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# SMASHING SHAKESPEARE

*Exposing propaganda and class prejudice in the most over-rated author on earth*



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# SMASHING SHAKESPEARE

## Excerpted from *Dangerous Books*

### Introduction

Intelligent high school students often ask me, with genuine bewilderment, why they must read the plays of William Shakespeare (1564-1616). Despite the best efforts of their teachers to convince them that old William's works deserve to be read, students *suspect* that stories about young lovers committing suicide, greedy nobles committing treason, a Moor killing his Italian wife and a Jew demanding Italian blood are not works of genius and are certainly not relevant to their lives. Their suspicions are well-founded, but most students lack the critical insights they need to avenge the millions who have suffered intolerable boredom and confusion at the hands of Shakespeare and his disciples.

To free English students and millions of ageing Shake-ophiles from the plague that is Shakespeare, let us begin by recognizing that Shakespeare was not a free mind and that he was a paid entertainer of the England's most powerful and corrupt elites. England's movers and shakers paid for *entertainment* and not for *enlightenment*. That's not surprising. People rarely want to be enlightened, and the ruling class is typically the least interested in the critical thinking and painful self-examination needed for enlightenment.

Shakespeare's job was to entertain his beloved yet ruthless patrons: Queen Elizabeth, King James I (and IV), and Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, not to mention other patrons of the Globe Theater. His job was never to write anything that challenged his patrons' superstitions, vices and prejudices. In the whole history of the world, the ruling class has never hired anyone to enlighten them.

And yet, thousands of scholars still believe that Shakespeare's works communicate enlightened ideas, refined feelings and good jokes. They write wonderful dissertations and eulogies about their idol. They are fiction writers and windbags, and much to my delight, Shakespeare scholar Jonathan Bates agrees. In a recent article, he rightly dismissed Harold Bloom's windy and laughable sermons about Shakespeare's role in developing the West's enlightened or progressive values. In Jonathan's own words,

Ludicrously, the critic Harold Bloom once proposed that Shakespeare invented our idea of what it is to be human. Far more plausibly, one could argue that Montaigne and Shakespeare ... effected a seismic shift in our sense of the autonomy of the individual, the sense of the self, and the *western tradition's acknowledgement of cultural difference and relativity of values* [italics mine]. (The Statesman, July 10, 2014)

My apologies; after Bate's first sentence, the rest is nonsense. Montaigne's rarely-read books have no influence on the West, and Bate's assessment of Shakespeare's influence on our culture is similar to Bloom's. He claims Shakespeare's works "effected a seismic shift in our sense of the autonomy of the individual." Nonsense. *Shakespeare and his patrons wanted the*

*whole world to surrender its autonomy – its freedom – and wanted the world to bow before England's monarchs.* To insist that Shakespeare promoted autonomy and individualism is like arguing the utter absurdity that U.S. presidents promote democracy and human rights around the world. Nonsense! *They are in the business of destroying both – because neither one is profitable.*

Shakespeare never even dared to whisper that individuals should be autonomous – free from monarchs, parliaments and their laws. Why? Because he wasn't free to express such opinions, and everything he wrote had to be authorized by the royal censor, the Master of the Revels, who had unlimited power to imprison, torture and execute any playwright who criticized, satirized or offended royal prejudices, beliefs, policies, and so on.

And, in case we haven't noticed: slaves, suffragettes, civil rights activists and political revolutionaries rarely quote Shakespeare *because the language of freedom and autonomy does not exist in his works.* And this shouldn't surprise us. Shakespeare's patrons were mostly sexist and racist elites, nobles, snobs and greedy, calculating, war-mongering jingoists. They had no interest in granting autonomy to human beings; they would have preferred to see all other nations enslaved to their budding empire.

What's next? Will Jonathan Bate argue that the CIA promotes freedom and democracy?

And let's consider the claim, too, that Shakespeare helped create the "western tradition's acknowledgement of cultural difference and relativity of values." What utter balderdash! Did the English colonists treat any foreign culture as if it were just as good as their own? Oh, nowadays our comfy imperialists boast about multiculturalism and tolerance for ethnic minorities – but look closely and you will find culture on its deathbed. The diverse ethnic populations of the West spend 95 percent of their time slaving as students, workers, taxpayers, shoppers and consumers of goods and western 'culture.' They have almost no time for their own culture, and/or they have no land on which to practice their traditional ways.

Jonathan's gist was that Shakespeare's plays promote tolerance towards other cultures, but where is the evidence? Do Shakespeare's plays teach us that heathenism, paganism, Puritanism, Catholicism, Presbyterianism, Judaism, Islam, utopianism and other cultures are different *but valid*? On the contrary! Shakespeare's works make a mockery of every culture except English-Anglican Imperialism.

Does Shakespeare teach understanding of foreign cultures? He does not. The foreign characters in *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice* are not portrayed as intelligent, generous or virtuous characters. Even generous Antonio does nothing to compensate Shylock for his losses. As for mad King Lear, well, he might be English, but he's not really English, not by Elizabethan standards; he's irredeemably pagan and ignorant of his 'duty' to keep his country united under one monarch.

Did Shakespeare set most of his tragedies in foreign countries because he respected their "cultural differences"? No. He set his tragedies abroad because his audiences considered foreign countries inferior and doomed to tragedy.

Shakespeare's works contain little or no evidence of human intelligence, which is why Hollywood is in love with the. It loves *Macbeth* for its violence and its immorality; that and nothing more. *Macbeth's* only morals, if you can call them morals, are that Christians should not listen to non-Christian women, men should not listen to their wives, and no one should kill his leader or desire the wealth that belongs to his leader. Of course, these are not morals – these are *immorals* or *anti-morals*.

Actually, Shakespeare's 'tragedies' are not genuine tragedies; they are not designed to make us pity foreign kings, princes, commanders, money lenders and so on. Do you honestly think

Shakespeare's audience, a crowd of wealthy snobbish English patrons, wished to feel pity for foreigners? Their only wish was to *conquer and exploit* foreigners, and none of their hired playwrights ever dared question that immoral desire.

What about our beloved *Romeo and Juliet*? Does it "acknowledge cultural difference"? Well, if it did, its Italian characters would be cast in a positive light; instead, *Romeo and Juliet* exaggerates old stereotypes of women and Italians, portraying the one as weak and meddling, and portraying Italian men as belligerent, argumentative, lustful and vain. Moreover, *Romeo and Juliet* mocks the Catholic Church and its beliefs. If the play acknowledges cultural differences it does so only to mock them.

While respecting Shakespeare's obvious talent as writer, we should acknowledge that he was a human being, or at least an Englishman and a salaried entertainer who was not free to use the stage to promote enlightened views. He was the eloquent masseur of his masters; this is why he condemned none of the sins of his masters: colonizing foreign lands, hunting so-called witches, persecuting Catholics, war mongering, impoverishing the majority, and corruption in the highest levels of government.

At best, Shakespeare was a prisoner of a world that forced him to echo and peddle despicable prejudices and illusions.

### *Beware of Disciples*

Amazingly, almost incredibly, around the world, Shakespeare's tragedies are taught without hardly a single teacher encouraging children to question their pro-war and anti-democratic narratives and messaging. But what else should we expect? We live, after all, in a world that remains committed to waging war, overthrowing democratically elected leaders, and to defending undemocratic political and economic institutions – I refer to large corporations and the government bureaucracies they manipulate.

So, why do we teach Shakespeare uncritically while we purport to live in democratic and peace-loving countries? Why? The answer is simple: our democracy and love of peace is a sham, and the men and women who praise Shakespeare the loudest are least to be trusted, *and* those who defend the 'king' most passionately are the most insane.

Let the defenders and cheerleaders of King Shakespeare look beyond his velvet robes. Let us heed the words of Voltaire and Tolstoy, both of whom criticized Shakespeare's works on moral grounds, and let us even heed Nietzsche mocking comparison of Shakespeare's works to the grotesque and showy clothing worn in Elizabethan times by England's royal idiots.

In the name of objectivity and critical thinking, how did high school and university teachers lead me through Shakespeare's pastures without ever expressing a single criticism? Shakespeare is their god, and his disciples still earn their daily bread preaching the imagined moral and aesthetic values of his "masterpieces." Their Shakespeare is too sacred to question or criticize. Analysis is permitted only if it does not threaten their beliefs.

To seek humanistic values in Shakespeare's works is like looking for anti-war and anti-government values in Hollywood. His job was to glorify England's vices. He did not have the liberty to criticize anything of importance, and his freedom of expression was crippled by a prohibition on all satire and criticism of the ruling class. Upsetting his masters would have meant a quick trip to the gallows.

And yet, somehow Shakespeare has plenty of disciples and followers.

## A History-Reality Check

English teachers and professors have no qualms about using Aristotle's 2300-year-old definition of Greek tragedy to understand Shakespeare's 400-year-old tragedies. This is silly. Would you use an airplane manual meant for a 1935 Spitfire if you wanted to understand how to operate a 1996 Cessna Citation turbofan engine?

Everything evolves, everything changes. Europe was not in suspended animation for the 1900(?) years that separate Aristotle from Shakespeare. While Shakespeare studied ancient Greek and Roman classics, he was no Greek or Roman. While he lived in the Renaissance, Renaissance England was far from a reincarnation of ancient Greece or Rome.

In fact, Shakespeare's culture – with all its snobbery and jingoism – was almost the antithesis of Aristotle's Hellenic culture. The British were a hundred times the racist snobs the Greeks ever were, and their snobbery is writ large over Shakespeare's plays. We don't notice Shakespeare's vices because our teachers and directors blindly worship Shakespeare. We don't understand Shakespeare's plays *as he wanted us to understand them* because we are not wealthy, powerful English snobs who enjoy judging foreigners and lovers.

Shakespeare never intended to be "dramatic"; he never intended to stir up feelings of hope and fear, the main effects of modern entertainment. The only emotions he promoted were the noble English feelings of honor for monarchs and superiors, pride for England and God, and contempt for foreigners, women, non-Christians, and so on.

Would you expect a Russian Communist to write deep, sympathetic plays about capitalists? Would you expect a Chinese imperial court poet to present Mongol society in a positive light? Then why do we expect Shakespeare to show compassion and understanding for the foreigners with whom it was often if not always at war? And why would he, a servant of Anglican elites, write plays that show compassion for Catholics, Puritans, pagans and the lower classes? He wouldn't – and he didn't.

So, what did Shakespeare's audience watch *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Romeo and Juliet*? Well, they watched because Shakespeare's tragedies *confirmed their beliefs that foreigners and non-Anglicans are stupid*. That is all. Italy gets the brunt of Shakespeare's attack because Italy was the home of the Roman Catholic Church, which exploited England for centuries, and because Italy was the heart of the Roman Empire that conquered and looted England long before the Church did.

## The Tutor's Torment

Long ago, the Roman Catholic Church stopped conducting its religious services in Latin and conducted them in languages people understood. Yet today, thousands of teachers, professors and film producers *continue to preach Shakespeare in Elizabethan English*. As if the cultural divide between us and Shakespeare were not wide enough, must we also subject our children and audiences to a language they can hardly understand?

How many millions of children have been tormented by Shakespeare's language? Students gain nothing from reading original versions instead of modern English translations; instead, they lose much time, patience, and understanding.

Was it cheating when people started reading the Bible in their own language?

More importantly, why read Shakespeare in any language? Whatever the language, Shakespeare remains an abomination. What do we learn from *Romeo and Juliet*? If it teaches us

that feuding Italians won't live in peace with one another until their children commit suicide. Well, we have plenty of children committing suicide, even in England, but I see almost no evidence that adults are prepared to change their ways.

And why should we read *The Merchant of Venice*? Does it teach children to demand fair wages, consume less, recognize true wealth and be wary of borrowing money from banks?

Shakespeare has nothing good to teach us. To demand that students read his plays in Elizabethan English is like asking children to drink alcohol from a pot at the bottom of a cold, dark well.

And our teachers are hypocrites, for they forbid students from plagiarizing, yet Shakespeare plagiarized most of his plays! Teachers even force students to plagiarize the structure of their essays! Originality in structure is forbidden, but originality in content is demanded – although, paradoxically – students must not be too original; they must not dare criticize the master of plagiarism and the parrot of English imperialism.

## Hollywood's Morons

The critical difference between Shakespeare's Globe Theater and our Hollywood is that Shakespeare wrote for the very literate upper class while Hollywood's prostitutes write scripts for the barely literate masses. This means that whenever Hollywood adapts Shakespeare for the silver screen it always turns Shakespeare upside-down, turns Shakespeare's plays into sickly love stories and frightening tragedies. Some blasted Hollywood fools even wrote the script for a popular movie titled *Shakespeare in Love*. Someone please explain to Hollywood's drug pushers that *there is no love in Shakespeare*. His plays turn love into a farce, or into something despicable, or into something to be sacrificed for one's king. As for Shakespeare's personal life, we might note that he left no evidence behind that he loved his family, and none of his plays portray a happy family. The ruling class simply scorned domestic happiness. And, I assure you, if Shakespeare ever dared to have a lover, he would not know how to make her happy. This embarrassing conclusion is supported by the fact that none of his plays were meant to make women smile, and every reference to lust is marked by Christian disgust and every reference to sex oozes with contempt for the body and for women.

## Macbeth

Scholars who claim that Macbeth is a tragic hero and that the play contains a strong moral cannot defend their position against my attacks. First, I remind the enemies of truth that William Shakespeare was part of an elite media machine that entertained the upper class and that, as such, he was not in a position to criticize his king. Indeed, Shakespeare did his best to please his ultimate master, the first Stuart monarch, King James, by writing a play that appealed to his morally poisoned, prejudiced and paranoid brain.

## Immoral Pro-Monarchism

Scholars and teachers believe *Macbeth* teaches us about the evils of greed and hubris. That is the kind of wishful thinking one expects from idolaters. If Shakespeare had been concerned about greed for money and power, he should have portrayed King Duncan, King Edward and all kings

as monsters of greed. Do you think kings acquire their wealth and power without greed and cruelty? Do people freely give them their wealth and power? Isn't all wealth and power taken by force?

King Macbeth is evil and monstrous – *not because he is greedy*. The right of kings to possess infinite wealth and power is never questioned by Shakespeare. No, King Macbeth is evil *because he listens to witches, listens to his wife, and is therefore the godless opposite of King Edward, whom Shakespeare portrayed as a second Jesus*.

*Macbeth* has no moral other than this: kings and monarchism is good, and *their* greed and power is justified if they are either English or ruled by England.

## The King's Prostitute

Like most kings, James was terrified of treason, so Shakespeare tried to soothe his fears with *Macbeth*. This silly tragedy assured King James that men who commit treason will suffer horrible consequences: madness, loss of friends, childlessness, death in combat and a future in eternal Hell.

Imagine Shakespeare writing a play in which an ambitious traitor kills his king and lives happily ever after. Had he written *that* play, he would have lost a few pounds, as many pounds as his head weighed. No, to appeal to the king and to live to write another day, Shakespeare wrote a play in which a traitor loses his mind *because* he committed bloody treason, his wife loses her mind *because* she compelled her husband to commit treason, they lose all their friends and the traitor is finally defeated by – who else? – the English army. How's that for stroking the king of England?

the play encouraged the atrocities committed against so-called witches, and the play whitewashes England's conquest of Scotland – a whitewashing accomplished, in part, by blackwashing or portraying Scotland's rulers, Duncan and Macbeth, as a dunce and a bloody tyrant respectively. Now consider, if you would, Shakespeare's eloquent whitewashing and blackwashing is paralleled in modern times by the U.S. media and government – which blackwash or demonize any leader of any country that American leaders wish to destroy or control, and which censor the truth and the atrocities the U.S. military commits abroad.

## History Whitewashed

Of course, England doesn't merely defeat Macbeth; England *liberates* Scotland from its horrible, Scottish tyrant. Sound familiar? It's the storyline still being used by the U.S. and NATO as they 'liberate' countries around the world from their local tyrants and human rights violators. The world has changed – yes, the pace of 'liberation' has only intensified, and Hollywood's boiling pot of patriotism, war and violence glorification can be traced back to Shakespeare.

Indeed, Shakespeare's English army does much more than liberate Scotland, for it was never in the business of doing anything for free. So, wouldn't you believe it but Prince Malcom, King Duncan's Scottish son, agrees to an alliance with England's King Edward because, of course, he desperately needs the English to save his Scotland. The alliance effectively unites the two kingdoms and – not coincidentally – this fictional alliance mimics and glorifies the real alliance that occurred through King James, the man who, in 1603, became king of both Scotland and England. Shakespeare celebrates this union in *Macbeth*, where an alliance with England solves

Scotland's problems. England, of course, had no problems and gains nothing from being allied so closely to Scotland. Nonsense. Scotland must be saved by England's King Edward and his earls, and so it is saved by them and Prince Malcolm, who has already made an alliance with England in order to overthrow Scotland's King Macbeth, also chooses to adopt the English system, turning all his nobles into earls. This effectively means that Malcolm will not be king and that the earls will rule Scotland on behalf of England's king. It's a perfect English wet dream. As for the union that formed through King James, you can be sure it was designed for England's benefit. Indeed, in 1707, Scotland was *forced* to become part of a greater English kingdom known as the United Kingdom.

This seemingly inexorable process of kingdoms and empires growing larger *through undemocratic processes* continues to this day, as the European Union has united much of Europe in an undemocratic union, and, more significantly, western elites are busy writing so-called free trade treaties in order to impose a new world corporate order that overrules the authority of sovereign nations and renders national, so-called democratic governments powerless.

Shakespeare's attempt to make us fear and condemn traitors is laughable. How can we sympathize with a king who lives in fear of treason? Do you think I sympathize with billionaires who live in fear of losing their wealth? I wish the whole era of kings and queens could be wiped from our history. I believe no one has the right to rule over me or anyone else. I believe in the right and ability of every person to rule themselves. But don't expect such anti-authoritarian-egalitarian thoughts from the king's entertainer.

Should we give Shakespeare credit for writing a play in which greed, ambition and stupidity lead to insanity and death? Let us reflect. Is this the brutish justice we want for ourselves? Let greedy monsters like Macbeth be enlightened, educated, reformed, and given a human 'soul'. Why is so much pain and violence necessary for the stage and the cinema?

Actually, *Macbeth* is not a play about greed, at least not greed in general. The play only condemns the greed that leads men to murder kings and nobles. The lives of the poor were of no concern to Shakespeare and his patrons.

*Macbeth* also strokes King James' royal ego by supporting his policy of executing traitors without trial. After the treasonous Gunpowder Plot of 1605 failed to kill King James, the king authorized executions and authorized a fresh wave of anti-Catholic persecutions. Thus, *Macbeth*, first performed in 1606, mentions that the execution of the traitor Macdonwald occurred without trial. And, by allying the traitor with Catholics and Irish, Shakespeare indulged in that old English custom of villainizing all Catholics and all the Irish.

Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is a sweet lullaby for King James; it suggests that treason leads to psychological Hell and death for the traitor. Wasn't that a sweet comfort for the anti-democratic King James?

With *Macbeth*, Shakespeare stroked the egos of all of England's war-mongering, imperialistic rulers. In the play, the English army enters Scotland at the behest of Prince Malcolm. If angry Scottish princes can grant England the right to invade their country, then England will always be able to find some excuse to come to the rescue of some poor nation with an allegedly evil ruler. If this sounds familiar, that's because similar excuses regularly whitewash the U.S. Empire's invasions and destructions of foreign nations.

Moreover, Macbeth persuades three poor men that rich Banquo is the cause of their misery and that they should kill him. Afterwards, according to the text, they appear to have received no payment or improvement. Shakespeare's message is that Scotland's elites used their own poor people to fight for them, but this is a universal practice. Today, and doubtlessly long ago, Anglo-

American elites and intelligence agencies specialize in persuading poor men in foreign countries to overthrow foreign governments that the Anglo-American elites do not like.

Moreover, with his morally disgusting portrait of Lady Macbeth, Shakespeare catered to the widespread sexism of his Christian masters. Shakespeare endows Lady Macbeth with the foulest mouth in literature. The cunning woman *persuades* and *coaxes* her husband into committing treason, which effectively means that her husband's only crime was to listen to his wife. If Shakespeare portrayed contemporary England or Scotland honestly, he would have given us a drunken Macbeth beating a nagging wife and a prophet predicting 400 years of domestic violence in Britain ("Silent shame of domestic violence in Britain," Jane Merrick & Emily Dugan).

Shakespeare was a talented flatterer. He portrayed England's King Edward as if he were the reincarnation of Jesus. Malcolm, Scotland's own prince, actually claims that England's King Edward could heal people with his hands. And the evil Macbeth is brought to justice *thanks to the help of the good English army*. Shakespeare certainly knew how to lick his master's boots.

## Christian Superstition

Finally, Shakespeare's plays promote the dangerous lie that human beings are immortal. After killing King Duncan, Macbeth expresses the idea that Duncan's soul shall be called to either Heaven or Hell. This amounts to saying, "Duncan, if you were a good man, God will reward you and you will benefit from being murdered by me." Isn't that nice? It's quite a wonderful way of whitewashing any murder. Although this belief does not wash Macbeth's conscience free of guilt, in reality, it's quite effective. Millions of murderous Christian thugs have unconsciously avoided guilt for their atrocities – their unconscious trick is to simply assume that their victims do not die, that God will give eternal life to anyone who deserves it. But, being an ignoramus and a psychological nitwit, Shakespeare understood nothing of how religion corrupts human behavior, and rather than being an enlightened critic of Christian superstitions, he catered to his king's ignorance and helped keep an entire nation drunk on religion, confident in their personal immortality – which is, quite possibly, the most stupid and dangerous confidence on Earth.

In short, Shakespeare peddled grandiose delusions, paranoia and dangerous superstitions to England's rulers. A diseased prostitute could not have posed a greater danger to England.

## England Supremacism

Of course, Shakespeare's plays are not only disgusting exercises in royal fellatio. As the willing prostitute of the British ruling class, Shakespeare was also their chief propagandist promoting loyalty to the King of England and unconditional sacrifice for one's country – I mean for England's rulers.

Like the rulers of every empire, the rulers of the budding British Empire believed that they and their culture were superior to all other peoples and cultures. This shouldn't surprise us. Such myths are universal among the world's ruling classes.

*Macbeth* is designed to be read as pro-English propaganda. After all, its Scottish King Duncan is naïve, gullible, and so corrupt and foolish that he promotes his heartless and savage cousin, Macbeth, for his unspeakably violent behavior in battle. Imagine a ruthless, blood-smearing commander who enjoys personally butchering his enemy – and now imagine a president promoting him to a high-ranking political position: now you get the gist of King Duncan's

*Scottish idiocy.* Of course, in reality *the most ruthless men and women rise to power in every country.*

King Duncan is so incompetent he even permits his body guards to drink themselves into a stupor while he overnights in the castle of his savage cousin. Predictably, he's murdered by Macbeth.

Shakespeare's portrait of Scotland's new king, Macbeth, is such a masterpiece of demonization that even the modern propaganda-press has difficulty matching it with its portraits of Hitler, Stalin, Hussein, Ghadaffy, and so on.

A few scenes after Macbeth assassinates his kingly cousin and becomes the new king, Shakespeare wanted us to laugh, for he made Macbeth's wife tell her guests, in a ridiculous attempt to reassure them, that her husband has always been insane.

And Shakespeare's Christian bias is rampant in *Macbeth*. The so-called hero, Macbeth, is ruined *because he listens to non-Christian women*, to witches – a group that includes his wife, for she speaks and behaves exactly like a witch.

Shakespeare's Christian bias is also on display when the sergeant states that Fortune, a Roman goddess, is a "whore" who supported the violent rebellion against King Duncan, the very Christian King of Scotland whom Macduff calls the "Lord's anointed temple." This means that Duncan's kingship was blessed by God and that God, in fact, lives in him, as a spirit in a human temple. Such exaggerated fantasies are to be expected from England's chief propagandist.

Of course, the whole plot is a work of royal propaganda designed to promote the belief that killing a monarch is the ultimate evil *and will result in God condemning the traitor's soul to eternal Hell*: "[I've] given my eternal jewel [immortal soul] ... to the common enemy of man [Satan, the devil]" (3.1.67-68).

## Macbeth Is No Tragic Hero

Scholars and teachers believe Macbeth's savage behavior on the battlefield is actually evidence of heroic behavior and that his initial hesitations to kill his king prove he's essentially a good man who was corrupted by his wife and the witches. But Macbeth was never heroic. Please consider:

- The sergeant compares Macbeth to the Roman soldier who killed Jesus Christ at Golgotha. He states that Macbeth (and Banquo) spilled so much blood on the battlefield that they seemed to re-enact the scene at Golgotha (1.2.40), where a Roman soldier impaled the crucified Jesus Christ. This implies that Macbeth is like the Roman soldier who spilled Christ's blood, which means Macbeth is an immoral monster.
- Hecate rebukes the witches for wasting their time on Macbeth, a man she calls stubborn and wrathful. In other words, she believes Macbeth was not worth corrupting since he was already a sinner destined for Hell.
- Macbeth listens to witches and to his wife, two unforgivable and very unheroic indiscretions in Christian Europe.
- The fact that Macbeth is an evil man is confirmed at the end of the drama, when he has a special partner named Seyton, meaning Satan.

So who is the hero in *Macbeth*? England's King Edward is the real hero. Shakespeare portrayed him as a reincarnation of Jesus: he even heals the sick with his hands. The runner-up is the

Scotsman, Macduff, because he killed Macbeth and sacrificed his family for his country and king. While Shakespeare considered such sacrifices praiseworthy, they are abhorrent to people of conscience.

## The Bankers Will Rule the World

To give Shakespeare credit, at least his play contains one accurate prophecy. I refer to Shakespeare's sub-plot involving Banquo, a man much too friendly with King Duncan and whose sons, according to the witches, will rule Scotland for nine generations. If the Banquo family symbolizes powerful banking families, this is astonishingly prophetic. Today, bankers dictate policies to our governments ("Meet the Secretive Group that Rules the World," Tyler Durden); our governments are ruled by *bankers* ("Central Banks, BIS and Goldman Sachs Coercion," Sartre (James Hall)); they fund our wars and our violent revolutions ("The Federal Reserve Cartel: Rothschild, Rockefeller and Morgan Families," Dean Henderson; "The Top 5 Revolutions Funded by George Soros," Lisa Grass), and they lead continents into crippling debt (*IMF and World Bank Destroying Countries*, Greg Palast and Mark Phillips).

My Banquo=Bankster interpretation is supported by Banquo's name, the only non-Scottish and non-Anglo-Saxon name in the play. Shakespeare likely derived it from the Latin word for bank, *banque*, or in modern Italian, *banca*. Banquo's connection to finance is supported on three occasions: when he and others first appear before King Duncan, Duncan speaks of recompense, payment and debt (1.4.19); secondly, when Banquo appears before Macbeth's castle, Banquo says so few stars are shining because heaven is saving money (2.1.4); thirdly, when Macbeth describes Banquo to the thieves he claims that Banquo has oppressed them, worked them into an early grave and turned them into beggars (3.1.90) – a good description of the effect modern banksters have on human life ("How the credit card bosses wreck lives for profit," Matt Nichter). Lastly, Banquo's connection to finance is established by his son's name, Fleance, which Shakespeare possibly derived from the verb "to fleece," which since 1570 has meant "to cheat and swindle." Apparently, England's pro-monarchist bard knew how much people suffered on account of bankers.

Since I can find no evidence that Elizabethan Scotland had powerful and abusive banking institutions, apparently Shakespeare foresaw a day when it would have them. Actually, since Fleance fled to England and received help from the English monarch, apparently Shakespeare prophesied that English finance would use Scottish puppets to fleece Scotland for generations, perhaps even to our own time ("Britain is ruled by the banks, for the banks," Aditya Chakraborty).

Because Banquo represents a Catholic Italian or Spaniard, doubtlessly Shakespeare's audience understood the message that foreign bankers are a danger to sovereignty—today more than ever, as even Canada, like nearly every country, is being fleeced by domestic and foreign bankers:

- *Killing the Host: How Financial Parasites and Debt Bondage Destroy the Global Economy*, Michael Hudson
- *Confessions of a Wall Street Insider: ... Banksters*, Michael Kimelman
- *International Bankster\$ ...*, James Morcan & Lance Morcan
- *The Bankster Diaries ... The Federal Reserve*, James Bernard Gilmore

- *Greedy Bastards: How We Can Stop ... Banksters*, Dylan Ratigan
- *Wall Street Banksters Financed ... Adolph Hitler*, The Committee Of Twelve ...
- *Web of Debt: The Shocking Truth about Our Money System*, Ellen Hodgson Brown & Reed Simpson

## Against Native Traditions

Witches are people who practice the world's older, more native cultures. In Europe, witches and pagans rejected the imposition and importation of Christianity; consequently, witches were violently oppressed and persecuted. Yet Shakespeare did not care for them. He served a gang of Christian dogmatists, so of course he portrayed witches as evil, cruel subhuman creatures.

In reality, witches were harmless women who practiced their traditional and *native* cultures.

If I portrayed modern indigenous peoples as dangerous scourges on civil society; would anyone consider me a genius?

Shakespeare *intentionally* censored himself and erased the crimes of his country and religion. Christians executed thousands of innocent natives – witches – during Shakespeare's comfy life. In fact, in 1604 Shakespeare's beloved king even authorized cruel revisions to Queen Elizabeth's Witchcraft Act. The revised Act denied persons accused of witchcraft the right to use ecclesiastic courts, and it made the entirely *imaginary* crime of witchcraft punishable by death.

Shakespeare actually encouraged King James' dangerous paranoia. In 1597, James suspected witches of sinking his ships by stirring up storm winds, which is precisely and not coincidentally what Shakespeare's witches do in *Macbeth*. Thus, Shakespeare encouraged the king to fear, persecute and even kill innocent women suspected of practicing England's native traditions. Of course, because most readers are historically illiterate or literally incompetent, nowadays Shakespeare's witches simply amuse us. We don't realize that in Shakespeare's time Christians killed thousands of innocent people suspected of being witches and warlocks, and we fail to draw the moral conclusion that it's highly irresponsible of anyone to reinforce the lie that witches are dangerous and evil.

How evil are Shakespeare's witches? They are quoted as having said, "Fair is foul and foul is fair," which means "good is evil and evil is good," which means the witches enjoy being evil. Shakespeare was a hypocrite. His religion and his country had overturned the moral world order with its evil and rotten monarchy, classism, militarism, land privatization and rampant environmental destruction. And now, 400 years later, people seem more determined than ever before to believe that their evil behaviors are good ones.

Shakespeare used a few literary 'tricks' to portray his witches as evil, subhuman creatures. They only meet in bad weather, and they meet outdoors, like animals; like animals they communicate with animals, and they hover like bats. His witches do not communicate with God, do not shine like Jesus and do not meet in lovely churches or fly like angels.

How evil are Shakespeare's witches? Extremely evil! One witch brags about how she will torment a sailor headed for Aleppo (1.3.7), a city in modern Syria which was primarily known in Shakespeare's time as the place to which the bloody knights of Christ, the Crusaders, went to fight for God and King. Thus, the witch's desire to torment such a man was supposed to be viewed as the strongest evidence of the witch's godless and immoral spirit.

How evil are Shakespeare's witches? Infinitely evil! Behold, they are responsible for the murder of God's anointed king! No graver sin is possible – at least not for Shakespeare.

Native land traditions are also demonized, but we hardly notice because we have forgotten our native traditions. When King Duncan grants the property of the Thane of Cawdor to Macbeth, no one questions his right to treat land as a possession to be shuffled about between nobles. Shakespeare never criticized England's policy of concentrating land ownership in the hands of the 'noble' minority, nor did he condemn its policy of forcing the majority to live without their native birthright, their *common* land. So, thanks in part to our evil Shakespeare, students remain ignorant of their right to live freely on land, and thanks in part to our evil Shakespeare, modern England citizen still know that some privately paid-for homes and many of the nation's apartments are actually owned by the rats who own the freehold titles to the land while the mortgage paying residents only possess the leasehold title ([leaseholdknowledge.com](http://leaseholdknowledge.com)).

England's native or pagan culture respected women far more than did or does the invasive Christian culture. This is why Lady Macbeth and the three pagan witches – all women – are not afforded any respect. They are the figments of Shakespeare's hateful, sexist and delusionary mind. His 'Lady' Macbeth even claims she's brave enough to commit infanticide! And the witches torture, cook human body parts and blow down churches. Of course, for *them* fair is foul and good is evil. *They* have no morality and good Christian men had a monopoly on morality: *that* is what Shakespeare teaches our children.

Witches with supernatural powers never existed. Shakespeare's *Christian* portraits of witches are the products of a sick mind beset with paranoia and hypocrisy.

Next, Shakespeare deliberately misrepresented the native herbal tradition. His witches don't cook traditional medicinal herbs; instead, they cook repulsive animal parts and parts of humans: Jews, Turks, Tartars and a stillborn babe. These four groups of human beings were, ironically, commonly victimized by Christians, not by witches. But Shakespeare didn't care about truth. If he were alive today, he would write scripts about evil Muslims, Russians, Chinese and blacks.

Shakespeare's witches brew a "dark potion" instead of a traditional herbal remedy. At best, Shakespeare uses the herbal tradition as comic material, as Macbeth asks his doctor whether rhubarb, senna or some other herb with laxative powers could 'expel' the English army from his 'domain' (5.3.57). Ha-ha-ha. Of course, witchcraft was useless against the military power of the Christian oppressor. Evil spells and potions did infinitely less damage than Christian swords and torches.

Native pagans usually made medicinal potions, but Shakespeare's witches make a potion that produces the four hallucinations that lead to King Macbeth's death. Excuse me, but a witch's potion has never been responsible for killing a king and few if any human beings. If Shakespeare had been more truthful, he would have written a play in which the poisonous royal diet of alcohol, meat, flour and sugar kills the king.

Shakespeare's demonization of herbalism continues with his portrayal of Macbeth's doctor. When Macbeth speaks to his doctor about treating his wife's madness, he mentions rhubarb and flowers (cyme), suggesting that his doctor is an herbalist. Of course, soon afterwards, Lady Macbeth kills herself. Thus, Shakespeare suggests that a herbal potion had an evil influence on her mind.

Well, instead of wasting our time discussing Shakespeare's anti-herbal ignorance, let's study the ignorance of the modern medical system, taking careful note of the toxic and bizarre ingredients put into our vaccines and pills. What god of poison dreamed up the system we live with? Consider watching *Rockefeller Medicine*, by James Corbett. And what has the mainstream media taught us about the deadly mental health effects of our epidemic of prescription drug use ("Astounding increase in antidepressant use by Americans," Peter Wehrwein), drugs such as

anti-depressants (“The Violent Side Effects of Antidepressants that Many Ignore,” Dr. Mercola), opioids, ADHD, blood pressure and other medications (“Pharmaceutical Drugs Kill More People Than Bullets,” Melissa Melton)? Instead of learning about evil pharmaceutical potions, we are taught to love Shakespeare’s nonsense about evil witches and traitors.

## King Lear

### Against Herbalism

The Bible is full of anti-herbal propaganda, and Shakespeare’s cannon follows its example. In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, the clownish Bottom states that garlic and onions should be avoided because of their effect on our breath. This remark would be funny if it wasn’t part of a pattern of deliberately misrepresenting traditional, medicinal plants.

In *King Lear*, Cordelia utters a derogatory lie about pagan medicinal plants and a flattering lie about England’s imperial, grain-based diet. The evidence is in her description of Lear’s crown of herbs: “Crowned with fumiter and furrow-weeds, with hardocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers, darnel and all the *idle* weeds that grow in our [health giving] corn” (4.4.3-6). These alleged “weeds” are not weeds but traditional medicines and foods. Cordelia’s claim that England’s fields of corn, meaning wheat and other grains (once known collectively as corn) are good for human health is disingenuous and obscures the fact that English people did not adopt the grain-based diet for its health-giving effects; they adopted it because England’s centralized, imperial economy forced them to eat it (*Against the Grain*, James C. Scott; *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds ...*, Katrina Blair & Sandor Ellix Katz; *Foraging: Beginners Guide to Foraging Wild Edible Plants and Medicinal Herbs*, Dahlia Rose; *Wheat Belly: Lose the Wheat, Lose the Weight, and Find Your Path Back to Health*, William Davis MD).

Shakespeare’s attack on the pagan dietary tradition continues when the doctor mentions that he plans to use medicinal herbs to help Lear sleep. A couple of scenes later, when Lear reappears, he has completely lost his mind. What does this mean? Audiences were supposed to infer that the doctor’s herbal medicine ruined Lear’s remaining sanity he had. For sheer bullshit, Shakespeare’s anti-herbalism propaganda ranks with the Reefer Madness campaign that claimed cannabis causes madness and psychopathic behaviors.

And while we are exposing Shakespeare’s dangerous lies about health-giving, herbal medicines, let’s also study the lies spread by the pharmaceutical and vaccine industries – two industries that actually can and do cause brain damage, illness and death (*Vaxxed*, Oliver Stone; *Vaccination Voodoo: What YOU Don’t Know About Vaccines*, Catherine J Frompovich & Paul G King PhD; *Vaccine Epidemic*; Louise Kuo Habakus & Mary Holland; *Getting Us Hooked: How Big Pharma’s Greed Fueled the Latest Heroin Epidemic*, Matthew Morris; “Blood Pressure Drugs Linked to Depression and Other Mental Health Disorders,” Linda Searing).

### Against Our Native Heritage

Although the characters in *King Lear* do believe in Roman gods, they also believe in an older local religion, one that Shakespeare fancifully equated with Nature worship, which he also associates strictly with insanity and evil impulses. To quote his insane King Lear:

Hear, Nature, hear! dear goddess, hear!  
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend  
To make this creature [Lear's daughter, Cordellia] fruitful.  
Into her womb convey sterility;  
Dry up in her the organs of increase;  
And from her derogate body never spring  
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,  
Create her [a] child of spleen ...  
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits  
To laughter and contempt, that she may feel  
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is  
To have a thankless child!  
(1.4.268-283)

In short, King Lear asks his pagan Nature goddess to curse his daughter, Cordellia, who will soon die childless. Doubtlessly, Shakespeare's audiences associated such evil requests with witchcraft, as in *Macbeth*, evil witches and the witch-like Lady Macbeth curse others and have no respect for human life, not even for the lives of newborn children. Secondly, in keeping with Shakespeare's propagandistic agenda, Nature fulfills the curse and never does any good, neither here nor anywhere in Shakespeare's canon.

Additionally, Shakespeare propagandized against the tradition of polygamy or open 'marriage.' He did this by portraying the evil bastard, Edmund, as a man who would sleep with two married women. You understand the Christian prejudice? According to Shakespeare, only an evil man would love multiple women.

Shakespeare also implied that power cannot be shared, especially not by women. This pro-monarchy *moral* also contradicts the relatively matriarchal and egalitarian pagan tradition.

Moreover, *King Lear* exhibits the bane of sexism which Christianity popularized. King Lear's daughters are portrayed as incapable of ruling a kingdom and the third daughter, Cordelia, betrays her country by marrying a French prince shortly before he invades England. Sexism is part of *King Lear* because Shakespeare was Christian. Christians and the Romans before them had turned England into a nearly absolute patriarchy; if royalty didn't fail to produce male heirs or habitually kill male heirs to the throne, England would never have had a queen.

The essence or 'moral' of *King Lear* and of the entire Shakespearean canon is the following idiocy: one is good, more is evil. In other words, polytheism leads to madness, polyarchy leads to political ruin, and polygamy is evil – like Edmund. Lear's foolish belief in *polytheism* has its counterpart in Lear's belief in *polyarchy*. His belief in many gods instead of *the* one 'God' of Christian monotheism has its counterpart in his belief that his kingdom can be ruled by more than one monarch, even three monarchs or polyarchs. These beliefs lead to ruin *not because they necessarily lead to ruin in the real world but because Shakespeare was a monomaniac.*

Shakespeare's *King Lear* also condemns the pagan family for being more inclusive than the Christian family. This prejudice is founded on the Christian obsession with marital fidelity. Shakespeare reveals his Christian bias against so-called bastards by portraying the bastard

Edmond as a jealous and vicious schemer. With the first line that springs from Edmund's mouth, Shakespeare catered to every noble, blue-blooded, monogamistic bigot in his audience: "Thou, nature, art my goddess." You see, Edmund is a sworn heathen!!! Doesn't that validate a good Christian prejudice or two? Shakespeare intentionally plays Edmund into the hands of his Christian audience, which possessed certain prejudices against children born to 'unfaithful' women. According to the prejudice, bastards are evil; therefore, Shakespeare's Edmund is a worshipper of the ancient nature goddess, a believer in astrology, a forger, a destroyer of marriages, a murderer, a speaker of gibberish, and ... in case this isn't damning enough, he makes Edmund utter his own condemnations.

King Lear's name is yet another slander of paganism. The name and the character are borrowed from the Celtic myth about Lir. Shakespeare altered the name, for fun, you understand, turning it into a homophone for *leer*, meaning – "a sidelong glance suggestive of sexual desire or malice." Thus Shakespeare makes the old pagan king seem even more repugnant to Elizabethan Christian prudes.

Shakespeare, like Christian authors before him, turned the pagan Lir, or King Lear, into a laughingstock. His Lear devises a stupid test of loyalty and love, entrusts his kingdom to bad daughters and foreigners, surrenders his best daughter to England's Catholic enemy, France, banishes the only man who cared about him, fails to recognize the same man in disguise, and talks to himself and to unresponsive Nature.

In short, *King Lear* provides a negative and ignorant portrayal of Nature and paganism; therefore, Shakespeare is responsible for keeping students ignorant of Nature and for helping to create workers who *blindly* destroy the environment that gives them life.

## Against the Roman Gods

Christianity was not and is not native to England. Christianity invaded England, crushed its native culture, and smeared anyone who did not swear allegiance to Christ's imaginary and worldly "kingdom." England's native culture was erased by waves of Christian persecution, but Christians also erased the imperial Roman cult that England's rulers had practiced for centuries before the fall of Rome and before the arrival of Christianity in the 7<sup>th</sup> century.

*King Lear* is set in a time before England's conversion to Christianity; its ruling class characters are non-Christians who still believe in the imperial Roman pantheon. They are non-Christians and therefore they – according to Shakespeare – believed in the wrong gods, and this is the *only* reason Lear's kingdom descends into chaos and is weakened, divided between two female rulers, and invaded by French troops.

Shakespeare consistently avoided or rather censored references to Nordic and Celtic gods and traditions. Mad King Lear's brain is primarily colonized by ancient Roman gods: "[B]y the sacred radiance of the sun, The mysteries of Hecate and the night, By all the operation of the orbs..." (1.1) He also invokes Apollo. Lear believes in the visible gods of the Greek pantheon and he sees nothing beyond the visible world except "nothing," so "nothing" becomes a recurring motif in the play. Lear's problem would have been understood by Shakespeare's audience as a failure to see the invisible spirit of the Judeo-Christian God and as proof that Lear is ignorant.

To make him even more ignorant, Shakespeare made King Lear believe in astrology (4.3.34) and talk to Roman gods who do not answer *because Shakespeare did not want to promote belief*

*in Roman gods. He wanted us to understand that Rome's pre-Christian beliefs are worthless and false.* Shakespeare's plays always function as Christian propaganda.

Shakespeare's nasty habit of propagandizing against non-Christian traditions compelled him to make Gloucester insult his own gods: "As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods; they kill us for their sport" (4.1.41-42). Perhaps such words have little force among students unfamiliar with religious persecution; but they were a powerful legitimization of England's long history of persecuting polytheists and other non-Christians.

Shakespeare's negative representation of the Roman gods continues through Edgar, who suggests that the gods are good *because they torture sinners*: "of our pleasant vices [they] make instruments to plague us" (5.3.201). Such words do not reflect the psychology of people who believed in gods; the reference to "vices" and the idea that gods punish people for their vices is entirely Christian. Shakespeare has, in effect, put a Christian idea into the mouth of a non-Christian character who persists in his vices, suggesting that, in fact, these little punishments or plagues are ineffective and a better religion, or God, is needed.

King Lear's madness is his religion. At one point, Lear's doctor claims his madness has passed, but the doctor's diagnosis is obviously wrong, and not only because Lear is deeply confused but because he remains ignorant of the 'true' religion, Christianity, of course. This ignorance of the 'true' religion is exhibited twice, first when Lear asks his daughter to forgive him – not for sinning but for being "old and foolish" (4.7.75), and next when he offers to kneel before his daughter and ask her for forgiveness (5.3.9). Apologists consider this a moment of humility and realization of guilt; however, this moment actually highlights his ignorance. After all, a good Christian, Anglicans included, would only kneel and beg forgiveness for sins committed and only beg it from a male religious authority.

## Against Humanism

Scholars inclined to love and admire Shakespeare habitually – by the law of their own perspective – interpret Lear's humanistic ravings and musings as evidence of his enlightenment *and* of Shakespeare's bravery, as they assume he supported Lear's humanistic ideas and they know those ideas were forbidden by his patrons and by the ruling class in any nation. Nothing could be further from the truth. Shakespeare's Lear is mad from beginning to end; he always represents the opposite of the ideal-imaginary English king: he is non-Christian, a pagan, and he never understands the English or Tudor belief that a king must wield absolute authority and never divide his kingdom, and he never understands the Tudor ideal that a king must rule not for personal glory but for the glory of the entire aristocracy and patriarchy.

When he's stripped of all his wealth and power, Lear expresses humanistic sympathy for England's poor (3.4.32-42). Scholars consider this Lear's epiphany, but it is only the epiphany of his madness. Shakespeare's aristocratic audience would never have tolerated a play that promoted sympathy for the lower classes – that is, sympathy of *their victims – the victims of their brutal and seemingly endless class war*.

In fact, Shakespeare and his patronizing audience likely considered any sympathy for the lower classes as clear evidence of madness. If Shakespeare actually sympathized with the lower classes, he would have written romances about English kings marrying laundresses, distributing gold to the poor, opening palace doors to beggars, granting peasants unlimited access to crown land, instructing troops to build decent homes for Irish slaves, and so on.

Shakespeare's apologists also dream that Lear bravely accused himself of causing widespread poverty. Any king could draw the same conclusion, but in Shakespeare's canon, Christian kings never draw it. Lear, being non-Christian, is allowed to blame himself *because he's non-Christian, which – for Shakespeare – meant he was insane*.

However, ironically, pagan England suffered much less from poverty than Christian England, and before the Romans came, England's native people never lost their wealth – their free land and time – to violent and greedy tyrants.

*King Lear* is less a tragedy than a national anthem for Christian bigots

## Hamlet

### The Evil Gardener

Squirrels understand more about Nature and nutrition than Shakespeare or any English prince ever understood. His Prince Hamlet, a widely reputed genius, is a mouthpiece of ignorance. When he's angered, he curses, but instead of using religious cuss words – words that were in vogue in Shakespeare's time, Hamlet says, "Wormwood, wormwood!" (3.2.170) This is ridiculous. Wormwood is the name of a widely used medicinal plant. But, because Shakespeare has an anti-herbal agenda, he forced Hamlet to speak of a good plant as if it were something horrible. Obviously, sugarcane and opium would have been better names to use in anger.

Shakespeare believed that all native plants are evil, useless, weeds while wheat and other foreign grains are good. This imperial bias against native plants, or *weeds*, is evident when Hamlet calls Denmark "an unweeded garden" (1.2.135). Hamlet's statement implies that Denmark is bad because too many of its people are weeds that need to be plucked out – which is a polite way to say that many Danish people deserve to die.

Shakespeare's anti-weed language reflects an imperial agenda to destroy native traditions, native economies, and native diets and plants. Shakespeare's anti-weed language is dangerous, for many weeds are edible and provide superior nutrition to our invasive grains and grasses ("The Five Healthiest Backyard Weeds," Christopher Wanjek; "Five weeds that make better medicines than any pharmaceutical drug," Michael Ravensthorpe).

Shakespeare's very civilized ignorance of weeds continues as Hamlet refers to a mythological weed that causes forgetfulness: "And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed / That roots itself on Lethe Wharf" (1.4.32-33). Shakespeare didn't refer to any particular weed, but his reference to Lethe points at weeds that grow in swamps and along shores, though perhaps this is too literal and he just meant to associate all psychotropic plants with Lethe, the mythical land of forgetfulness. Well, do you know any weed that produces forgetfulness? Well, I know from experience that cannabis can produce some amusing short-term memory failures, but even in Shakespeare's time it was used as medicine. Even a Portuguese physician named Garcia da Orta recognized cannabis' medicinal properties in 1563. So, why did Shakespeare and his English masters continue denying the weed's benevolent powers? Was it because cannabis threatened their poisonous alcohol and religion profits?

Never mind cannabis' power to cause short-term forgetfulness; Shakespeare's works have helped cause England's long-term forgetfulness of its past.

Shakespeare's anti-weed propaganda is again evident when he describes the suicidal and emotionally broken Ophelia wearing a wreath of weeds, just as his mad Lear wore a crown of weeds. In both cases, Shakespeare is using the trick of guilty-by-association to suggest that weeds have evil powers that lead to madness and death. A similar trick is used by modern marketers when they use female and male models and idyllic scenes to sell products, although in this case they use the desirable-by-association trick,

In addition, Shakespeare chose specific wildflowers to make Ophelia look weak and emotionally broken; each flower has a meaning related to Ophelia's condition:

*Columbine*: insincere flattery, ingratitude

*Rue*: sorrow, regret

*Daisy*: forsaken love, unhappy love

*Violet*: faithfulness, decency

Why didn't Shakespeare associate Ophelia with roses? Because roses are Christian symbols for purity and the Virgin Mary. Moreover, Shakespeare actually associated very useful plants with suicide and madness, and by doing this he did a great disservice to humanity. What do I mean? A hasty search has provided this potentially useful information:

*Columbine*: flowers are edible, other parts are toxic

*Rue*: edible, spice, antispasmodic, emetic, prevents coughs, croupy affections, colic and flatulence, eases severe pain of sciatica.

*Daisy*: edible, treats wounds and bruises, possibly treats disorders of the gastrointestinal and respiratory tracts

*Violet*: edible, antimicrobial, insecticidal, can suppress coughs and asthma, treats insomnia

Since Shakespeare did not value the above medicinal and edible flowers, what kind of plants did he value? Hamlet refers to Claudius as a "mildew'd ear" (3.4.64) that is, to an ear of grain that is diseased with fungus. Plants that bear mildew-free grains are Shakespeare's preferred plants because they fuel empires, England's included.

## Who Are Our Rulers?

*Hamlet* might, in part, be based on the life of Shakespeare's second monarch and master, King James I. Both Hamlet's and King James' fathers were murdered, and each man's mother married her husband's murderer. Well, that's life for the ruling elites. Love has no place in their world – neither in Shakespeare's time nor in mine. How else can they oppress, exploit and wage wars without dissolving in tears? In the words of Martha Stout: "Sociopaths love power. They love winning. If you take loving kindness out of the human brain, there's not much left except the will to win." That's true.

Actually, Hamlet behaves like a morbid, sexless, condescending, bookish Catholic priest. Hamlet even forges a letter by King Claudius – a hint, perhaps, that Shakespeare knew about the

Catholic Church's history of forging written documents (*The Criminal Bible, volumes 1 & 2; Fake Literature, volumes 1 & 2*).

We hereby end this verseless poem with a rhetorical question from Pathocracy.net: "Do Psychopaths Rule the World?" and with John Haltiwanger's answer: "People with Traits of Psychopaths Actually Make the Best Leaders."

## Sick Love in Denmark

Ophelia is passive, emotionally weak, and susceptible to fits of hysteria. That's how women were stereotyped, and, perhaps rightly so. After all, upper class English women were forced to be passive, silent, obedient, uneducated, unloved, inactive, wrapped in absurd clothes, subject to unsatisfying sex and poorly nourishment. If I were them, I would also be susceptible to fits of hysteria.

Hamlet's mother, Queen Gertrude, does not love Hamlet or her husband. Instead of privately speaking to her son about what might be bothering him, she let's the man who killed her son's father speak to him during a formal meeting. She doesn't even object to Hamlet being sent to die in England, nor does she try to stop her husband from organizing a duel meant to kill her son.

Shakespeare knew the royal family and English nobles well enough to be familiar with their epidemic of sexual debauchery and loveless sex. Obviously whatever debauchery he depicts in his tragedies about foreigners were obviously informed by his experience at home. Indeed, nearly every royal, presidential and other elite family is rife sexually dysfunctional. A few authors have written about this little-known reality ("Part III; Pedophiles, Sex Slaves and British Royalty").

How sexually deranged is Prince Hamlet? He appears at Ophelia's door with his semen-stained stockings around his ankles, and he tries to anger her father by warning her that she might soon be pregnant: "Let her not walk i' th' sun. Conception is a blessing, but not as [in the way] your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't" (2.2.196-197). In other words, beware, for your daughter might soon conceive in a horrible way, possibly without being married. The hypocrisy is stunning. Hamlet dares to threaten adultery while he obsesses over his mother's sexual purity.

King Henry VIII expelled the Catholic Church in order to assert his right to marry as often as he wished, so Shakespeare's audience likely viewed Hamlet's anger over his mother's remarriage as proof that Catholicism is a superstitious mania. The Catholic marriage problem is so central to the text that Shakespeare derived Hamlet's mother's name, Gertrude, from the Germanic word for marriage. And now, 400 years later, presidents and kings are still forbidden from being remarried, single, divorced, or otherwise in conflict with the cult of monogamy.

## Of Mercenaries and Pirates

Shakespeare lived during a time when pirates from various nations, both Christian and Muslim, sacked coastal cities and took prisoners for ransom, as still happens today. The kidnapping industry was and remains hugely profitable.

Queen Elizabeth helped fuel piracy by employing pirates as 'privateers' who were paid by her government to attack foreign ships and towns and settlements in Europe and in the

Caribbean. But King James I, being a bit of an idealist, was staunchly opposed to piracy, executed captured pirates on a daily basis, and likely enjoyed Shakespeare's negative portrayals of pirates. But – did Shakespeare actually do that?

Pirates help Hamlet avoid execution in England. Apparently, pirates rescued the hero and seem to be doing good. This is bewildering – but only if we assume Prince Hamlet is a hero, which he isn't. He's an insane pest. The pirates are bad characters, after all, for by saving and returning Hamlet to Denmark, they prevented Holy England from executing the princely pest, and they caused the destruction of the Danish monarchy.

Why did Shakespeare have Claudius ask England to kill Hamlet? Because England is the ultimate hero, and because it's fun to suggest that England was *asked* to interfere in foreign governments when, in reality, it surely interfered without invitation. From this perspective, how is Shakespeare's *Hamlet* any different from the modern mainstream media's efforts to portray U.S. invasions of foreign nations as if the U.S. the poor, oppressed peoples of foreign nations begged and invited their interference.

Finally, we should also be honest about pirates. While Shakespeare demonizes them, the reality is that pirates were employed by the government, who called their 'chosen' pirates privateers – and they acted as private armies helping England gain control of shipping lanes and establish the British Empire.

Finally, the work done by the privateers of England has its modern counterpart in the work done for the U.S. by the many foreign death squads, military regimes, rebels and guerillas who work in unison to destroy governments that do not cooperate with U.S. elites.

## Deep Psychology

Hamlet's belief in an afterlife is a dangerous error. It leads to dangerously provocative behaviors such as threatening to commit adultery with a nobleman's daughter, insulting the king's advisor, killing the king's advisor, insulting his dead girlfriend's brother at the funeral, revealing to the king's spies his frustration at not being the king, and using a play to accuse the king of murderous treason. Without his belief in the afterlife, Hamlet would certainly have acted more wisely and we would not have Shakespeare's cruel, life-destroying drama.

Of course, the above psychological insight into the danger of religion was not communicated by Shakespeare because he did not possess it.

## The Anti-Catholic Bias

*Hamlet* is set in medieval, Catholic Denmark, well before the Danish ruling class expelled the Catholic Church in 1536. The Catholic setting is critical to understanding Hamlet. It is set in Catholic Denmark *because* Shakespeare wanted to write a grotesque satire of a foreign, Catholic royal family.

Striking evidence of Shakespeare's religious agenda is Claudius' tormented conscience. He murdered his brother and profited by becoming the new king of Denmark and the new husband of his brother's wife, Queen Gertrude, but he eventually wonders if the Catholic policy of selling forgiveness is acceptable to God and conscience. "[Consider the] effects for which I did the

murder: My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen. May one be pardoned and retain th' offense? In the corrupted currents of this world Offense's gilded hand may shove by justice, And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself Buys out the law. But 'tis not so above [with God]." These thoughts were clearly inspired by Martin Luther's denunciation of the Catholic Church's practice of allowing rich criminals to buy forgiveness with money criminally acquired. This practice of selling forgiveness to people was called selling indulgences.

Shakespeare mocks the Catholic prohibition against suicide through Prince Hamlet, whose famously obscure psychology is only obscure if we don't understand Shakespeare's purpose. Hamlet wants to commit suicide but cannot commit it because his Catholic religion didn't permit it; consequently, in a desperate and obscene attempt to end his life, he strives to provoke others to murder him. *That, my dear scholars, is the whole solution to the riddle of Hamlet's riddling and insane behavior.*

Why did Hamlet want to die? Like a good Catholic, he was furious that his mother had remarried, and like a good Catholic he was furious that his father had died without receiving the Catholic deathbed absolution ritual. Thus Shakespeare highlighted the madness of Catholicism and thus Shakespeare catered to self-righteous Anglicans who despised Catholicism.

Prince Hamlet is insane because he's a Danish Catholic. Shakespeare makes his insanity abundantly evident. His Hamlet believes that dew melts, that spontaneous generation occurs, and that ghosts exist. The last point is particularly relevant because *good Christians were required to only believe in the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit.*

Here are a few other ways in which Shakespeare made Hamlet seem insane: he gives his country away to a foreign enemy, he drives his girlfriend to suicide, he kills a man who calls for help, he insults his girlfriend's grieving brother, he asks pirates to return him to Denmark – where the king wants him dead, and he can't remember how long ago his father died. Finally, he tells the king's spies that he is impatient to be king – a crazy admission intended to provoke the king to kill him.

*Hamlet* is first and foremost a religiously biased play. In fact, in England "Hamlet" meant a small village *without a church*. Consequently, the name Hamlet was intended to conjure very popular prejudices against people without churches, that is, without God.

The anti-Catholic bias not only shaped Shakespeare's portrayal of Hamlet but also his portrayal of the Danish castle guards and the educated Horatio. Each one believes that the ghost they imagine is real. This silliness served to mock Catholics.

Shakespeare rightfully mocked the Catholic concepts of purgatory and final absolution. He mocked them by telling us that Hamlet is upset that his father, an admitted criminal, might have gone to Heaven if he had received the Catholic deathbed absolution ritual. Hamlet's father openly complains that he suffers in purgatory because he wasn't absolved by the Catholic Church of all the "foul crimes done in my days of nature" (1:5:16). I support Shakespeare's decision to mock Catholicism, but his Anglican Church inherited plenty of absurdities from the Catholic Church, yet Shakespeare did not dare ridicule them.

*Hamlet* also portrays the Catholic Church as a corrupt institution that was willing to accept bribes. Ophelia's parents bribed the Catholic Church for an honorable Christian burial, a burial she should have been denied because she committed suicide and possibly had premarital sex. Again, I support such portrayals of the Catholic Church, but Shakespeare should have been fair and not neglected to mock his corrupted Anglican Church. While being less voracious than the Catholic Church, it has always been a tool whereby the ruling elites suppress critical thinking and promote ignorance and forgetfulness.

Shakespeare's anti-Catholic bias is also evident when, early in the play, Hamlet asks to study in Germany's Wittenberg University (1:2:115), the same university where the great anti-Catholic, Martin Luther, was educated a century before Shakespeare. Although Hamlet seems to be living a couple of centuries *before* Luther, Shakespeare implied that if Hamlet's parents had granted his request to study in Luther's university, the prince would have been saved from his Catholic insanity.

Obviously, Shakespeare did not understand that Protestants are just as capable of being insane as Catholics, and clearly he did not understand that *no school or university can give you sanity*. Indeed, schools are more likely to dehumanize their students, for even presidents, CEOs and other elite criminals regularly graduate from top western universities ("15 Presidents Who Went to Ivy League Schools," Tucker Westbrook; "Harvard, the CIA, and All That," Geoff Dutton; "Without Cause: Yale Fires An Acclaimed Anarchist Scholar," Joshua Frank).

## The Royal English Bias

*Hamlet* is a grotesque mockery of Danish royalty. They're made to look appalling and morally abhorrent – certainly, nothing in Shakespeare's English history plays matches the depravity of Denmark. Imagine, its Queen Gertrude married her dead husband's murderer! And the murderer happens to be the dead husband's brother! Oh, but if that isn't repugnant enough, consider that the dead man's ghost claims his brother is committing incest with his widowed wife! Do you understand the enormity of this? It means both brothers committed incest with their sister! Queen Gertrude not only married one of her brothers, but two!

Well, what's all the fuss about? Why do I pretend moral outrage? I'm not a fan of marriage, especially not of marriage to murderers, but if people want to have sex with their siblings, that's none of my business. I even wish them joy and orgasms. That said, if such bold adventurers are reading this, I recommend they avoid producing children *unless they want a child like Hamlet*.

But let's move on from Shakespeare's incestuous effort to insult Catholic Danes. He wove many other insults and sneers into *Hamlet*.

Consider young Hamlet's clever insult that Fortinbras, the Norwegian prince, is a fool for wanting to fight for a worthless piece of Polish swamp. I can still hear Shakespeare's audience sneering with contempt. They weren't wasting time with lifeless swamps. They were greedily extracting wealth from Ireland, Normandy, Scotland and Newfoundland. Actually, England, led by Shakespeare's patron Henry Wriothesley, had barely begun to colonize North America, but dreams of ownership already existed. Furthermore, English elites were global leaders in extracting wealth from their own people as laws were passed permitting them to take and buy the land of the poor majority and turn formerly food-producing land into wool-producing land. Hunger for the poor and profits for the rich soon followed.

Please note, too, that Hamlet's uncle, Denmark's King Claudius, bears a Roman instead of a Christian name, perhaps *because Shakespeare couldn't portray a Christian king morally repugnant and administratively stupid*. Claudius is so incompetent that he grants his enemy, Norway's Prince Fortinbras, permission to lead armed forces across Denmark *even though Fortinbras had earlier sought to wage war against Denmark and Denmark had been preparing for war with Norway*. Claudius is so distracted with parties and by Hamlet that he neglects to attend to his country. Thus, at the play's end, the foreign prince walks unmolested into Claudius' palace, where he finds the Danish royal family busy killing itself.

Oh, if only Claudius' plan to have Hamlet killed in England, then Denmark would have been saved *by England!*

## An Amerikan Prophecy

Well, perhaps *Hamlet* isn't just propaganda. Sure, it's funny to laugh at how a Danish royal family becomes so immersed in its own domestic scandals that it forgets about foreign policy and larger issues like war. But, we could also read it as a prophecy. The fact is that *Hamlet's* plot appears to be America's script. U.S. leaders are mimicking Claudius as they are distracted by President Trump's outrageous behavior and statements, and the political class and voters generally are distracted by the usual golf balls, partisan politics, loveless sex, drugs, alcohol, sumptuous parties and so on. Will a Fortinbras-like foreign conqueror waltz into America just in time to see it kill itself? Perhaps not, but it is certainly killing itself – and it is already being conquered – not by foreign armies from Norway or elsewhere, not even by immigrants or foreign elites, but by a *force* unrecognized, a *force* that cannot be stopped, a *force* that will conquer America without money or war.

The Hamlets of the future will be both intellectual and fearless *activists*. Those who cannot escape from civilization and help regenerate the Earth and create a human culture will be driven to accuse their parents of being irresponsible and insane, and they might yet be driven to murder the enemies of life.

## The Merchant of Venice

### The Witch-Doctor

Shakespeare never missed a chance to denigrate and misrepresent the world's herbal tradition. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare makes two Italian lovebirds tease one another with the wrong classical allusions. First, Lorenzo compares his love for Jessica to the love of Troilus for Cressid – which is an unfortunate comparison, since his love for Cressid is never fulfilled. Next, Jessica compares Lorenzo to the lion that frightened Thisbe, compelling her to flee and provoking her lover to commit suicide. Next, Lorenzo compares Jessica's situation to that of Dido when she stood on Egypt's coast and sought, in vain, to summon her beloved Aeneas back to Egypt *with a willow branch*. This image of Dido is a mockery of the tradition of dowsing, using forked willow branches to find water – *not to find lovers*. Moreover, in the presence of so much water Dido's branch should arch downwards, and the subsequent image of a woman holding a downward arching branch hints at failed love and erectile dysfunction. Lorenzo seems to understand the embarrassing innuendo, so he counters by mentioning that the witch Medea “did renew old Aeson” with “enchanted herbs.” This sounds like a positive portrayal of herbal power, but Medea was, according to classical literature, an evil witch who poisoned people and murdered her own children. Besides, the herbal remedy ascribed to her is also *deadly*. According to legend, to renew Aeson, or Jason, she drained his blood and then infused it with herbs before

pouring it back into him. This is clearly a prescription for death. Of course, that is precisely how Shakespeare and his contemporaries wanted to portray the herbal tradition.

Why don't Jessica and Lorenzo understand that their allusions to classical literature are all wrongheaded? Obviously, Shakespeare wished to portray them as poorly educated idiots – and, of course he wanted to turn the love between Jessica, a Jewess, and Lorenzo, a Christian, into a joke.

## Anti-Italianism

Like *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice* has no heroes. How could it? It doesn't have an Englishman; it's full of damned Italians – England's plague – men whose ancestors twice conquered, raped and looted England! Don't you remember? First their Roman Empire turned England into a Roman colony, and next the Roman Catholic Church confused and bamboozled the whole country. Didn't our beloved King Henry VIII execute Rome's agents and didn't Shakespeare's monarchs continue the tradition of suppressing the Roman Catholic Church? And, isn't Rome in Italy? Then why do you expect Shakespeare to create Italian heroes? If a foreign power ruled your people for a thousand years, would you want to watch movies that portray them as heroes?

## Anti-Semitism

Shakespeare's defenders claim that he sympathized with Jews. As proof, they offer the following words spoken by his Jewish character, the infamous Shylock: "If you prick us [Jews], do we not bleed?" Beautiful words! But what does it mean? Shakespeare's supporters say he wanted his English audience to understand that Jews are humans, too. Imagine that! How profoundly humanistic!

If Shakespeare wanted to combat anti-Semitism, why did he write such an awful portrait of Shylock? Why is Shylock himself pitiless and why does his own daughter betray him and feel no remorse for her betrayal?

And why do Shylock's above-quoted words smell of irony? Like other human beings, Jews certainly bleed if pricked, but their blood is different! I mean, Jews believe their blood makes them *very* different from the rest of humanity, so for a Jewish character to use his blood as evidence that he is the same as everyone else – *that* is very ironic.

Furthermore, Shylock's claim to having feelings is strongly contradicted by his cruel demand for a pound of Antony's flesh.

Additionally, the name "Shylock" is probably a hybrid of "shyster" and "warlock," two words with negative meaning. In Shakespeare's time, *warlock* referred to the devil as well as to man-eating witches, and a *shyster* is a con-artist.

Oh, and of course it's nice for English teachers and Shakespeare experts to talk about the anti-Semitism that existed in Italy and forget that England's rulers were, for many centuries, anti-Semitic (*Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe*, Matti Bunzl; *The History of Anti-Semitism, Volume 4: Suicidal Europe, 1870-1933*, Léon Poliakov & George Klin). Even after a Jewish family of bankers, the Rothschilds, gained control over the English economy *and* its central bank in 1815, Jews have remained so unpopular in England that, in 1917

the Balfour Act was signed in order to encourage Jews to leave England. Moreover, during the anti-Semitic Nazi reign of terror, England accepted very few Jewish refugees even though English political elites were busy sucking the teats of Jewish banksters and financiers.

Shakespeare encouraged English hypocrisy. *The Merchant of Venice* portrays Italians as anti-Semites who did not pay debts to Jews. What about the fact that England had its own unfair “solution” to dealing with debts owed to Jewish lenders? In 1290, King Edward, unable to pay his debts by increasing tax levies, expelled all Jews from England. But, in England’s defense, they were merely following the French example set in 1182. Besides, on three other occasions, similar expulsions of Jewish populations resulted in Jews migrating eastwards from France and Germany. And, about a dozen other edicts of expulsion were issued in other European countries, the last being issued in 1593 in Italy’s Papal States. So, why didn’t Shakespeare write *The Merchant of London* or *The Indebted King of London*?

## Classism

Oh, let us praise Shakespeare for portraying the anxiety and tribulations of a wealthy Italian merchant hounded by debt! England was crowded with millions of poor people struggling with debt, struggling to pay rents and taxes, *but Shakespeare did not have time for them*. He did not even mock his own government for living in debt. It’s so much easier to sneer at foreign spendthrifts and none of his patrons wanted to sympathize with the poor, so they were ignored and often mocked.

## The Bankers

A pound of flesh is a barbaric punishment for an unpaid debt – but why waste our time on Shakespeare’s lies when our world is far more barbaric – even if our money lenders are a great deal more sophisticated ... Billions of people are being crushed and bled by banking and financial giants. Entire continents are slaughtered as international bankers and politicians collude to squeeze blood and life from taxpayers. And still more debt is piled on the poor and greedy through mortgages, student loans, credit cards, and so on.

Shakespeare’s England wasn’t much better. And yet, he has the audacity to make us laugh or perhaps feel pity for an indebted fool named Anthony? A colossal fool! If your spendthrift friend asked you for money – even though he’s already indebted to you – just so he can impress a very rich lady, well, would you lend the enormous sum? Would you lend it even if you knew that you could lose a pound of flesh and die? I trust you are wiser than Shakespeare’s Italian emotionally unstable merchant.

Oh, those foolish Italians!

Luckily, Antony’s rich friends saved his flesh – though not his mind. Of course, they did it by corrupting the Italian justice system, freeing Antony from his legal obligation to pay back his debt.

Oh, those corrupt Italians!

Obviously, this play has no hero. Each of its Italian characters, both native and Jewish, is corrupt and compassionless.

Antony has borrowed money from a Jew named Shylock. After being freed from his obligation to pay back the money to Shylock, he does not care what happens to Shylock even though Shylock also went into debt to loan the money to him.

And why should we care about Antony, a wealthy merchant with poor judgement? I would rather care about the billions of people presently living with debts.

Although Shakespeare gave us corrupt Italian Catholics and a savage Jewish money lender, he did not dare shine his unflattering stage lamp on Italian bankers. Italian bankers in Venice and Florence dominated Europe and certainly deserved attention. In fact, according to Paul Gallagher, after being crushed by the usurious Venetian bankers,

Edward III of England [belatedly] revolted against the seizure and looting of his kingdom by the [Italian] Bardi and Peruzzi banks, by defaulting on their loans, starting in 1342. But King Edward's national budget was dwarfed by that of either the Bardi or Peruzzi; in fact, by 1342, his national budget had become a sub-department of theirs. Their internal memos in Florence spoke of him contemptuously as "Messer Edward"; "we shall be fortunate to recover even a part" of his debts, they sniffed in 1339.

Why didn't Shakespeare write a play about the historical tragedy that had actually devastated the English budget, the economy and the debts incurred to fuel the Hundred Years War? Why? England, like all proud, imperial cultures, was in deep denial about its past crimes and failures. No one wanted to be reminded by an eloquent drama that Florentine and Venetian bankers had trampled England. Similarly, England's elites did not want Shakespeare to dramatize the ugly, violent suppression of Catholicism that began with Henry VIII. So, Shakespeare did not record those dark chapters in his writings, not even in his dramas about Henry VIII.

How serious was the conquest of England by Italian bankers (or Banquos)? Again, according to Paul Gallagher,

The Bardi and Peruzzi banks ... "privatized" the revenues of Edward II and Edward III of England, paid the King's budget, and monopolized the sales of English wool. Rather than paying interest (usury) on his loans, Edward III gave the Bardi and Peruzzi large "gifts" called "compensations" for the hardships they were supposedly suffering in paying his budget; this was in addition to assigning them his revenues. When King Edward tried forbidding Italian *merchants and bankers* to expatriate their profits from England, they converted their profits into wool and stored huge amounts of wool at the [Catholic] "monasteries" of the Order of Knights Hospitalers, who were their debtors, political allies, and partners in the monopolization of the wool trade.

Since Italian bankers were not able to collect their debts in gold coins and bars, they seized and *privatized* English resources and industries, particularly the English wool industry. Why didn't Shakespeare immortalize England's financial tragedy? Was it too embarrassing for England's ruling elites to see their tragedies reenacted on stage?

England's historical exploitation by bankers is a scene that has been repeated around the world. Presently, banks are privatizing Greek resources because Greece cannot pay its debts.

Canada has privatized a highway in order to pay its debts, and national assets around the world are being sold for the same reason. The world is again in the death grip of international bankers and financiers, some of them Jewish, most of them Christian. Now entire continents are being privatized, their resources monopolized, their people drained of their blood and stripped of their flesh. Now, almost no country on Earth is spared, and yet, Hollywood is still *full* of Shakespeares – cowardly writers, propagandists who write about America’s imaginary greatness and about the imaginary inferiority of foreign nations. They will likely never tell their audiences that America destroys health and nations, that the Holocaust was financed by Anglo-American bankers, and that ordinary Americans bear responsibility because they blindly trust their bankers, politicians, and doctors, and they build the military hardware that kills women and children.

## English Money 1

On account of its humbling experience with Italian bankers, England’s ruling class was not fond of gold. Additionally, before and during Shakespeare’s lifetime, Spain and Portugal rivalled England for world dominance because they grew wealthy by looting gold and silver from South and Central American natives. This put England at a disadvantage. In fact, over a century before Shakespeare, big-spender King Henry VIII did not have enough gold and silver and debased the currency. This inflated the government’s financial resources and condemned the poor to inflationary prices – another atrocity against the poor that England’s favorite propagandist chose to ignore.

England’s prejudice against gold is evident in the episode in which Portia’s suitors must choose whether Portia’s portrait was hidden in a gold, silver or lead casket. On the one hand, by putting Portia’s portrait in the lead casket, Shakespeare implied that Portia was not valuable; on the other hand, putting her portrait in the lead casket suggests that gold and silver are deceptive and unreliable, which is close to the English sentiment.

Of course, Portia’s non-European suitors choose the valuable caskets and get nothing; Bassanio, the Italian suitor, chooses the lead casket and wins Portia like a prize at the county fair. However, since her name means *pig* – we have another joke at the expense of Italian men and women.

## Romeo and Juliet

*Romeo and Juliet* portrays Verona and Italy by extension as a fractious, violent and divided world. Such a portrait reeks of hypocrisy. Before, during and after Shakespeare’s lifetime, the reformation transformed England from a Catholic country controlled by Rome and the Pope to an Anglican country controlled by London and local monarchs. This transformation was violent and – in England – it involved demonizing and mocking all things Catholic and Italian – and that is precisely what Shakespeare did in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Needless to say, the reformation was a false reformation. It benefitted English elites, as it was, in effect, a coup and a distraction from the fact that for the masses – pun intended – no substantial improvements to their quality of life accompanied the reformation. As such, the reformation may be compared to the civil rights movements and the neo-liberal policy of promoting gay, feminist, racial and other rights while the quality of life for the masses continues

to decline.

## Against Herbalism

Shakespeare's anti-Nature bias is on full display through Mercutio, who calls Romeo a "natural," by which he meant an idiot (2.4.41). A culture that associates nature with idiocy has become drunk on religion and power.

The anti-Nature bias is also on display through the idiotic, irresponsible and arguably evil Catholic cleric, Friar Lawrence. Shakespeare deliberately portrays him as if he were a witch and therefore, in his eyes, evil. Lawrence he states that he must gather "baleful weeds and precious-juiced flowers" (2.2.9). The phrase "baleful weeds" can fairly be interpreted to mean *deadly weeds*. Granted, some weeds are deadly, but they are vastly outnumbered by weeds that are medicinal and nutritious, so why did Shakespeare represent weeds as baleful, dangerous and useless? Apparently, the answer is that 400 years ago the English ruling class believed only priests and faith could cure the sick, while medicinal plants could only do the devil's work. Again, Shakespeare is guilty of misrepresenting the pagan tradition, just as modern medical industry deliberately prevents people from accessing the healing properties of plants.

Well, to be fair, Friar Lawrence also *praises* weeds, I mean herbs, when he says, "the powerful grace that lies in plants, herbs ... [each] some special good doth give" (2.2.16-19). But this is ironic praise. The witch-like Friar's idea of what is good was Shakespeare's idea of evil; his idea of "grace" is Shakespeare's idea of curse. Shakespeare clearly implies that herbs are not good, and to reinforce this message he made Friar Lawrence's herbs lead to the deaths of young Juliet, Romeo and Paris.

Additionally, in an earlier scene, Romeo purchased herbs meant to kill. Clearly, Shakespeare was not painting a pretty picture of herbal power.

Can herbs ever be used for evil? I'm sure pagans used their knowledge of herbal poisons to kill their enemies, but swords have ended many more lives, but don't hold your breath looking for evidence that Shakespeare dared to criticize the use of swords, or cannons, or metallurgy, or warfare generally. Shakespeare was in the business of promoting death, not life.

## Stereotyping and Mocking Italians

Forget Hollywood's sugary interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet*. This play is the opposite of a love story. Yes, two children are in love, but Shakespeare did not intend for us to admire them or to feel their love warming us with memories of our own pubescent sexual escapades. You're supposed to feel disgust and contempt for the two rebellious, infatuated children, and a good deal more contempt for the Italian parents and the priest who performed the secret marry just days after the lovers met for the first time.

Shakespeare denigrates Italy. The first scene is a masterpiece of racism, classism and sexual degeneracy. Two Italian servants joke about violence and rape *as if such talk were quite normal in Italy*. Is that a fair representation of Italian men? Unsurprisingly, if you read all of Shakespeare's plays set in England, you won't find a hint of such salacious dialogues. Granted, you'll find plenty of violence, but not violence for sex, and you wouldn't find mere servants starting a bloody street skirmish that – shame, shame, shame – inspires senior nobles to draw

their swords and join the bloody brawl. Clearly, such behavior is laughable, especially if you're a proud British nobleman who would never risk his own life fighting in street battles.

Shakespeare's story about the feuding Montagues and Capulets, two noble families, or tribes, reflects the reality of Italy during Shakespeare's lifetime, during which Italy was still divided among city states (*Civility: A Cultural History*. Benet Davetian). Internal divisions made Italy weak, while the English nobles grew strong by uniting around a central government and monarch. Shakespeare likely viewed Italy's lack of unity as proof that Italians were inferior, so in *Romeo and Juliet* he immortalized their inferiority by giving us a story about belligerent Italian nobles infighting amongst themselves.

Shakespeare's scorn for Italian politics and the Italian character (personality) is supported by his portrayal of Verona's ruler. Prince Escalus is barbarous, impotent and ineffective. Rather than resolve the feud between the noble families with legal proceedings or a formal investigation, Escalus *escalates* the tension by threatening to execute anyone involved in another violent disturbance. But this negative portrayal of Italy is hypocritical. England was wracked by uprisings and riots, and it would be the first country to introduce a domestic military, a so-called police force, *because its economy was the cruelest, and being the cruelest it generated the most crimes and the most discontent and therefore also the greatest need for police.*

The young males in *Romeo and Juliet* are obnoxious, lustful and intemperate. We are amused or horrified by them, but they were meant to be scorned by reserved English snobs, and again treated as proof of the inferior quality of the Italian character.

Contrary to popular misconceptions, Romeo is a sexual predator: barely a teen, he laments that Rosaline defended her virginity from his advances. What's worse, soon after lamenting his failure to have sex with her, he kisses Juliet at first sight, uses his gold to corrupt a pharmacist, commits two murders, ignores the decree of his prince, and commits suicide over love. Nothing would have disgusted England's noble prigs more than such behavior *even though many of them were probably as corrupt as a dozen Romeos*. Sexual predation among upper class men is normal, a sad fact amply demonstrated by the current flood of sexual misconduct cases against U.S. celebrities and politicians.

Shakespeare's shamelessly hypocritical and racist portrayal of Italian men as sexual predators is supported by Shakespeare's sexual puns for the feuding families: with a little trick of the tongue, the Capulet family name becomes *copulate*, and the Montague family names becomes *mount on you*.

And why are Romeo and Juliet barely teenagers? Isn't this ridiculous? Yes, peasants still married at such ages, but in Shakespeare's time, marriage between 13- and 14-year-olds was rare among European nobility. By claiming that children of noble Italian families married at this young age, Shakespeare encouraged us to laugh with contempt at the uncivilized Italians.

And let's not forget Paris. Why did Juliet's parents want to marry their daughter to an older man named Paris? It's another horrible joke. Paris' namesake was a famous Trojan *adulterer*. Imagine, Italian parents wanted their daughter to marry a man whose name is associated with adultery. Isn't that funny?

Of course, we mustn't laugh at any of this, not even at the idea that in some countries children are still marrying at a young age, long before they learn how to be parents. We live in more civilized times and places, don't we? But wait – in the U.S., all fifty states, including the District of Columbia, permit persons as young as thirteen to marry if their parents authorize it, *even if the children don't want to marry* (“Why can 12-year-olds still get married in the United

States? – We preach against child-marriage abroad. But thousands of American children are wed annually,” Fraidy Reiss).

## Mocking the Roman Catholic Church

Judging from his works, Shakespeare was a religious bigot who would gladly persecute Catholics. He portrayed Friar Lawrence, a low-ranking Catholic priest, as a lying, treasonous idiot void of conscience, steeped in pagan habits, and speaking pagan heresies such as “earth that’s nature’s mother” (2.3.10). A *real* Catholic priest would say, “God is nature’s creator,” but his Friar Lawrence intentionally misrepresents Catholic clergy. By this, I don’t imply that Catholics friars were better than Shakespeare portrayed them; I only imply that they were different; they might even have been ‘good’ Christians, but whatever they were, they were and are not very different from Anglican ministers and archbishops (“Archbishop of Canterbury accused of hypocrisy by sexual abuse survivors,” Harriet Sherwood).

Shakespeare defames Catholic priests through, Friar Lawrence. Though the friar’s job involves marrying couples, he issues the ridiculous and implausible comment that a short marriage is best, especially if it ends with an early death and a quick ascent into heaven. Shakespeare’s patrons must have laughed at such unpriestly words. If you’re not sure how unchristian the friar’s comment was, imagine the head of the U.S. Department of Labour announcing to the nation that *the best job is a short one followed by a quick ascent into the upper class*.

And consider that Friar Lawrence marries two children in their early teens without even consulting their parents! That’s scandalous. *Not that parental consent ensures a happy marriage, and English royals from King Henry VIII to Princess Diana have a long history of joyless marriages. But, if you’re Shakespeare, you can mock Catholics while chickens lay eggs on your face.*

This brings us to the problem of the clown. The Capulets have a servant; in some manuscripts he’s *the clown*; in others, he’s *Peter*. What a curious confusion! Who is this clownish Peter? Of course, he symbolizes the Holy Roman Catholic Church, for he was the first pope, and he is the disciple of Jesus after whom Catholics named their greatest temple: Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

Shakespeare’s Italian Peter-the-servant-clown implies that the Catholic Church is the servant of wealthy families, which was and remains true. But why is Shakespeare’s Peter unable to read? Did Shakespeare want to suggest that popes are illiterate? Isn’t that a nice jab from the old ‘spear’?

In another illiteracy joke, Lady Capulet compares the rich suitor, Paris, to a book containing a golden story” (1.3.94). This is a curious description in a play that associates gold with evil. Shakespeare liked his bookish joke so much that two other characters joke about doing things “by the book” – which implies that Italians lack independent thought and blindly follow written texts (1.5.107; 3.1.98). Well, isn’t that ironic? Shakespeare wanted his actors to act by his book, and people have been reading Shakespeare blindly for centuries. And, thanks to public education, books and the media, billions of people lack creativity and independence. But I digress.

Juliet pretends to curse Romeo for deceiving her (3.2.74-75). In all countries, teenage lovers deceive each another and their parents because their culture does not teach them how to love and *because the cult of monogamy, faithfulness and sexual repression deserves to be violated*. So, I

don't blame Romeo for his lust and deception; instead, I accuse Shakespeare of being a prig and a fool who did not understand how Christianity corrupted healthy human desires and the human potential for love and happiness.

Shakespeare's parody of Roman Catholicism is confirmed by the names of his two leading characters. Juliet = Jesus and Romeo = Rome. Rome worships Jesus/Juliet. In Romeo's words, Juliet is his holy "shrine", "angel" and "saint" – a perfect trinity. As for Romeo's first love, *Rosaline*, she is the eternal virgin, or *rose*, a flower that symbolized virginity and the Virgin Mary. And, let us also remember that Romeo offered Rosaline gold in return for sex.

To grasp how offensive Shakespeare's language is to vigilant Catholics, we have to make an effort to think like Catholics of the Renaissance. Modern readers don't care that Romeo compares 13-year-old Juliet to a holy shrine, a saint and an angel – but Romeo uses these very Catholic words to flatter his way into a girl's bed. If this doesn't seem offensive, ask a devout Muslim how they would react if a non-Muslim dramatist wrote a play in which a Muslim boy attempts to purchase sex from one girl and then compares his new 13-year-old girlfriend to the most holy shrine in Islam, compares her lips to the holy stone of the Ka'ba, and compares her body to the body of Muhammad's most beautiful wife, and her voice to the angel Gabriel's. In more than one Muslim country, that dramatist would lose his head.

Why do Shakespeare's Roman Catholic characters believe in pagan gods and goddesses from Cupid to Diana and Apollo? This was Shakespeare's way of accusing Italian Catholics – the elites especially – of secretly believing in the old pagan gods and goddesses, all of the pagan deities except, notably, Zeus, the prototype of the Christian God. His absence reminds me of another curious absence: no one in *R&J* ever prays, attends a Church service, or even mentions Jesus, God the Father, the Holy Spirit or the Virgin Mary. In short, Shakespeare accused Italian Catholics of being Godless.

## English Money 2

Why did Shakespeare associate gold with evil? Gold was money in Europe. But it was largely controlled by Roman Catholics. In fact, Italy's gold florin had given Italy dominance in the European currency market for nearly 300 years, ending shortly before Shakespeare's time. Shakespeare's bias against gold is evident when Romeo uses his gold to persuade an apothecary, or pharmacist-doctor, to give him poison in return for gold, and this bias is confirmed when Romeo says that gold is "poison to men's souls" (5.1.80). This sounds like Romeo has taken the moral high ground. However, afterwards he happily uses his gold to buy poison for Juliet. And, earlier in the story, in perhaps the most repulsive line in the entire Shakespearean canon, Romeo admits that he tried to use gold to purchase sex (1.1.209). In light of these negative portrayals of gold, when the play ends with vows to erect golden statues in *honor* of Romeo and Juliet, we must suspect some irony, as gold was portrayed as a source of *dishonor*.

## The Happy Moral

Can we salvage a grand and good moral from *R&J*? Good luck!

Perhaps this is the moral: wealthy Italians should control their children's sexual desires, stop fighting amongst themselves, fight others instead, be ruled by a monarch instead of a prince, and stop trusting priests. How English is that?

Shakeophiles seriously believe that the death of two children could inspire two violently feuding families to make peace. This is very silly. Capulet had already disowned his daughter before she died; how could her death inspire him to make peace with his enemy? And Romeo's parents had never met Juliet, so why would they erect an expensive statue in her memory – worse, in the memory of a girl from a family they hated and fought just days earlier? Why did Shakespeare create such stupid, implausible characters? For the worst kind of laughter.

History has no precedent of any feud or war ending on account of slaughtered children. They are slaughtered every day in senseless violence perpetrated by heartless adults. And, when our own children die, not only do we not seek peace but we thirst for blood, the drug of catharsis through revenge.

## Irony

If I've persuaded you that *Romeo and Juliet* is a grotesque comedy full of "vile matter," you'll be able to appreciate the irony of the following quotation:

Was ever book containing such vile matter  
So fairly bound? O that deceit should dwell  
In such a gorgeous palace!  
*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.2.84-86

These are, perhaps, Shakespeare's truest and most perfectly ironic words.

## Foreshadowing or Spoiling?

To understand just how poorly Hollywood and the modern reader understand Shakespeare's dramas, consider his Prologue to *Romeo and Juliet*: it deliberately spoils the ending before the story even starts. Why? What was Shakespeare thinking? Obviously, he was not interested in building suspense – the drug of modern theater and story-telling. Shakespeare was pushing a different drug. England's favorite propagandist knew what he was doing. By foretelling the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, he prevented us from feeling hope and pathos, but that wasn't his goal. His goal was to elicit feelings of pride in England and contempt for everyone else. The Prologue serves this purpose quite well, for armed with foreknowledge of the deaths of two Italian children, Shakespeare allows his English audience to watch their prince, parents and priests and not only to watch them but also to judge them guilty of their children's deaths.

The effect of the Prologue is supported throughout the text by many hints, reminders or *foreshadowings* of the imminent deaths of the two young lovers. What pleasures were we supposed to experience as a result of these reminders that two young lovers will die? The experts call it dramatic irony, but that is expertly astray. By giving audiences knowledge of the future, Shakespeare encouraged them to feel superior to the Italians (characters) who don't see the

future and whose decisions lead to disaster. Shakespeare peddled dramatic egoism, not dramatic irony.

Fortunately, lovers of dramatic irony can get plenty in the World Theater, where the student of life can watch people blindly following the script written by their leaders, oblivious of their own impending deaths, oblivious of how they are killing themselves and oblivious of how they are impoverishing themselves – while, ironically, they claim to be pursuing wealth and the good life. The corrupt, manipulative Authors and Directors of the World profit from the ignorance of their actors and characters.

## Othello

### Against Reason and Nature

Was Shakespeare a humanist? Did he believe that Reason, meaning the human intellect, could achieve more than faith, trust, respect and obedience? Don't be ridiculous! Shakespeare vilified Reason by associating it with Iago, the villain who dismisses traditional virtues and praises Reason in his monologue:

Virtue! a fig! 'tis in ourselves that we are thus  
or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which  
our wills are gardeners: so that if we will plant  
nettles, or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up  
thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs, or  
distract it with many, either to have it sterile  
with idleness, or manured with industry, why, the  
power and corrigible authority of this lies in our  
wills. If the balance of our lives had not one  
scale of *reason* to poise another of sensuality, the  
blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us  
to most preposterous conclusions: but we have  
*reason* to cool our raging [e]motions, our carnal  
stings, our unbitted lusts, whereof I take this that  
you call love to be a sect or scion. (1.3.8-11)

Iago expresses the atheistic belief that human beings determine their own destiny: “tis in ourselves that we are thus and thus.” This irreligious and blasphemous monologue also claims that love is a curse that leads men astray, and that only Reason can temper our violent passions. Obviously, Shakespeare's audience was supposed to despise Iago's humanistic ideas. Granted, humanism was popular among a few educated authors, artists, scientists and so on, but Shakespeare did not offend his audience by associating Reason with evil, for the upper class is always ultra-conservative. Of course, in our time, many in the upper class espouse a false form of Reason that they call “science,” though their science is my madness.

Iago does not promote humanism; he speaks like a dangerous humanist. He does not believe in either a God or a soul; he believes in the body, the will or Reason, and this means that Shakespeare presented him as a devil and heretic. Iago claims Reason can “cool our raging

emotions,” but Shakespeare leads us to conclude that Iago *cools* his raging emotions only to better *hide* his evil intentions from both Roderigo and Othello. In other words, the play demonstrates that Reason is used for evil and might have no other function.

Furthermore, Shakespeare reinforced his negative portrayal of humanism and Reason by linking them to images of herbal gardens in Iago’s monologue. Do you understand what this means? Herbal gardens were already associated with witchcraft and potions. Iago mentions nettles, a ‘weed’ popular with herbalist. These herbal images were intended to help ignorant audiences associate Reason with witchcraft and evil. Obviously, propaganda does not respect logic or fact.

However, even Iago does not seem to understand the gardening tradition. The words “supply [the garden] with one gender of herbs, or *distract* it with many” imply support for the disastrous monoculture tradition instead support for the pre-Christian polyculture tradition.

## Against Witches and Nature

Teachers are fond of drawing our attention to the fact that Iago and Brabantio are racist towards Othello, they are less apt to notice that Othello is a liar, that he manipulated Desdemona with his lies, that he is arrogant and incompetent, and that Shakespeare hints that he really is a witch – just as Brabantio claimed. The first evidence that he is a witch is the fact that he used his speaking skills to ‘cast a spell’ of love on Desdemona. Secondly, he believes in the power of a handkerchief given to him by a female relative from Egypt. Thirdly, he wins the sea battle because a wind storm sank the Turkish fleet – in Shakespeare’s time witches were believed to have power over the winds.

## Drink Your Poison!

Shakespeare used Iago to light-heartedly boast about England’s aptitude for consuming England’s favorite poison (2.3), beer. He wrote not one word about the obviously unhealthy physical, mental and social effects of drinking the juice of rotting grains and grapes. I won’t bore you with the staggering statistics connecting alcohol to liver failure, fatal accidents, domestic violence, and so on. And, since Shakespeare’s time, beer has become more poisonous. Besides containing pesticides and herbicides, U.S. beer contains unknown ingredients because producers are exempt from publishing ingredients. Now, no one quite knows what evil potions they are drinking. Fortunately, one good woman actually cares about what people drink (<https://foodbabe.com/beer/>).

## Classist Propaganda

*Othello* is a masterpiece of anti-working-class propaganda. Iago is a working-class man. He is Othello’s errand boy. During battles, he carries the Italian banner. But, he has ambition. Heaven forbid! He wants to be as wealthy as the people above him! He wants a promotion, but Othello gives it to Cassio, someone with no experience, someone educated in irrelevant subjects, but someone from a wealthy and noble family. By promoting Cassio, Othello paid tribute to Italy’s wealthy elites.

Audiences could pity Iago, but they don't, and that's what Shakespeare intended, and the current culture of conscious and unconscious capitalist prejudice means that professors and teachers do not draw attention to the plight of the working class. We are taught to ignore classism and the economic injustice suffered by Iago and by all of Shakespeare's crude and comical working-class characters.

Iago is Shakespeare vicious caricature of working-class people. Iago is godless, cunning, vengeful, lecherous, disloyal and greedy. Thus Shakespeare legitimized the upper class' fear and contempt for the working-class people they kept under their iron heels.

## Racist Literature

Most readers see *Othello* through rose-colored glasses, imagining modern liberal values about racial equality and forgetting that Shakespeare's job was to entertain the most racist pigs on Earth – men and women who would never have tolerated anti-racist preaching from a mere dramatist.

How racist were England's ruling elites? Spanish conquerors inter-married with Native Americans; not so the English. They were too racist to do more than dream of intermarriage. England's ruling elites were so racist that centuries after Shakespeare's death, in Canada, America and Australia, the English forced native peoples into little open air prisons called reservations. Anyone who thinks Shakespeare had the liberty to write and perform plays about racial equality *is historically illiterate, not to mention textually illiterate.*

The evil Iago obviously expresses racist attitudes towards the black Moor, Othello. But Shakespeare did not portray Othello as an innocent victim. Othello *provoked* Iago by not giving him the promotion which even Iago's wealthy supporters recommended.

Moreover, while Iago is racist, Othello's behavior provided Shakespeare's audiences with reasons for hating the black Moor. After all, Othello gave the treasured promotion to a man who visits prostitutes and can't control his love for alcohol. And Othello is driven by his own lust. What else can we conclude from a man who wants to take his young wife into war? And Othello is so full of hubris that he thinks his noble deeds will defend him from Brabantio's entirely true charge that Othello *betrayed his trust and friendship* by secretly marrying his daughter Desdemona, without neither his permission nor notification. The marriage is a betrayal of trust because Othello had often been a guest in Brabantio's house. By portraying Othello as a man not to be trusted with the daughters of trusting white men, Shakespeare validated the racist English prejudice that blacks cannot be trusted with European women.

In fact, the truth is still worse. Othello won Desdemona's heart with lies. He didn't use magic to seduce her, but he seduced her with tall tales about dangerous adventures and misfortunes. He even claimed to have encountered a foreign people whose heads grew from their shoulders. That was Shakespeare's way of telling us that *a black man can only win a white woman's hand by lying and taking advantage of her trust and naivety.*

If you're still not convinced that Shakespeare was a racist pig, consider the black man's name: *Othel-lo*. His name is a play on *br-othel* and *bordello* – two words associated with prostitution. This association is not coincidental. *Othello* is set, in part, in what seems to be a brothel. Bianca is a prostitute, Cassio flirts with Othello's wife, Iago's wife speaks in favour of sex for financial gain, Roderigo is hot for Othello's wife, the climax occurs in a bedroom,

Othello steals a young woman from her family and Othello lies about having lost his sexual potency.

Finally, Othello is obsessed with the imagined magical properties of his Egyptian handkerchief. Thus, Shakespeare validated the racist Elizabethan stereotype that all Africans are superstitious while European Christians are, of course, not superstitious.

## Against Independence for Women

Shakespeare did not intend for us to consider Desdemona a heroine. Shakespeare gave us sufficient warning in her name: *Des-demon-a*. She is a demon, a devil, and like a perfect devil she rebelled against her father, or, to speak like a Christian, she rebelled against “the Father.” And who is Desdemona’s father? He is, *of course*, an aristocrat. And his name, Brabantio, refers to *Brabant* – a region in northern Europe – which means he’s very white and therefore very godlike.

Shakespeare’s moral, with regards to Desdemona, is that young women must be controlled by their fathers, otherwise they will marry non-Christians, even – gasp – ones of African descent!

The historical irony, of which Shakespeare was unaware, is that we are all descended from black ancestors. Moreover, marriages that cross ethnic divides produce children with genetic advantages or heterosis. Moreover, since his plays consistently warn against marrying foreigners, Shakespeare sounds like a Jew, a Nazi, or like any ruling class bigot who believed in keeping their ‘blood’ pure while they poisoned themselves with unhealthy foods and beverages.

## The Untragic Tragedy

Like Ophelia, Desdemona sings her own funeral song. Not only is such behavior unrealistic, but Shakespeare’s audience would have considered it melodramatic and contrary to English taste. The playwright even encourages his audience to think that Desdemona’s emotions are not genuine, for he makes her interrupt her sad song just eight lines from the start; then, after singing just two more words, she pauses to tell her friend to flee.

Just as Desdemona’s pre-murder song was not meant to be taken seriously or *dramatically*, so the murder of Desdemona was not intended to be tragic; indeed, it was meant to be funny, though at best it’s ridiculous. Instead of swiftly dispatching his wife, Othello grabs her head and gives her time to beg for mercy. Next, while he attempts to smother her with a pillow, she politely asks him to kill her “to-morrow” (a more ridiculous death-bed request has never been asked, I think), and while she is being smothered she somehow continues to speak, as if the great (but old) General Othello could not smother a spoiled tart. Next, she asks him to grant her half an hour before he kills her. He ignores that request, but after he finally “stiffles” her, he hears a voice from beyond the room. But, being quite out of his mind, he thinks Desdemona is *still* talking to him, so he says, “Not dead? Not quite dead?” When he realizes the voice belonged to Iago’s wife, Emilia, he worries that Emilia will speak to Desdemona ... but then he remembers that Desdemona is dead, *remembers ... I beg your pardon ... he remembers that he killed his wife only seconds ago!* Well, that is a short memory indeed. Still more incredibly, Emilia enters the room and proceeds to converse with Othello without noticing her dead friend until that dead

friend cries out (from the dead?), “Oh, falsely, falsely murder’d!” Not falsely murdered but *wrongly* or *incorrectly* murdered. Perhaps, in Shakespeare’s day, such grotesque humor about death and murder sounded better.

## The Ottoman Othello

Shakespeare hints that, contrary to Othello’s story, Othello did not come as a refugee to Italy. Instead, he seems to have lived a privileged life in Italy, visiting its wealthiest nobles like Brabantio, and even being educated there. Without a European education, how could he use the arcane Greek word *Anthropophagi* (1.3.148)? Perhaps Othello’s family even paid for a European education. Why shouldn’t that be possible? Four hundred years later, wealthy Muslims are still paying to be miseducated in Europe and America (“...So Many Iranian Leaders Have Been Educated in the US,” Armin Rosen). And Muslims are not alone. North Korea’s Kim Jong Un was educated in Switzerland (“Kim Jong Un’s Swiss school days revealed,” Allan Hall), and the sons of many foreign dictators and ultra-rich elites attended *dehumanizing* western schools, sometimes before becoming useful puppets.

Now we can understand why Shakespeare’s play has a black Moor serving as the highest ranking military officer of an Italian city, or can we? There’s no historical precedent for cooperation between Muslims and Catholics, or is there? The Ottoman ruler, Suleiman the Magnificent (1494-1566), *openly* signed treaties with France and sat for portraits in Italy, so who knows what behind-the-scenes power-sharing deals were made between Italian and Ottoman elites? We might ask the same question about modern western leaders and their secret and not-so-secret dealings with a hundred dictators in Saudi Arabia, China, Israel, Russia, various African countries and elsewhere.

Although blacks comprised only a small part of the Ottoman Empire, Othello’s color fits the European stereotype of the Muslim Ottomans. Since Othello betrays Brabantio’s trust and wastes the stored wealth of Cyprus, Shakespeare’s message is clear; Europeans should not integrate with Muslims because they cannot be trusted. Well, honestly, no one in the upper stratosphere of wealth and power can ever be trusted, friends and relatives least of all, but Shakespeare only echoed the popular prejudice against foreigners.

Wait, doesn’t Shakespeare’s portray Othello as a naval hero? Granted, on Italy’s behalf, Othello prepares to fight a fleet of Ottoman Muslim ships, but the Turkish fleet sinks in a storm. So, the Italians did not benefit from hiring Othello; instead, thanks to Othello, they lost much of their wealth.

In short, besides being sexist and classist, *Othello* is also a work of xenophobic propaganda.

## Julius Caesar

### Anti-Roman Racism

As usual, Shakespeare did not waste this opportunity to heap scorn and English bigotry on Rome. In fact, he forces the voice of English bigotry into the mouth of Cassius, forcing him to speak these implausibly unpatriotic words: “what trash is Rome, / What rubbish and what offal, when it serves / For the base matter to illuminate / So vile a thing as Caesar!” (1.3.109-112) Did Shakespeare dare express such opinions about his London? He was too ashamed and fearful. A

brief investigation into the living conditions of Elizabethan London would suffice to inspire a bout of vomiting and weeping. And, a similarly brief investigation into the toxic air, food, water, entertainment and politics of modern-day Washington D.C. would suffice to inspire a mass evacuation from that accursed place, – but don't expect Hollywood to speak the truth about the capital of capitalism.

## English Hypocrisy

The play begins with a shoemaker and a carpenter celebrating the triumph of Julius Caesar. They are rejoicing because they imagine and hope that Julius will end their oppression by predatory, land-owning oligarchs. Shakespeare intentionally makes the two artisans smarter than Flavius and Marullus, who are two repulsive representatives of the Roman ruling class. The shoemaker jokingly offers to mend their “soles” – a pun on “souls.” Both artisans are mouthpieces through which Shakespeare expressed contempt for Rome's ruling class – a contempt he reinforced by portraying them as hopelessly flawed, superstitious, violent, and treacherous.

Similarly, Caesar was commonly viewed as a power-hungry megalomaniac whose terrible goal was to destroy the Roman Republic and become the first Roman Emperor. However, an emperor is another word for monarch, and Shakespeare's England was ruled by a monarch, so Shakespeare could not portray Caesar's allegedly evil desire for absolute power as if it were evil. After all, English monarchs were no different. The solution was to make Caesar's character too stupid for the role of emperor. Therefore, Shakespeare portrays Caesar as a man steeped in pagan Roman superstitions and as a man who consults his wife. Shakespeare also rationalized Caesar's popularity – not by portraying him as a revolutionary but by portraying Rome's republican rulers as if they were even less desirable than Julius Caesar.

While Shakespeare could not criticize England's budding empire, he followed convention and condemned Julius Caesar's for allegedly wanting to create an empire. To avoid being called a hypocrite, Shakespeare did his utmost to portray Caesar as a fool unworthy and incapable of ruling an empire – an empire Englishmen respected and hated.

And what about those artisans and their dreams of being liberated from landowning oligarchs? Their dream was based on Caesar's agenda of creating greater economic equality by redistributing land and placing limits on private wealth aggregation – two policies that provide the true reason Julius Caesar was reviled by England's ruling class.

Today, the MSM is busy writing the new *Julius Caesars* as they demonize and degrade foreign leaders who dare to defy western imperial interests. The MSM has given us the tragedies of *Saddam Hussein*, *Bashar Assad*, *Vladimir Putin*, *Fidel Castro*, *Omar Ghaddafi*, *Kim Jung-un* and many others.

## Anachro-mockery

The play mentions mechanical clocks even though they were invented thirteen centuries after Caesar's death. Isn't that silly? Shakespeare committed an *ironic* anachronism: having mechanical clocks appear in the wrong century is rather *untimely*. Perhaps this was also a way to mock Julius Caesar's fixing of the Roman calendar – for the new Julian Calendar was still

imperfect, was ten days off in the year 1582, around Shakespeare's birth, at which time it was corrected and called the Gregorian Calendar.

Perhaps Shakespeare could have said something more substantial about clocks, something approaching a criticism of a device that is primarily used to control workers and turn life into a inhumane schedule.

## The Tempest

Duke Prospero was betrayed by his brother, but Shakespeare does not paint a sympathetic portrait of the man because Prospero was a wizard. Honestly, isn't Shakespeare's Christian prejudice against pagans a little tiresome? But wait, Shakey also insulted the humanist or liberal arts tradition, for he clearly states that Prospero's liberal arts studies led his immersion in "secret studies." In other words, Shakespeare – or his monarch – looked with grave suspicion on the 'modern' education of his time, even linking it to witchcraft. Such irrational ideas are what I've come to expect from Shakey. But let me not neglect to praise him for writing such wonderful dialogues in Act One – one needs the talent of a god to write such a heap of colorful insults.

## Three More 'Tragedies'

In order to avoid interpreting *Coriolanus* as another sexist-racist-classist text, we should endeavor to interpret it as a (Aristotelian) tragedy. To manage this, we must prove that Coriolanus, a nobleman, is a great man who deserves pity. Unfortunately, the play makes this interpretation impossible. As one scholar admitted, Coriolanus "at so many points in the play ... irritates us." Of course he irritates us! After all, he's a damned foreigner!

In an analysis of *Antony and Cleopatra*, one scholar admitted, "[Shakespeare] began with an appeal to the meanest member of the audience." That is well spoken! Oh, but one error peeps out, for the statement assumes that some members of Shakespeare's audiences were not mean.

To enjoy *Antony and Cleopatra*, how mean should we be? Well, Shakespeare portrayed Cleopatra, the black queen of Egypt and Caesar's wife, as an animal who lusts for Antony's "inches," meaning his sizable penis. The scholar I quoted earlier also admits that Antony betrayed his good friend Julius Caesar, yet he somehow imagines that we are supposed to pity Antony for being Cleopatra's victim. Oh, *please!* A victim? A white man the victim of a black woman? Any half-educated nitwit would know better. Moreover, I sincerely doubt that Shakespeare or his audience could have sympathized with any foreigner, especially not a Roman nobleman who betrayed his leader, Julius Caesar, by sleeping with his African wife and queen, and who lost everything because of his lust for her. In short, this play also oozes English prejudice.

One familiar scholar filled ten pages trying to persuade us that *Timon of Athens* is designed to rouse *humane* feelings and – maybe – even intelligent thoughts. But the anonymous scholar overlooked a small detail. You see, Timon's city of Athens was renowned as the birthplace of eloquence, orations, eulogies, epitaphs, and other formal speechifying. Did Shakespeare honor this reputation? Of course not! Shakespeare's play won the hearts of English jingoists by portraying ancient Athenians as if they were verbally deficient barbarians better at cussing than at discussing. Shakespeare also mocked ancient Athens by giving us the Athenian Apemantus. There's a crude pun if I ever found one. It's Shakespeare's way of saying that ancient Athens

was an uncultured zoo, not the center of an empire that was highly literate and that (had) produced some of the greatest poetry and philosophy on Earth.

As for the play's protagonist, Shakespeare stole Timon from Plutarch because his low character is perfectly suited to win English sneers and frowns (Why would Plutarch, a Greek, speak badly about his country's past and its leaders? Was he exceptionally honest and brave? Nonsense! *Fake Literature I*, Peter Dudink).

What is the moral of *Timon of Athens*? I think you'll love this moral: generosity is unwise. Yes, because it caused both Timon's downfall and the bloody reign of Alcibiades. How do you like that? Thank you, Shakespeare, for promoting the worst human habits – the habits of the rich.

## The Taming of Shakespeare

*The Taming of the Shrew* promotes the prejudices and injustices of Shakespeare's England. It was designed to inspire England's nobles to sneer at any poor man who aspires to be rich; secondly, it was designed to inspire England's ruling patriarchs to sneer at any woman who dares reject England's sexist tradition of beating and oppressing women. Lastly, the play is designed to exploit and confirm the upper class's fear that middle-class tutors might seduce their daughters. Like all of Shakespeare's canon, *The Taming of the Shrew* is irredeemably marred by classism, sexism, sexual repression and paranoia.

## A Midsummer Night's Lie

This play should be criticized for promoting patriarchal values. It should also be exposed for toying with homoeroticism for the benefit of Shakespeare's wealthy and sexually disoriented audience members. I do not dispute the validity of these criticism, I just don't have time to explore them, I have two other criticism I wish to articulate.

Firstly, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* exploits the idiotic social taboo against polygamy and polyamory. Two men fall in love with one woman, or one woman falls in love with two men, and the audience is supposed to treat these entirely *natural situations* as dangerous problems that make us nervous and inclined to laugh at the awkwardness fools feel when they see such situations. Instead of promoting the obvious solution to such 'problems,' Shakespeare promotes the unnatural solution: monogamous marriage.

Secondly, this neurotic play associates non-Christian traditions with the witchery of evil herbal potions that create such intense passions that the poor, intoxicated victims don't even respect their fathers' wishes and violate the Christian tradition of monogamy.

Let's stop pretending that monogamy is viable and healthy. The statistics on divorce and spousal abuse are horrifying, and every day millions of people are happily committing adultery in the shadows of the great marital disaster.

## As I Like It

### Titles and Masters

The title *As You Like It* is odd; all of Shakespeare's plays could bear the same title; after all, they were written to be approved and liked *by them*, that is, by his masters, England's rulers.

But this play is probably best known for this little metaphor: “All the world’s a stage.” I love it! It’s such a tidy little idea, no wonders people treat it as if it were a shiny diamond ring. But what does it mean? If the world is a stage, this suggests the world is not real, and that stinks of the Christian superstition that our physical, Earthly world is not the real world – and it stinks of the Christian idea that our physical world is merely a show and the true or real world is somewhere else, probably in God’s Kingdom of Heaven.

If Shakespeare had a healthy respect for truth, he would have written something entirely different, something like this: “I live in a world of illusion, for I *believe* in the Theater of Church and Monarchy. My plays are prayers and brayers repeated for the express purpose of pleasing my noble masters, the true authors of my world, the writers of the script that shapes English civilization. I am always striving to please my masters so that I may remain in their ‘good books’ and live in their heavenly world of luxury and privilege.”

### A *Sheepy* Tragedy

Like most of Shakespeare’s so-called comedies, this play ends with the pomp of weddings – as if weddings represented happy endings. In reality, weddings represent the herding of couples into stalls or pens from which they should never escape.

While the chief danger of this play is its promoting of monogamous marriage, it also promotes ignorance of the rarely discussed evil that was England’s monocultural, wool-dependent economy. Wool was being produced for export to Europe’s monied classes in order to profit the wealthy English landowners – the same thieves who wrote laws like the Statute of Merton, stole land from the poor and turned the country into a patchwork of fenced-in private pastures and estates owned by them. Free humans disappeared from the land and were replaced by sheep. “During the 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries ... Villages were depopulated and several hundred seem to have disappeared” (“A Short History of Enclosure in Britain,” Simon Fairlie).

Not only did Shakespeare ignore this tragic reality, he had the gall to attempt to use it for comical effect in several plays, including *King Lear*, in which the insane king utters the silly and insensitive comment that he does not owe wool to sheep. This might seem funny, but it in the context of a world in which sheep are being used to impoverish, dispossess and displace human beings, it is horrible. And, it’s horrible for a second reason: the king’s right to take wool from sheep expresses the tyrant’s belief that he has the right to exploit any living thing that submits to his power.

In the play presently under discussion, when Corin, the lowly shepherd, is asked about his philosophy, he answers like a simpleton that he has no understanding of the world beyond such simple observations that rain soaks, fire burns and good pastures make fat sheep (3.2.24). Thus, Shakespeare mocked the intelligence of the lower classes – the poor people who lost their land and traditions to England’s ruling nobles as they imposed an economic model that only profited them.

Beyond wool exports, the eating of meat was so widespread among England’s upper class that meat became synonymous with food, as if animal flesh were the only food proper to a nobleman. But here I must indulge in a little psychoanalysis, for however much nobles loved eating animal flesh, they were not comfortable with the thought of slaughtering animals. This is why Shakespeare never mentioned it, and to my knowledge he ever used the image of men leading domestic animals to a slaughterhouse as a metaphor for people who lead others to ruin. I suspect Shakespeare avoided this metaphor because his audience would have felt interpreted it as an admission that animal slaughter is inhumane.

Today we continue to pretend that we are not slaughtering millions of peaceful animals for our plates and stomachs. More than ever, we are dependent on animal agriculture. The world’s appetite for animal flesh seems insatiable, which is astounding, as our culture of devouring animal flesh spreads ill-health for humans and animals, contributes massive quantities of greenhouse gases, is the leading cause of deforestation and species extinction, and contributes to the creation of massive dead zones in our oceans

(Saving the Planet, One Meal at a Time, Eating Our Way to Disease,” Chris Hedges; *Slaughterhouse: The Shocking Story of Greed, Neglect, and Inhumane Treatment Inside the U.S. Meat Industry*, Gail A. Eisnitz; *Kiss the Ground: How the Food You Eat Can Reverse Climate Change, Heal Your Body & Ultimately Save Our World*, Josh Tickell & John Mackey).

## Thirteenth Night

Comedians should never seek laughter exclusively at the expense of others, and yet, Shakespeare never dared to mock either himself, his religion, his xenophobia, his monarchism and all prejudices and patrons. *Twelfth Night* mocks the culture of a foreign country once named Illyria, a place recently known as Yugoslavia, at least, until NATO shattered it for being too socialist and for refusing to bow to Anglo-American ‘interests.’

How does this little play, *Twelfth Night*, help to promote and echo the English pride and snobbery that excused and glorified centuries of English crimes against humanity? It does so by portraying the people of Illyria as incompetent fools whose ruling elites are melodramatic drunkards incapable of managing their own households and corrupted through intermarriage with persons associated with pirates. Never mind the fact that English monarchs like Queen Elizabeth commonly employed pirates as privateers in their empire building strategies.

Shakespeare also made Duke Orsino, Sir Andrew, Sebastian and Anthony seem laughable, at least according to Shakespeare’s English standards. The most powerful man, Duke Orsino, aka Arseno, is effeminate, cowardly, and completely disinterested in matters of state and governance. He is absorbed by his infatuation for Olivia. He lacks the character of true ruler. He lacks Roman stoicism and English reserve.

The play makes a mockery of foreign nobles. The ridiculous Duke Orsino fails to recognize numerous hints that his servant, ‘Cesario,’ is actually a woman in love with him, and, like a nagging, petulant child, he is determined to win Olivia’s favor without sending her gifts, invitations, letters, or his corporal self.

Duke Orsino, meanwhile, is an unmanly coward, drunk on love for noble Olivia, and ha-ha-ha unable to distinguish a woman from a man. And Olivia is quite a caricature, too. She is so emotionally distraught by the deaths of her father and brother that she can’t keep her house in order. A humane dramatist would have treated her with pity, but Shakespeare treats her as object of contemptuous humor, telling us that she wishes to live like a (Catholic) nun so that she can mourn her brother’s death for the absurdly long period of seven years. However, ultimately, like Orsino, she chooses to spoil her noble bloodline and marry a pirate.

Well, aren’t those foreign nobles simply too emotional, too stupid and too corrupt? Aren’t their behaviors laughable?

Perhaps the best joke in the play is delivered by Olivia’s household clown, or fool. After she commands her staff to take the “fool” away, he argues her that Olivia is the fool because she believes her brother is in Heaven, so she be happy instead of mourning. This almost sounds like an intelligent joke, but the clown only intended to mock Olivia. Millions of believers could benefit from the clown’s joke if they took it to heart, but they don’t, and the clown had no desire to benefit anyone but himself.

In fact, Olivia’s fool was never meant to be genuinely funny. This explains why he participated in the torture of the steward, Malvolio, and why he sang such terribly infantile songs for his master, Lady Olivia. Has anyone else noticed that the fool isn’t funny? Perhaps not. Even modern comedians – British ones included – still depend on jokes and gags that involve pain, physical and verbal cruelty, and infantile diversions.

Another of the fool's insensitive jokes is "Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage" (1.5.17). Excuse me, what is "a good hanging"? Is the death penalty something to laugh at? Is death really the only solution? And the phrase "bad marriage" presumes that good marriages are possible, whereas, in reality, even the best marriage isn't very good.

What can we say to redeem *Twelfth Night* from damnation? Well, the apologists might say, Shakespeare did use Sir Aguecheek to criticize beef eating: "I am a great eater of beef and I believe that does harm to my wit" (1.3.192). Indeed, Shakespeare echoes this anti-beef sentiment in *Troilus and Cressida*, "thou mongrel beef-witted lord" (2.1.869). What nonsense! He was probably just echoing the dietary bias of his royal patron, who probably felt that fish and venison were proper royal dishes while beef was the meat of people who couldn't afford increasingly scarce and inaccessible wildlife.

## Kings Reichard

Every ruler deserves the name Richard. It is a compound Norman name meaning reign-power; students of German and WWII might translate it as reich-heart, with heart meaning courage and strength. Why are courage and strength connected? The Norman rulers shaped their language to reflect their psychopathic views, so they treated courage and strength as the same thing. For all conquerors and rulers, being strong means being courageous enough to fight, conquer and rule without weakness – that is, without any sense of shame or guilt.

Although Shakespeare wrote about two of England's royal Richards, he somehow neglected to write a play about the most famous King Richard, the first one, the one known as Richard the Lionheart. I suppose this omission is due to the fact that Richard I (1157-1199) experienced too few state scandals (with the exception of his violent persecution of Jews). He spent most of his reign abroad, being a good Catholic, courageously crusading to capture and rule Jerusalem.

Richard-the-Crusader represents the founding father of a long tradition of Europeans bringing death and horror to South West Asia. About 700 years later, during World War I, Jerusalem was finally seized by the British. General Allenby insisted that the British had not waged a religious war, which is a half truth that also ignores the greater truth that WWI was motivated, in part, by interest in South West Asia's immense fossil fuel resources. The crusades also had economic motives such as seizing new territory and gaining control over important trade routes. So, the Crusades and WWI have much in common. Of course, neither Shakespeare nor MSM journalists and historians ever expose the economic motivations behind war *because their masters want the truth kept secret*.

A century has passed since WWI and the English-speaking world is still busy bringing death and destruction to South West Asia. Of course, western psychopaths and their media are keeping the tradition of denying that any of their wars are motivated by greed.

King Richard II (1367-1400) was luckier; Shakespeare deemed his life worthy of the stage, but he omitted far too much. You see, Richard II began ruling England at the age of 10. Unfortunately, Shakespeare did not seize this excellent opportunity to write a hilarious comedy about a nation ruled by a royal infant. His little drama, *Richard II*, only covers the last two years of the king's life and *gently* portrays Richard as a slightly flawed ruler whose little errors led to his own downfall. Well, we are still excusing our disasters; every economic, social, military and environmental failure is blamed on little errors and a few rotten apples, and thus we keep alive the illusion that civilization isn't a perfect disaster.

And this is rather convenient: *Richard II* does not even mention the most frightful political event in 14<sup>th</sup> century England: the Peasants' Revolt (1381). This cataclysmic uprising of popular discontent nearly brought England's ruling class to its damned knees. Why so much discontent? Slavery and taxes! English slaves, more politely known as serfs, demanded freedom, and small land owners were repeatedly taxed to fund the incredibly stupid and wasteful Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) fought against France. I'm sure people had supplementary complaints, but slavery and taxation are good reasons for riots, violent rebellions and civil disobedience. Shakespeare, however, did not want to remind his rulers of any frightful chapters in English history, so the Peasants' Revolt was conveniently forgotten.

King Richard III (1452-1485) was the last king of the Plantagenet Dynasty. He was killed by a representative of the Tudor Dynasty, the dynasty to which Shakespeare was loyal. Since Richard III was not a Tudor and actually had to be overthrown by the Tudors, Shakespeare portrayed him as a deformed, Machiavellian monster who murdered with a smile. You can try to find a moral in Shakespeare's story, but you'll have to look for it in a cauldron bubbling with Tudor prejudice and English chauvinism.

### King Henry V

Henry V (1386-1422) was an earlier Plantagenet, so Shakespeare portrayed him as both a valiant commander and a monstrous monarch for committing too many wartime atrocities and for blaming them on the unwillingness of people to surrender to his power. While this is a critical portrayal, don't imagine that Shakespeare was a pacifist; the play merely suggests that wars should be more civilized and involve fewer atrocities. Ideally, the enemy surrenders peacefully. That is the perfect English fantasy – a fantasy enjoyed by Queen Elizabeth, for whom *Henry V* was first performed. She recommended diplomacy with what she called the “rude and barbarous” people of Ireland, but when 30,000 were deliberately starved and thousands more were killed, she offered no apologies. Naturally, Shakespeare did not write a play exposing the horrors authorized by *his* masters, and Hollywood's script writers and movie studios are likewise kissing the asses of their masters.

### King Cade

Somehow, Shakespeare missed the opportunity to write a comedy about Henry VI (1421-1471) becoming king of England at the fresh age of *nine months* and king of France shortly afterwards. Instead of making us laugh, Shakespeare did his worst to glorify and dramatize the life of another English tyrant.

Henry VI's life good material for the stage because he lost control of England's government. This could happen to any monarch who isn't vigilant, cunning and dominant, so Shakespeare blamed the catastrophe on Henry's failure to unite and control his bickering nobles. Blaming Henry is rather stupid. You see, all governments are corrupt and full of endless bickering and infighting. Besides, Shakespeare's play assumes that kings need absolute power over everyone. That should be shocking; all of Shakespeare's works are anti-democratic and elitist.

Shakespeare also had an opportunity to portray Henry's mental breakdown as he did the madness of Macbeth, King of Scotland. Of course, he missed that wondrous opportunity. Shakespeare was unwilling to reveal such damning details about an English monarch. So, the fact was censored – but it was censored in vain, for everything kings do is insane.

Shakespeare also censored most of the great rebellion that involved Jack Cade, peasants, small landowners, a few squires and members of parliament. In 1450, they could no longer tolerate the oppressive and unjust land policies of their rulers, so they sent a letter of demands to Henry VI. The letter was ignored. Consequently, they launched a violent attack in London under the leadership of Jack Cade. Instead of portraying Jack Cade as a man of conscience seeking justice, Shakespeare used a ‘little’ artistic license to portray the man as an Irish agent working to create unrest in London on behalf of the Duke of York, Henry’s main rival for the English throne. Additionally, Shakespeare portrayed Cade as an illiterate thief and a vicious murderer who hated the literate upper class, who hated literacy generally, who desired the throne for himself and who dragged the corpses of his victims through London.

In contrast, Shakespeare whitewashed King Henry VI. He even censored the fact that Henry captured Cade by dishonorably breaking his word. According to more honest historians, Henry had written pardons for Cade and his followers, but without informing Cade, he cancelled those *written* pardons and issued a *written* warrant for his arrest and murder.

Shakespeare also censored the fact that England’s rulers were engaged for centuries in stealing land from their own people by raising taxes so that small landowners had to sell their land.

Finally, Shakespeare falsely suggested that Cade killed Lord Saye for the ‘crime’ of corrupting England with literacy. I sincerely doubt anyone ever hated literacy that much. That said, we might argue that the Catholic Church hated the idea of a literate public reading its books, and I’m certain millions of students hate reading and writing, and sometimes even I am quite out of patience with my literary labors. Still, regardless of Shakespeare’s considerable authority on the subject of literacy, I suspect Cade and the rebels had more substantial reasons for risking their lives in a rebellion.

## King Henry VIII

### History

*A Description of Elizabethan England*, by William Harrison, explains that a power struggle existed between the pope of Rome and the second Tudor king of England – *well, no kidding!* The Catholic Church resembled modern multinational corporations pillaging poor nations and not-so-poor nations (*The Divide: A Brief Guide to Global Inequality and its Solutions*, Jason Hickel). Obviously conflict existed between England and Rome, especially while the declining Holy Roman Empire operated inside the borders of the rising British Empire. Mr Harrison, in an amusing appeal to God, quotes scripture to remind us that God commanded all men (popes implied) to respect kings and princes. But do you think England’s kings wanted respect from Rome? No, they wanted the Church’s wealth and power, which the Church was unwilling to give, in part because the Bible conveniently does not command God’s church to pay taxes to kings and emperors.

If you believe historians, King Henry VIII expelled the Catholic Church from England over a dispute about divorce. That dispute can be framed as a moral dispute, but in matters of State and Church, you’ll miss the heart of the matter if you ignore money. The expulsion of the Catholic Church and its replacement by the Anglican Church was good for English profits

because the Anglican Church, while also tax-exempt, did not and does not siphon English wealth into Rome.

Henry VIII, the second Tudor king, expelled the morbid, superstitious and corrupt Catholic Church from England, but England only became worse. The wealth that once flowed into the Vatican gullet was redirected into ambitious, English empire-building projects. Instead of writing about this enormous development, Shakespeare preferred to whitewash Henry's marital escapades, to ignore Henry's obsession with producing a male heir, and to flatter Henry by glorifying his daughter, Elizabeth, the last Tudor monarch and the queen who, quite conveniently, was also Shakespeare's first monarch.

## Biography

King Henry VIII was a Tudor, so Shakespeare's play about him is an imperial soap opera and a royal whitewash. Not a single detail about Henry's legendary vanity, cruelty, paranoia, gluttony, obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, gout, sepsis and idiocy. Shakespeare even claims that Henry did not know about a severe tax levied to finance war with France, and he credits Henry with pardoning tax resisters while neglecting to mention that Henry rightly confiscated land from the Catholic Church and *wrongly* sold it to raise funds for his war campaigns. Since he could have distributed the land for free and thereby lowered food prices, his selling of the land would force landowners to keep food prices high, so Henry had secretly created a food tax.

On a more trivial note, Shakespeare barely mentioned the fact that Henry badly injured his leg participating in an infantile display of manly military prowess during war games or so-called jousting games. Similarly, his play politely avoids mentioning that the royal fool grew obese, and the injured leg festered and swelled and the stench had to be concealed as the royal whale mated with several women in a desperate effort to produce an heir to the gilded throne.

War games and bad dietary choices were Henry's undoing; in that lies a message for the world that the bard ignored. At least Henry's fall could have been exploited for a little slapstick comedy, but not by Shakespeare, not by England's scribbling lackey. Not a word about Henry's deadly diet of plainly dressed meat, beer, toasted cheese, and puddings; vegetables were scorned as peasant food. Silly books such as Susanne Groom's *At the King's Table: Royal Dining Through the Ages* do not help, though I must credit her with describing, without laughing, that while Henry was fasting the first course of one meal included "soup, herring, cod, lampreys, pike, salmon, whiting, haddock, plaice, bream, porpoise, seal, carp, trout, crabs, lobsters, custard, tart, fritters and fruit." Well, why blame the glutton? God permitted fasting Catholics to eat fish on fast days, and Henry took full advantage, devouring the life of our oceans. Presumably, his disgusting diet did not improve after he abolished Catholicism. The rotten fumes rising from the cauldron of his belly probably poisoned his brain and helped make him a monster of cruelty. With so much alcohol poisoning his liver, with so much meat and dairy rotting in his gut, with so little fiber cleaning his foul intestines and colon, little wonder that he was mentally ill and little wonder that he executed his wives and many others on suspicion of treason. And yet, Shakespeare, who likely ate from a similar plate, overlooked these tragic details and did not exploit the chance to make us laugh, for example, by reminding us that England's monstrous monarch actually founded the Royal College of Physicians in 1518 and formed the Company of Barber-Surgeons in 1540. Ironically, despite his fondness for surgeons, Henry never found the courage to amputate his rotting leg, and he was so averse to real medicine, I mean fruit,

vegetables and herbs, that he avoided herbal treatments and preferred to treat himself with salves made of toxic white lead and useless ground pearls. But wait! To give credit where it's due, I must applaud Henry for developing public access to clean water – access to which meant that England could live without smelling its sins. Of course, regarding these matters, Shakespeare wrote not a word. Instead, his drama focuses on the monarch's desperate effort to preserve his royal bloodline. For this reason, Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* honors the marriage superstition, glorifies Queen Katherine's miserable chastity, and promotes the *bloody* belief that nations should be ruled by a king, his male descendants and – let us not forget – their armed thugs in uniforms.

## Biology

Even in his so-called historical plays, Shakespeare continued using the stage to communicate negative impressions of Nature, especially of soil and plants. Queen Katherine asks Heaven to shield King Henry from “soil” (1.2). Modern English speakers still use the “soil” to mean something they consider unpleasant, namely poop. Actually, a little soil can be eaten without ill effect, and without soil we would all be dead.

The misnamed “Gardiner” says, “He is a rank weed ... And we must root him out” (5.1). I cannot comprehend why he needs the adjective “rank” to describe a weed when clearly, for all of Shakespeare, all weeds are rank, meaning *foul*. Besides, a good gardener would not uproot any plant unless he intends to eat the root; soil should not be unnecessarily disturbed, and weeds can easily be crushed or chopped instead.

In a bumbling attempt to explain why taxation should be moderated, King Henry states that trees can be stripped of their bark, have some of their “timber” removed and left to dehydrate (1.2.80). Well, excuse me, but Shakespeare must have known that such abuses kill trees. Perhaps his intent was to have a little laugh over Henry's ignorance of arboriculture and life.

Trees were sacred to pagans, and rightly so, but Henry's England converted trees into ships and mansions, and converted forests into pastures, fields of wheat and potatoes, and golf courses. I'm not voicing the naturalist's complaint. Forests were more than places of biodiversity. Although ancient forested England supported a much smaller population, forests can be converted into food forests or habitats rich in edible plants, medicinal plants, fuel, building materials, and so on. Of course, this idyllic vision of the future is not compatible with the building of empires, therefore Shakespeare did not mention it.

## The Sonnets

To be a good sonnet writer, William became exceptionally skilled at counting syllables and lines as well as at finding words that rhyme (sorry!). To create sonnet-worthy content, Billy skillfully avoided criticizing classism and racism, imperial ambitions and Anglican superstitions, and he skillfully avoided sharing any knowledge we might utilize in creating a better world. But, don't lament. Luckily, Billy the Bard was gifted with a divine judiciousness that enabled him to write about such refined and philosophical matters as ... the brevity of life. I suppose his rich patrons and he himself frittered so much time away, enjoyed life so poorly *despite* or rather *because of* their extravagant wealth, that life seemed too short. So, Billy wrote them some sonnets that sympathize with their feelings and imply that life *really* and *empirically* so to-o-o-o short, and so

he missed a glorious opportunity to explain that when you feel life is too short, you've obviously wasted your life on the wrong pursuits.

Billy also sonnified on the equally imaginary idea and pseudo-philosophical notion that appearances are deceptive and the senses not reliable. Sorry, but all wisdom and intelligence is founded on the senses. You are a void without them.

Billy's final stroke of genius was to address many of his sonnets to a homosexual beloved. From this we may rather impolitely conclude that he sonnified for a special patron who was very, very, very sick of Nature.

Coincidentally, King James I was a reputed homosexual who believed in the supernatural.

## Conclusions

### A Little Apologia

Why should we blame Shakespeare for doing his job and earning a good income for his family? Everyone needs a job. Around the world, religious evangelists continue to actively spread the curse of religion, and imperial propagandists are still spreading the curse of war. Moreover, hundreds of millions of people are working in the following, deadly and environment destroying fields: the military-industrial complex, the pharmaceutical-industrial complex, the geoeengineering-industrial complex, the agricultural-industrial complex, and ... well, isn't every modern worker complicit in our omniscidal civilization?

So, let's not be too harsh on poor Shakespeare. Let us merely wonder, in awe, at how consistently he avoided writing anything worth reading. How could this happen?

Perhaps Shakespeare was 'content' to communicate so little content, I mean such utter fluff, was this: he had no energy and/or time for content. He was too busy rhyming, inventing new words for old ideas, counting his syllables, organizing alternating stressed syllables and making sure all the acting parts could be done by his limited theater company.

In a similar fashion, modern scientists have their heads so full of rarefied verbiage, acronyms, formulas and equations that we can hardly be surprised that the wheels of conscience cannot turn.

### The Curse of Shakespeare

Shakespeare's works are consistently anti-Nature, pro-Christian and classist; therefore, they are partly responsible for the modern world's apathy regarding the destruction of our health and environment as well as the modern world's ignorance of the unjust schemes that impoverish everyone except the upper class.

Shakespeare's dramas teem with deceivers and tricksters, but he somehow neglected to expose the worst ones in all of England: the ruling class and their supporting priestly class. The ruling class' existence is founded on deceptions such as banking fraud and political fraud, on fiat money and fractional reserve banking as well as on the illusion that royalty and political elites genuinely care about the public. But did Shakespeare dare expose these lies?

The Anglican Church might be less rapacious than the Catholic, but its promises of divine love and a wonderful afterlife turn people into trusting and blind sheep who happily follow their shepherds into the slaughterhouse.

### The King's Consolation

Well, perhaps we should feel lucky that Shakespeare did not sink as low as Tony Blair, Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, the BBC, CNN, and the vast network of psychopaths who speak and act on the stage of western power. They actually celebrate their evil wars, their evil medicines, their evil banks, their totalitarian governments and their sexual disorientation.

So, let us console ourselves with the thought that at least Shakespeare did not *celebrate* England's crimes: its crushing of Catholics, its extermination of pagan tradition, its violent imposition of a class system, its defrauding of the public through currency debasement, its dispossessing of the masses by privatizing or enclosing formerly common land, and so on.

And let us console ourselves with the knowledge that Shakespeare is the father of English propaganda. He was the first to use the stage to glorify English power and demonize non-Christians and non-Anglican Christians. His pioneering work is now being *unconsciously* emulated by English speaking actors, authors, news reporters and anyone else who would glorify violence, ignore injustice and promote hatred of anyone who dares to reject democracy, government, public education, industrial medicines, banking, technological innovations and all the other pillars of the great myth of civilization.

## Humanizing Shakespeare

While we can curse Shakespeare for not writing anything critical of the Tudor and Stuart monarchs or about the many unjust policies of England's rulers, we can keep his cowardice in perspective by remembering how other, more outspoken people, fared when they dared to criticize land theft. While England's ruling aristocrats gobbled up more and more land, what author or artists dared to immortalize a conscientious criticism?

The first recorded written complaint against enclosure [land theft] was made by a Warwickshire priest, John Rous, in his *History of the Kings of England*, published around 1459-86. The first complaint by a celebrity (and 500 years later it remains the most celebrated denunciation of enclosure) was by Thomas More in *Utopia* ... Other big names of the time weighed in with similar views: Thomas Wolsey, Hugh Latimer, William Tyndale, Lord Somerset and Francis Bacon all agreed, and even though all of these were later executed, as were Cade, Kett and Pouch ... ("A Short History of Enclosure in Britain," Simon Fairlie)

Instead of writing about land, the basis of human life, Shakespeare enjoyed writing about cannons, a means to destroying human life. Examine his two dozen references to cannons; they always mention cannons uncritically and even entertainingly. Nowhere does Shakespeare denounce cannons, muskets, and other deadly developments in military technologies. Rulers never tolerate cries for pacifism, and Shakespeare was not a pacifist; he fully enjoyed dramatizing England's military victories and fully enjoyed imagining inferior foreigners.

Forget Shakespeare. English literature was less prejudiced, less arrogant and less *insane* before him. The secular literature of the Middle Ages – especially when it wasn't commissioned by a ruling elite – is bawdier, less priggish, less snobbish. Shakey's predecessors, Boccaccio and Chaucer, did not stoop to smearing foreigners with so-called tragedies. And his successors, Milton and Goethe, were less offensive *because they were not financially dependent on elite psychopaths*.

Yet, I want to remember that Shakespeare's situation was not entirely unique. Shortly after his death, Moliere (1622-1673), a French dramatist, composed plays for French royals and was permitted to mock the Catholic Church but not French royals and their heinous, domestic-oppression, profit-extraction and empire-building policies.

Modern authors have faced and still face similar problems. American movie script writers working for their nation's mainstream movie studios cannot write bold criticisms of American imperialism. Consequently, Hollywood's movies do not portray America's ruling class as a bunch of fools only capable of producing tragedies. Nor do we have a single movie that highlights the suffering of America's victims in Vietnam, Germany, El Salvador, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Somalia, Syria, Panama, Mexico, Honduras, Cuba, Guam, Hawaii, Alaska, California, and so on.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, under communist rulers in Europe and Asia, professional artists were forced to produce works that glorified their communist nations; under capitalist rulers in the U.S., novelists, journalists and scriptwriters who dared to express communist values lost their jobs – if they had jobs – or were forced to either censor themselves or risk being blacklisted by the government. Today, Hollywood script writers and mainstream Western journalists must reflect the values of their capitalist masters; they must not criticize U.S. corporations, U.S. wars, the U.S. monetary system, and so on.

In fact, blatant censorship is back in fashion. In Canada and the U.S., scientists are censored. If government scientists dare to criticize our dependence on fossil fuels, they are no longer employed by the government. If a government scientist does research on the negative impacts of fossil fuel dependence, meat consumption, pet ownership, smart phones, shopping and so on, he is no longer employed. If a military general or a foreign policy advisor dares to suggest that war is a waste of the people's money and of human potential, he will vanish.

In Big Britain, also known as the U.S.A., censorship can come from a CIA plot, from CFR media members, from a Clinton-Bush hired assassin, or via some other gang. Additionally, governments corrupt thousands of artists with their grants and content policies. Finally, the politically-correct-speech joke has morphed into anti-free-speech hysteria. Presently, stress and confusion are so intense almost no one is able to discuss serious matters calmly and rationally.

Fortunately, ignorance is endangered. 21<sup>st</sup> century readers are a rare breed, but they are becoming aware of the extent to which propaganda and ignorance shapes the civilized world, and they have access to excellent critical literature, documentaries, interviews and even documents that were never meant to be read and critiqued by you and me.

