespeare sometimes resorted to the philosophical ideas of late Antiquity, first proclaimed by "the last Roman" Boethius in his treatise *De Institutione Musica*. Inspired by the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition, Boethius divided music into the objective music of the cosmos (*musica mundana*) and the subjective music of the human soul (*musica humana*). His philosophy is connected with the idea of the musical nature of Being. According to Boethius, the cosmos is structured on the principle of musical proportionality. The relations between heavenly spheres are equal to those between musical intervals. Seven heavenly spheres form a heavenly heptachord, whose every planet corresponds to a certain string of a kithara, i.e., the cosmos is imagined as a huge musical instrument (Boethius 1867: 188-189). And if the human ear can no longer hear the sounds of heavenly music, the reason is our force of habit: we become so accustomed to its sounds, that we stop distinguishing them. In European Christian culture, this idea was transformed as follows: heavenly music can't be heard by people because of their imperfection, as that kind of music is of divine and eternal nature, like the singing of angels.

The second kind of music according to Boethius is human music (*musica humana*). Everybody who pays attention to his/her inner self can understand it. This music is a reflection of the indivisible human essence and is the expression of man's inner world. Both world and human music are united by the principle of harmony, which is capable to turn essentially different phenomena into a single one. So music puts in order not only the cosmos, but also the human being, harmonically uniting flesh and soul. Thus the two kinds of music that Boethius speaks of are like two directions of a human being's way of looking: upwards – to the stars, and within – into one's heart.

Boethius music theory also includes a third kind of music, instrumental or sound music (*musica instrumentalis*), i.e., music in the true sense of the word (Boethius 1867: 191). Instrumental music may have such a great influence on the human being that it can be used for healing or in education. In connection to this, let us remember an ironic cue by Shakespeare's Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*: "Now, Divine air! Now is his soul ravish'd! – Is it not strange that sheeps' guts should hale souls out of men's bodies?" (II.3.54-56).

Boethius' music theory was taken over and developed by Renaissance aesthetics and was reflected in the works of art by Renaissance authors. From this point of view, Shakespeare's dramatic works are of special interest, because music is present in them in many universal ways.

For Shakespeare, music was the harmony of heavenly spheres, just like for his older contemporary, Philip Sidney, who spoke of the “planet-like music of poetry” (Sidney 1973:121). In a famous musical episode in *The Merchant of Venice*, Lorenzo compares the movement of heavenly bodies that “like an angel sing” with the harmony of “immortal souls”:

Look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his notion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close in it, we cannot hear it
(V.1. 58-65)

In Shakespeare's plays one can also hear music in the human soul. Anticipating the poetics of Romanticism, Shakespeare sees music as the true language of the senses. But at the same time, he combines musical and moral values, presenting virtue as inner music, which is close to the tradition of medieval Christian ethics. The close interweaving of musical and moral terminology characterizes many of Shakespeare's dramatic works. Here is again an example taken from *The Merchant of Venice*:

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted.
(V.1. 83-88)

Musical terminology is sometimes used by Shakespeare to characterize his dramatis personae. Let me give only one, but very significant, example. In the first act of *King Lear*, Edmond greets Edgar after having defamed him before his father and he enumerates, quite by chance it seems, several musical notes: “O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi” (I.2.131). It is necessary to give an explanation here. The note “mi” in Shakespeare's time corresponds to the note “si” in our contemporary designation. Then it becomes clear that Edmond enumerates the notes of the musical scale: fa, sol, la, si. The interval between “fa”, the fourth sound of the scale, and “si”, the seventh sound, forms a musical interval of dissonance, which was called ‘diabolic’ in Shakespeare's time. So by enumerating these musical notes, Edmond reveals his demoniac, diabolic nature.

It should be noted that Shakespeare's plays reflect not only their author's deep understanding of the philosophy of music, but also his excellent knowledge of music practice - musical instruments, musical genres and terms. Let us remember in this respect a comical music lesson in *The Taming of the Shrew*, where Hortensio offers to teach Bianca the gamut “in a brief sort” and shows her a kind of written scenario in which the main character is the gamut: “Gamut I am, the ground of all accord” (III.2.71). Due to the

polysemantic character of the word “accord”, which is not only a musical term, but also a condition of harmony and concord, the whole phrase acquires a deep meaning.

The sweet power of music that can heal sorrows and feed love is the leitmotif of many of Shakespeare’s plays. Thus, Duke Orsino’s well-known monologue in *Twelfth Night* opens with an expressive metaphor: “If music be the food of love, play on” (I.1.1). It is interesting to note that this line becomes a metaphorical motif that Shakespeare would use again in his tragedy *Antony and Cleopatra*, when Cleopatra says:

Give me some music, - music, moody food
Of us that trade in love

(II.5. 1-2)

To a Russian reader, these words may seem somewhat familiar, due to Alexander Pushkin’s well-known cue in his little tragedy *The Stone Guest*:

To love alone does music yield in sweetness.
Yet love is melody itself

(Pushkin, I.2: 281, tr.by Eugene M. Kayden)

Shakespeare’s plays strike their readers or spectators by the diversity and the harmony of their melodies of love.

The power of music in Shakespeare’s dramatic work embraces also the elements of nature, as brilliantly shown in Oberon’s monologue (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*):

My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou remember’st
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin’s back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid’s music.

(II.1. 148-154)

One of the key concepts of Shakespeare’s poetics – the concept of time – is also filled with musical associations; it contains one of the most apt definitions of music, regarded as the expression of mathematical order in the stream of time. In Shakespeare’s plays, the right rhythm of time can build both the life of a man and the life of society; to break this rhythm means to untune the music of life. This idea is expressed in the monologue of King Richard the Second, in Shakespeare’s historical drama bearing the same title:

Music do I hear?
Ha! ha! keep time: - how sour sweet music is,
When time is broke and no proportion kept!
So is it in the music of men’s lives.
And here have I the daintiness of ear
To check time broke in a disorder’d string;
But for the concord of my state and time,
Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.
I wasted time, and now doth time waste me;

(V.5. 42-50)

As the word “time” contains not only temporal but also musical characteristics, the meaning of this monologue becomes very complex.

In *The Winter’s Tale*, Shakespeare uses the following stage direction at the beginning of Act IV: “Enter Time, the Chorus”. And the Chorus sings:

Now take upon me, in the name of Time,
To use my wings.

(IV.1.3-4)

Thus, Shakespeare’s time can be heard, it is music itself.

Following the tradition of classical antiquity, Shakespeare interpreted music as a contradictory phenomenon. On the one hand, in the antiquity, music was perceived as the embodiment of order, measure, beauty and harmony, the figures of Apollo and Orpheus being personifications of these qualities. On the other hand, music was also connected with the figures of Dionysus and Pan, who symbolized its exciting, ecstatic and chaotic nature that needed a certain control and restriction. In Shakespeare’s comedy *Measure for Measure*, the Duke notes:

... Music oft hath such a charm
To make bad good, and good provoke to harm

(IV.1.14-15)

There is no doubt that Shakespeare’s poetics is dominated by the concept of music as harmony, which is interpreted as “consent of dissent” (*concordia discors*). Such understanding of harmony is the source of the most important principles of Shakespeare’s architectonics; it is based on polyphony, the contrasting interlacement of motives and characters, in one word, on everything that realized the musical principle of agreement in diversity. Shakespeare adopted the Renaissance inner unity of music and word, based on the similarity of the structural principles of the two arts. The idea that words have a special power given by their harmonious arrangement is often found in poetological treatises of the XVI-XVII centuries, where word harmony is understood as numerical proportion. The application of numerical harmony principles to poetry is motivated by its concern with “sphere music”. In particular, in his treatise *Observation in the Art of English Poesie* (1602), Thomas Campion noted that the universe was created in accordance with the principles of symmetry and proportion and that, in a sense, it might be compared with music, and music – with poetry (Campion 1969: 293). Being interpreted as a cosmic power, harmony makes different and contradictory phenomena unite into a single whole: due to harmony, the world consisting of differences will not perish.

It is no coincidence that Shakespeare’s time was marked by the development of polyphony in music and by the principle of wit in poetry - wit being understood as the combination of dissimilar images. Musical polyphony was, at the same time, perceived as a semantic phenomenon: the simultaneity of voices entailed the simultaneity of meanings. Our contemporary understanding of polyphony in literature is associated first of all with M. Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism, where polyphony is considered to be the dialogue of personal voices, individual shades of meaning and points of view (Bakhtin 1979: 363-373). However, it was the aesthetics of Romanticism that laid the foundation for this view of polyphony, as it was directed to musical categories. German romantics in general and

F.W. Schelling in particular characterized Shakespeare as an exemplary polyphonic writer and as the great master of harmony and counterpoint in music (Schelling 1966: 205). The poetics of Romanticism put at the forefront the ideal of the final harmonic concordance: the more genuine the artist is, the better his ability to reconcile some contradictory views within the same literary work. And it was in Shakespeare's work that the Romantics found the greatest range of those "reconcilable" qualities. Indeed, Shakespeare's words aimed at musical sounding and simultaneously joined different qualities, like different voices in polyphonic music.

Thus, taken as a whole, Shakespeare's work is an example of how difference and dissonance may be overcome by means of harmony that creates the unity of sound in his artistic cosmos.

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A Shakespearean Behind the Curtain

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"His eye for detail is so acute and his understanding of the dramatist's craft so subtle, he opens up aspects of each play that surprise and persuade... His was a mind that we will miss", wrote Barbara Mowat (1992:10) in her Introduction to the posthumous American edition of Marco Mincoff's last critical opus, *Things Supernatural and Causeless: Shakespearean Romance*. In a recent private message to me, Brian Vickers defined Mincoff as "a fertile and independently minded scholar" and added: "You must have noticed that I cited his work on several occasions", which indeed I have, and what is especially clear in my mind are Professor Vickers (2002)' numerous references to Mincoff's in-depth study of the authorship of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. In the mid-1980's, when I first met Inga-Stina Ewbank in Leeds, she told me that, in her early years as a student of Renaissance literature, Mincoff's essay "What Shakespeare Did to *Rosalynde*" (1960) had become an eye-opener and an inspiration for her further work. Two decades earlier, A. D. Nuttall, still a young lecturer at the University of Sussex at the time, was curious to know what kind of person Mincoff was. "In Stratford", he said, "I have heard him speak like an Oxford don." In the early 1990's, Samuel Schoenbaum, in spite of his deteriorating health, came all the way to Sofia to pay his respects to the memory of his esteemed colleague. In Moscow, Alexander Anikst often spoke of Mincoff

as the top Shakespearean scholar of Eastern Europe. Helen Gardner, Kenneth Muir, Philip Brockbank, Cyrus Hoy and many others had for him only words of deep appreciation and sincere respect.

In another universe, with a different political history, Mincoff might have very well been an Oxford don. In real life, however, it so happened that when the Iron Curtain cut Europe right through the middle, he found himself stuck on the wrong side. Born in 1909 in the family of a Bulgarian diplomat and his English wife, the future scholar went to school consecutively in the homelands of both his parents, then studied classical languages and literatures at Sofia University and went through a full course of English philology on a Humboldt scholarship in Berlin, where in 1933 he earned his doctoral degree with a linguistic dissertation. After another six years of high-school teaching in Bulgaria and academic specialization abroad, Mincoff was appointed Associate Professor of English at Sofia University, to be promoted to full professorship and to the chairmanship of the newly formed Department of English Philology by the end of the Second World War, an unchallenged position, which he retained until his retirement in 1974. For three full decades he taught all the core language and literature courses of the subject and raised them to a level comparable to that of any respected European University, producing for all of them the necessary textbooks, which have not lost their usefulness to this day. His main efforts, however, were soon focused on the study of English Renaissance drama and, more precisely, on Shakespeare's part in it.

Mincoff's broad academic background of an all-round philologist – a type of scholar now unfortunately extinct – led him naturally to a minute exploration of the linguistic texture of the plays. Thus the bulk of his research was to be devoted to stylistic studies illuminating the problems of authorship, collaboration and chronology.¹ Some of their findings have acquired an important place in Shakespearean scholarship worldwide. Another, adjacent research area is the analysis of the plays vis-à-vis their sources, revealing the dramatist's characteristic predilections. The slant of these studies is as much stylistic as it is structural and compositional. The latter two are the central preoccupations of yet another group of essays discussing plot construction. In spite of his preference for a close textual analysis, Mincoff was not averse to the search for illuminating generalization about Shakespeare's dramatic vision and his pervasive aesthetic principles, as long as they were well-grounded in provable facts. 'The Problem of the Tragic in the Work of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries' (1964a) and 'Shakespeare and Hamartia' (1964b) are good examples of this thematic circle, but its central part is formed by a series of studies starting with the early, yet fundamental 'Baroque Literature in England' (1947), going through 'Shakespeare, Fletcher and Baroque Tragedy' (1967) and permeating most of the critic's larger works, including his highly original *A History of English Literature*.² These are the writings testifying to Mincoff's unflagging interest in interpreting Shakespeare's as well as his contemporaries' dramatic endeavours, as part of a great Wölfflinian transition in sensibility and artistic expression that took place in England during the Bard's creative years and divided his career into recognizable periods.

¹ For lack of sufficient space, the titles of Mincoff's numerous journal publications, with few exceptions, are not quoted here. A detailed account of his work can be found in: Alexander Shurbanov and Christo Stamenov 2000. *English Studies in Bulgaria*. In Balz Engler and Renate Haas (eds.), *European English studies: Contributions towards the History of a Discipline*. Published for the European Society for the Study of English by the English Association. Printed in Great Britain, 267 – 293.

² *A History of English Literature* first appeared in 1947 as a mimeograph textbook for the students at Sofia University under the title *A Survey of English Literature from the Beginnings to the Close of the 17th Century*. A regular printed two-volume edition under the present title was produced by the Nauka i Izkustvo Publishing House in Sofia in 1970. The second volume was a new extension of the original survey, covering the developments during the eighteenth century and the Age of Romanticism. In 1998 the Pleyada Publishers in Sofia produced a single-volume edition of the entire book.

In the mid-1970's, Mincoff wrote his first large-scale critical book, entitled *Shakespeare: The First Steps*, attempting, on the basis of earlier in-depth explorations of individual plays, to sketch out the evolution of the dramatist's professional craftsmanship as well as the process of his poetic maturing from the late 1580's until the mid-1590's, a period of strenuous apprenticeship and trial, encompassing the creation of his first historical tetralogy, the four early comedies and his first tragedy, *Titus Andronicus*. A second book of a similar range, the above-mentioned *Things Supernatural and Causeless: Shakespearean Romance*, was written very soon after this, but did not see the light of the day until its author was already on his deathbed, in 1987. This is a thoughtful study of the poet's last dramatic ventures examined against the background of their sources and in the context of contemporary trends in the Jacobean theatre. What it makes abundantly clear is the generic and generally aesthetic divergence of the late romances from Shakespeare's earlier and, in the author's opinion, more impressive achievements, as well as the inescapable continuity of his tireless artistic pursuits. It was this last book that had the good fortune of appearing five years later in a new edition in the US and thus acquiring its deserved place in academic libraries abroad. As Barbara Mowat (1992: 10) pointed out, "Mincoff can spot that which is truly unusual in the romances because of his intensive knowledge of the other drama – other literature – of the period and because of his ability to place the plays within the context of their own time." This was indeed an integral part of the scholar's method throughout his career.

The communist regime, established in Bulgaria after the Second World War and fully consolidated by 1947, could not look with a favourable eye at a person of Mincoff's background: his father's service to the pre-war bourgeois governments, his own education in Western Europe, his mother's British nationality and, to top it all, his wife's German lineage were not the things that might vouch for him to the new authorities. The Professor's academic prestige was so high that he could not be easily removed and replaced by a more trustworthy substitute, but for years on end he was forced to live and work in virtual separation from the outside world. For a while even the basic course of English literature was taken away from him, as an ideologically-charged subject that could not be entrusted to an unreformed teacher of his kind. As a rule, granting the right to attend international conferences or to travel abroad for other professional reasons in those days was carefully dosed. Books shipped from the West were sifted by anonymous censors and sometimes did not reach the addressee, while sending a manuscript for publication in the opposite direction was strongly discouraged by an atmosphere of suspiciousness and red tape.

Mincoff managed to plod through all of this with the pertinacity of someone who was doing his work in spite of the obstacles on the way. He almost appeared not to notice them and certainly did not allow them to dishearten him for a moment. Notwithstanding the constraints, he continued to publish his scholarly articles in the most authoritative international journals and almanacs,³ which in turn sent him important new books to review for them, thus helping him to keep abreast with the current trends in the field of Renaissance studies.

At home Mincoff's name was perhaps less well known than in the academic world abroad. His tall gaunt figure, his general aura of a recluse dedicated to an arcane mission inspired awe in both students and teachers at Sofia University. The broader public would have come across his occasional writings addressed to it, the most important of which is perhaps a book called *Shakespeare: His Age and His Work*, an overall Bulgarian-language popular survey, published in 1946 and containing many of the author's lasting

³ The bulk of these dispersed publications are now collected and made readily available to all interested in a facsimile single-volume edition, issued on the occasion of the centenary of the author's birth by St. Kliment Ohridski University Press: Marco Mincoff, *Studies in English Renaissance Drama*, Sofia, 2009.

convictions and views on the subject. A number of anniversary articles in the press and pithy introductions or afterwords in books of Shakespearean translations form, over the subsequent years, the spreading trail of this early publication. Mincoff's editorial supervision of Valeri Petrov's translation of Shakespeare's entire dramatic canon, mostly produced in the 1970s, is generally considered of decisive importance for its high quality.⁴

The heroic feat of this literary critic and historian consists not only in the fact that he succeeded in making a significant contribution to Renaissance and, above all, to Shakespearean studies, in spite of his enforced isolation from the scholarly community, but, to an equal if not greater extent, in that he never succumbed to the crude ideological pressure of the establishment and did not budge from his well-considered convictions. Friedrich Engels had defined the Renaissance as "the greatest progressive revolution that mankind had so far experienced". This phrase became one of the mantras in the Soviet-style construction of history. The extolment of the Renaissance as a decisive break with the past became particularly important to communist ideology, for it found in that age an almost biblical prefiguration of the socialist revolution. In contrast, of course, the preceding Middle Ages had to be construed as the dark period of religious obscurantism. Shakespeare was proclaimed the supreme representative of Renaissance humanism and Hamlet was elevated to the status of a hero struggling for a better world, though unfortunately born too early to be able to materialize his eschatological ideas.

It is instructive to observe how in the teeth of all these shibboleths, Mincoff continued unflinchingly to hold his very different and unprejudiced views. The English Renaissance, he argued, inherited and developed the artistic forms of the Middle Ages and that was particularly true in the case of the new popular drama, which is in fact a transformation of the native medieval tradition. Shakespeare himself is not an ideologue or even an original thinker. His primary interest is not in exciting new ideas, but in the complexity of dramatic intrigues and the behaviour of the characters involved in them. In the plays he raises difficult questions, but does not provide unequivocal didactic answers to them, leaving them to the audience to excogitate. And his choice of a story or a character, or an approach, or a style is more often than not motivated by the changing theatrical fashions of the day rather than by an inner philosophical agenda.

So Shakespeare, the would-be teacher of the proletariat in his official representation, was unceremoniously stripped of his mentor's gown and exposed as a mere public entertainer. What is more, his belonging to the only 'progressive' kind of art, Realism, was cast doubt upon. In a well-balanced answer to Tolstoy's anti-Shakespearean invective, Mincoff (1946:182) wrote:

'Realism is not the one and only literary principle, neither is it the most precious one, and it would have been reckless in a poet capable of affecting the emotions as directly as Shakespeare did to entangle himself in the chains of realism. Tolstoy's criticism is rooted in a misunderstanding, for which he in fact cannot be held responsible. The culprits are above all those critics who, in their blind idolatry, have chosen to admire Shakespeare's psychological truth, the profundity of his thought, his realism – things that are often rather illusory and in which he is surpassed by many quite mediocre modern writers, – instead of stressing his lyrical power and the beauty of his poetry.'

This went directly against the Marxist high praises of Shakespeare's realistic method and threatened to problematize a basic critical assumption of the new aesthetics.

⁴ This edition of Shakespeare's dramas was published in seven volumes by the Narodna kultura publishing house from 1970 to 1981.

But Mincoff's most decisive blow was levelled at the textbooks' heroic construction of Hamlet as a revolutionary. He never tired of reminding his readers that the Prince of Denmark was first and foremost a study in melancholy, a fashionable mental aberration in Shakespeare's time, which had found its projection on the stage in the stock character of the vacillating malcontent. And in Mincoff's popular introductions to the play we often come across the warning that Hamlet is a deeply disturbed man, whose views, attitudes and reactions should not be accepted uncritically. Almost in the same breath however, the critic admits that the Prince's feelings are so forcefully expressed by poetic means, that we cannot help empathizing with him. In this paradox, Mincoff discerns a sign of Shakespeare's unusual ability to project himself onto a character and endow him/her, almost in spite of himself, with unfading vitality. Such an ability is, of course, basically psychological, but its immortal products are licked into shape by the author's extraordinary poetic talent. In Mincoff's view, Shakespeare was a greater poet than a dramatist or psychologist and his lasting impact is mostly due to his lyrical power, although the combination of all these gifts was of paramount importance for his achievement. There are, regrettably, not many literary critics who have Mincoff's keen sense of the subtleties of poetic language, a deficiency that often deprives Shakespearean criticism of its most essential focus.

In his writings for the academic audience, Mincoff's sound commonsense attitude was no less refreshing and salutary. He consistently appreciated the Bard's genius 'on this side idolatry' and was not prepared to admire indiscriminately everything written by him, an inclination which he found and detested in some current publications. Shakespeare's gradual growth of artistic skills, from his early years of apprenticeship to the peak of his powers around 1605, was traced by the scholar with a critical eye. The late romances seemed to him a period of decline and enforced accommodation to new trends in the theatre, which the dramatist could not fully internalize. With this estimate, Mincoff went staunchly against the current interpretations of his day. His uncompromising clear-sightedness, however, only helped him to discern the extraordinary achievement of the great artist where it truly lay. And at such points he was not stingy of strong words, which acquire even greater worth from the fact that they had never been unthinkingly squandered and that they came from one who was at home with the whole of world literature. Of Shakespeare's mature tragedies he said without qualms that they formed "an absolute summit in the history of the drama" (Mincoff 1970, vol.I: 375).

Mincoff was similarly impatient with another persistent tendency in Shakespearean criticism, that of creating an arbitrary theory or scheme and then struggling to ram the material of the plays into it. Neither could he tolerate the vagaries of biographical speculation used to explain various aspects or details in Shakespeare's works through references to the poet's emotional life and his supposed associations with other people. He repeated again and again that pre-Romantic poetry did not tend to be self-exploratory but audience-oriented and therefore focused on aesthetic perfection rather than on personal confession. Along with this, Mincoff cast aspersion on the endless conspiracy theories about various ghost-writers who had allegedly done Shakespeare's work for him. Such hypotheses, he (1946: 65) concluded, are only maintained "by amateurs lacking the necessary philological background and by irresponsible journalists." Sadly, their market value has proved so high and tenacious that they keep proliferating.⁵

⁵ It is curious how close to Mincoff's indignation – after nearly seven full decades – sounds the recent reaction of the Director of the [Shakespeare Institute at the University of Birmingham](#), Professor Michael Dobson, to Roland Emmerich's film *Anonymous* (2011), which presents the Earl of Oxford as the author of Shakespeare's plays: "Taken as a serious account of real history, this is so plainly daft, and so wildly at variance with all the copious evidence we have about Shakespeare, the Elizabethan theatre, Oxford, Elizabeth and Southampton alike, that it is beyond rational refutation. Taken as a version of one of our culture's

Mincoff's life story can be said to be one of incessant struggle in the name of lofty intellectual and professional principles. The question must after all be asked: did he never compromise on anything at all? One would expect that he must have done so to make his survival possible, but it did not show on the outside. Perhaps concessions were made in some small, insignificant things, though even then he found a way of disowning the compromise. This is, for instance, how, in the Preface to the 1970 edition of his *History of English Literature*, he managed with characteristic laconicity, cautiously yet clearly enough, to express in conclusion his inacceptance of both the academic isolation he had been forced to work in and the pressure to comply with ideological tenets he had nothing to do with:

Keeping up with the times has not been easy, and no doubt there are many gaps where I should have been happy to use other material if it had been available. The reading lists themselves are extremely eclectic. Partly they consist of works that happen to be available here, but also of some that are not, partly of works to which I owe a particular debt, and also of some to which I rather obviously owe none. (1970, vol. I: 6)

This is as proud a declaration of dignity unbroken under duress as one can come upon. The international Shakespearean community, I feel, owes Marco Mincoff special recognition, not for the merits of his accomplished work alone, but also in consideration of the circumstances under which he carried it out staunchly to the bitter end.

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perennially recurring daydreams, however – the tale of the oppressed rightful prince, wickedly deprived of his true heritage and recognition – it ought to give us serious food for thought about the ease with which fantasy, in some minds, can prove far more compelling than mere truth”
(<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2011/oct/26/shakespeare-is-no-fraud>).

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Successful Projects

***Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance.
The Journal's Past, Present and Future***

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*Shakespeare is the true multicultural author. He exists in all languages.
He is put on the stage everywhere. Everyone feels
that they are represented by him on the stage.*

Harold Bloom

Anyone who studies Shakespeare is aware of such outstanding journals as *Shakespeare Studies*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *Shakespeare Bulletin*, *The Upstart Crow*, *The Shakespearean International Yearbook*, *Shakespeare Newsletter*, *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriations* and *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*. Most of these periodicals have been in worldwide circulation for many decades - nowadays also published in electronic versions - and they have achieved a great renown as high quality academic publications.

Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance holds a special place among all these journals, since it is devoted in its entirety to Shakespeare studies, as practiced in a complex and diversified international context. As a peer-reviewed periodical it has a long history, having undergone probably more transformations and modifications than any other Shakespeare publications on the market. In presenting a short outline of its history, I will begin by paraphrasing the King in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*: I will "begin at the beginning, and go on till I come to the end."

In 1971, at a time when the current, vibrantly thriving interest in the processes of globalization and the idea of Shakespeare's multicultural reception did not occupy the leading place in the mainstream of academic research, Professor Toshikazu Oyama, President of Seijo University, Japan, chaired the Investigative Committee on *Shakespeare Translation* at the First World Shakespeare Congress held in Vancouver. During the Committee's discussions, its members engendered *Shakespeare Translation*, a journal which would be devoted to the multivariate issues of Shakespeare's presence in the world, as seen through the prism of its translations. In other words, it was at that meeting that the idea of a periodical, addressing the question of Shakespeare's international/global presence, was born.

The journal's first issue appeared in 1975 in Japan. Professor Oyama was its editor-in-chief, and the editorial board included: Hans W. Gabler, Jagannath Chakravorty, Toshiko Oyama, and Kristian Smidt. In 1983, when Oyama was seriously ill, he nominated Yoshiko Kawachi to take over the editor-in-chief's responsibilities and continue the publication. At the Fourth World Shakespeare Congress held in West Berlin in April, 1988, the participants in the Special Session on Shakespeare Translation, which was organized and chaired by Kawachi, suggested changing the journal's name into *Shakespeare Worldwide: Translation and Adaptation*. This change involved the extension

of the publication's fields of interest to other topics as, for example, stage and film adaptations in an international context, later reflected in several thematic volumes, such as those on *Hamlet* (1986), *King Lear* (1989), *Othello* (1991) and *Macbeth* (1995).

For almost twenty years the publication of *Shakespeare Worldwide* attracted the attention of many eminent Shakespeare scholars from many countries and various continents of the world, who closely cooperated with Kawachi in publishing the periodical. Looking through its volumes - hardbound and printed on high quality paper - one must praise their academic standard. And this standard was also achieved thanks to the work of the journal's international Advisory Board, whose members helped with their knowledge and expertise, by reviewing the essays submitted for the publication.

Appreciating *Shakespeare Worldwide* as a significant publication, I was not only honoured, but also extremely surprised when, at the Seventh International World Shakespeare Congress in Valencia (2001), Kawachi, whom I had known as a friend for many years, invited me to lunch, over which she asked me if I would be willing to co-chair the journal with her. Though the proposal was flattering, I became quite nervous indeed, since I was not sure if I would be able to manage the responsibilities and preserve both the journal's high academic standard and its international fame. During our long discussion, Yoshiko persuaded me that we would be up to the challenge. The first thing we decided to do was to change the journal's name once more, this time into *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance* and to move its place of publication to the University of Łódź, Poland, which is my place of employment.

Reminiscing on the periodical's move to Poland, I must admit it was not easy. Since there is little that bureaucrats hate more than novelties, it took about four years to settle all the problems associated with the publication. The truth is that many internationally recognized Shakespearean scholars assisted me with the endeavour by sending letters of support to the authorities of my University. In 2004 the first issue of *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance* was published. It received a new cover, and its content was divided into three sections. Yoshiko (kawachiyah@mtf.biglobe.ne.jp) and I (Krystyna.Kujawinska52@gmail.com) are responsible for the editorial work of the whole volume as well as the academic standard of the essays. Sarbani Chaudbury (India, sarbanich@gmail.com) is responsible for the section: "Book Reviews," while Xenia Georgopoulou (Greece, georgopx@yahoo.com) heads the section: "Theater Reviews." For a while, Dr Katarzyna Kwapisz Williams (Poland) was also actively engaged in editorial matters. So what we have is a truly multicultural/global venture prepared and edited by an international group of editors coming from Japan, India, Greece and Poland.

Our Advisory Board is impressive, and taking this opportunity we would like to thank its members coming from Great Britain, USA, Canada, Romania, India, Germany, Holland, Greece, Portugal, Czech Republic, Brazil, Ukraine, Poland, Australia, and China. This international team of Shakespeare scholars and critics actively participate in editing the volumes: they not only serve as reviewers of the submitted essays, but they also support and promote the publication. Since the Advisory Board members represent various nations and cultures, we believe that the essays undergo an appropriate degree of scrutiny by academic experts. But with so many submitted texts reviewed and adjudicated by two independent academics, there is quite a lot of work.

Recognizing both the journal's academic quality and value along with its significance in the international arena, the Polish Ministry of Higher Education has included the journal on its List of Eminent Periodicals published in Poland. So far the journal is indexed in a great number of databases, among which EBSCO Discovery Service Google Scholar, MLA International Bibliography, ProQuest (relevant databases), WorldCat (OCLC), and many others.

We are lucky to be able to run the journal now when we can cover global distances in seconds, with possibilities for real-time communication provided by e-mail or the internet. It would be impossible to organize our editorial work without these precious tools. Time and space have shrunk in the modern global village or city, as some anthropologists call it, and we can both freely discuss our editorial issues, and make contact with the authors of submitted materials within seconds. In addition, *Multicultural Shakespeare* would never have been possible without the friendship, responsible cooperation and great enthusiasm of its editors and the members of the Advisory Board. A word of appreciation is also due to the authorities of the University of Łódź, who understand the significance of our journal, and generously cover the cost of publication.

Multicultural Shakespeare currently appears in two formats. The electronic version is published by Versita Open (now part of the Walter de Gruyter platform, <<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/mstap>>), while the print copy is published by the University of Łódź Publishing House (<<http://multicultural.online.uni.lodz.pl>>). We aim to present a high quality journal not only in the content of the articles, but also in its form. Currently almost each volume includes colourful photographs from various theatrical productions of Shakespeare's plays and many essays are accompanied by diagrams or other illustrative materials.

Following Kawachi's inspiration, we have started publishing thematic volumes. The first one, edited by Lawrence Gunter, was devoted to "Shakespeare and Europe: History—Performance—Memory" (vol. 4/19, 2007). Its texts represented selected essays from the seminar "History and Performance," which Gunter convened and led at the European Shakespeare Research Association (ESRA) conference "Shakespeare, History and Memory" (Cracow, 2005). In 2011 Laurence Wright (The Republic of South Africa) edited "Interrogating the Spread of Shakespeare: Australia and New Zealand" (volume 8/23). Volume 10/23 (2013) "Shakespeare in Old and New Asias" was edited by Lingui Lang (China).

The texts published in *Multicultural Shakespeare* come from a variety of countries and continents. They offer firsthand knowledge and information on historical and modern interpretations from their authors' cultural perspectives, which are frequently marginalized in the main stream of Shakespeare studies. Such an approach is unparalleled in the field, as it truly presents Shakespeare as a global/multicultural phenomenon. As far as we know, no other journal plays such a significant role in uncovering complicated nuances, often unknown to the majority of international readers and scholars of Shakespeare as a global phenomenon. Though the translation studies still constitute an important part of the journal's content, Shakespeare's appropriations, also in commerce and in such digitalized forms as YOUTUBE, reveal the richness of the international responses to the playwright and his texts. The role of theatrical and cinematographic traditions and current approaches, conditioned not only by culture, but also by politics and social issues, reveal and confirm Shakespeare's contemporaneity all over the world. The authors refer to modern critical trends in areas such as literature, literary criticism, anthropology, and philosophy, while at the same time providing new vistas for various discourses in the field of Shakespearean studies.

Looking back at the journal's last decade, I would like to believe that the publication has kept its initial objective: to create a global space in which culturally diverse voices can present and share their experience of local Shakespeares. Yet working with Shakespeare scholars and academics who come from highly diversified cultural backgrounds constitutes is a constant adventure, as the interaction with local customs and beliefs has its rewards as well as its difficulties. One of the most straining situations arose when, after the publication of an essay, I received an official complaint stating that the presentation of certain historical events connected with the reception and appropriation of

Shakespeare in one culture had served as promotional propaganda of a nationalistic party's electoral campaign! Once again Shakespeare had become implicated in the maelstrom of politics and fight for power, which so many of his plays so skillfully portray.

I would like to believe that both we, as the journal's editors, and the journal's readers are acquiring knowledge not only about Shakespeare, but also about other cultures. Though *Multicultural Shakespeare* will not turn us into advanced specialists in Hungarian history, Chinese folklore, or Brazilian theatrical practices, the local responses to the playwright's texts represent a great opportunity to discuss and circulate information and, hopefully, promote understanding and the acceptance of an ever-increasing colourful canvas of nations, people, customs and beliefs. No one can deny that national, political, social and cultural barriers have been and will continue to be present, even in Shakespeare studies. At the same time, it cannot be ignored that for centuries Shakespeare has been crossing these barriers, contributing to the transformation and improvement of relations within both national and ethnic communities as well as among individuals. We hope the issues of *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance* will extend beyond linguistic, historical, political, social and cultural differences, which in the past frequently turned into nationalistic disputes, at times even into war, and will contribute to the creation of a space for global multicultural discourses. In this endeavour it is our desire to also invite you, our readers, to consider helping us spread the idea of international Shakespeare through contributing your scholarly research to our journal. Not only would this further enhance the journal's quality, but also allow us increase its publication to twice annually.

INTERVIEW

Everything we do is political An Interview with Kevin Smith

Dana Percec and Alexandru Oravițan
University of the West, Timișoara



In 2012, when *Jammy Dodger* was published, this satirical novel was very positively received by press and literary critics in Britain and Ireland. The author, Kevin Smith, was born in London and grew up in Northern Ireland. A journalist, he spent a few years in the 1990s in Eastern Europe, including Romania, as a foreign correspondent. Until 2009, when he devoted himself to creative writing, he worked for newspapers, radio and electronic media, collaborating with *Financial Times of London*, the *Associated Press* and *Reuters*. He currently lives with his family in Dublin. *Jammy Dodger*, shortlisted for the Desmond Elliott Prize for debut fiction, is an ironic presentation of artistic life in Ireland, filtered by the main character, the bohemian Artie Conville, and projected against the background of the political conflicts in 1980s Belfast. The novel was regarded by critics as funny, sharp, “deliciously absurd” (*Daily Mail*). His second novel, a historical comedy adventure, will appear later this year. Courtesy of British Council Romania and Dr. Nigel Townson, Director of the British Council, Romania, Kevin Smith was a special guest of the British and American Studies conference, organized by the English Department at the University of Timișoara, in May 2013, where he read excerpts from his novel. On this occasion, he was invited to share some of his views on contemporary literature and his experience as a writer and journalist.