Abstract

One key debate in the critical reception of Shakespearean late romance concerns how best to approach the functionality of the dramatised worlds that constitute it. What I call 'containment' readings of late romance argue that the alternative realities explored in the plays – realities of miraculous revivals, pastoral escapes and divine interventions, – serve to affirm the inevitable return of extant power structures. Utopian readings dispute this, making the case that the political and existential destructurations exposed in these plays point toward a new orientation for the dramatic subjects they produce.

With the aim of contributing to the debate between containment and utopian readings, I explore in this thesis how late romance produces its subjects. I interrogate the plays' structures with the help of the anthropological model of the limen, which is shown to be a useful category through which to educe the meaningfulness of certain ritual sequences. The *limen*'s three phases – separation; *limen*; aggregation – are employed to make sense of the transitions that subjects undergo in the four plays studied: *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. To study the liminality of these plays is, I argue, to study how dramatic subjects are produced therein, guided by the fact that their language shares properties with ritual discourse. When studying this discourse the focus falls on that class of language which impinges most lastingly on subjects: performatives. How performatives function in late romance will show us how real the changes induced in liminal subjects are.

I examine the four plays in turn and find that their performative language produces subjects in a *limen*-consistent fashion. Aristocratic subjects are first of all estranged from those discursive practices that nourish their identity; their subjectivities are then glued back together in the ritualised, emblematising language of the *limen*. The conclusion I draw from my interrogation of the liminal patterns uncovered is that the functionality of late romance is broadly consistent with containment readings; I claim to have extended such readings, however, in showing that Shakespeare's dramatisation of the state's return to power usefully exposes its logic and symbolic grammar.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

"Repetition to the life": Liminality, subjectivity, and speech acts in Shakespearean late romance

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Mark Webster Hall

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Introduction

In spite of its belonging to a romance genre notable for its shapelessness and "mouldy" pedigree (Jonson 283), Shakespearean late romance has a structure and this structure can be studied forensically. Dramatic subjects in these plays are constituted in ways that inscribe laws of action and reaction unto the sprawling canvas of happenstance and fortuitious revival (McDonald 2006 38; Wells 329). In *Pericles*, for example, a subject (Thaisa) is drowned, resuscitated and cloistered before being mysteriously reconciled to her long lost kin. *Cymbeline* has Innogen locked up for marrying beneath her; she then flees after a husband who wishes her dead, wakes with the headless corpse of a suitor, and finds her traumatised way back to the court. To follow Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* is to track a similarly hazardous recovery from isolation for a subject tormented by her husband's world-emptying jealousy; it takes a miraculous event to put that world back together again. In the case of Prospero in *The Tempest*, meanwhile, we see dramatised the work involved in manipulating *others'* subjectivities along the lines of enslavement and emancipation in the hope of materialising a return to power; much of that manipulation seems to rely upon the harnessing of magical forces. All of these cases demonstrate how subjects are constituted in and through structures that instantiate patterns of romance narrative.

I provisionally identify three constituent phases in late romance: separation, ordeal, and reconciliation. The phase of separation typically corresponds to a violent rupture that finds the aristocratic body – that is, key members of the ruling court – flung to all corners of dramatic space (Adelman 193; Tennenhouse 179). The violence of the separation presages the violence of an ordeal phase that has subjects face radical

disorientation and extreme suffering, and has them enter a kind of no man's land where they must cope with unexpected stimuli and bouts of rampant desubjectivisation. *Pericles's* Marina provides a case in point: this dramatic subject is fostered out, betrayed, kidnapped by pirates, and then sold into prostitution; all of these pressures have the effect of distancing her from those networks of identity-support that would otherwise have shaped her aristocratic being. It is characteristic, finally, of the reconciliations produced in late romance that they be hurried, unashamedly artificial, and brokered by divine powers (Frye; Ryan 2003 32; White). Subjects are produced as they collaborate to instantiate transition through these phases; a key feature of my project is to study subjects as they so collaborate.

The dramatological structures invoked in these plays are not those of comic reversibility and frictionless reconciliation. Critics have come to accept that the suffering which conditions subjects in Shakespearean romance is so traumatic that full recovery from it seems unthinkable; the ordeal phase exacts a price (Adelman 193-238; Barber 61). Differences of interpretation come in, however, when critics look at the changes that this ordeal phase has instituted in the community that survives it. Critics belonging to what I will call the "containment" school argue that the ordeal phase constitutes no more than a temporary concession to the imperfections of aristocratic hegemony; their arguments suggest that the status quo is strengthened by the return to it of subjects whose allegiance to the state has been purged of discontent and ideological slackness (Bond x; Brown 53; Greenblatt 1988; 1990; Tennenhouse 178-180). Stephen Greenblatt reads the ordeal phase of one play as the discursive application by the state (Milan, in his instance) of a "salutary anxiety" (1988 145), the idea being that power recuperates to that throne which *dramatises* its fears of being lost. The general principle

put to work in containment interpretations is that whatever greater freedom has been given for subjects to wander – and suffer – under authority's temporary disintegration has been given in order that subjects let off steam and that the *system* better reproduce itself in the future.

The containment reading is contested by critics who find the utopian possibilities sketched in late romance persuasive. Utopian critics argue that the plays' dramatisation of a radical breakdown of the state (whether it be Sicilia or Tyre, Milan or Britain) produces alternative political and existential realities in the forms of life which fill the vacuum of the ordeal phase (Brockbank 109; Ryan 2003). The argument then runs that whatever miraculous reconciliations are improvised to put the state back together again, the utopian options revealed in the interim have made a difference:

> Those who would construe the ends of the plays as surrenders to comformity must face the fact that the adequacy of those endings is undermined by the richer definitions of identity and possibility adumbrated in the previous acts. In the wake of this widening of horizons and raising of expectations, the final return to the old regime, as kingdoms, ranks, families and gender roles are restored, exposes the shrunken poverty of what custom and habit decree. (Ryan 2003 37)

I wish to contribute to the utopian/ containment debate by studying how the plays actualise the structures of separation, ordeal and reconciliation. It is obviously important to make sense of dramatic subjects passing through these phases, and constituting various worlds as they so pass (Doložel; Ronen). The question as to whether these (transitional) worlds are new or old – utopian or containing – can then be addressed by

examining the changes produced in subjects (Althusser 170-176; Rabkin 10; Mieskowski). Even if an aristocratic protagonist at reconciliation slots right back into the hierarchical position from which he or she was exiled at separation, then it will still be worthwhile to see how he or she is produced as a subject after her ordeal. Has the period of dislocation and absence from the routinised expression of power changed the way that that routine is now expressed? What changes in the subject impact upon the system of aristocratic-subject makings? If the changes have been the mere finessings of discursive power management – as containment theorists suggest – then how have these finessings been negotiated in the ordeal phase? If, on the other hand, utopian energies have made their presence felt in the producing of subjects, then it is important to understand the mechanisms at work in this presence.

The three-part structure I have proposed as constitutive of late romance leads me, when examining questions of dramatic subjectivity, to draw upon a hermeneutical model that is structurally consonant with it: the anthropological model of the *limen*. Anthropologists use the concept of liminality to educe the structural meaningfulness of certain ritual sequences (Bell 102; Myerhoff; Yang 382-385), such as those involved with the circumcision rituals which may constitute the transition to adulthood in certain societies. Ritual subjects are moving from one well defined state (in this case childhood) to another, and the *limen* marks that in-between state which produces the subject precisely as undefined. Edward Muir provides the example of the "oath of fealty" phase of a vassalage rite (36). In this case the kiss exchanged between the two parties (lord and vassal) at the point of the oath-taking qualifies as liminal because their respective status positions are suspended just so long as lips meet; hierarchy returns when the bodies part and updated power structures move back in to separate two

individuals. The two individuals stand in a new relationship thanks to the taking of the oath. I argue that the concept of liminality is hermeneutically advantageous when used to study the transitional dramatological contours of Shakespearean late romance.

Liminality is most apposite, of course, when applied to contexts of *passage*. And the notion of a subject passing through one ritual phase (before entering another) is *prima facie* consonant with dramatic case studies of protagonists losing contact with their societies, finding their identities under threat, and undergoing exile and hardship, before having reconciliation swoop down upon them.[1] It is not simply that the plays have subjects parting and passing through various changes before reconciling, but that the changes are so radical and oftentimes disturbing. Subjects in the ordeal phase of late romance are exposed to such volatile disorienting effects that their identities do seem up for grabs in a way that resonates with the ritual subject prone to stimulus sets hell-bent on degrading his or her conspicuous sense of normalcy.

Together with the structural likeness between the two fields of study there is also the happy coincidence that anthropologists divide into something very similar to the two camps of utopian and containing when it comes to interpreting the consequences of subjects undergoing periods of "ritual" ordeal (Alexander 28/9; Deflem 4; 14; Turner 1974). The functionalist paradigm in anthropology produces interpretations which suggest that such ordeals serve extant power structures by efficaciously reproducing subjects for the society which underwrites the rituals (Flanigan 48; Halpern 9). Passage, it is suggested, exposes another world for ritual subjects in order to galvanise their

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[1] This claim falls within the wider one made by Louis Montrose concerning Shakespeare's "frequently focus[ing of] dramatic action precisely *between* the social acts, between the sequential ages, in the fictive lives of his characters. Many of the plays turn upon points of transition in the life cycle – birth, puberty, marriage, death (and, by extension, inheritance and succession) – where discontinuities arise and where adjustments are necessary to basic interrelationships in the family, the household, and the society at large" (33). Montrose goes on to suggest a "partial affinity" between such a focus for Shakespearean dramatisation and "rites of passage, which give a social shape, order, and sanction to human existence."

return to this one. This interpretation is consistent with containment readings of the work of the late romance ordeal. Utopian readings in the anthropological context argue that ritual work is constitutive of real and innovative possibilities with respect to a new structuration for those societies of which it is an organic part (Gilead 184; Rubenstein 252; Turner 1969; 1982 42; Siegel 89). Sensitive as they are to the constructive energies of the liminal phase, these readings sit well with utopian interpretations of romance upheaval and experimentation.

Having argued my case for the appropriateness of using an anthropological mode to make sense of a particular literary context, I now wish to discuss the character of the model. Ever since Arnold van Gennep (1960), anthropologists have chosen to identify the *limen* as the second of three stages in various rites of passage: (1) separation; (2) *limen*; (3) aggregation. The sequence can be explicated readily enough: the initiands are taken away from the group (separation), they enter the liminal phase, and are then returned to the group (aggregation). It seems typical of liminal subjects that they are dispossessed of traits which hitherto marked them as individuals within the wider society (Gennep; Turner 1967; 1969 102-106; 1982 26). If one subject was brunette before she entered the limen, and a second blonde, then the shaving of the heads of both would mark them as belonging together by virtue of the absence of a signifier. This kind of negative marking is very common (Adjaye 12; Myerhoff 117; Turner 1967; 1974), for as much as possible the initiand must shed her previous social personality and assimilate a new and comparatively empty one (Gennep 30). An important feature of these negative markings is that they allow the ritual subject to be typologised as radically ambiguous with respect to any number of key differentiating characteristics (Turner 1967 359).

Liminality constructs a state for the ritual subject to occupy which is as ambiguous as possible – as Victor Turner puts it, "[The subject] passes through a realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state" (1967 94). Liminal language, because of its dominance both inside and outside the limen, must somehow contribute to this ambiguity. Anthropologists have compiled a number of helpful examples of how it does so. For the Kol of India, a reversal of default sociolinguistic practice takes place when a funeral cortège marches through the village: the women cry, and the men are silent (Gennep 151). Typologies consistent with this would show the men identifying with the corpse (which is itself, for the Kol, in a liminal state) by suppressing the garrulity which, in everyday life, ratifies their power. In the Ndembu circumcision ritual a significant number of restrictions are placed on the language use of both ritual subjects and their instructors (Turner 1967): "[Novices are] forbidden to speak while eating" (224), and are not permitted to explain the secrets revealed to them during the phase of the communication of sacred knowledge. Those speakers (the instructors: "*makishi*") authorised to impart this sacred knowledge engage in symbolic behaviour which richly ambiguates their ontological status – the blowing of "bull-roarers" complements the wearing of frightening masks and a blinking of the eyes which symbolises the *glans penis* – so much so that "the novices believe that the *makishi* are 'dead people'" (239).

How ritual subjects use language is an important constitutive element of the production of liminal ambiguity. Given that my project focuses on the production of subjects in the "ritual" phases of late romance, it is vital that I study the raw materials of that variety of subject-production. Shakespearean romance produces its subjects in dramatic language; this being the case, it is the class of ambiguities relating to the

subject's use of that language that is of primary concern in addressing *limen*-consistent subject-form. When subjects speak and are spoken to/ about in dramatic representations they are subjectivised; it is there, in language, that I must study any hypothesized production of subjectivity.

One significant device by which language is transformed to foreground its ambiguity is the use of riddles, oracles, symbolic songs and chants (Evans-Pritchard; Gose; Kang 154; Tambiah). The potential ambivalence of items drawn from the non-liminal lexicon is heightened in and with the production of cryptic objects designed to stretch the heuristic repertoires of initiates. The "working out" of the riddle is a kind of passage of its own: readers dawdle at the gates of interpretation before their cunning and persistence gives them access to a richly symbolic (and highly topical) truth:

> One of the riddles of the [Ndembu circumcision] lodge is *katooka kusaloka*, which means "white water becoming restless at night." The correct answer is "semen."
> (Turner 1967 249/50)

Such is the language that the initiates are faced with as it percolates through the estranging and complicating devices of their instructors; it is full of dense, liturgical elements which are chosen for their musicality and for their comparative impenetrability. The instructional metalanguage is made deliberately less accessible than the contents it is ostensibly teaching; what makes ritual knowledge "sacred" is indeed this rigorous and systematic priming for inaccessibility. An approach to the "liminal" language of Shakespearean romance must likewise take its wilfully estranged and numinously obscure features into account if it is to gain explanatory traction.

When it comes to regulating the language in which ritual subjects must produce a liminal subjectivity themselves, it is clear that there is a significant emphasis (in the Ndembu rituals anyway) on the two options of silence and song. "'*Kwejima kwayang'awu anyadi ching'a kuya nakwimba tumina nihakuya nihakwinza nawa'* (Wherever the novices go they must go singing songs both going and returning)" (248). With respect to the silence option (which holds sway when subjects receive nourishment: when they eat and when they are taught), it is not, of course, a continuous flow, but rather a patterned silence tailormade to groom alertness and passivity. The songs, for their part, are highly repetitive in their contents and in their structure. When the sun comes up, for example, the novices must celebrate its reappearance with the following strain: "'*Denzawo denza itang'wa detu denza denzawo denza* (It came, it came, our sun, it came, it came).'" The refrain is not only gorgeously alliterative but isoclonic. The sun is ours because it returns to us, the initiates boast; furthermore, it belongs in our song because its return is echoed best here, in the refrain's simple, balanced, and echoic structure. The tendency for liminal language to be repetitive and, for the most part, composed of primitive structures will be an important feature of my study.

Different languages (and different cultures) mobilise the repetitive tendencies of liminal language in different ways. The rituality of liminalising episodes needs to set itself apart from non-liminal registers and it can do this by exploiting a variety of structures and modes (Gennep 169; Mehta; Tambiah 178; Turner 1992). The Demin ritual language of Mornington Island, Queensland, provides one example of how the *limen* conditions the speech of subjects in a manner that is forceful, simple and yet enormously creative. The lexical target items of Demin are all drawn from Lardil, the

mother tongue of ritual subjects. The problem these Lardil-speakers are set when, in the limen, they begin to learn Demin is twofold: firstly, they are forbidden to use Lardil; secondly, the lexicon arrogated to the liminal situation is greatly (and deliberately) impoverished. Barry Alpher sums up the novices' predicament as follows (102):

> The extremely small number of basic elements in Demin forces speakers to make very judicious use of them in allocating these [elements] to various concepts expressed by single words made in ordinary Lardil.

It is thus the case that the liminal language (Demin) is a miniaturised proxy for the source tongue (Lardil). If Lardil has 10,000 lexemes, then we can imagine Demin having 50. The vast majority of the lexemes of Lardil have been purged. The purging forces Demin speakers to produce serviceable utterances that somehow "frame any propositions that [they] wis[h] to express" and yet abide by the terms of the new language field (Alpher 102). A liminal semantic economy of this sort is characterised by its unwieldiness, repetitiveness and its high yield of ambiguous objects.

This discussion of anthropological liminal language has thrown up a number of properties which I will be interrogating when it comes to Shakespearean late romance. Ritual subjects in the *limen* characteristically find that the signifying practices in which they are caught up radically impinge upon their subjectivity. The liminal language that subjects are "left with" is a stylised, programmatic and greatly simplified resource: it is shot through with repetition, songs, riddles, and estranging effects. The liminal register inaugurates a new kind of language use, and a use that constitutes a new kind of subject. I will examine the language which produces subjects in these plays as liminal, studying

that language which has properties that are *limen*-consistent, in order to discover how the subjects in question constitute their late romance worlds.

At the coalface of subjectivity production it is the language *of* the subject that I am to focus on in late romance. The hypothesis I examine is that the language which produces subjects in these plays is a liminal one. This hypothesis will be examined in a way which applies findings concerning the production of subjects to the question of whether or not the alternative worlds dramatised in late romance *change* anything in those non-alternative worlds that surface in the reconciliation/ aggregation phase, or simply leave them the same. As such the research will contribute to the debate as to utopian and containment interpretations of the "*limen*" of late romance: Is the Shakespearean *limen* subversive, or does it simply constitute a praxis of containment?

I propose to focus in this study on the productivity and durability of the language deployed to constitute subjects. My interest in discovering how dramatic subjects change as a result of their ordeals in romance promotes an interest in the kind of speech that has most impinged on their subjectivity. This general methodological preference foregrounds a treatment of language forms which changes things as they appear and has lasting consequences, namely performatives (speech acts) (Austin; Petrey 431). The value of interrogating speech acts with a mind to seeing how subjectivity is fashioned, nourished, and re-directed is not only that they produce immediate changes in the representational surface but that, as Judith Butler remarks, they promise to perdure (1999 241) :

> The effects of performatives, understood as discursive productions, do not
>
> conclude at the terminus of a given statement or utterance, the passing of

legislation, the announcement of a birth. The reach of their significance cannot be controlled by the one who utters or writes, since such productions are not owned by the one who utters them. They continue to signify in spite of their authors, and sometimes against their authors' most precious intentions.

My analysis of late romance speech will look to discover what performatives are used in the subjectivisation and desubjectivisation of dramatic subjects. But it will not stop there (with a tally: *contra* Fish 244/5). The study is to ask questions of the performativities and subjectivities which are met along the way. I want to know how late romance subjects are constituted in performative language, and what this constitutivity *does* to the performative reality of the liminal structures of which they are a part. There is to be nothing off-puttingly taxonomical about this explication of the composition and workload of performatives. My watchword as I look at the constellations of speech acts in the plays is the disarmingly simple comment of Branislav Jakovljevic concerning J. L. Austin's work in this area: "[He] examine[d] how performance appears in language" (434). Once we know how performance appears in the language of romance subjects, I proffer, we are beginning to zero in on the desideratum of this thesis: How are subjects changed such that their liminal selves *perdure* to influence the world of their aggregation?

The consideration of late Shakespearean romance in terms of liminality is not entirely new. Peter Womack, for example, bruits the notion of *Pericles*'s Thaisa's "withdraw[al] into Diana's temple" qualifying as a "liminal state" (182). Commenting on the notoriously accelerated dénouement of *Cymbeline* (Kermode 1963 28), Martin Butler likewise draws upon the relevant anthropological concept (52): "[The] drama of

inheritance frames the final act, which stages spectacular rites of passage to move Posthumous and the princes out of their subordinated pasts and into achieved social identities." These readings usefully adumbrate a study of threshold states; however, they are more piecemeal than the sustained liminal hermeneutic that I will deploy.

If we step back from the specific context of late romance, then there are a number of important Shakespearean applications of liminality to consider. Joseph Porter provides an apposite case study when he develops a critique bracketing performativity with the *limen* (2001). Porter's reading of liminality, however, is not an anthropologically conceived one: his study of Mercutio's liminal being, for example, defines itself in terms of the gap between when he is referred to and when he appears. Such "entrance" and "exit limen[s]" will not play a central role in my discussion (181). A critic whose work shows an interest in liminality that is much closer to my own is René Girard. This author's hermeneutic of "difference" tackles concerns whose scope goes far beyond what I propose to examine. Girard treats of cases that may begin at a liminal juncture – with that "regal in-betweenness" associated with coronation, for example (Fleming 52) – and then pan out from there. My account converges most pregnantly on his when it explicates the principle of *undifferentiation* that applies when a Girardian "scapegoating mechanism" comes into effect (Girard 1977; 1986; Moi 22). Subjects who qualify as "mimetic rivals" – subjects such as (for him) Lysander and Demetrius – desubjectivise as their rivalry intensifies, to the point where there is no "difference" between them (Fineman 428; Girard 1979 201/2; 2004). And it is this feature of Girard's mechanism which most closely resembles my interpretation of the undifferentiating pressures of the Shakespearean *limen*: when subjects enter the limen they start to lose their individuality, and they start to behave (and speak) in the same

way. This undifferentation – especially in so far as it is conditioned by and expressed in language – constitutes an important part of my study.

Anthropologically conceived treatments of liminality – and Girard's is one – are certainly interested in how "difference" expresses itself in a sociological context. Granting that the *limen* moves to produce an egalitarian zone for ritual subjects to endure/ enjoy so long as it lasts, there is no question that when aggregation occurs those subjects will be expected to take up roles in an explicitly hierarchical system. The liminal phase has suppressed difference and now, with aggregation, difference returns: kings become kings (again), and clowns clowns (Frye 104). And an interrogation of how hierarchy reproduces its subjects is very much my concern. Late romance, I argue, dramatises the occlusion of the aristocratic subject's "difference" and then constructs its return. In this study the subject will be interrogated in terms of how it is liminalised and then deliminalised in speech acts. That interrogation contributes to an inquiry as to what effect both phases – the loss of difference; the recuperation of difference – have on the difference-reliant aristocracies constituted in the plays. If the return of the subject does nothing to problematise hierarchy, then containment interpretations of the liminal phase would seem to be justified. If, on the other hand, the returning aristocratic subject has changed in terms of how they reproduce difference, then a utopian reading needs to be reconsidered.

Pericles*: Ritual coerciveness, revival, and the concatenation of the state.*

The courtly world of *Pericles* begins to break down when the romance language of its chief protagonist encounters the coercive language of a particularly unforgiving ritual form. I argue that in dramatising an aristocratic subject's approach to and flight from this encounter, the play consitutes a liminal phase in which the subjectivity in question produces suites of increasingly repetitive and emblematic language. This language allows, finally, for aristocracy's recuperation. Alongside this main stream of Pericles's princely liminalisation run dramatisations of alternative responses to discursive and ritual propagations of subjectivity. In the case of Marina, I suggest that material contestations of an ostensibly transcendent virtue battle to produce a subject. In studying Cerimon's "work" on the island of Ephesus, I likewise address a subject field produced in contestation. Both cases, I argue, contribute to the liminal patterning of the play, a pattern which must be understood before we consider containment and utopian readings of it.

Pericles, Prince of Tyre, is subjectivised very early on as a speaker who seems to know what he want*ed*. The goal taking shape in his description seems perfectly clear and is given together with the reason it was once thought so attractive:

> …I went to Antioch,
>
> Whereas thou knowst against the face of death
>
> I sought the purchase of a glorious beauty
>
> From whence an issue I might propagate… (1.2.69-72)

The scene Pericles picks out is consistent with the ordeal in a quest romance: the hero is tested and his triumph, were it to be successful, would forestall a crisis of succession. The roles and models sketched – seeker; object sought; propagation of issue – would slot into a myth-critical reading of the play that finds a dramatic subject relentlessly propelled from crisis to crisis the better that he emerge victorious in the end (DelVecchio and Hammond 56; Frye 32). The problem is that this reading is problematised by the nature of the episode to which Pericles harks back: the failure at Antioch.

That princess sought at Antioch was locked into a violation of seekable propagation which took her away from the logical steps available to the quester: the prince could "expound" (1.1.91) the riddle ("*He's father, son, and husband mild;/ I, mother, wife, and yet his child*" (69/70)) and get his head chopped off, or flee and expound in his flight. This flight was not only a flight from "meaning" – "he hath found the meaning,/ For which we mean to have his head" (144/5) – but a flight from a place in which finding meaning made no sense (J Moore 34; Relihan 76/77). Looked at in this light, Pericles's reaction seems eminently sensible; I will suggest, however, that his real "failure" here is the failure to comply with the inexorability of a ritual sequence.

Pericles, back at Tyre, is haunted less by failure than by fear. The fear is that the tyrant, "[t]o keep his bed of blackness unlaid-ope,/ [Will] lop that doubt [and] fill this land with arms" (1.2.88/9). The shortfall which leads to this economy of doubts is an epistemological shortfall: one person doesn't know what a second doesn't know – and the ignorance is mimetic. The easiest way for this to have been avoided was for Pericles to have solved the riddle and make public his knowledge. Antiochus has argued ("Either expound now or receive your sentence" (1.1.91)) that part of the "purchase of [the]

glorious beauty" (1.2.71) was the speaking, the making public. Pericles has breached the contract he entered into by refusing to expound. And there is no question that he willingly enters a contract (Foakes 184): he makes it perfectly clear that he has done so by rehearsing his obligations to the king and by invoking the necessity of his abiding by the logic of the ordeal:

> Antiochus, I thank thee, who hath taught
>
> My frail mortality to know itself,
>
> And by those fearful objects to prepare
>
> This body, like to them, to what I must… (1.1.42-45)

It is curious that it is just this invoking of necessity ("I must") which shows that Pericles has underestimated the brutal coerciveness of this ordeal. Antiochus's ritual invites Pericles to subjugate himself to the inevitably forlorn nature of the signifying practice of liminal subjects engaged in it. There is no such thing as "success" in this ritual, if the term is taken to mean the evasion of decapitation and display. Aggregation comes to liminal subjects here when they take their position on the wall with undifferentiated others, reduced to a testimony of "speechless tongues and semblance pale" (1.1.37). Subjects face the fact that there is no *happily married* ending to this pursuit; the desire for propagation which led them here is to be extinguished along with all their others hopes. That (Antiochus might say) is the discipline; the tyrant has exposed the questing prince to the logic of ritual in its most unforgiving form. To a Pericles wont to speak of himself as quester such an exposure is terrifying.

And rightly so. There is no point in a hero completing his subjectivisation by

being executed in the first scene. Pericles must flee. This flight from the nadir of Antiochan rituality, however, serves to propel him towards conditioning structures whose liminality, though less despicable than it, are irresistibly coercive nonetheless. Pericles "put[ting] himself unto the shipman's toil,/ With whom each minute threatens life or death" (1.3.22/3) constitutes the first of these structures. The "toil" in question has him relinquish his political power and makes him prey to hazards that he would not have otherwise met; he thus enters a liminal state (at sea; in exile) which points toward a continued reduction of an aristocratic subjectivity. Granting that the authoritarian personality survives in patches with Pericles toiling as shipman – "Yet cease your ire, you angry stars of heaven!" (2.1.1) – by the time he washes up at Pentapolis there are plenty of signs to indicate that his confidence in his princely being is on the wane.

Although there is a long way to go (until Act 5, in fact) before we find Pericles garbed in sackcloth, mum, and conclusively forlorn, the tourney scenes at Simonides's court do find the prince's subjectivity on the verge of radical overhaul. His tattered and baleful appearance, in this case, points to a trajectory that constitutes significant recovery ("From the dejected state wherein he is,/ He hopes by you [Thaisa] his fortunes yet may flourish" (2.2.46/7)). And our intuitions are correct here: he does recover win the joust and Thaisa's hand. But this simply demonstrates that the liminal conditioning of his subjectivity is taking place in fits and starts. The manner of his performance in the tourney, for example, illustrates that his identity as prince has taken something of a beating. Comments like the next hardly help in this respect: "[B]y his rusty outside he appears/ To have practised more the whipstock than the lance" (50/51). That Simonides counters this with a sententiae pushing for the "inward man" trumping "the outward habit" (57) doesn't necessarily erase the preceding impugnment.

As it turns out, the nobility of Pericles is most compromised by his own behaviour at Pentapolis. His reticence and the marginality of his speech presence are the most notable properties of this behaviour. A limpid example of the reticence comes with the impresa which he delivers to Thaisa: "*In hac spe vivo*" (2.2.44) – which "motto" accompanies "[a] withered branch that's only green at top" (43). Both sentence and device are far less bombastically chivalrous than the other contenders' efforts, and speak of an anticipation (of victory) deliberately shrunk in order to tumesce ("flourish" (47)) when the time is right. The modesty of the speculation is consistent with Pericles's earlier reluctance to commit himself to the Antiochan ritual form; he participates, but in a fashion which makes his suspicions of the spectacle plain. He is estranged from the ceremonial grammar of an occasion – his contribution being the meanest – and this occasion invites openness of gesture and cleverness of phrasing.

The sheepish jouster had, when first shipwrecked at Pentapolis, promised a bolder ritual participation, but it was not to be. The prince who foresaw "mount[ing him]self/ Upon a courser, whose delight steps/ Shall make the gazer joy to see him tread" (2.1.143-145) backtracks into marginality when the heat is on. This chivalric language fails to undergird a confident rituality. The fishermen who meet a bedraggled survivor ("*Enter* Pericles *wet*" 2.1.0 s.d.) find him equipped with a disconsolate frankness: "What I have been, I have forgot to know;/ But what I am, want teaches me to think on" (65/6). The infirm state of the prince is ripe, liminally speaking, to be compensated for by the instruction of others. What "Patch-breech" (14) and "[P]elch" (12) do for him *is* significant: with their disquisition upon "the fenny subject of the sea" (45), for example, they teach him something of the disadvantages of top-down hierarchy – a ruler ought to keep the "rich misers [in church and state]" (28) in check. They also redeem his father's

chainmail for him from the deep, enabling him to compete at the tourney. But however undifferentiating the effect of their pastoral teaching, it can never be sufficient for Pericles simply to hear it, and understand it, and move on; the down-on-his-luck aristocrat must somehow learn to speak a liminal language himself. The "voice" of his father that identifies the redeemed "steel" foregrounds the kind of discourse sets that need to regulate a prince's liminal subjectivity: "'Keep it my Pericles, it hath been a shield/ 'Twixt me and death'" (114/5). Such a ventriloquial message advocates a material *betweenness* being reproduced in son and father. The message constitutes a dialogicality which is both reliably hierarchical and protective; it atavises the romance language of "courser[s]" and questers by paring it down; it is a step in the direction of a speech profile rich in silences and uncluttered dialectical formulations (*me/ shield/ death*).

Having tracked Pericles some of the way along his liminal pathway, I should now like to break off and compare his trajectory with that of his daughter. Tyre's prince undergoes, as we know, a reductive transformation from ruler to floating exile, from husband to widower, and from father to lamenter of fortune (Palfrey 60). These sea-changes are liminal in that they rob a subject of that network of affiliations on which his discursive privilege most depends. Marina, if anything, suffers challenges to her noble identity in a more accelerated fashion than her father (Adelman 196/7; Gosset 356): she is separated from her parents, haled out to murder by the wicked Dionyza, kidnapped by pirates, and sold into prostitution at Miteline. Once in the brothel, further pressure (by Pander, Bawd, and Boult alike) is brought to bear on having this "orphan" princess shed those remaining differentiating traits which keep her apart from the gruesomely frictional dynamics of a house of "creature[s] of sale" (4.5.73): "We were never so

much out of creatures, we have but poor three, and they can do no more than they can do, and with continual action are ever as good as rotten" (4.2.5-7). The critical property which Marina must fight to keep if she is *not* to cross the threshold – and this phrase is not used loosely here for Boult is several times described as a "damnèd door-keeper: (4.5.109; 47/8) – is, of course, her "virgin-knot" (4.2.120). She appeals to Diana (goddess of chastity) to "aid [her] purpose" (120) in this respect, she digs in her heels, preaches "divinity" (4.5.4) to sundry clients, impresses (shames) Lysimachus with her "holy words", and proves in her "peevish[ness]" a very "thorn[y] piece of ground" indeed (121; 112; 131) (Healy 57). The liminal pressures, therefore, all prove misfires; Marina transcends a world of "[rotten] continual action" and we are exhorted (by Gower) to applaud her "'scap[e][…/ Into an honest house" (5.0.1/2), where she dumbs "[d]eep clerks" and tutors "pupils… of noble race" (5; 8). Everything seems to be going very well.

While this summary may give the impression that Marina's triumph is unproblematised, such an impression is misleading. Granting that the overall tone of the princess' submersion into depraved territory is comic, there are nevertheless reminders that her escape from prostitution came at a price (Helms 329). And the price comes in the form of ransom for immediate release: "Here's gold for thee" (4.5.158/9). Marina thus pays Boult a fee for opening the door of the brothel. And the material exchange goes some way to undermine whatever transcendent qualities we may otherwise have allocated to the young lady's defiance of commercial friction. While it would be churlish to suggest that her "preaching" against the evils of the industry in which Boult, Pander and Bawd are involved has lacked grit or consistency, it is important to note that her rhetoric in this regard accentuates certain hierarchical assumptions that speak

against reading her as some kind of weightless, presuppositionless spirit. It is true that her discourse has constituents that recognise the material dangers of working in the brothel ("[T]hy food is such as hath been belched on by infected lungs" (149/50)), but for the most part her hallowing language is far less terrestial ("[C]hange me to the meanest bird/ That flies i'th' purer air!" (93/4)) and more status-obsessed ("Thou holdst a place for which the painedst fiend of hell would not in reputation change" (146/7); "[F]or what thou professest, a baboon, could he speak, would own a name too dear" (156/7)). To make matters worse, the pecuniary supplement here given is followed up with a concession that Marina's profit from her teaching is siphoned directly into the brothelkeeper's pockets: "That pupils lacks she none of noble race/ Who pour their bounty on her, and her gain/ She gives the cursèd bawd" (5.0.9-11). This concession is something of an embarassment to the purity of Marina's triumph over the forces of cynical exploitation. She has escaped, but something has been left behind to negotiate that escape; there is something (a gratuity) that ties her to the scene of the crime because it needs to be continually topped up.

Marina's flight from the brothel mirrors Pericles's flight from Antioch. In both cases dramatic subjects were faced with a wretchedly terminal logic of a ritual sequence that threatened to exhaust their difference. Neither spoke that language of terminality. Pericles fled to the high seas; things looked up for him briefly, and then hazard plunged him into the trauma that came with a wife being consigned to the deep, and a daughter abandoned, betrayed and thought lost forever. The sequence prefigures the prince's movement toward a state of floating, drifting silence (Glazov-Corrigan 1991 136). Marina, for her part, was ruthlessly separated from her birthright and faced with the grossest exploitation. That exploitation was circumvented thanks to the repetitive

performance of her virtues (Williams 599). I have argued that both father and daughter are confronted with liminal pressures on their subjectivity throughout. For the time being, however, I want to leave them where they are and turn my attention to the third "stream" of liminality that I see working in this play: the *limen* of Ephesus where the virtues of a most highly conspicuous rituality deserved to be addressed.

The rituality in question, of course, concerns the operation performed upon the body ("corpse" (3.2.62)) of Thaisa by the "[r]everend appearer" (5.3.16), Lord Cerimon. Before I examine the circumstances of this particular episode, I wish to treat of Cerimon's subjectivity at some length. It should be noted that his original appearance is constituted in very positive terms. The first full-blooded speech act that he uses ("[G]et fire and meat for these poor men" (3.2.3)) signals empathy, charity and authority in one fair shot. The first (of two) Gentleman superadds to this positive impression by "marvel[ing]" (19) that an individual in Cerimon's position should be up at the crack of dawn attending to the dying:

> But I much marvel that your lordship,
>
> Having rich tire about you, should at these early hours
>
> Shake off the golden slumber of repose,
>
> 'Tis most strange nature should be so conversant
>
> With pain, being thereto not compelled. (3.2.19-23)

This is an odd expression of "marvel" given that if Cerimon is the physician here – and everything points to this being the case – then he would be "compelled" to heal the sick (whatever the hour), and be "conversant/ [w]ith pain." The Gentleman's priorities,

however, are clearly marked by his annexing of "golden" to "slumber" and his highlighting of Cerimon's "rich tire." Value for this speaker resides in comfort, "repose," and ostentatious display. Distance from the dead, the dying, and the working is critical to a project of "repose" that supervises the potential breaking points in the hierarchical system. Cerimon himself, when he comes to expound upon this value system, makes no bones about bypassing those lineaments of social difference that most detain the Gentleman (viz., "tottering honour" (36) and "t[ying]… pleasure up in silken bags" (37)). The discursive practices the healer favours are those implicated in mastering his "secret art" (30) – by which he means "physic" (29) – and circulating that discursively by means of "speak[ing] of the/ Disturbances that nature works and of her cures" (33/4).

To reiterate: whereas the two gentleman of Ephesus are absorbed in their "repose," Cerimon focuses on compulsive movements. His study is a form of work in which he "turn[s] o'er authorities" (3.2.30). This "turning o'er" fosters a devout inculcation of the knowledge system (the "authorities") that preceded him. The student of "physic" leafs over the pages of his tomes, turning them, and making each page a page met a thousand times before. Couching this practice of "turning o'er" in the vocabulary of the *limen*, therefore, leads to a reading of Cerimon as an instructor reading the ancient protocols the better to have his liminal subjects inculcate them in their later movements. And in terms of Cerimon's preoccupation with "speak[ing] of the/ Disturbances that nature works and of her cures," it seems clear that the speech he invests "true delight" (35) in corresponds more to the performative side of language than to the descriptive (constative). Speaking, in this case, means doing, and art ("physic") connotes not only diagnosis, but cure.

The "secret" (30) of Cerimon's form of healing lies in the speaker (the physician), as we shall see, retroactively locating (with his voice) the health of the patient *in* the patient. The gist of this approach is demonstrated when Cerimon addresses his present patient (Thaisa's "corpse"): "[H]ow thou stirr'st thou block!" (3.2.87). I suggest this line marks a *retroactive* locating of health because the structure of the address itself posits life, motility, and even addressivity in the patient (the block). By speaking to the "block" (even ironically), the speaker creates an addressee out of an object that ought not deserve that status. That a speaker addresses a block *as* a block ("thou block") adds to the possibility of this speech circuit being one of both (now exaggerated) irony and wonder. The intimacy and the transitivity of the first address component ("thou") contains within it the performative clout to trump the desultory speakerly options of the second component ("block"). When you speak to something, your speaking to it logically endorses the possibility of reply (Culler 62): Cerimon exploits this logic here. That he states that his addressee "stirr'st" as he addresses it merely ups the performative ante in this regard. By giving movement ("stirr'st") the predicate place in his speech act, and then by identifying a champion nonmoveable ("block") as subject, the speaker once more enhances the suggestiveness and the "true delight" (35) of the situation. Were a speaker (quack or no) to keep this kind of paradoxical healing pressure up, then an addressee might respond. And this, of course, is what happens: "O dear Diana, where am I? where's my lord?/ What world is this?" (101/102).

It is interesting to note that the physician brokers reversibility with speech acts whose healing orthogonality depends on the language of difference (*thou/ block*; *stirr'st/ block*). In a conventionally liminal interpretation, after all, the language of difference underwrites hierarchy and is the enemy of *communitas* (Deflem 14/15;

Turner 1982 44-52). I will argue that hierarchy – which in Ephesus is flagged by the signifier "repose" – is perfectly conditioned to problematise Thaisa's recovery and her "mak[ing of] the world twice rich" (3.2.99). The gist of the problematisation can be tracked by attending to the focal switch made from Cerimon's signature etymon of "cure" (*curare*: care) to the Second Gentleman's rehearsal of "charity" (*caritas*):

> Your honour has through Ephesus
>
> Poured forth your charity, and hundreds call themselves
>
> Your creatures, who by you have been restored;
>
> And not your knowledge, your personal pain,
>
> But even your purse still open, hath built Lord Cerimon
>
> Such strong renown as time shall never – (3.2.39-44)

At this point the speaker is interrupted by the entrance of a coffin: "chest" (s.d.). Whereas Cerimon has tried his best to situate cure/ care in the foison of a nature-dwelling speech, this speaker enthusiastically reworks caritas to a "pour[ing] forth" which finds its origin in the aristocrat ("*Lord* Cerimon") and is inextricably linked with the material flow of patronage. This reworking of care into caritas enriches itself on the promise of speech acts propagating patronage, for we are authorised to flesh out images of "hundreds call[ing] themselves [Lord Cerimon's] creatures" by visualising patient after patient throughout Ephesus saying *I am your creature*; *I am your creature*. And this is clearly a vision of a caste of individuals publicising their difference by means of a prostrate acknowledge of dependence on the healing aristocrat's powers. The vision ideologises Cerimon's praxis as a tool of difference-conservation. While the stirring of

blocks can be read as a challenge to the Ephesan noble's default option of "repose," it is here being co-opted into the patronage system of the state in a move that would ensure its contribution to the inculcation of difference. Discursive modes are being contested here: the performance of "revival" – which constitutes a *prima facie* liminal pressure – is contested as well.

But study of the contestation is not complete until some assessment of the patient's role in the resuscitation is taken into account. If we look again at the speech act which constitutes Thaisa's rejoining of the living, then it is plain that she contests a certain kind of patronage-sensitive reading of the recreation landscape: "O dear Diana, where am I? where's my lord?/ What world is this? (3.2.101/102). Thaisa makes clear that her priorities lie less in structures (ties) of *material* patronage than in kinship obligation and in psychogeography. While the appeal to the divine and to her "lord" do constitute binding hierarchical commitments, the objects of these commitments are distantiated in a language which speaks past what is at hand. There is no question here of any reflex deferential postures being taken in respect of the present factor of her recovery (Lord Cerimon). It is not until the final scene of the play that Thaisa voices her gratitude to "[the] man, through whom the gods have shown their power" (5.3.56) in bringing her back to life. The patient's distantiating and spiritualising reading of the rebirth scene contests the witnesses' material-patronage reading. My project is primarily interested in how these rival contestations press interpretations of how subjects are produced into service. If all recovering Ephesan patients are produced as cap-in-hand "creatures" of an aristocratic healer, then it makes sense to read whatever liminality they exemplified prior to their aggregation as a containing function of the state. If, on the other hand, subjects like Thaisa awake to thank the gods, and search for lost husbands,

then a different reading might be submitted.

In order to study the net liminal subjectivity realignments of such dramatic subjects as Thaisa it is necessary to revisit the logic of the ritual form. Analysis of Pericles's flight from Antioch suggested that this flight demonstrated the reluctance of a subject to submit himself to the brutal coerciveness of a tyrant's rituality. That brutal coerciveness was actually read as an adumbration of all such ritual operations: upon entering the *limen* the ritual subject gives up all prerogative of individual difference, including the right not to be tricked into losing his life. Pericles fled from this irreversible reversibility. I have suggested that by escaping from the liminal pressures of decapitation he was being made subject to other liminal pressures – furthermore, that he was learning to speak a new language. What language? A language in which the subject was decentered: a language without flourishes; one of simple, repetitive structures which allowed for long silences. The diffident, marginalised and somewhat gormless character of Pericles's signifying practice at the tourney, for example, gave evidence that he was on his way to picking this language up.

Marina's experience of ritual form was more traumatising than her father's in some ways, but it was also played to significant comic effect. She was pressured to inculcate repetitive behaviours ("continual actions") of notable depravity. The barrage of unofficial speech ("bawdy") that she faced in the brothel had some influence on her rhetorical choices – in anger she resorts to mention of "Tib[s]" (4.5.148) and "choleric fisting" (149) – but her language for the most part retained the dulcet and nourishing qualities which Pericles is later to commend it for: "[She] starves the ears she feeds/ And makes them hungry, the more she gives them speech" (5.1.107/8). The prospect of Marina actually shedding distinctively aristocratic properties and aggregating with the

brothel prostitutes is clearly not a prospect the play takes seriously. The liminal vector runs in the opposite direction: the ritual subject emerges to astonish the world with virtue undiminished. Nonetheless, the fact remains that she must pay to establish and maintain her distance from the whorehouse. This flow of capital qualifies as liquidised form of bondage and it problematises Marina's transcendence of prostitution.

There are concerted voices in the play which insist that Marina evades the charge of inconsistency. Effectively they argue that because her subjectivity is not "adhesive" (that is, psychologically and materially complex), the charge does not stick. When Lysimachus comes right out and accuses Marina of having been commodified – "Why, the house you dwell in proclaims you to be a creature of sale" (4.5.72/3) – the accusation is contested by those who argue that this subject has not *dwelt* in the proclaiming place with sufficient weight for his predication to be valid. The play's language conditions Marina for another relationship to the business of "dwelling" entirely: "[T]hou seemst/ A palace for the crownèd truth to dwell in" (5.1.117/8). Here *she* is the place where the proclamation ("the crownèd truth") resides and resounds. This language bids to make her a structure – and a very particular kind of structure: not a brothel but a palace – and to remove her from the structurating feats of material rituals altogether.

The propaganda is this respect is remarkable consistent: Pericles dematerialises the daughter he believes dead with the floundering of his recognitions: "But are you flesh and blood?/ Have you a working pulse, and are no fairy/ Motion?" (5.1.150-152). Additional predicates attributed to her by Pericles also contribute to the impression that Marina is a magical, unearthly creature: "My queen's square brows, her stature to an inch,/ As *wand*-like straight, as silver-voiced, her eyes/ As jewel-like and cased as

richly" (104-6) (my italics). When Lychorida explicitly reifies the (baby) princess ("Take into your arms this piece of your dead queen" (3.1.17)) the father steps back from this material classification by cradling an infant he sees as a "fresh new seafarer" (42), extemporising thereby a cognomen that eschews all permanence of kinship and station. Ancient Gower, for his part, adds to the ambiguity surrounding Marina's ontological status by foreshadowing the episode at sea where "[a] babe is moulded" (3.0.11). To "mould" a child is to sculpt it from preexistent forms, and to use this trope to constitute a dramatic subject is to deny its uniqueness; it is to emphasise that the subject in question is made out of materials which have produced subjects before.

With respect to Marina's liminal subjectivity, therefore, the best we can say is that the language of *Pericles* contests that she is immune from contestation and at the same time constitutes her in that contestation. Marina *qua* liminal subject is constituted in this space of ideological and dramatological contestation. Whatever she is, she is because she occupies those characteriological slots that accrue by dint of this repeatedly discursive practive of fashioning and taking away. She may have escaped the knockshop, one might contend, but she has not escaped the "continual action" (4.2.7) of discursive reproduction.

With respect to Cerimon's relationship to ritual it is known that he is a practitioner of it and Thaisa is his subject. First and foremost, this pair are both involved in bringing a "corpse" back to life. This event takes place in an ideological habitat of contested patronage; one group of dramatic subjects (the two gentlemen) lobby for this patronage to be sought, secured, and maintained by speaking of gold, createdness and social rank. Another dramatic subject (Thaisa) responds to a revitalising constellation of speech acts by situating herself in a frame of reference that held *prior* to the miraculous

restoration, viz., that of goddess, and husband ("lord"). For Thaisa the present, material exponents of "rebirth" – napkins, fire, physician: all – are to be looked past rather than addressed and used to recategorise her own situatedness. The ritual event is thus contested in terms of the power it has to shape the obligations and signifying practices of those who take part in it.

To consider the wider ritual dramatology of *Pericles*, the play negotiates for structures that are restrained, choric and programmatic. No matter how miraculous their tangents, we find that the episodes of "recovery" that constitute subjects are carried out in a well-supervised, conscientious and remarkably languid manner (Nuttal 334/5; White 115; Wilson Knight 14-17). The narrator Gower may speak from time to time of occasions of fervid, public outbreaks of voice and performance – "What pageantry, what feats, what shows,/ What minstrelsy, and pretty din" (5.2.6/7) – but even these are deliberately stilted and masque-like in their representation. The brutal logic of the ritual at Antioch pledged itself above all to ceremonial strictness (Kiefer 207). Likewise with Cerimon on his bleak seaside: he did not indulge in hocus-pocus; he simply organised his materials, and read the "script" he was given: *Here I give to understand/ If ere this coffin drives a-land…*" (3.2.67/8). The performance of the resuscitation is processional and highly stylised; nothing is rushed; it all depends on movements – on the "turning o'er [of] authorities" (30); it is markedly ritualistic in form.[2]

So it is with the banquet and the tourney at Pentapolis, when Pericles bids for the

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[2] Staal's verdict on the behaviourist semantics of ritual is worthwhile noting here (3): "A widespread but erroneous assumption about ritual is that it consists in symbolic activities which refer to something else. It is characteristic of a ritual performance, however, that it is self-contained and self-absorbed. The performers are totally immersed in the proper execution of their complex tasks. Isolated in their sacred enclosure, they concentrate on correctness of act, recitation and chant. Their primary concern, if not obsession, is with rules. There are no symbolic meanings going through their minds when they are engaged in performing ritual."

Thaisa's hand in marriage. It is typical of all such ritual occasions that language slows down and is made ornately grave; at these junctures certain inertial structures of repetition and stiltedness flag the signifier's fulsome accentuation over the signified (McDonald 2001 48). Where language is antiquated, estranged and condensed onto a frozen impresa – "*Me pompae provexit apex*" (2.2.30); "*Sic spectanda fides*" (39) – by way of example, representational form takes on a tableaux-like structure and reduces the opportunities of speakers using that form to idiosyncratise and to step outside the archetypal. Those scenes managed by that very personification of hammy antiquation, Old Gower, include ones which constrain subject-differentiating liberty even further, viz., the dumb shows of 3.0.14-(s.d.)-15 and 4.4.22-(s.d.)-23. Here subject-making speech is extinguished and representation flattens into conspicuously emblematic forms and movements.

The notion that not only language but representation itself takes a back seat when navigating ritual form is one congruent with the property of "brutal coerciveness" that such forms tend to promote. With the flattening out of the dumb shows and the various distancing effects of the play's antiquated discourse patterns and languid staging, the dramatic subject finds it harder and harder to gain any kind of traction. Subjects are conditioned by language stimulus sets that prescribe for repetitive and emblematic constitutivities. The possibility of a subject *fleeing this terrain* of custodial prompting and heavy-handed narration is reduced significantly as the play goes on. The language of subjects becomes valued when it corresponds to modes of expression that are non-specific, largely prefabricated and, in terms of both musicality and content, gorgeously predictable.

The climax of this kind of programmatic discourse stimulus is reached with

Diana's instruction to Pericles that he

> Before the people all
>
> Reveal how thou at sea didst lose thy wife;
>
> To mourn thy crosses with thy daughter's, call,
>
> And give them repetition to the life. (5.1.235-238)

This counsel exemplifies the very language that it coaxes Pericles to generate in response to it: a corny, pretty, rhyme-thick confection that further simplifies the language-world on impact: "Perform my bidding, or thou livest in woe:/ Do't, and happy, by my silver bow" (239/40). When repetition comes (5.3.1-12) it is noticeable that the language of Pericles's "confess[ion]" (2) is not quite as ornate and bubbly as the ditty that induced it – for the speech must constitute itself in terms that connote "frigh[t]", death "in childbed" and conspiracy ("fourteen years [Cleon] sought [her] to murder") (3; 4; 8). These inclusions are critical: if the confessional rhetoric deployed by Pericles did not contain the "crosses" (the traumatic events; the separations) for which Diana legislated, then a certain votaress (Thaisa) would not have latched onto an identification in the temple: "Voice and favour,/ You are, you are, O royal Pericles!" (12/13). This performance of recognisability is congruent with the logic of the *limen*; the reconciliation of husband and wife occur precisely where stereotypically ritual language gives way in that rough music of hardship that is again indexable to a particular speaker.

"Repetition to the life" is lobbied for by voices other than the divine, it needs to be remembered. Cerimon's post-resuscitation prompting of Thaisa falls in this category:

"Live, and make us weep/ To hear your fate, fair creature, rare as you seem to be" (3.2.99/100). The perlocutory effect of the preferred speakerly response ("Make us weep") is at the heart of the summons that invites it. In spite of the acknowledged rareness of Thaisa's position – dead, royally appointed, washèd up on a beach – there is also an anticipated "secondariness" framed in the injunction: to call for a weep-inducing speech act in another is to assume that what will be heard (and wept to) has a quality (viz., a lachrymosity) that is already known, and that has been experienced before. Seen through the lens of liminality, this "living repetition" constitutes the bringing forth of a voice that is a liminal entity in its own right. The voice induced is liminal because it both belongs to subjects and does not; the voice is ahead of those who speak it, and has already had its effect on those destined to hear it; it is the undifferentiated and undifferentiating voice of the *limen*.

There is one final critical scene involving examples of this liminal voice which demands being discussed in some depth. The scene (5.1) finds Pericles's bark "driven before the winds" (5.0.14) and finally anchored at Miteline. The prince is silent and woe-stricken. Marina is sent for when it is "wager[ed that she] would win some words of" (5.1.38) this catatonic patient. Given the wager, it seems another tourney or quest in underway, this time in miniature. Once tales of loss and of the radical diffusion of aristocratic identity have been exchanged – Marina: "[T]ime hath rooted out my parentage" (87); Pericles: "This cannot be my daughter, burièd" (160) – it seems that a transparent reconciliation of speakers is imminent (Glazov-Corrigan 1991 138). But the reconciliation can only be actualised when certain naming protocols are met:

PERICLES What was thy mother's name? Tell me but that,

> For truth can never be confirmed enough,
>
> Though doubts did ever sleep.
>
> MARINA First sir, I pray what is your title?
>
> PERICLES I am Pericles of Tyre.
>
> [*Marina kneels*]
>
> But tell me my drowned queen's name, as in
>
> The rest you said thou hast been god-like perfect,
>
> The heir of kingdoms, and another like
>
> To Pericles thy father.
>
> MARINA Is it no more to be your daughter than
>
> To say my mother's name was Thaisa?
>
> (5.1.195-205)

The dialogical equipoise of this exchange is telling. Pericles must withhold one name (the name of a wife: "Thaisa") in order to leave space for the daughter independently to name her mother (Kermode 2000 259/60). In doing so he has created a necessarily mortal name – the emblematic language-string which is "my drowned queen" – for the spouse he has lost. "Thaisa," being withheld, establishes (in that withholding) a performative gap into which the name the speaker (Marina) produces may fit. If "Thaisa" is produced, then the production will produce a daughter. In addition to the production of a daughter, the felicitous naming will produce a new perlocutory valency for the name produced ("Thaisa"). Once Thaisa is named as mother, father and daughter can reflect upon a drowned queen by sharing in the wonder that her name has performatively wrought, "Thaisa" having reconciled Pericles to Marina. The naming

operation here works in the construction of an illocutionary field where there was none before. Pericles and Marina collaborate to produce the cirumstances in which Marina's production of "Thaisa" produces three name-carrying subjects: father, mother, and daughter. Prior to this illocutionary deployment of "Thaisa" this trinity was radically underdetermined; the force-field of the naming has dragged the subjects together.

The performative calibrations of this exchange can be usefully compared to a naming operation whose ritual contours are just as evident. And although the exchange I wish to study is one of the most famous of the whole play, I believe the fact that it *is* an episode of naming has been overlooked. The scene concerns the prince, still groggy after learning that his interlocutor is both a "Marina" (5.1.144) and the daughter of a "Pericles" (175), urging that the young woman approach:

> … O come hither,
>
> Thou that begetst him that did thee beget,
>
> Thou that wast born at sea, buried at Tarsus,
>
> And found at sea again. (5.1.189-192)

Critical attention has been largely drawn to this speech act by virtue of the dense and riddle-like properties of its second line (Barber 61; Williams 617). I prefer to concentrate less on the semiotics of the formulation, and more on its position within the performative frame of the address.

A distinctive feature of the direct and intimate opening of this address is that it brokers the appearance of an identificatory subject-marker which will clarify who it is that is being addressed: "O come hither, _____." The identity of the addressee, of

course, is known by the speaker, by the addressee, and by the audience. What is not known is the exact surface form of the description that will represent her. Pericles could use a name to do the job; he could use Marina's name ("Marina") – *O come hither, Marina*. That might work; it might just bring her to his side. But there is a completely different kind of identification in the offing, a kind whose performative ingredients are best seen when concatenated into names which are descriptions:

Thou-that-begetst-him-that-did-thee-beget

Thou-that-wast-born-at-sea-[and]-buried-at-Tarsus-[a]nd-found-at-sea-again

These description-names *represent* Marina, which is another another way of saying that they go proxy for her (other) name ("Marina"). But if we take the name as the chief linguistic differentiator of the subject, then what this name *does* with respect to its subject becomes interesting. What seems to be taking place here is that one name ("Marina") is being unfolded into constituents which (collectively) designate a sequence of events in which the subject has been constituted: the begetting of a father, the being born at sea, the being buried at Tarsus, and the being found at sea again. The expansiveness of this form of identification has the effect of differentiating Marina in a way that is emblematic and welcomely collective. The reader of the name *Thou-that-wast-born-at-sea-[and]-buried-at-Tarsus-[a]nd-found-at-sea-again*, for example, is invited to participate in the meaning of the name by going through the journey that the name's reading instantiates: this happened here to subjectivise you (you were born at sea), and then this happened here to contribute likewise to your namefulness (you were

buried at Tarsus), and so on. Not only does the concatenate name testify to the passage of the subject toward her naming, but the collective reading of the concatenate reproduces something of that passage. Such could not happen with "Marina" because it is too truncated a representation of the experience of growing-to-fit-a-name.

Immediately after this sequence of concatenate naming, of course, Pericles is to introduce Marina to Hellicanus by using her other name ("Marina"). The concatenate naming marks, therefore, the culmination of a project in which naming had to be constituted in terms of the liminal passages of a father and a daughter. The liminality was inverse-mimetic in structure: Pericles lost a wife, his daughter a mother; Marina was orphaned out and betrayed, whereas her father was exiled to his "mortal vessel" (4.4.30) and his whiskers; finally, the daughter with two names too many was reconciled to a father who wouldn't speak at all. For both named and namer the shared passage – *the rooting out of a parentage* – has led itself to the passage of a concatenate naming. The naming has opened meaning up and flattened it out into an archetypal discourse structure. The naming has constituted a *limen*-consistent form of "conspicuous teaching" which makes both namer and named aware how saturated the language of kinship and community is with the evidence of reading a life (Myerhoff 118). Names can be reattached to their subjects – "Pericles" to Pericles; "Marina" to Marina – now that this process of liminalisation has taken place. State and family have reassembled in the language of concatenation.

Cymbeline*: Dismemberment, descriptionality, and the propagation of kings*.

The recoveries which part-constitute liminal subjects in *Pericles* negotiate a representational field that is stylised, antiquated in form, and usually predictable. The inevitability of the triumph of the aristocratic body is problematised in various ways, but the ordeals that that body undergoes are constituted in a language that promotes the stepwise integration of voice, self, and communal meaning without the rhythms of the language that contests this reintegration throwing the language of promotion off its course. Speaking and naming are stretched and flattened, but the subjects discursively fashioned in this identificatory terrain benefit from the clemency of forms that prefer to estrange rather than decapitate. With *Cymbeline*, however, decapitation is the order of the day. I will argue that the violence that dismembers bodies in this play works alongside other forces – the force of descriptionality, in particular – to take subjects apart and to assail them with liminal pressures. With the subjectivity of key state constituents (Cloten, Innogen, Posthumous, and the two princes) either fractured or marginalised, the additional liminal pressure of "story" arrives to put them back together. How these subjects are constituted in this process illustrates the manner in which the state propagates itself, and the dramatisation of this propagation can then be studied with respect to both containment and utopian readings.

To speak of decapitation is to speak of an interruption between head and body: the brain can no longer tell the legs to carry it forward. Such interruptions are dramatised in this play. To speak of the violent separation of aristocratic subjects from their courtly identities is to speak of a similar kind of interruption, for the ruling class can no longer communicate *through* its most vocal parts in a fashion that is

unproblematised. This is the interruption that I see dramatised most prominently in *Cymbeline*. I argue that this interruption is constituted as a *limen*, that undifferentiating pressures are typically brought to bear on dramatic subjects in this play to make them "new o'er" (1.6.165), and that these pressures are so strong that they separate heads from shoulders and speakers from voices. Subjects are constructed, deconstructed, flung to all corners of representational space, and expected to reconstruct themselves *as others*, before being coerced into the Kermodean stampede of twenty-four dénouements which qualifies as the "resolution" of the work (Geller 252; Glazov-Corrigan 1994 379; Landry 75; Nosworthy l; lxxx). Just as it is the job of decapitation and descriptionality to produce the ruptures in aristocratic subjectivity, so it is the job of the idioms of myth and story to aggregate surviving members of the governing class. But the business of recovery in this play is anything but straightforward. Where separation and liminal phases have been so radical and bloodsoaked, it seems likely that subjects will return to the court with, at the very least, serious contusions. That the aggregation phase in this play is an imperfect one can be seen from the fact that it is *the hangman* who pleads most enthusiastically for singularity of thought and ethic – "I would we were of one mind, and one mind good" (5.3.257). Lest we forget, that hangman's calling is to interrupt (definitively) commerce between head and body.

One effect of the liminal pressures operating on subjects in *Cymbeline* is that which, as suggested above, lops voice from speaker. I read this effect as a form of ventriloquism in which a voice which was once (for a community of speakers) the chief index of one body relocates to speak from another. Death – the downfall of a speaking body – may be implicated in such a migration, but it need not be.[3] The case of Cloten

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[3]I read this alongside the comments of Harry Berger to the effect that "[s]peakers in Shakespeare's texts, as in others, don't necessarily die. Some do. But others just stop; they leave the text or the stage and don't

speaking with bodyless head provides a clear example of the process in question – as thus with Guiderius (4.2.183): "I have sent Cloten's clotpoll down the stream,/ In embassy to his mother." Here the true (but marginalised; pastoralised) prince, Guiderius, rejigs the language-presence of his enemy (the quintessentially thicko) such that it reduces to a simple, rough and ready "Here I am, mother!," the "clotpoll" bobbing shortwindedly in the water. That "embassy" can be so savagely pruned back from, say, the comparatively felicitous jingo of Cloten's rebuttal of Lucius's demands on the part of Caesar – "Britain's/ A world by itself, and we will nothing pay/ For wearing our own noses" (3.1.12/13) – shows that persuasion (rebuttal) in this play is wont to come in some of the bluntest forms imaginable.

Cloten is by far the most likely dramatic subject to find himself recreated in a bloodthirsty narrative. As many commentators have noted, he is set apart (differentiated) right from his characteriological outset, as a means of shifting the fortunes of others thanks to his becoming the object of violence (Hunt 2002 418; Marcus 148). Ruth Nevo (99) argues that Cloten and Posthumous are

> … both assailants upon Innogen's chastity, would-be performers of her lover's role, and they are diametrically opposed, sophisticated, cunning, gallant and coarse lout, Queen's son though he be. They are clearly antithetical doubles.

The first disclosure in the play of the ritual function of Cloten's paired subjectivity comes with First Lord's suggestion to the oafish prince: "I would advise you to shift a shirt; the violence of action hath made you reek as a sacrifice" (1.2.1/2). Rank, volatile,

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come back. Why, then, do some of them die? Not because they die, say, in Holinshed, but because their death is the object of their desire, their response to the conflict of discourses" (1997 221).

and laboured in his aspirations (to mate; to win at bowls; to establish the performative currency of his birthright), Cloten achieves precious little materially even before he is lopped in two. What the play structurally demands of him is that he vent and then exhaust those properties of animal lust, welcoming of hazard, and congenital hotheadedness that he shares with Posthumous (Butler 33/4; Hayles 240; Landry 70). Only when Cloten is sacrificed can the reconciliation phase for Posthumous begin.

Arviragus is one speaker who points up the flatness of the exchange-value of this most doltish scapegoat: "Poor sick Fidele,/ … To gain his colour/ I'd let a parish of such Clotens blood,/ And praise myself for charity" (4.2.165-167). And it deserves to be noted that the scapegoat himself is aware of how a paired subjectivity can immediately benefit one symbolic twin at the expense of the other; it is simply that he miscasts the victim:

> What mortality is! Posthumous, thy head, which now is growing upon thy
>
> shoulders, shall within this hour be off, thy mistress enforced, thy garments
>
> cut to pieces before her face; and all this done, spurn her home to her father, who
>
> may haply be a little angry for my so rough usage; but my mother, having power
>
> of his testiness, shall turn all into my commendations. (4.1.12-17)

That Cloten's assessment of "mortality" prefigures his own demise is certainly important. The speaker foresees the demise of another subject in a way that the foreseer himself actualises and is objectified in. This supplantation of plight is something of an amputation in its own right; there is a real sense in which Cloten lives his death as Posthumous (and then finds his mutilated corpse being tagged as "Richard du Champ"

(4.2.376)). The habit of associating (misassociating) a set of mangled and detached body parts with other names, and other subjects, continues the trend of ventriloquising in the direction of the materials at hand. Cloten predicts a grisly end for Posthumous which he (Cloten) enacts; Innogen (in distress) mistakenly identifies parts of Cloten as parts of her husband and, in attempting to staunch the carnal monstrousness of these parts, associates them with the gods:

> A headless man? The garments of Posthumous?
>
> I know the shape of's leg; this is his hand,
>
> His foot Mercurial, his Martial thigh,
>
> The brawns of Hercules; but his Jovial face –
>
> Murder in heaven! How? 'Tis gone. (4.2 307-311)

The misassociative grammar in both of the above passages is surprisingly productive. Innogen speaks to the non-dead Posthumous and fashions thereby an undead Cloten; Cloten speaks to a future victim whose clotpoll he has rhetorically lopped from his shoulders and he turns out to be speaking to the one version of himself which will be actualised in the play. Getting things wrong here means making a life for the subject who "grows" to fill in the mistakes spoken into being: Posthumous "grows" into the space left behind by his performatively self-amputating rival.

And the symbolic productivity of such mutilation/ mutation is by no means limited to the Cloten and Posthumous; elsewhere it spreads out into a vegetable motif. When Innogen (as Fidele) is mistakenly thought dead, and is borne from the cave in the arm of a lamenting Arvirargus, this motif is constituted in a speech act of his brother:

"O sweetest, fairest lily!/ My brother wears thee not one half so well/ As when thou grew'st thyself" (4.2.200-203). The tableaux of Arviragus cradling Fidele's body is thus read as one body "wear[ing]" another, as if the corpse were a coat (Hunt 1999 74). Guiderius's "thesis" here is that wearing another's body is a performance which can be (negatively) compared with the performance of "growing" one's own. This thesis exerts a liminal pressure on the business of *being embodied* in so far as it (the living with a body) is spelt out *to be* a performance which, in a sense, anybody can do: essence is denied. The idea of bodies being interchangeable – mooted herewith – is proposed again with Guiderius's claim that "Thersites' body is as good as Ajax',/ When neither are alive" (4.2.251/2). These kinds of formulations, I argue, part-constitute liminal pressures: when bodies are anonymised and paired in this way subjects undergo that radical undifferentiation consistent with the *limen*.

Mention of bodies "growing" into one another and being swapped, as it were, without loss prefigures a scene in the climax notable for its graft-like choreographies, that is, Innogen's flinging herself at the husband who has only recently biffed her (as "scornful page" (5.4.228)) on the jaw. Posthumous "anchors upon Innogen" (394) and gives shape to the fecundity of her lunge by revisiting the vegetable motif: "Hang there like fruit, my soul,/ Till the tree die" (263/4). The "lily" (4.2.200) is now a more substantial and (you never know) more dehiscent botanical item ("fruit"), and it is expected that it grow together with the male tree. Of course, the imagery now stipulates a subject-growth which is conclusively dependent: Posthumous will not wear his wife like a coat, but will "bear" her in a lifelong instantiation of the *tree/fruit* relation. The conclusiveness of this performative-rich embrace is triangulated when Cymbeline ropes himself into the agricultural/ aristocratic framework by promising to irrigate (bless)

their marriage: "My tears that fall/ Prove holy water on thee!" (268/9). Pastoral language (*fairest lily*; *growth*; *fruit*; *tree*) has been well and truly co-opted into a discourse set that constitutes and then rubberstamps the heavily supervised institution of a royal coupling.

In liminal terms, the finality of the embrace here (the *hanging* (263)) flags the termination of a period of radical undifferentiation for Innogen. The liminal ecology involved with the force of difference, however, is multiform. Pressures have been on Innogen from the outset to give up those rights of *difference* that she brought to the court when she married Posthumous. From her point of view, of course, by "cho[o]s[ing] an eagle,/ [She] did avoid a puttock [Cloten]" (1.1.139/40), but puttockhood was the option endorsed by the state: "Thou took'st a beggar, wouldst have made my throne/ A seat for baseness" (141/2), so the king. Its options being ignored, the state responds to Innogen with the multiple penalties of carceration and separation – "She's wedded,/ Her husband banished, she imprisoned" (1.1.7/8) – and then with a sequence of grotesque disorienting pressures climaxing in her bloody entanglement with "Richard du Champ."

Properly speaking, there are two separation phases which Innogen is forced to undergo. The first is constituted, as I have indicated, in the separation from her husband: she remains at court, and he leaves for Italy to commence the wager plot. The second occurs when she commits herself to the unhappy trek to Milford Haven. But it should not be thought that the first period signals, for Innogen, a lull. Her father, in addition to confining his daughter ("Away with her,/ And pen her up" (1.1.152/3)), structures his policy for her re-education in terms consonant with the language of ritual sacrifice: "Nay, let her languish/ A drop of blood a day, and being aged/ Die of this folly" (156-8).

Fastidious, long-term performance, in this formulation, constitutes the death of the madness that threatens the reliable propagation of kingship. A pattern is being established here in terms of Innogen "bleeding" and "being bled" in order that certain kinship identifications be recovered in the play. It is also clear that Cymbeline's figuration of her as a sacrificial subject is constitutive of the play's liminal structures.

The high water of Innogen's performance of "being bled" comes with her resting on the pillow of Cloten's maimed trunk. There she chips in with a touch of mortuary cosmetics which adds to the direfulness of the tableaux:

> O,
>
> Give colour to my pale cheek with thy blood,
>
> That we the horrider may seem to those
>
> Which chance to find us. (4.2.328-331)

But the thought experiment of wreaking violence upon Innogen is first postulated by those male dramatic subjects closest to her: we have seen her father call for bleeding, and now we see her husband urging ritual punishment for perceived infidelities: "Oh that I had her here, to tear her limb-meal!/ I will go there and do't i'th' court, before/ Her father. I'll do something" (2.4.147-149). The urge to tear limbmeal comes, however, in direct violation of Posthumous's own injunction to "[s]pare [the] arithmetic [and] never count the turns" (2.4.142). For the tearer will, with his dismembering, multiply galore, and this multiplication is bound to jeopardise correct propagation. A *sparagmos* trope, in which the body is ripped apart and bestrewn in a sacrifical rite, must be instituted (Detweiler; Nim 273-275). Posthumous vows to tear and scatter Innogen's

body in order that it not tear and scatter itself through its illegitimate conceptions. I want to argue that the would-be sacrificer is partially aware of the contradictory vectors that his normative vengeance must map out if it is to succeed. Innogen must be butchered and the parts of Innogen spread as wide as possible so that her "turns" (142) won't count. But that spreading far and wide performatively instantiates the very "arithmetic" countermanded in the performance. It seems then as if Posthumous is winding himself up to enact a form of sympathetic magic: the action of the dismembering will be isomorphic with the action of the illegitimate dissemination; the hope is that this structural isomorphism will there and then inoculate against the dissemination of the illegitimacy. The contradictory energies in this "hope" result in the prescriptiveness of any action dribbling away here; the speaker ends up, of course, beckoning the most flaccid of courses: "I'll do something."

Innogen, momentarily sheltered from the arithmetic of her beloved, does something that "count[s]" (2.4.142) equally as well: she plans to recover a loss. On the run from the idiotic aubades of her suitor Cloten and the scrofulous rhetoric of Iachimo she takes to the road. With her are "[t]he scriptures of the loyal Leonatus" (3.4.79) soon to "tur[n] to heresy" (80) when the dismemberment of his trust is made known. On this journey to "blessèd Milford" (3.2.60) Innogen is constantly being made and remade in the speech acts of other (Thorne 180). As Iachimo misrepresents her as a "lady being so easy" (2.4.48) and Posthumous curses her and wishes her dead, just so Pisanio blesses her (3.5.152/3) and regulates what parts of her husband's scriptural "heresy" she will hear and when. Innogen's subjectivity, of course, has been under the hammer from the word go; she is being reported and blazoned, imprisoned and regaled all the way through (Jordan; Tommaso 276). Nonetheless, it is when she is away from the "pen"

(1.1.153) of the court that the liminal pressures on her at at their strongest.

The most blatant of the negative pressures that assail Innogen come from her "loyal Leonatus" (3.4.79), as we have seen. Posthumous's "cognizance of [his wife's] incontinence" (2.4.127) leads directly to his violent "limb-meal" (147) fantasy of dismemberment. Iachimo has already dismantled the princess, of course, in his stealing of the bracelet and his description of (among other things) the mole ("cinque-spotted" (2.2.38)) beneath her breast. This rhetorical performance of divvying Innogen up is contagious in the sense that it leads directly to her own projection of a "limb-meal" transformation: "Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion,/ And for I am richer than to hang by th' walls,/ I must be ripped. To pieces with me!" (3.4.49-51). Innogen's being left "to hang by th' walls" cannot easily be read as her being put on display (as a trophy wife, or as an Antiochan skull), given her staleness. Clearly, a priority system is being assumed here by which she, on the basis of her value ("rich[ness]"), and post-dismemberment, must be put back in circulation as quickly as possible.[4] The sacrificial offer made ("To pieces with me!") derives from Innogen's assumptions as to how value is ordinarily exposed and processed in this system. Rhetorically she commits herself to a wholesale undifferentiation (of tissue, as it were) in order to conserve the amount of "rich[ness]" in the network of affiliations and discursive practices that constitute this society.

To counteract the speech acts that bid to dismember Innogen are those performatives which seek to protect her subjectivity from the malign and the divisive. It has been noted that Innogen stands in receipt of numerous prayers and blessings

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[4] The Norton editors paraphrase the relevant sentence (3.4.48-50) as follows: "And because I am too valuable to be discarded (by being hung up and forgotten about), I must be torn apart (so that the material may be reused)" (Greenblatt, et al. 1997).

throughout the play (Glazov-Corrigan 1994 393). Pisanio not only calls for the help of the gods – "Flow, flow,/ You heavenly blessings on her" (3.5.152/3) – but likens the potential recipient of this help to the divine helpers themselves: "She's punished for her truth, and undergoes,/ More goddess-like than wife-like such assaults/ As would take in some virtue" (3.2.7-9). Innogen herself prays before she falls asleep and has Iachimo next to her pop succubus-like out of his trunk: "To your protection I commend me, gods./ From faeries and the tempters of the night/ Guard me, beseech ye" (2.2.8-10). In terms of assigning her suchlike praise, Belarius provides the exemplar sequence:

> But that it eats our victuals, I should think
>
> Here were a fairy.
>
> GUIDERIUS.   What's the matter, sir?
>
> BELARIUS   By Jupiter, an angel – or, if not,
>
> An earthly paragon. Behold divineness
>
> No elder than a boy! (3.6.40-44)

Arviragus likewise fashions his apprehension of Fidele in the predicate "angel-like" (4.2.48). Perhaps the most striking reading of Innogen's virtue comes when Iachimo vaporises it entire near the end of the play: "I have belied a lady,/ The princess of this country, and the air on't/ Revengingly enfeebles me" (5.2.2-4). In this image the *atmosphere* of Britain takes in all of Innogen's truth ("I have belied a lady"), evacuates it, spreads it out, and then pushes it back down upon the deceitful invader.

But what are these constellations of resourcefully uplifting speech acts doing to Innogen's subjectivity? My argument here is perfectly straightforward. The

"affirmative" speech acts are working to counteract the verbal assault and battery of those stemming from Cymbeline, Posthumous, Cloten, and Iachimo. Just as Iachimo, for example, fills the air with the sordid, innuendo-rich tropes of 1.6 the better to seduce Innogen, so the likes of Pisanio and the "mountaineers" (4.2.71; 100) fight back with their rosy and celestial language-strings. Innogen is not so much caught in the middle of these contestations for her virtue (much like Iachimo's monkeys are caught "'Twixt two such shes would chatter this way, and/ Contemn with mows the other" (1.6.40/41)), but rather the subject *Innogen* is produced in (as) the cross-fire. The liminal Innogen is exhausted in the constitutive practices that go to make her up: she has no essence; nothing belongs to her that has not been discursively given.

My argument is, thus, that Innogen is produced as a subject in the contestations in which other subjects engage. The contestational field under examination is a liminal one in so far as the pressures it exerts condition for the emergence of a highly undifferentiated subject. Milford Haven-bound Innogen is moving toward a liminal state in which she, under alias and in disguise, is taken for dead and abandoned to a pastoral charnel. My claim is that performatives of praise and blame have been propelling Innogen toward this bloodstained anonymity, and I want to extend this claim into a general one concerning the play's constitution of its dramatic subjects. One of the most important ways in which the play builds and dismantles subjects is to describe them (*limb-meal paragon*), and to report them (*cinque-spotted fairy*). But I am going to argue that many of these descriptions have a peculiar quality: they are descriptions that describe themselves as much as they describe the subjects they purport to describe. A study of those self-describing descriptions that produce subjects provides an insight into how this play instantiates its liminal structures.

I propose to call the trait that some descriptions have to self-describe *descriptionality*, and to suggest that a speech act is descriptional whenever it draws attention to itself as a description. The most notorious candidates for such descriptionality arrive in the play's opening scene. Posthumous – that dramatic subject who depends even in the dramatis personae on the "sur-addition Leonatus" (1.1.33) for some of his zoological colour – is the main figure that these descriptional descriptions produce. Posthumous *is*, I will argue, the descriptions of Posthumous. Let us use that statement to negotiate the following:

> FIRST GENTLEMAN He that hath missed the Princess is a thing
>
> > Too bad for bad report; and he that hath her –
> >
> > I mean, that married her (alack, good man,
> >
> > And therefore banished!) – is a creature such
> >
> > As to seek through the regions of the earth
> >
> > For one his like, there would be something failing
> >
> > In him that should compare. I do not think
> >
> > So fair an outward and such stuff within
> >
> > Endows a man but he.
>
> SECOND GENTLEMAN You speak him far.
>
> FIRST GENTLEMAN I do extend him, sir, within himself,
>
> > Crush him together, rather than unfold
> >
> > His measure duly.
>
> SECOND GENTLEMAN What's his name and birth?
>
> FIRST GENTLEMAN I cannot delve him to the root… (1.1.16-28)

This is clearly an example of descriptionality in that it is a report that draws attention to itself as a report. It does this, initially, by conceding that there is one item reported hereat (viz., Cloten) which violates assumptions concerning the moiety between report and reported. Cloten is "too bad for bad report"; he should be better (even for a "bad report"); his badness is such that it destroys any correspondence between the badness a bad report could measure (reciprocate in structure) and the badness a bad object of report himself could exemplify. Cloten's failure makes the report's failure to correspond to his badness that much worse, and this increases his badness from the point of view of those who, like the speaker, value reports. So much for Cloten.

When it comes to "reporting" Posthumous, the first real predicate that unravels itself is an item of devilish ambiguity (Nevo 96; Palfrey 86): "[He] is a creature such/ As to seek through the regions of the earth/ For one his like, there would be something failing/ In him that should compare" (19-22). However the reader decides to make sense of this passage, it is clear that the predicate unwound is going to get (and lose) its explanatory traction in terms of the mechanics of comparison. To make a comparison in this case, says the speaker, is to embark on a journey – rather a disappointing journey as it transpires because whenever you latch on to a Posthumous-likeness, there will always be something failing. Of course, it is difficult to establish who or what is responsible for this inevitable lack of fit. For my purposes, however, it is enough to say that the description problematises all future descriptions of Posthumous, so much so that it seems to take delight in its own constative perplexities.

When Second Gentleman comments on the report given thus far he brings to the

fore the *transitivity* of what is going on: "You speak him far" (39). This comment encourages the describer to turn his attention to this as well: "I do extend him, sir, within himself,/ Crush him together, rather than unfold/ His measure duly" (25-27). With transitivity on board the claim here is not simply that a subject can be represented in speech, but that she can be directly shaped by it (Sweetser; Langton). If I speak *of* someone, I do not draw attention to the fact that my description is producing this someone as it goes. As it is, the valency of these performative operations – *I extend him*; *I crush him* – is noteworthy. On the one hand, the statements point back to the descriptions of lines 16-24, quoted above. This is what you are doing, says Second Gentleman, with your description: You are speaking [Posthumous] far. This is what I am doing, says the describer (First Gentleman): I am extending him within himself, and so on. The statements qualify as descriptions of descriptive acts. On the other hand, however, these speech acts – *I extend him*; *I crush him* – have illocutionary force. How so? Let us remember the principle which was meant to guide us through this passage: "Posthumous *is* the descriptions of Posthumous." When the speaker says he "extends" Posthumous, he extends him there and then. There is nothing else to Posthumous save this welter of descriptions; the *extending* produces the subject who is that being extended. The descriptionality of the description – "This is what I'm doing when I describe [Posthumous]" – reveals itself to be fully constitutive of the subject described.

The ontologising aspect of this descriptional speech has implications in terms of our knowledge of the dramatic subject. Posthumous is nothing until these descriptions and these descriptions of descriptions kick into gear. The subject we see produced in the extensions and the crushings together is no more than the operations in which he is produced. He has no essence. Posthumous is produced in descriptions which are, as

Simon Palfrey points out, "self-aggrandising" (85). His descriptions not only draw attention to themselves as descriptions, but they almost qualify as acts of grievous bodily harm: speakings far, extensions, crushings, unfoldings, delvings – the operations are distinctly surgical in character (Glazov-Corrigan 1994 387; Palfrey 86). The two gentlemen toy with the subject *Posthumous* as they go along; their introducing of him is really an introduction of their own discourse, a discourse which holds itself entirely responsible for the constitution of subjects.

The *Posthumous*-work that the two gentlemen perform with their speech can be contrasted with the likes of Cymbeline's threats against that same subject (Posthumous) when he runs across him: "Away,/ Thou'rt poison to my blood" (1.1.127/8). Here we are back in the world of essences. The king does not concern himself with the representational sovereignty of his predications ("Thou'rt poison"), he simply directs them to an object (Posthumous). You *are* a threat to my aristocratic line, says the king, henceforth you are banished. Cymbeline is hardly the place to look for performative subtlety. His queen provides the more complex predications of the reigning pair. In plotting to slot Cloten into pole position with respect to the suitorship of Innogen, for example, she must first concoct a prognosis for the absent husband: "His fortunes all lie speechless, and his name/ Is at last gasp. Return he cannot, nor/ Continue where he is" (1.5.52-54). This speaker understands the importance language plays in both banishment and the "penetrat[ion]" (2.3.11; 12; 24) of the authorising class. Her description of Posthumous's prospects zero in on his lack of advocacy ("speechless") and the terminal state of "his name."

By means of such contrasts between the language-foregrounding procedures of the two gentlemen and the less costive signifying praxis of other dramatic subjects,

Shakespeare has early multiplied perspectives on how representational language is going to be shaped and problematised henceforth (Garber 812; Nosworthy l). Key elements of liminal destructuration are thus already at work and are focusing on the subjectivities of protagonists. This work will heat up when it comes to Iachimo's rhetorical undoing of the fidelity of Innogen, together with his attempts to remake Posthumous (in ways that will fluster his wife) as "the Briton reveller" (1.6.61) and "the jolly Briton" (67). That Iachimo is no stranger to descriptionality is made clear both in his promising to make Innogen's lord "new o'er" (165) when he speaks of him, and his scrupulous reading of the chimney-piece in her bedchamber: "Never saw I figures/ So likely to report themselves" (2.4.82/3). The belier of this lady is a subject-maker of notable resourcefulness.

Posthumous is no match for Iachimo when it comes to either the transitive or the descriptional felicities of rhetoric. The performative failure recounted to the Frenchmen – concerning an episode where his mistress's virtues were lamely traded in blazon – ended in deadlock and was "put to the arbitrement of swords" (1.4.39). Iachimo, by comparison, makes reasonable claim to be competent in what's promised: "I am the master of my speeches, and would undergo what's spoken, I swear" (114/5). Posthumous is drawn into a world of wagers where words are weapons, and he is cudgelled again and again by those who better brandish such items than he. Iachimo "catalogue[s]" and "words" Posthumous on top of "perus[ing] him by items" (3; 11; 5); Philario then asks that Leonatus be given the chance to "story him[self] in his own hearing" (25). The point needs to be made, of course, that this invitation cannot be taken up with a dramatic subject who is so blatantly excluded from *self*-constituting in language.

The implausibility of Posthumous "story[ing]" him[self]" brings us back to the question of how subjects are made in this play. If they are not self-storying constructions, then what are they? The argument underway suggests that they are *described* in peculiar ways. Posthumous's birth as a subject comes to pass in descriptions of descriptions; predicates are withheld from him and it is in this withholding that he is made. As a means of further explicating this account of subjectivity's emergence it is advantageous to deploy the logic of the *limen*.

My thesis is that key subjects in *Cymbeline* are constructed in a phase of intense descriptionality. This construction marks the onset of the liminal phase. Subjects emerge in an undifferentiating language field which produces constellations of sacrificial behaviour. Subjects are produced "limb-meal": either they want to see themselves in pieces and spread to all parts of the play, or they want this to be done to others. Sacrifice as dismemberment is from time to time instantiated physically (as with Cloten), but more often than not it is instantiated in the figural economy of the language circuit. Examples of this dismemberment are legion. In laying down rhetorical snares for Innogen with respect to Posthumous's humour, Iachimo depends on a troping of organ transplants: "Half of all men's hearts are his" (1.6.168). Posthumous, in turn, shapes a divisive pathological imaginary when he cannot swallow the inevitability of having "women/ As half-workers" (2.5.1/2). The *division* of labour is not to be tolerated. Behind Posthumous's wish to mangle his beloved is the desire to androgenise production; this desire is liminal in that it pushes for the eliminating of gender difference.

Even the solidity of the "half-working" envisioned is contested, however, when we read reports that a king's "issue" can double (and then vanish) in the blink of a

shamelessly contradictory description: "His only child./ He had two sons" (1.1.56/7). Things can tick over, sure enough, and sons can be nursed (5.4.322), but there is no guarantee that they can reproduce the father: "There be many Caesars/ Ere such another Julius" (3.1.11/12). Subjectivity's up-keep does not, in this play, include the making sense of who is going to appear in which hierarchical slots: roots prove undelvable, and "imperceiveran[ce]" (4.1.11) is the order of the day. Such are the pressures of undifferentiation at work here: identity cannot be held together in difference, nor propagation of kinds secured.

In spite of the pressures working against a sensible reconciliation of difference in *Cymbeline*, there is one romance pressure that brokers something of a return of aristocratic identity to power: the pressure of *story*. Posthumous's inability to "story him[self]" (1.4.25) can be usefully contrasted with how "story" works to rehabilitate the marginalised subjectivities involved in the missing princes subplot. Belarius – who is very much convinced that blood will out ("How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature!" (3.3.79)) – construes a blunt, one-track hermeneutic for storying when recounting the spectatorial profile of young Guiderius:

> When on my three-foot stool I sit and tell
>
> The warlike feats I have done, his spirits fly out
>
> Into my story; say 'Thus my enemy fell,
>
> And thus I set my foot on's neck', even then
>
> The princely blood flows in his cheek, he sweats,
>
> Strains his young nerves, and puts himself in posture
>
> That acts my words. (3.3.89-95)

For Guiderius, to partake of a story is to translate one's own listening body into the vocabulary and subject-frames of what is heard; it is to repeat the story in the reader, and to leapfrog the ontological distance between the representation and the valiant efforts portrayed therein. Belarius's earlier stress that a man can become a story – "O boys, this story/ The world may read in me" (55/56) – is taken up by Guiderius and given a twist. His reading reads, and then enters, the story by reciprocating the stance of its subject (with foot choking a defeated "enemy"). Latent princehood is thus broken in by the use of an instructional device that welcomes the collapse of its representational logic.

I intend to use the storying logics tapped into by Guiderius to interrogate Posthumous's development as a reader in this play. Leonatus has been, as I have shown, very much the passive victim of the storying language he has met thus far. The descriptionalities that crushed him (folded him; extended him) gave him no room to contest their fashioning of them because they exhausted his subjectivity. The descriptions that have exhausted and pell-mell desubjectivised this *Posthumous* were anything but stories; they were tabulations and "catalogu[ings]" (1.4.4) that constructed a non-subject. There was no Belarius to tell this Posthumous a story to which this non-subject may have assimiliated a likeness, and negotiated an interest. But this denial of subject space is about to change. So convoluted and constative-reneguing has the descriptionality and transitivity of Posthumous's non-story become that space is ceded for a discourse more forgiving of primitive and emblematically storying language.[5]

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[5] A due part of the performative force of "story" is that the dramatic subject involved is narrativised in a way that stresses the historical inevitability of the events which catch her up. Robert Weimann's discussion of this with respect to the hero of Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* is particulary suggestive in light of the context of Guiderius and Arviragus (126): "A glance at the represented fiction in the world of the

Leonatus Posthumous is about to be made "new o'er" again.

Emblematic language begins to gather for Posthumous in the final act of the play. With Cloten's elimination the misogynistic wagering and cleaving – "Is there no way for me to be, but women/ Must be half-workers?" (2.5.1/2) – has gone from the speech in which he is made. The soliloquy which opens the final act establishes itself in the material reminder of sacrifice – the sacrifice he believes to have been his wife's: "Yea, bloody cloth, I'll keep thee, for I wished/ Thou shouldst be coloured thus" (5.1.1/2) – before going on to beseech the divine:

> Gods, put the strength o'th' Leonati in me.
>
> To shame the guise o'th' world, I will begin
>
> The fashion – less without, and more within. (5.2.31-33)

Posthumous here outlines a movement away from an attempt to reshape subjectivity by division and sequestration ("half-workers"; "Half of all men's hearts are his" (1.6.168)), and towards a desire to reshape by addition. Genealogy is called upon to establish a "fashion" in which content is redirected from surface to centre ("less without and more within"). The speaker tries to escape the restraints of descriptionality by going back in time (hence the Leonati), and by going in (hence the Leonatus: "me"; "within"). Perusing by items, this call trumpets, is over. And to an extent the claim is validated in the language which constitutes the call: the rhetoric is flatter than it was before. I

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story suggests that it is inseparable from the narrated legitimation of young Arthur's royalty. This legitimation is represented in such a way that the process of achieving it is conspicuously free from any modern gesture of self-authorization. The young Arthur, in fact, does not even dream of promoting, let alone fashioning, his own identity and social status. Whatever authorization his claim to the throne has is something that *happens* to him."

nonetheless want to argue that the notion of the speaker jumpstarting a "more within" phase for his language is not entirely convincing.

What we get instead of "more within" here is a subjectivising language that is primitivised at the surface. The prosopopeiac resource to which this speaking subject has turned ("Gods, put the strength o'th' Leonati in me") is something which promises to bring the past forward (well, *down* as it transpires) and congeal at the site *Posthumous*. Before we know it, the ancestors of this subject are participating in his life and "sham[ing] the [dramatological] guise of the world" (5.2.30) in so doing. The speakerly appearances and contributions of the "ghosts" (5.3.154; 158) produce, with their arthritic fourteeners and clunky appeals to Jupiter, a possible reorientation for (the sleeping) Posthumous. And this possible reorientation is anything but "more within": it consists of tropes which go to fashion a *surface* of kinship ties, ossified virtues and rehabilitated "fealty" (147). This is an example of rhetorical time travel which slows things up, estranges the language world of the play, and conditions for a soteriological party line from "the Thunderer" (159) as hammy as it is emblematic: "Whom best I love, I cross; to make my gift,/ The more delayed, delighted" (165/6).[6] Such language does nothing to fill subjects up; rather than interiorising them it flattens and simplifies their character.

Posthumous's acceptance of his primitivised subjectivity at this juncture often brings critics to focus on the reading of the tablet which he wakes to find draped across his chest (Hayles 244; Marcus 140; Mikalachki 135; Thorne 188). Let us first note that the document that presses down on him is a riddle, a form of language known to

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[6] "[J]ingling twaddle" is the predicate Harley Granville-Barker fetchingly assigns to the language of the ghosts (260).

disclose liminal ambiguity:

> 'Whenas a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be
>
> embraced by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped
>
> branches which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old
>
> stock, and freshly grow; then shall Posthumous end his miseries, Britain be
>
> fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty.' (5.3.202)

Of course, we can tackle the riddle by seeing it as a collision between the amputation-management strategies ("To pieces with me!" (3.4.51); "I have sent Cloten's clotpoll down the stream" (4.2.183)) and the vegetable motifs running through the play ("Hang there like fruit my soul,/ Till the tree die (5.4.263/4)). Here the branches "lopped" are "jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow," and dismemberment is rendered naturally productive (Hunt 2002 410; Jordan 41; 50/1). But Posthumous does not participate in this reading; his grafting of this text onto his subjectivity comes because he *cannot* negotiate a meaning:

> 'Tis still a dream, or else such stuff as madmen
>
> Tongue, and brain not; either both, or nothing,
>
> Or senseless speaking, or a speaking such
>
> As sense cannot untie. Be what it is,
>
> The action of my life is like it, which
>
> I'll keep, if but for sympathy. (5.3.208-213)

I argue that this commitment of one's subjectivity to the most baffling "likeness" constitutes the heightening of a liminal phenomenology and semiotic. Posthumous recognises a likeness ("sympathy") between a message which makes no sense to him, and his own life. His subjectivity is being revamped according to templates which are beyond his own ken, and a "sympathy" takes hold which radically undifferentiates a subject who no longer feels compelled to read fidelity into descriptions. What he reads is not a *description* of anything: for Posthumous it constitutes an undifferentiated melange, a "senseless speaking, or a speaking such/ As sense cannot untie" (210/11). If anything the riddle only shares its parabolic narrative with Posthumous in so far as it turns away from the relentless specificities of the "reports" of Iachimo and the two gentlemen: the tablet neither extends anyone nor folds them unduly together, and it steers well clear of proof texts such as "cinque-spotted" moles. Posthumous experiences this new language as uncategorisable ("either both, or nothing"), and *therefore* gravitates to it. His subjectivity is owning up to its complete malleability.

Posthumous's response to the riddle flags the retreat of descriptionality and transitivity, marking the onset of a flatter and more ritualistic discourse environment. I am going to examine this discourse change by looking at a scene which, in many ways, shows evidence of a return to the perspective-multiplying ecologies of the first scene of the play. One of the conclusions I drew from the exchanges dramatised there was that a community of describers was collaborating to fashion a subject (Posthumous) by witholding from him all but the most deeply problematised predicates. Describers delighted in their power to flood and evacuate representational fields. The scene to which I now turn, 5.3, differs from that inaugurative episode in two crucial respects. First, one of the play's central protagonists, Posthumous, is present throughout its

unfolding; and secondly, that central protagonist dominates constative proceedings therein. Although Briton Lord (5.3-[s.d.]-1) scarcely gets a word in edgeways, I will argue that his dialogic presence constitutes the greatest point(s) of interest. What I want to show is how the describing subject – the very subject who did not find himself satisfactorily described in 1.1 – argues strongly for the right to be made a subject in a particular kind of language.

The scene I wish to examine comes hard on the heels in Posthumous's ferociously hybrid re-enactment of the battle between Rome and Britain (5.3.4-13; 14-51). In that re-enactment constativity had been embellished with tropes as giddy as the next:

Forthwith they fly

Chickens, the way which they stooped eagles; slaves,

The strides they victors made; and now our cowards,

Like fragments in hard voyages, became

The life i'th' need. (5.3.41-45)

The auditor expected to unravel this reconstruction of battlefield sea-change (Briton Lord) has already been flagged by Posthumous as someone unlikely to embrace the manic heroism captured in the ruckus of this telling: "[Y]ou, it seems, come from the fliers?" (2). But this foretaste of spectatorial interrogation does not quite prepare us for what is to come. After Briton Lord attempts to condense the account to a slogan – "This was strange chance:/ A narrow lane, an old man, and two boys!" (51/2) – Posthumous rounds on his interlocutor and goes for the hermeneut's throat:

Nay, do not wonder at it; you are made

Rather to wonder at the things you hear

Than to work any. Will you rhyme upon't,

And vent it for a mock'ry? Here is one:

'Two boys, an old man twice a boy, a lane,

Preserved the Britons, was the Romans' bane.'

LORD   Nay, be not angry, sir.

POSHUMOUS   'Lack, to what end?

Who dares not stand his foe, I'll be his friend;

For if he'll do as he is made to do,

I know he'll quickly fly my friendship too.

You have put me into rhyme.

LORD   Farewell, you're angry.   *Exit* (5.3.53-63)

Posthumous takes offense at Briton Lord's reduction of his narrative to a slogan (Marcus 141). But what is it about this reduction that constitutes, for Posthumous, the "mock'ry"? One aggravating feature of the condensation is that the condensor is absent from the episode which he attempts to reductively paraphrase. This upsets Posthumous who was there to experience and there to tell. But I want to suggest that it is the representational properties of the truncation to slogan that most irritates the original teller: he objects to seeing his description pared back to a language string ("That was strange chance:/ A narrow-lane, an old man, and two boys!") that obscures the identity of the agents involved ("old man"; "two boys"). Further to this, of course, the sloganeering leaves out entirely the agency and identity of Posthumous himself. The

reduction eliminates the original narrator's role. This is certainly an extenuating factor in the dialogical belligerence of Posthumous. Above all, however, I think it is the general tendency of the reduction to abstract that causes the most offense. Briton Lord has taken the dramatisation of a battle and acclimatised it with his truncation to the discourse of the nursery, or even of the impresa. As a result of this centralising abstraction's reduction, a tranquilised speech act can now enter mythology. Posthumous resists this sweetening and flattening transformation – "You have put me into rhyme" (63) – almost to the end.

In spite of Posthumous's resistance, the reductive slogan does enter the mythology of the play. The two boys are soon to be exposed as the missing princes, and the "narrow lane" will penultimatise their liminal transition from pastoral nowhere to royal presence. The lane at once situates and universalises their rebounding into power and catalyses their harmonious aggregation into kingship. There is a strong liminal sense in which Briton Lord's words act as the perfect narratological catalyst. In the talk of the "ghosts" (5.3.154; 158), the clunky riddling of Jupiter, and the emblematising truncation of this "narrow lane" slogan, the play discloses the birth of new subjectivities for its dramatic subjects. And yet Posthumous still resents being put into rhyme; unlike the two princes, he has not been frictionlessly liminalised; his contestation of the reductively liminal language of Briton Lord constitutes the sticking point which, for him, problematises a satisfactorily aggregrative role in the play's climax. My earlier suggestion, of course, was that Posthumous was beginning to "own up to his complete malleability" as a subject. That malleability is now being problematised. And I think this problematisation demonstrates the liminal production of subjects in *Cymbeline* to be uneven. It is with discussion of this notion of subject-productive unevenness that I wish

to conclude my analysis of the play.

If we classify dramatic subjects in *Cymbeline* according to how easily they respond to the aggregative effects of story and emblematising language-strings in Act 5, then we can see a number of clear groupings develop. Guiderius and Arviragus slot very neatly into the "narrow lane" liminal archetypes into which they must settle; their being subjectivised in ritual language is frictionless. Subjects such as the Queen and Cloten, of course, are bled of their symbolical functionalities and then disposed at or before climax. With respect to Iachimo it is clear that his characteriological enfeeblement draws inevitably toward his being "[n]obly doomed" (5.4.420) by Posthumous ("Live,/ And deal with others better" (419/20)). The overheated rhetoric of succubus-Iachimo and the baroque descriptionality of wager-Iachimo has been reduced to those verbose expositings delivered (141-146; 147-149; 153-168; 169-178; 179-209) in order that the king know how his "Italian brain/ 'Gan in [his] duller Britain operate/ Most vilely" (196-198). That vileness dramatised – first with gusto (in 1.4, 1.6, 2.2, and 2.4) and now on bended knees – the Italian can be silenced. Cymbeline, for his part, is by far and away the most charisma-depleted subject on display (Adelman 200; Geller 246; Nosworthy lii)). But the liminal pressures of the play are not responsible for this: his lack of presence, and utter marginality, have been traits characteristic of him throughout. Given this, there is no question of his subjectivity reducing or billowing to accommodate *limen*-indexed change.

This analysis leaves us with Innogen and Posthumous, those subjects most liminally malleable in large part because most complex. This complexity is not, however, the complexity of essence: I argue that both subjects are produced *as* fields of liminal pressure, and it is precisely because other subjects dedicate their speech acts to

them that they have the greatest scope for subjective adjustment. Innogen survives the projection of dismemberment fantasies to come, of course, back from the dead. And her return trek from "blessèd" Milford generates steam at the cost not only of any difference she may have brought to the court, but also of anything save the blandest aristocratic presence imaginable. Having fallen two rungs down on the line to the throne thanks to the rehabilitation of her brothers, she annexes herself to the trunk of a Leonatus hopeful of an auspicious deciphering of the senselessness to which he has declared his "sympathy." As yet, however, the exact reconciliative position of this "trunk" is unclear.

Posthumous himself is sensitive to the precariousness of his aggregation to Cymbeline's court. It is he who requests that Lucius call on his soothsayer Philharmonus to "declare the meaning" (5.4.434) of the tablet-couched riddle Jupiter has saddled him with. The complaint that leads to this request is that "[t]his label on my bosom, whose containing/ Is so from sense in hardness, that I can/ Make no collection of it" (430-432). And the trope of "no collection" here would seem consistent with a reading that saw the aggregation of meaningfulness foreshadowed in that "sense in hardness." And there is no question that Posthumous *is* asking that his subjecthood be retrieved from meaninglessness at this juncture. The trouble is that the retrieval comes in interpretive moves that are extremely dubious. It is to be expected, of course, that Philharmonus spiritualise the uncomfortable "hardness" of the proof text. That he does so by evacuating dramatic agency into the protective shield of a weakly dramatised aether is also unsurprising – "The fingers of the powers above do tune/ The harmony of this peace" (464/5). When it comes to reading sense into the riddled density of what is promising to materialise as *Posthumous*, however, the soothsayer resorts to solutions made of whole cloth (Glazov-Corrigan 388; Granville-Barker 259; Lewis 348). To

derive "mulier" from tender air ("*mollis aer*" (445)) is to produce a faulty "declar[ation]" (434). The idea that the derivation is strained is unhappily reinforced by Cymbeline, with his deeming that the reading "hath some seeming" (450). When such a nuance-blind subject endorses a like interpretation, then you know your aggregation is in trouble.

The uneven characteriological liminalisation I have spoken of prepares for a dénouement which has the state recuperated, and yet full of holes. Innogen has "lost by this a kingdom" (5.4.373), but speaks of the consolation of getting brothers as "two worlds by't" (374). Kingship has located and authorised the male successors to the throne in their passage back from oblivion. The logic which has propagated the intact court is not consistently applied to all of its actions, however. Having freed itself from the yoke of Rome's tribute the state pays up anyway, providing yet another hiccup in the plot (Bloom 638; Hawkes 47). Some preserved meanings have been co-opted into the new-old order – specifically meanings involving narrow lanes – but others leak like a sieve ("mollis aer"). Nursing surviving aristocrats back into the language of power means "ratify[ing peace]" (481) with such "crookèd smokes" (475). Most of those subjects who have made it this far are committed to whatever sense can be made by being "put into rhyme" (5.3.63). That being put into rhyme constitutes their aggregation. The court, having undergone violent fracture, is remade in the imperfectly concerted language of the subjects who speak it.

The Winter's Tale: *Paranoid supervision, difference, and paragon queen*.

In both *Pericles* and *Cymbeline* aggregation comes at a cost. I have shown that in the former, liminal language conditions a subject in her recovery from trauma and dislocation by interpellating ("How thou stirr'st, thou block!") and naming (*Thou-that-begetst-him-that-did-thee-beget*) in ways that are communal and stylised. In *Cymbeline* the dislocation in question is more punitive: here subjects are chopped up and reconstituted in a helter-skelter of "fierce abridgement[s]" (5.4.382) and ventriloquial spasms – the subject emerges from disassociation only when story and emblematicity arrive to glue her together. Much the same "flattening" constitutes the liminal pressures in both plays. In turning to *The Winter's Tale* I turn to a work which instantiates ruptures as violent and reversibilities as astonishing as anything studied thus far. In looking at how it produces its dramatic subjects, I want to suggest that the *limen*-consistent structures it exploits constitute a parallel universe, and that the radical separateness that this version of romance solution-making invokes pushes our understanding of liminal subjectivity into new territory.

The claim I make concerning a *limen*'s separateness here is intimately connected with how tenaciously key protagonists supervise the hierarchical order of the society represented in the play. As the aristocratic world of Sicilia fractures, it gives way to the pastoral world of Bohemia; I intend to study dramatic subjects as they constitute these worlds. The play's subjects will be divided into two classes, according to whether they pass through the pastoral *limen*, or belong there. The first class of subjects include the aristocrats of both Sicilia and Bohemia, and the second class the rustics (Clown, Shepherd, Autolycus) part-constituting the green world of this second state. My

argument with respect to key aristocrats (Leontes and Polixenes) is that they supervise hierarchy in such a paranoid fashion that their world splits and succumbs to the pastoral. Whether aristocratic subjects *change* as a result of their experiencing the *limen* of Bohemia decides whether or not dramatisation of that experience qualifies as a containing or a utopian project.

Those subjects dedicated to supervising hierarchy focus on preserving the difference between authorised and unauthorised reproductions of the state. The pressures of difference in *The Winter's Tale* are remarkably strong, and they largely qualify as "pressures" in terms of how they produce subjects. The subjects being produced are produced as subjects highly attentive to matters of succession and the integrity of the state (Hackett 28/9; Richards 78-83; Snyder and Curren-Aquino 20/1). Strict policing of the status quo – that ideologically propagatory field which sees to it that kings remain kings and clowns clowns – is bound to have a determining effect on how that strictness is released when it comes to the induction of a liminal phase. My study of this play will thus focus on the relationship between a heightened supervision of difference and the destructuration that interrupts that supervision.

With respect to their policing of hierarchy there is actually no "great difference between [Archidamus's] Bohemia and [Camillo's] Sicilia" (1.1.2/3); both states are keenly sensitive to any breach of the rules and are prepared to chastise violators with the utmost severity. When Polixenes discovers that Perdita's dalliance with Florizel has brought her "family" within genealogical cooey of his throne ("[B]rother-in-law was the farthest off you could have been to [the King] (4.4.671/2)) the response is severe: Bohemia threatens a violent *re*differentiation: "I'll have thy beauty scratched with briars and made/ More homely than they estate" (405/6). Surface (a beautiful face) to surface

(a shepherd's lean-to) must resonate anew if all is to be right with aristocratic difference. The question of how much room *appearance* has to move a subject "into grace" is contested: Florizel can valorize Perdita's "prank[ing] up" of a "lowly maid" into a "queen," on the one hand, and Perdita can greet it with the most serious misgivings on the other: "To me the difference forges dread" (740; 9; 5; 428; 17). Dressing up as queen for a pastoral feast is asking for death ("dread") because the change is both too real ("goddess-like" (10)) and not real enough. Also concerned with the risks of "prank[ing] up" in the sense of consorting with one's betters is Shepherd: "O cursed wretch,/ That knew'st this was the prince, and wouldst adventure/ To mingle faith with him!" (438-440).[7] Where Shepherd constructs his taboo of "mingling" in abstract terms ("faith"), Polixenes fashions his metonymically (that is, with objects), accusing his son thus: "[T]hou a sceptre's heir,/ That thus affects a sheep-hook!" (399/400). Subjects police difference with the language they have available.

There is a sense in which Shepherd, in spite of the humbleness of his rhetoric, is more perceptive with respect to the structurating principles of the environment that constitutes him than is the aristocrat Polixenes. Shepherd sees the big picture where Polixenes only sees the cracks; he actually goes so far as to argue *against* the desirability of a liminal phase altogether:

> I would there were no age between ten and three-and-twenty, or that youth would
>
> sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between by getting wenches with
>
> child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting…

---

[7] The career of "mingle" in this play is significant. Leontes begins his reign of morbid jealousy with the following, intemperate aside: "Too hot! Too hot!/ To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods" (1.2.108/9).

(3.3.58-61)

If only "ancientry" could reproduce versions of themselves that waited their turn to reproduce, that showed respect to those who had produced them, and observed rights of possession over body and property. If only this reproduction could take place (over thirteen years) on both sides of an order-preserving sleep. Transitional phases, acknowledges the rustic, are awkward; to optimise the repose of those who are beyond transition, it would be best to eliminate such phases altogether. There are kings in this play who would agree with him.

Mention of the desire to eliminate transitions takes us to the Sicilia of the opening acts of the play. Leontes there becomes swollen with a language that produces the most insanely jealous of responses to a wife whose physical condition speaks the language of transition ("[F]or 'tis Polixenes/ Has made thee swell thus" (2.1.61/62)) (Enterline 25; 34; Knapp 264). The mobilisation of these responses drives Leontes to an eliminative solution that promises to furnish him with the "moiety of [his] rest" (2.3.8); he seems unable to live with the uncertainty that a swollen belly dramatises (Erickson 819). The uncertainty is constructed and explored by a language in which the husband-king swims, a language so unremittingly fecund that it can only really be processed (by those who are constituted in it) as a voice from another world, as a dream language. And this is how Hermione, when required to formally publicise her reading of the accusations against her, classifies the voice that attempts to classify her:

> Sir,
>
> You speak a language that I understand not.

> My life stands in the level of your dreams,
>
> Which I'll lay down. (3.2.77-79)

But the white cells of Leontes's rhetoric – insults, constellations of bawdy, drinkings of spiders – mobilise in all the greater frenzy because it is not "understood," because it has no purchase on what else is spoken and done (Barton 36). The "nothing" that he speaks into perception as "whisper[s]" (1.2.281) and "virginalling/ Upon… palm[s]" eats up his world much as would a logical cancer, searching for "crack[s]" in difference (124/5; 319).

It is the spectre of cuckoldry which furnishes these early acts with their most provocative "whisper[s]." Populating Leontes's fantasy descriptions of the adulterous theatre in which his wife plays the central role are such fictional subjects as "Sir Smile" (1.2.194), "Dame Partlet" (2.3.75) and "Lady Margery" (159). The first cuckolds in true piscatorial style ("[H]is pond fished by his next neighbour" (1.2.193)), and the second henpecks her "unroosted" (74) husband (Antigonus). Cuckolding is variously conceived in astrological and military terms ("It is a bawdy planet, that will strike/ Where 'tis predominant" (199/200); "No barricado for a belly" (202)). Part of the problem facing the cuckold is the victimology of the whole enterprise, for the disease as such ("Physic for't there's none" (198); "I cannot name the disease" (381)) interferes with the means to know what it is. With this in mind we can begin to understand why, when one's "eye-glass/ Is thicker than a cuckold's horn" (265/6), it is thought impossible to see what particular disgrace is being endured. The coupling of adulterers (at "[n]oon midnight" (287)) is coactive with a force that blinds others "with the pin and web" (cataracts) (288). The condition is a paradoxical one in that it combines the cuckold's wanting to

know with, as Claire McEachern notes, his terrible fear of being exposed (47). As Leontes proselytises his litany of Polixenes's and Hermione's "mingling" (108) throughout the court he must insist upon the "pin and web" not afflicting him; *he* can see what others cannot:

> You smell this business with a sense as cold
>
> As is a dead man's nose; but I do see't and feel't
>
> As you feel doing thus, and see withal
>
> The instruments that feel. (2.1.150-154)

The allegedly inductive side of Leontes's research project thus feeds into its deductive absolutism. The problem is that the discourse is at odds with the logical slant. The attempt constituted in Sicilia's moves toward a universal suspicion ("All's true that is mistrusted" (2.1.48)) runs at cross-purposes to the highly theatrical discourse of cuckoldry and "feel[ing]" (154) (sniffing; fishing; planetising, and barricado-ing). The performative energy of the cuckoldese is such that it disseminates its colours and its stories throughout the court with mischievous efficacy. That those stories are fabricated no one doubts (Barton 35; Neely 170/1). That not a soul is persuaded by Leontes's manic bricolage – "'tis very credent/ [Affection t]hou may'st co-join with something, and thou dost,/ And that beyond commission" (1.2.141-143) – is also hardly the point. This language does work to singularise a subject (Leontes), and to destroy as many stable links as possible to its grounds in communal discourse.

The singularisation of Leontes's rhetoric can be helpfully construed as a liminal (eliminative) pressure. Polixenes goes first, "oershade[d]" by fear (452) and Camillo

with him. Mamillius wilts and "is gone" (3.2.142), Perdita "[h]aled out to murder" (99);

Hermione is incarcerated, her bravest qualities ("honesty [and] honour" (2.2.9)) locked

up "from/ Th'access of gentle visitors" (9/10), before being dragged out for a show trial.

That her husband counsels her in the language consonant with the *limen* is, I hold, no

error: "[T]hou/ Shalt feel our justice, in whose easiest *passage*/ Look for no less than

death" (3.2.87-89) (my italics). Sicilia's world is emptying of those subjects associated

with transition (spouse, children, rival), and the vacuum answering to this purge is that

of difference.

Leontes is committed to making a difference in difference. He is working

overtime (and without sleep: "Nor day, nor night, no rest" (2.3.1)) to demonstrate most

perversely that "Sicilia cannot show herself overkind to Bohemia" (1.1.18). To this

strain he adds the workload of redirecting the hostility he felt towards Polixenes against

his wife:

> for the harlot king
>
> Is quite beyond mine arm, out of the blank
>
> And level of my brain, plot-proof; but she
>
> I can hook to me – say that she were gone,
>
> Given to the fire, a moiety of my rest
>
> Might come to me again. (2.3.4-9)

Displayed here is rhetoric which constitutes a subject's incipient awareness that his

jealousy is a fictional enterprise, and built upon sand. Polixenes, being in "himself too

mighty" (20) to accuse and to be ritually punished, loses his concreteness and escapes

Leontes's "plot." A figure that was earlier dramatised as a living, breathing playmate (and later an adulterer) has become "the harlot king," a cardboard cut-out who now occupies a separate chunk of reality. Sicilia can no longer conceive of targeting a man who is "out of the blank/ And level of [his] brain." Given this, it is inevitable that "present vengeance" (22) must be taken on Hermione.

The vengeance which Leontes conceives against his wife is a highly visible and grievously punitive one. It is forthrightly proposed as a ritual solution to the alleged violation of "distinguishment" (2.1.86) for which she is held responsible: Hermione is to be "[g]iven to the fire" (2.3.8). The sacrificial character of this "gift" is later to be augmented with the burning of a bastard daughter: "[T]ake it hence/ And see it instantly consumed with fire" (132/133). Both cremations are intended to bring Sicilia "a moiety of… rest" (8) by annihilating those subjects within the state which appear to have threatened the purity of the king's lineage. The "affection" (1.1.20) between two princes (Leontes and Polixenes) that "[could not] choose but branch" (20/21) when they became two kings has now curdled into the "[a]ffection" (1.2.137) of a remaining (insomniac; curse-rich) king. The king (now a tyrant) uses this affection to tell himself stories about cuckolds, harlot kings, and instant sacrificial endings. These stories are so good – their language so intoxicating – that they convince him that they are being enacted; he believes he must partake of this enaction (by condemning Hermione) in order to bring them to a close.

Alternative endings to Leontes's stories are rejected because they are constituted in a language far less obsessive and wakeful. Even endings fashioned in ritual language fail to gain traction in his world. Paulina's declaration that she "come[s to him] with words as medicinal as true,/ Honest as either, to purge him of that humour/ That presses

him from sleep" (2.3.36-9) is an example of this. The urgency of Sicilia's drive to singularise by eliminating those closest to him is too manic to be allayed (Taylor 51). There is a terrible irony in the fact that it is at a time when the king should be the most secure in his "issue" – he has one son alive, after all, and a second child on the way – that he should decide to purge the issue-securing environment of his court.

In liminal terms it is tricky to make sense of Leontes as a ritual *subject* at this point. In the "rigor" (3.2.112) of his tyranny he is the one responsible for improvising the punishment mechanisms that will send others to their various dooms. What he hopes is that by sacrificing Hermione and Perdita he will bring himself peace of mind. The idea is not to teach the victims of his jealousy a lesson, but to separate them from his world for good (Cavell 146; Snyder 7). Aggregation is not part of the tyrant's policy. His only strategy is to preserve his "issue" (Mamillius), and therein find peace. Having said that, he *is* setting in motion a chain of events which will require him to perform a ritual subjectivity; he will have to become an "issueless" subject doing penance for the damage wrought in his folly. This penance will begin with the retraction of story: "I have too much believed mine own suspicion" (3.2.148).

The movement from Grand Inquisitor, as it were, to penance-maker extraordinaire, when it comes, is striking. One minute he is baying for his spouse's blood, and the next he is promising that "tears shed…/ Shall he [his] recreation" (3.2.236/237) evermore. Having once imprisoned Hermione, Leontes now goes on to "shut up himself" (4.1.19). The performance of his "saint-like sorrow" (5.1.2) is undoubtedly an important constitutive element of the play. It is also important (and play-constitutive) that the audience doesn't get to see it – from 3.3 to 5.1 Leontes is absent from the stage. This fact leads us to interrogate the notion that he shuts up *himself*. Is it not the play that

"shuts [him] up" (4.1.19) in order that he perform his sorrows precisely by being unable to perform them for us? This is a difficult question. I argue that a study of Leontes's "functional" absence will benefit from an examination of why the broken state of Sicilia underwent such a violent separation phase in the first place. I also recommend that, once this question is better framed, attention then be turned to the liminal counter to the opening suite of rupture.

It is often pointed out that the career of Leontes's destructive paranoia begins with his failure to persuade (Enterline 17/18). His wife's success at entreating Polixenes to extend his stay at the court foregrounds her husband's perlocutory weakness ("At my request he would not" (1.2.86)). And it is true that this weakness stretches back to the beginnings of his relationship with his queen: "Three crabbèd months had soured themselves to death/ Ere I could make thee open thy white hand/ And clap thyself my love" (101-103). There is no question that the aetiology of Leontes's ferocious jealousy is tied in with history of performative impotence. A perceived weakness with respect to suchlike speech acts may well explicate the manifest surrender to the license of cuckoldese that goes on to overwhelm persuasion. For the time being, however, I would like to concentrate on an aspect of paranoia that transcends Leontes's personal infelicities. I wish to consider how sexual paranoia – a paranoia concerning "issue" – distributes its subject-constitutive effects across the aristocratic body as a whole. I wish to argue, furthermore, that it is the very generality of this paranoia that calls for the massive structural enterprise of a liminal counter to it.

The aristocratic obsession with supervising its own reproduction in this play is not limited to the "wild" projections of a not yet penitent tyrant. Leontes in full "saint-like sorrow" (5.1.2) is perfectly capable of circulating remainders that purity of the

blood-line is of the utmost importance. When Sicilia meets Florizel for the first time, for example, he is duty-bound to comment on his likeness to Polixenes: "Your mother was most true to wedlock, Prince,/ For she did print your royal father off,/ Conceiving you" (5.1.123-125). Behind this compliment is the trace of a speech act made long before, accusing a mother of not so truly printing. Sixteen years of fasting in perpetual winter has by no means produced a sexual paranoia-free zone in this speaker. And the obsession with "printing off" is obviously shared by Polixenes, who we have studied threatening Perdita with briars (4.4.405).

Outside of the kings themselves, there is a perfect illustration of the vehemence which a potential breach in reproduction inspires when Antigonus recruits his offspring as co-sufferers with Hermione should the latter's guilt be established:

> Be she honour-flawed –
>
> I have three daughters: the eldest is eleven,
>
> The second and the third, nine and some five;
>
> If this prove true, they'll pay for't. By mine honour,
>
> I'll geld 'em all; fourteen they shall not see
>
> To bring false generations. They are co-heirs,
>
> And I had rather glib myself than they
>
> Should not produce fair issue. (2.1.143-150)

One might think this is an over-reaction. But in this society it is not. Antigonus vows to neuter all his girls. He keeps the threat of having to self-castrate ("glib") in reserve simply to demonstrate how gravely he treats the potential dishonour of their flawed

conceptions. That this violence is promised in the faith that Hermione is true does not obscure the fact that it is promised. The blatancy of a father (even rhetorically) taking his daughters hostage in the name of revenging the highest representative of their sex (the queen), and subjecting them to such a gruesome undifferentiation, is aggravated by its representation as a standardised trade: "they'll pay for it."

While the women of the Sicilian court avoid the language of violence in promulgating the importance of "fair issue," there is no question that they participate fully in this ideology. When, at her trial, Hermione accuses Leontes of practising "rigor, and not law" (3.2.112) she valorises that law that ensures the stable replication of the state.[8] There is no surprise there, of course, for she is "a great king's daughter,/ [And] mother to a hopeful prince" (37/8). While the queen shows signs of rejecting certain aspects of patriarchal subject-constitution – by "not [being] prone to weeping as our sex/ Commonly are" (2.1.108/9), for example, and by insisting that "a lady's 'verily''s/ As potent as a lord's" (1.2.49/50) – there is no indication that she is any the less unrelenting than her husband when it comes to making sure that kings become kings (and shepherds clowns) (Erickson 825). Paulina, for her part, plays the royal "printing off" routine straight down the line when she bears the infant Perdita to the reluctant witness of her horn-obsessed father:

> Behold, my lords,
>
> Although the print be little, the whole matter

---

[8] This is not to say that Hermione is unaware of the tensions that the law she valorises force her to confront. The analysis of Ruth Vanita brings this awareness out (315): "As a queen, Hermione appears to be the most powerful woman in her society. But this power is extremely tenuous, as it depends on the whims of her husband. She bemoans the fact that although she is the daughter of a king, the wife of a king, and the mother of a prince, she can be so easily unqueened, thrown into prison, defamed and threatened with death."

> And copy of the father – eye, nose, lip,
>
> The trick of's frown (2.3.97-100).

Reading in this court is, first and foremost, reading for signs of replication.

So pervasive is the conservative impulse to supervise the begetting of the old state as the new that Leontes's hyper-application of it was a morbid development waiting to happen. I have, previously, made mention of the "white cells" of the king's rhetoric (p. 73) and this analogy deserves to be revisited. The aristocracy's supervision of propagation in this play is such that it is suspicion-friendly, to say the least. Leontes's over-reaction belongs with the discursive practices of these states (Sicilia; Bohemia). If we are going to stay with the metaphor of an immune-system malfunctioning, then it makes sense to say that Hermione has been so good ("Good Queen, my lord, good Queen, I say 'good Queen'" (2.3.59)) that Leontes's "false-issue" killers (white cells) have gone in search of violators. So geared up were they to find something that they have found and attacked a healthy organ of state (the king's body), viz., his "good Queen." Paulina's verdict, therefore, that Leontes's jealousies were "[f]ancies too weak for boys, too green and idle/ For girls of nine" (3.2.178/9) is inaccurate. The king's "fancies" are the overconditioned units of state practice, and they would just have easily turned on "girls of nine" as vengeance for any illegitimate "behind-door work" (3.3.71) as would have Paulina's glibbing husband.

The sensitivity that exists with respect to the supervising of hierarchical propagation in *The Winter's Tale* is a morbid one: patriarchs are quite prepared to sacrifice violators wherever a weak link in structure is felt to exist. The morbid sensitivity toward "cracks" in hierarchy produces behaviours which, as we have seen,

eliminate suspect propagators. This elimination, in the Sicilian case-study, results in an all but heirless king shedding tears for recreation (3.2.236). Leontes as penitent is "le[d away]/ To… sorrows" (239/40) which are obliged to be heavily repetitive, heinously reduced in colour, and shorn of performative traction. This will be a monarch who no longer rules through language, and who no longer seeks to short-circuit persuasion by co-opting fantasies and levying exercitives. Tyranny has exhausted such performative muscle. Simple, prayer-rich patterns will have to replace an assertiveness grown monstrous; tears will fall but they will not *move* anything, they will simply serve to commemorate. The most drastic revision of the licence Sicilia has to "swell" himself in speech comes with his removal from the stage entire. *The Winter's Tale*, for a period of time, "shuts up [Leontes] himself" (4.1.19) within it. The king's decentering is constituted by his absence. Project Sicilia is sucked off the stage into a liminal phase which is represented in its silence.

One *limen* is produced, therefore, in a realm's dramatic expulsion. All who remain in that world (Sicilia) enter a state which is distraught and emptied of authority and presence. There is one subject drawn from the pre-liminal version of this world, however, who is to be sacrificed to inaugurate its replacement: Antigonus. Before he is torn apart, however, Antigonus has work to do. As "the thrower-out/ Of [the] poor babe" (3.3.28/29) it is required that he experience an unclassifiable visitation of her mother. Although the apparition brokers nothing clearer than paradox, it does underwrite the opening up of an alternative phenomenology:

To me comes a creature,

Sometimes her head on one side, some another.

I never saw a vessel of like sorrow

So filled and so becoming (3.3.18-21)

That Antigonus must see Hermione, and see her like this, constitutes a liminal moment, with the figure seen appearing in such an ambiguous guise (*one side/ another; filled/ becoming*). As Gareth Roberts points out, Antigonus's construction of Hermione here prefigures "the later spectacle of the moving statue [given that] the apparition is rather like an automaton" in its behaviour – with its head bobbing around, and its eyes like "two spouts" (3.3.25) (136).

The "appear[ance]" (3.3.17) of Hermione thus constitutes a kind of liminal subjectivity that guides Antigonus and the infant Perdita unto the impossible coast of Bohemia. It is the infant alone who survives this transition. The sailors who brought this pair here receive no grander fate than to be "mocked" (90) and "flap-dragoned" (89) by the sea. Antigonus is picked out for special treatment. If we recall how patriarchially upright and surgical his performative reflexes were with respect to his young daughters, then I believe we can see why it is appropriate that his being sacrificed marks the present suppression of the Sicilian regime. The "law" (3.2.112) which was that system has to take a further step back. The unrelenting pressure of that structure has to be bought off through some act of resonant dismemberment. And the roaring bear is quite happy to oblige.

Directors of the play have often noted that the problem with the bear is not so much simulating its famous pursuit of a grey-bearded victim, but getting it on stage in the first place (Snyder and Curren-Aquino 30-33; O'Connor 382). Greg Doran's 1998/99 RSC production instituted a plausible solution to this representational hurdle by

having the beast on stage from 3.3.1 until the due end of that Antigonus-eating act (Doran). The creature looms behind a tarpaulin-like structure until its hunger triggers a bone-enveloping movement forward. Dramaturgically this is a welcome strategem; semiotically I don't think it goes far enough. For me, the bear should have been on the stage from the outset (with Archidamus's "If" (1.1.1)). And in a sense it has been. As a living symbol of the inertia of nature, if you will, the bear bides its time in the language of the play until it comes time to swing those exit-bound paws. Mention of the "sleepy drinks" (1.1.12) that the Bohemian courtiers must serve their Sicilian counterparts lest the latter find the former's welcome "insufficien[t]" (13) has the bear in its cave. Hermione's problematisation of the scrupulousness of the case against her has the bear snoozing beneath the magistrate's bed: "[I]f I shall be condemned/ Upon surmises, all proofs sleeping else/ But what your jealousies awake, I tell you/ 'Tis rigor, and not law" (3.2.109-112). The hibernating bear supplies the perfect semiotic counterweight to the insomniac belligerence of a tyrant-husband. It is brutally apt that it should awake to signal the dramatic constitution of a new form of sociality, and a less egregiously political kind of discourse.

It may seem as if I am pushing for an interpretation of the sheep-shearing scene (4.4) that sees it as the descending structure of a pastoral universe that squashes the paranoiac discourse we have hitherto met. With the bear's rousing, sleepiness wakes to engulf tyrannical insomnia and suspicion. And there is something attractive about such an interpretation. But it must be noted that the pastoral is infiltrated very early on by a Bohemian version of aristocratic paranoia. Everything is not simply "a gallimaufry of gambols" (4.4.309) hereabouts (Snyder and Curren-Aquino 19): potential cracks have appeared in the discursive repertoires of Polixenes's state, and he and Camillo enter the

pastoral to mend the rupture. With this entry of power the destructurating pressures of liminality are immediately contested.

The potential crack in Bohemia's articulation of power is constituted in Florizel's being "less frequent to his princely exercises than formerly he hath appeared" (4.2.26/7). Power congeals around such performative work ("exercises") when it is undertaken in authorised environments. And the repetition of this work, turn about, nourishes the authority. Princely neglect in this regard threatens the seamless reproduction of authority's performance. Knowledge of this neglect has reached the king thanks to his network of spies:

> POLIXENES   I have considered so much, Camillo, and with some care, so far that I have eyes under my service which look upon his removedness, from whom I have this intelligence: that he is seldom from the house of a most homely shepherd, a man, they say, that from very nothing, and beyond the imagination of his neighbours, is grown into an unspeakable estate.
>
> CAMILLO   I have heard, sir, of such a man, who hath a daughter of most rare note. The report of her is extended more than can be thought to begin from such a cottage.
>
> POLIXENES   That's likewise part of my intelligence – but, I fear, the angle that plucks our son thither. (4.2.28-38)

The rehearsal of courtly suspicion here neatly underwrites the semiotic grammar of power in this domain. Language must embed in particular contexts for it to reproduce

subjects in the correct manner (Althusser 170-176; Butler 2005 10). A prince's "removedness" compromises his aristocratic being. The ontological implications of this are made clear in the account of the homely shepherd's enrichment: fortune has taken him from "very nothing" into "unspeakab[ility]" (33). The wealth accruing to such a subject takes him beyond the classification of neighbour and ruler alike. Such "grow[th]" (33) signals a threat to the system that authorises particular speakabilities for subjects. The prince's father does not take kindly to Florizel's commerce with subjects who violate this authorisation. The difference the king sees between pastoral and courtly subjects is genealogically maximal. He articulates this maximality to his son directly:

> For thee, fond boy,
>
> If I may ever know thou dost sigh
>
> That thou no more shall see this knack (as never
>
> I mean thou shalt), we'll bar thee from succession,
>
> Not hold thee of our blood, no, not our kin,
>
> Farre than Deucalion off. (4.4.406-411)

The voice of structure (difference; aristocracy) enters the *limen* in the hopes of retrieving its own. Were Florizel's subjectivity to destructure to the point where his difference from a shepherd's daughter ("this knack") were compromised, then Polixenes would introduce a new difference to the Bohemian court by ridding it of its prince. The battle here is a battle to produce, retain, and regulate subjects.

 In looking for subjects who are *limen*-produced in this play, I think it makes sense to divide candidates into two groups: those who are not passing through the *limen*, and

those who are. Those subjects who belong in the limen reserve the right to pass out of it to something else, of course, but they cannot be said to be liminally made therein. Clown and Shepherd, for example, are so successful in their movement away from the "very nothing" (4.2.32) of rusticity that they catapult into a rebirth that has them emoting with privileged secretions. So Clown:

> … I was a gentleman born before my father: for the King's son took me by the
> hand and called me brother; and then the two kings called my father brother; and
> then the Prince my brother and the Princess my sister called my father father, and
> so we wept; and there was the first gentlemanlike tears that ever we shed.
> (5.2.118-123)

This representation pithily captures the fantasy of a general reduction of differentiating properties, both genealogical and class-specific. The diacritical basis for naming the positions in various hierarchical slots emulsifies when sons come before fathers, kings brother shepherds and sisters who are no sisters weep with bumpkin nobles. Such collisions flag the high water mark of a kind of Turnerian *communitas* (Deflem 14/15). The production of subjects (noble Clown; noble Shepherd) with this aggregation does not justify a reading of the pastoral as their *limen*, however. The rustics have moved from one world (pastoral) to another (court), this is true; but their liminal phase has been that zone of unspeakability bridging their finding of the fardel and their being welcomed into a bawling elite.

For a satisfying reading of Bohemian pastoral as *limen* we could do worse than track the changes in subjectivity of Florizel and Perdita. The changes mooted here

correspond, I will argue, both to their pre-liminal conditioning environments and to those in which they aggregate at the end of the play. The unwanted "brat" (2.3.92) Perdita, expelled from Sicilia, has "grown in grace" (4.1.24) and has become, much like Marina before her, a young woman of universal accomplishment. Time, the Chorus, requires us to turn our attention to "what to her *adheres*" (28) (my italics). I argue that this trope accentuates a useful approach to her constructedness *qua* subject, as, if you will, *princess-from-Shepherd's-daughter*. Items which build up her subjectivity are literally stuck upon her as she moves, in her "unusual weeds" (4.4.1), from "poor lowly maid" to "queen" of the feast "[m]ost goddess-like pranked up" (9; 5; 9). The only problem with Perdita's transformation here is that she seems to have inherited something of her father's acute sensitivity to the cracks in class difference. Where Florizel sees "jollity" in her performance as "queen," she sees "dread" (25; 17). She fears above all what would happen were Bohemia to "look to see his work [Florizel], so noble,/ Vilely bound up" (21/2). Perdita is curious as to "[w]hat [the king] would… say" (22) in such a situation. It doesn't take her long to find out.

To begin, the "prank" of Perdita draws the attention of disguised nobles only in so far as they describe her as set radically apart from her surroundings. Polixenes notes, for example, that there is "[n]othing she does or seems/ But smacks of something greater than herself,/ Too noble for this place" (4.4.157-159). This kind of "sparks of nature" rhetoric harks back to Camillo's comment that "[t]he report of her is extended more than can be thought to begin from such a cottage" (4.2.35/6). Such differentiating speech acts dramatise the anxiety felt by witnesses who can neither constatively, nor ideologically, process performance that belies its context. Perdita can be "the prettiest low-born lass that ever/ Ran on greensward" (156/7), but that prettiness ought not be

allied to behaviour that calls into question her station. Any further in the direction of "queen[ly]… inch[ing]" (429) and she will plough straight into the "unspeakability" that marooned her "father." Aristocratic Bohemia's thesis is that performance cannot alter essence; in short, that subjects are not produced, they are born.

Florizel seems to want to argue the opposite. When Polixenes threatens to disown him should he persist with his wooing of Perdita, the prince recovers his poise in the language of continuity:

> I am but sorry, not afeared; delayed,
>
> But nothing altered. What I was, I am:
>
> More straining on for plucking back, not following
>
> My leash unwillingly. (4.4.443-446)

In spite of this wish's note of defiance, however, the linearity it produces as desirable testifies to the speaker's deeply conservative instincts. For all the shape-changing games he has found the energy to play – one thinks of his "green Neptune/ [Playing] a ram" (28/9), for example – his subjectivity has not "grown" a jot. Doricles has forged no difference in Florizel: *What I was*, *I am*. What he desires in Perdita is precisely congruent with his impulse to keep things as they are:

> When you do dance, I wish you
>
> A wave o'th' sea, that you might ever do
>
> Nothing but that: move still, still so,
>
> And own no other function. Each your doing,

So singular in each particular,

Crowns what you are doing in the present deeds,

That all your acts are queens. (4.4.140-146)

The employment of key metonymic constituents of state in this fantasy ("[c]rowns"; "queens") betrays how comprehensively the desiring prince is built out of tropes that protect, repeat and nourish a monarchy of most singular disposition. The pastoral is well and truly squashed by the courtly in this imaginary. The only subversive aspect of Florizel's projecting "still[ness]" into his "queen" (Perdita) is that she is none such, to the best of his knowledge. And what he overlooks is the importance of this feature of "necessit[y]" (38). His "queen" does not: she is perfectly aware that "th' power of the King" (36) will reinforce the distance of the difference between two lovers when the times comes.

Having studied two dramatic subjects passing through the pastoral limen, I wish now to turn to those who are long term inhabitants. Clown and Shepherd have been discussed in terms of their emergence *from* this liminal field. By far the most important of those who still belong there is Autolycus, the balladmonger and highwayman "littered under Mercury" (4.3.24/5). If Florizel proved winter bear-like in his aspirations, then Autolycus flies over gadfly and bricoleur – he is "a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles" (25) – before "settl[ing] only in rogue" (88). If Perdita qualifies as a "changeling" (4.4.657), then Autolycus sails into view as a changeling-*maker*, as the very antithesis of inertia and essence (Palfrey 232; Weimann 1994 799). While saying this, however, it is important to remember that he, too, is *between* stations with respect to the ruling, station-conferring class: "I have served Prince Florizel and in my time

wore three-pile, but now I am out of service" (4.3.13/14). By no means adverse to wearing three-pile again, Autolycus must be treated as an interested party when it comes to his role as liminal problematisor of structure. He never immunises himself against the allure of "service," knowing full well that demand for "trumpery" (4.4.576) may fall away when "the sweet o' the year" (4.3.3) has passed. As a subject he is kept on his toes by the quicksilver logics of the anti-sententiae that make him make himself up ("I see this is the time that the unjust man doth thrive" (4.4.645)). Whereas pre-liminal Sicilia and Bohemia constitute themselves in paranoid discursivities alert to the rupture of difference, Autolycus is an exemplification of the preference to dabble in both structure and liminality alike.

There are a number of lenses through which I wish to study the subjectivity-pressuring attributes of Autolycus. The first constructs itself in the burlesquing of poor Antigonus's dismemberment (whose name he part-confiscates: A----us). The mirroring of this mauling is splendidly exercised. It begins with the cheat the rogue practises on Clown; this cheat depends on Autolycus rolling around on the ground clutching a very particular anatomical item – "O good sir, softly, good sir! I fear, sir, my shoulder-blade is out" (4.3.67/8). This item revisits one earlier signified in the same Clown's report: "And then for the land-service, to see how the bear tore out his shoulder-bone, how he cried to me for help and said his name was Antigonus, a nobleman" (3.3.86-88). No bear attacks Autolycus, but he nonetheless clutches that self-same body part ripped from Antigonus. It is by such paralleling means that the "cheat" of a ritual performance subsidises a peddler's journey to a liminal sheep-shearing by virtue of it emptying a rustic's pockets. Two performative streams – and the drawings of attention to two shoulders – pertaining to the larger ritual structure of the play cross over at this point;

and one stream (Autolycus's) shamelessly interrogates the other.

In studying the generally subversive features of Autolycus's dramatising of the pastoral what is notable is the omnivorousness of his enterprise. He petitions subjects to change themselves acquisitively in his broadcasting of kolportage: "Come buy of me, come, come buy, come buy!" (4.4.224). The stance he takes towards the subject-changing properties of his "peddler's excrement" – "inkles, caddisses, cambrics, lawns" (204/5) – is read as belonging to something wholly uplifting: "[W]hy he sings [his wares] over as they were gods or goddesses. You would think a smock were a she-angel, he so chants to the sleeve-hand and the work about the square on't" (206/7). The notion of a merchant singing (breathing divine life) into his goods is ritualistic; and the occult character of any subsequent vendition prefigures the ballad circulated about the "usurer's wife… brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burden" (251/2). The liminal pressures of ballads hereabouts chart movements all over the place. Women give birth to Gold (and not Mercury), and then they must devour "adder's heads and toads carbonadoed" (253) to compensate. Subjects coalesce in the bawdy of "'Jump her and thump her'" (194/5) and "'Whoop, do me no harm, good man'" (197), before escaping the logic of difference altogether with fish appearing "forty thousand fathom above water" (264/5). What all of these songs have in common is that they tend to eat away at structure by confounding its rhetorical elaboration in difference and reason.

Autolycus broadcasts the attitude and disseminates the means for subjects to defy structure. He himself is a master of imitation and role-playing. We have seen Florizel and Perdita engage in much the same thing. Even Polixenes and Camillo "prank" themselves down to infiltrate the pastoral. With its "greening" Bohemia thus instantiates a world whose subjects are far more carefree and protean than they ever would be in

paranoid Sicilia. Of course, this block pastoral is a seasonal manifestation; when the "sweet o' the year" (4.3.3) sours then the prerogatives of necessity and essence will return. And this point raises questions concerning the ontologising potential of the *limen* under discussion. Does it offer genuine remedy to the pathological anxieties of the court, or is it a mere temporising? A positive answer here is consistent with utopian readings. Is the state not using the pastoral interlude to vaccinate itself against the possibility of a full-scale overthrow of the enabling conditions of difference? A positive answer here is consistent with containment readings. For the purposes of my thesis both questions boil down to the next: Does this *limen* produce subjects?

At this point it is worth remembering that a *limen* is not a *limen* if it does not produce subjects. If the sheep-shearing scene and its ancillary episodes (3.3; 4.3) fail to produce subjects who make a lasting difference to the pathology of difference, then these dramatic representations are non-liminal. I have intimated that Polixenes, for one, is unaffected by the pastoral experience. The "boy eternal" (1.2.64) in Polixenes has long been suppressed. Are there any signs that this subject has changed as a result of his emerging from potentially liminal commerce with shepherds, saltiers (4.4.308), and greensward-running maidens? I do want to suggest that there are signs of change: they concern the response that both Polixenes and Camillo make when the fardel is opened (in report: 5.2.2), and reconciliatory channels between certain kings and their heirs is exposed. Both subjects fall into a kind of trance at this point that has them "staring on one another to tear the cases of their eyes" (10/11); they procede to articulate their befuddlement in mime:

There was speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture; they looked

as if they had heard of a world ransomed or one destroyed. A notable passion of wonder appeared in them, but the wisest beholder that knew no more but seeing could not say if th' importance were joy or sorrow; but in the extremity of the one it must needs be. (5.2.11-16)

The distancing effect of this multiplying of perspectives superadds to the ambivalence dramatised. We are informed (by a second party) that even those most gifted at witness ("the wisest beholder") could make neither head nor tail of what was seen. Why not? Why would the identity of a particular "extremity" be something beyond their ability to clarify in "dumbness"? The inarticulateness of Bohemia here is repeated when he and Leontes meet, Sicilia himself demonstrating the same pendulum-like indeterminacy as his brother/ rival:

THIRD GENTLEMAN Did you see the meeting of the two kings?

SECOND GENTLEMAN No.

THIRD GENTLEMAN Then you have lost a sight which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of. There you might have beheld one joy crown another, so and in such manner that it seemed sorrow wept to take leave of them, for their joy waded in tears. There was casting up of eyes, holding up of hands, with countenance of such distraction that they were to be known by garment, not by favour. Our King, being ready to leap out of himself for joy and his found daughter, as if that joy were now become a loss, cries, 'O, thy mother, thy mother!' (5.2.34-45)

It is difficult to pin down the reason for this indeterminacy. Such has been the

character of the various "disserver[ments]" (5.3.155) in the play that dramatic subjects have been traumatised wholesale, I grant this. This fact may have thrown various emotional compasses into disarray. It seems that the performative repertoire of emotional signifiers has been flattened, and co-ordinates in that repertoire transposed. Those observing this reconciliatory Babel clutch at two hermeneutical extremes, and find it difficult to plump for one over the other. Decisions concerning royal identity are clawed back to the brute recognition of "garment, not by favour" (43). If you are carrying a sceptre, then you are obviously a king; if a sheep-hook, then not. Language as maker and reinforcer of aristocratic boundaries has taken a step back. How can we account for this?

I am going to argue that for Sicilia and Bohemia the indeterminacy dramatised in 5.2 constitutes a liminal episode. The difference that keeps the state ticking over *is* problematised at this point. The binary structure that keeps "joy" and "sorrow" apart has been compromised to the extent that one can be confused for the other. That each marks an extremity can be intuitively grasped without it being the case that the identity of either extremity is known. This indeterminacy is aporematic and it suspends the frictionless translation of difference into speech act-constitutive power. A liminal state has been produced thanks to the extended running of two separate liminal projects. The first manifested itself in the extended off-stage penance of Leontes and what remained of his court. This *limen* was dramatised by the promises made before its instantiation and the descriptions constituting its final stages. Both dramatising components pointed to language and behaviour that was repetitive, prayer-rich and silence-golden. The second liminal project arrives with the pastoral of Bohemia. Here a paranoiac discourse of fantasising, cursing and banishing made way for a language that dismembered inertia

and revoked the performative deadweight of essence. Both Leontes and Polixenes are made to wait until this moment (5.2), however, until their subjectivities are produced in the liminal scene. Hitherto Sicilia and Bohemia have been zealous supervisors of difference; now they prove unable to specify the differences they perform for others to see, interpret and reproduce. Is the world they make one ransomed, or one destroyed?

Perhaps in the end this question doesn't matter. If difference has been momentarily problematised, then it soon returns with a vengeance. And the figure around whom and in whom this difference is concretised is Sicilia's "good Queen" (2.3.59). Up until this point Hermione has occupied a second-order liminal slot within the *limen* of penance-fashioning. She has been "ke[pt]…/ Lonely, apart" (5.3.17/18). Her resuscitation is designed to put the Humpty Dumpty of Sicilia back together again. There is a sense in which Hermione herself never participated fully within the difference-oversupervising world of old Sicilia. The language her husband spoke was, famously, "a language that [she] underst[oo]d not" (3.2.77). But the praise that has constructed her as a subject sets her on a pedestal long before she literalises this metaphor in becoming "stone." This praise has groomed her to be the focus of the state's recuperation. Polixenes, for example, noted that Leontes's jealousy was "for a precious creature [and a]s she's rare/ Must it be great" (1.2.447/8). Paulina, for her part, is continually involved in rhetorically manufacturing the "unparalleled" Hermione: the "good Queen" is as "peerless" as Sicilia is "issueless" (5.1.16; 93; 173). Convincing Leontes that there are "no more such wives" as Hermione entails that he will have "therefore no wife," and this logic obliterates the liveliness not only of all that can see but of all that can be seen: "Stars, stars,/ And all eyes else dead coals!" (56; 67/8). It shows, furthermore, tyranny objectifying itself in a universally monist reflex; from now

on, it is to be Hermione or nothing.[9]

The statue scene builds up great force by playing with the idea of the liminal state. One of the wittiest mimetic trademarks of the sculptor is his adding to the subject's perfection by etching in sixteen years' wrinkles (Garber 849). This touch helps persuade witnesses that the art work retains its prospects for "growth." The "carver's excellence" (5.3.30) in this respect is assisted by speakers who insist upon addressing the statue as if it had the capacity to respond. Leontes invites the "stone" to "chide" him for saying "indeed/ Thou art Hermione," in addition to reading "rebuke" into that object "for being more stone than [he]" (24/5; 37/8). Perdita, genuflecting, also anticipates a vocal response: "And do not say 'tis superstition, that/ I kneel and then implore her blessing" (43/4). Such prosopopeiac efforts reproduce the logical concession made by Cerimon to his stirring block (Roberts 132/3), namely that, if one addresses an object, one there and then performatively conditions that object for reply.[10] There hardly seems any need for Paulina and her stepwise marking of those moments at which a further breach of representation logic is due. Nonetheless, she delivers these and she delivers them po-faced: "No longer shall you gaze on't, lest your fancy,/ May think anon it moves" (60/1); "My lord's almost so far transported that/ He'll think anon it lives" (68/9). Her custodial discourse primes for emotional responses in the "gaze[r]" – "I could afflict you further" (75); "[R]esolve you/ For more amazement" (86/7) – that are consistent with the suspenseful ratcheting-up of expectations:

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[9] Granted, Perdita arrives in a *that-which-is-lost-will-soon-be-found* mode to provide her mother with a rival "paragon" (5.1.152); but a daughter's paragonality is not what the state is looking for.

[10] It works both ways, in a sense: if you speak to a block, then that speaking is wont to astonish you. Michael Riffaterre draws out just this reciprocity – "the symmetrical structure of prosopopeia" – when studying de Man on Milton's epitaph to Shakespeare (112): "[B]y making the dead speak, the living are struck dumb – they too become the monument."

What you can make her do

I am content to look on; what to speak

I am content to hear; for 'tis as easy

To make her speak as move. (5.3.91-94)

What all the aristocratic subjects present understand is that the license to move and to speak is produced in those performative contexts for which speakers are collaboratively responsible (Enterline 22). This does not entail that speakers know exactly what felicity conditions (in Austin's terms) they are brokering, but it does entail that without their participation such felicities would be null and void. Hermione's revival is very much in their hands and they behave "faith[fully]" (95).

The notion that Leontes, Polixenes and others are performatively responsible for Hermione's recovery problematises whatever miraculous traits a reader may wish to confer upon the event. Equally so, it makes somewhat redundant that welcomely anthologiseable snippet from Paulina that seems to trigger Hermione's stirring: "It is required/ You do awake your faith" (5.3.94/5). If the "faith" in question is already awoken in the discursive practices that the community uses to produce its own likelihoods, then there is clearly no need to add some veneer of spectacularity to procedings in order to get them off the ground. Closer inspection of the relevant speech act involved here, however, demonstrates that any alleged redundancy is edited out in the telling. Were a relative clause marker present to draw to the content of what is "required," then this would not be the case. Were Paulina's statement this next – It is required/ *That* you awake your faith – then the redundancy would jar. But what is produced is produced by allowing the second line to function as much as a constative as

a specifier of logical content: (1) It is required; and (2) You *do* awake your faith. Paulina's language has its finger on the performative button. The observers' faith in their language negotiates channels into which statue-relevant action may originate and "[b]equeath to death [its] numbness" (102).

Redemption is, I argue, a language game which chapel-bound aristocrats are teaching themselves to play. The real questions are: Why they are bothering to do this? Is such a longwinded performance necessary in order to satisfy the oracle? The point is that the genre-consistent shape of the oracle's having to be satisfied is very much a part of the game. Post-separation, as I have shown, the court has devoted energy to isolating, singularising and idealising Hermione. Her petrification is merely a symptom of this discursive collaboration. Sicilia and Bohemia now mobilise as many aristocratic voices as possible with a view to reshaping the discursive logic of their court. Hermione was progressively liminalised as the sexual paranoia of the court intensified, flew out of control, and then backtracked into penance. Her liminal status provided an index of the health of the state's self-monitoring apparatus while, at the same time, being part-constitutive of it. That phase of the operation characterised by putting her on a pedestal and making her "swell" with impossibly adulatory predicates ("peerless"; "unparalleled") has now climaxed with the ritual adumbration of her re-entry into the speech act community. Hermione has absorbed and concretised all the stillness and dumbness of gesture of those regal speakers who went too far in their policing of difference.[11] Sixteen mum and rigid years were the price paid for performative overkill.

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[11] Amelia Zurcher accords Paulina the instigatory role in the prophylactic manouevre of which I speak (911): "Faced with Leontes's jealousy, his unreasonable and excessive passion, Paulina names that passion as tyranny and offers the perfect antidote, the Stoic example of a sufferer turned literally to statue, as a way to counterbalance Leontes's peculiar excesses and heal not only his marriage but the body politic itself. But then, lest her Stoic lesson risk appearing overly belligerent to authority, she brings the statue back to life, defusing its potential challenge to authority and insuring that it be read instead as a humanist

The length of Hermione's static liminalisation indicates that this cycle – speak out; withdraw – is a generational rather than a seasonal one. The malfunction of regal white cells has caused significant damage to the propagatory success of the aristocracy, but it has not gone so far as to compromise the recovering of an heir altogether. Issue (Perdita) has been preserved and is now ready to be seen by the subject (Hermione) who has played the key role in its preservation. In case we might think that this bequeathing of foregrounding agency to the female marks a change in policy with respect to the costive policing of difference within the state, I think Leontes's *authorising* of his queen's return makes it clear that things are very much back to normal: "If this be magic, let it be an art/ Lawful as eating. (5.3.110/111). The king is not opening his court up to the difference-transcending wonder of some numinous reconciliation here, quite the reverse. "Magic" is being ideologised and routinised; it is being welcomed into the "law" of the state. "Rigor" (3.2.112), it is true, has been punished by the loss of authority over difference for a generation; what Hermione's descent inaugurates is a period of centralised, monogamous and issue-preserving paragonality. Granted, Hermione's status as pariah and "strumpet" (3.2.100) has been reversed; her faithfulness has now been comprehensively institutionalised, and she has become an almost saintly figure (O'Connor 374). Whatever "magic" was implicated in this reversal, however, has been well and truly corporatised by the monarch. A wider variety of discursive practices can now produce subjects in this society, but they are likely to be just as closely supervised by the state as ever they were.

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tool."

The Tempest: *Confinement, distantiation, and the visibilising of power.*

In the plays studied thus far, dramatic subjects are produced in environments that are geographically far-flung; the texts obey romance vectors inscribing fractures galore before reconciliation can be improvised. The liminal contexts brokered in these worlds of loss and expedient recovery are thus characterised by extreme phases of separation. Pericles washes up on many shores before his oracle can be wrung dry in repetition. The variously royal parties in *Cymbeline* undergo a violent decentering that robs them of individuality and liminalises them in the return to a description-rich court. In *The Winter's Tale* we find induced a pastoral which splits the hierachical obsessions of Sicilia and Bohemia clean in two before withdrawing to leave them the same. In each case key aristocratic subjects are obliged to leave a court in order that the symbolic distances within that court become more blatantly dramatised in the subjects' journeying around the play. The passages constituted in courtly absence can then accommodate the difference-mollifying properties of a climactic return. When it comes to *The Tempest*, this structural patterning receives a twist, for in this case the separation from the court is never shown and the return to it is only foreshadowed. The world of the play is dramatically actualised in the *islanding* of its agents, voices, sounds, and shapes. I argue that this concentration of subjects provides the opportunity to study their liminal production in ways that contrast neatly with other late romance forms.

The Tempest's island is a zone of concentrated dramatic form in that all of its subjects are here and here for the duration. With the exception of Caliban, Ariel and sundry "demi-puppets" (5.1.36) all the subjects that are constituted here are refugees. This locale is refuge for them because it is land and not sea. They came here either

against their will or as the result of maritime hazard. Prospero, Miranda and Sycorax came because they were banished. All of Alonso's party, for example, have been washed ashore and "[dispersed] in troops" (1.2.220). What next? Simple: all will stay put. There is nowhere else for them to be. Their subjectivity will be fashioned out of what they can make of this island, and vice versa (McAlindon 350; Troupp 116; Palfrey 138/9). Aristocratic subjects have been forcefully separated from their most familiar discursive backdrops; many of them will undergo a phase of radical disorientation – treadings "through forth-rights and meanders" (3.3.3) and "spell-stopp[ings]" (5.1.61) – and this phase threatens to reconstrue their subjectivity. They have been pushed into something of a no man's land, and their whole liminalisation speeded up. While this is true for the king's party, it is important to note that not all aristocratic subjects on this island follow identical ritual paths. Although it is true that, to a large extent, separation, *limen* and reconciliation are all crammed into the time and space of this island, and that all protagonists are subjectivised here, and here alone, there still exists room for them to play different liminal roles.

I will study dramatic subjects in terms of the roles they play. Clearly, the dominant subject in *The Tempest* is Prospero, a subject who manipulates the subjectivities of everybody else on the island. How these subjects are liminalised very much depends on how he expresses his authority. Prospero creates an environment – and a language – which islanded subjects must make sense of if they are to reach the aggregation phase. The challenge thrown down to subjects in this regard is taken on in various ways: while some are receptive to the strangeness of language they meet here, others rebel and conspire against the purchase it has on them. Where Ferdinand and Alonso, for example, learn to find value in the discourse of spells and masques, the two

groups of conspirators (Antonio's and Caliban's respectively) refuse to see anything even vaguely emancipatory in Prospero's articulations of power. Liminal subjectivities are constituted, therefore, in the responses produced to the various instantiations of Prospero's authority. It makes sense, given this, to begin my discussion with a study of his subjectivity.

How is Prospero's subjectivity liminalised? The magus, the caller-forth of "mutinous winds" (5.1.43), appears, near the end of the play, to renounce that mastery of the island he had most demonstrably achieved: "I'll break my staff,/ Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,/ And deeper than did ever plummet sound/ I'll drown my book" (54-57). In giving up his "rough magic," Prospero transposes himself back to "sometime Milan," and returns to a more socially discrete visibilising of authority with the wearing of "hat and rapier" (50; 86; 84). In sacrificing his occult power he slots back into his dukedom. He has drowned his *book*, but perhaps now he can return to his "library" (1.2.109). Such renunciation marks a solidarity with those who respond most magically to a more traditional brand of authority. That identity that is renounced has been forged in the liminal phase. The forging and the renouncing *constitute* this liminal phase. Milan is now to return to Milan without leaving the island. And such would seem to constitute his aggregation.

In studying Prospero *qua* liminal subject, let us start with the exposition of his separation from Milan. Milan anchored him to an identity ("Milan") which would have had to have been sustained in a repertoire of discursive practices. Detached from the office, the repertoire would need to fend for itself. In terms of how this detachment took place, Prospero claims that his absorption in the "liberal arts" (1.2.73) led to his "neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated/ To closeness, and the bettering of my mind"

(89/90). The move to "closeness" flags the withdrawal to a signifying praxis exhausting itself in much the same "turning o'er" of authorities in which Cerimon was so fulsomely engaged. The withdrawal, furthermore, has a physical dimension – "Me, poor man, my library/ Was dukedom large enough" (109/110) – and a political:

> those [arts] being all my study,
>
> The government I cast upon my brother,
>
> And to my state grew stranger, being transported
>
> And rapt in secret studies. (1.2.74-77)

The delegating of authority is represented as whatever duties and performances attach to an office being "cast upon" another. To speak of "cast[ing]" authority is to structure that which is cast as coherent, and therefore able to be thrown. That which is thrown is then assumed to survive the throw, and to be reproduced at a distance (perchance in a brother). There is a sense in which this structuring of what authority is speaks against its being constituted as a selection of *performances*. Whatever functions justify authority's being thought to belong to a coherent operation, what matters is that they hold together; what is downplayed is that what is held together may be a group of elastic and potentially independent discursive practices. To shape authority as something "castable" is therefore to de-theatricalise it.

Studied as an exercise in withdrawal from the arena of "worldly ends" (1.2.89), Prospero's casting of authority most resolutely *does not* adumbrate his revival of those "liberal arts" he will deploy on the island. His performance as magus rises and falls on how well he stage-manages waterspouts and fireballs, peacocky goddesses and born

devils (M Moore 503). His authority as Prospero (rather than as Milan) does negotiate a form of "closeness," but it negotiates it through a policy of tactical withdrawal and periodic visibility: his island "subjects" (1.2.342) are surveilled and punished both from a distance and up close (Baldo 118). Closeness for Prospero Magus means a panopticon closeness (Wilson 154) where "confederacy" against him is given the space to grow estranged to its own treasonous logic. But in the exposition of how he delegated governance to Antonio a different kind of closeness is being accentuated. Instead of a control freak retreating to the treetops to oversee the hapless conspiracies of those in his power, we get a bookworm retiring into his study. What brings about this change in his performance of "closeness"?

I suggest that it is the raw material of Prospero's power that changes his performance of "closeness" after he comes to the island. And what is the raw material of his power? The subjects he must produce and which are expected to reciprocate this production by producing him. As sovereign of a sovereignless zone, the magus produces subjects in a far more absolutist and frictionless manner than he could ever have done in Milan. With subject-production, an almost god-like power accrues to the aristocrat; it is just this power that Prospero ascribes to his brother in his conspiratorial improvising of a succession: "[He] new created/ The creatures that were mine, I say, or changed 'em,/ Or else new formed 'em" (1.2.81/2). Antonio as Milan is read as determined, what's more, to treat the creative onus of authority as something *performatively* creative: "To have no screen between this part he played,/ And him he played it for, he needs will be/ Absolute Milan" (107-109). Proxying no longer satisfies Antonio; he will have his being *in* Milan and not through Milan. The agglomeration of political subjects is thus read, not unnaturally, as a radical expansion of self:

He being thus lorded,

Not only with what my revènue yielded,

But what my power might else exact – like one

Who, having into truth by telling of it,

Made such a sinner of his memory

To credit his own lie – he did believe

He was indeed the duke, out o'th' substitution

And executing th' outward face of royalty

With all prerogative.

(1.2.97-105)

Acting as duke promotes a ducal self-belief, which self belief leads, turn about, to the more perfect execution of ducal performance. To sin in memory is no more than to refuse to detach the performance from the identity of the role being performed (Targoff; Plotz 817). Antonio embraces this behaviourist logic; Prospero sees a screen being dismantled illegitimately (Hunt 1989 36). Antonio's reading of aristocratic license denies essence, and collapses both "outward" and inward "face" (104) into one; the right to substitute becomes the exclusive right to manage authority-disseminating speech acts ("all prerogative"), and the ducal subject hits the ground running, creating subjects as he goes.

That Prospero's "neglecting [of] worldy ends" (1.2.89) and ceding of authority to Antonio resembles Vincentio's withdrawal from power in *Measure For Measure* has drawn critical attention (Skura 62; Wilson 153). The proxying self-abdication in

question also mirrors the kingly self-dividing of Lear. Prospero's error (as Lear's) is to assume that an essence of power can be kept over and above the circulating signifiers of that power. When kingship goes, however, it goes with those retinues of knights, speech acts, and discursive practices that once kept it alive (Geertz 124; Van Pelt 100/1). There is no remainder into which a cloistering duke or an unaccommodated king may vest an identity. In the case of Prospero, his banishment has him wash up in a largely subjectless zone. The "blue-eyed hag" (269) Sycorax is dead, having left behind her a litter of one (Caliban) – "For I am all the subjects that you have" (342/3). The massively subject-reduced predicament "sometime Milan" (5.1.86) finds himself in requires, therefore, the application of a uniquely creative subject-producing regime in order that the deficit be overcome (Orgel 4). And it is here, with this demand in mind, that Prospero puts his "liberal arts" to good use: he makes subjects (vassals). The vassals made thence construct for Prospero an authoritarian subjectivity which radiates its influence throughout the island.

The tension between the liberal and vassalising properties of Prospero's art concretises in the narratives of liberation on which much of the magus's authority depends. Time and again subjects are produced – and are reminded of their having been produced – in ways that call upon a *deconfinement* trope. Ariel, for example, becomes a subject for Prospero after his twelve-year imprisonment in the "cloven pine" (1.2.277) Ceres and Iris are likewise identified in terms of their having been drawn forth, and released, their pageant having run its course: "Spirits which by mine art/ I have from their *confines* called to enact/ My present fancies" (4.1.120/121) (my italics). Prospero, having been booted out of "closeness, and the bettering of [his] mind" (1.2.90), now takes advantage of his extirpation to reproduce deconfinement in the subjects he makes

fill the island. Ariel had refused the "grand hests" (274) of Sycorax, and had suffered for it. Prospero busts him out of that arboreal klink and the spirit is ready to do his bidding. We can imagine hordes of other "demi-puppet" subjects ensconced in variously picturesque states of carceration waiting for their master's call. Demi-picturesque Caliban is yet another subject called "forth" (316) by Prospero to engage in magus-serving performance:

> PROSPERO   Come on,
>
>   We'll visit Caliban, my slave, who never
>
>   Yields us kind answer.
>
> MIRANDA   'Tis a villain, sir,
>
>   I do not love to look on.
>
> PROSPERO   But as 'tis
>
>   We cannot miss him. He does make our fire,
>
>   Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices
>
>   That profit us. What ho! Slave! Caliban!
>
>   Thou earth, thou! Speak!
>
> CALIBAN (*Within*)   There's wood enough within.
>
> PROSPERO Come forth, I say; there's other business for thee.
>
>   Come thou tortoise, when? (1.2.309-317)

To correspond to Caliban's being physically hidden from view here is the myth of deconfinement. Both Prospero and Miranda promulgate the myth: father when he calls his subjects forth from their hiding places, daughter when she teaches Caliban language:

> Abhorrèd slave,
>
> Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
>
> Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
>
> Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
>
> One thing or other. When thou didst not, savage,
>
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
>
> A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes
>
> With words to make them known. (1.2.351-358)

Deconfinement can be constituted in the drawing of a "tortoise" from his cave, or, as here, in the exposing of a set of "meaning[s]." Either way, the same directionality is flagged: the nobles must bring vassalised subjects out from their hiddenness (Brown 59). Miranda argues that "gabbl[ing]" without the gabble being anchored to a concealed network of meanings is what makes the gabble gabble. The concealed meanings must be exteriorised in words for brutishness to be suppressed. When Prospero draws Caliban forth, he does so in order to fulfill "purposes" (357) less abstract: faggots must be fetched. The magus class will not stoop to perform such chores. What is brought to light in such a case is the fire that makes warm and visible the leisure of the *deconfinement* mythologisers. Concealment is, therefore, one pole in an ideological vector that has as its counterpart the nourishing of the concealing class. Prospero needs to confine his demi-puppets and slaves in order to call them forth and manifest his vassalising powers. The ideological translation of this manifestation of need takes the form of a myth that reads deconfinement as emancipatory, whereas in fact it is nothing of the sort. The

meanings of slaves are called forth to dovetail with the purposes of masters, just as the emancipation of spirits ties neatly in with the calling of an aristocrat's "present fancies" (4.1.122). There is a price to pay for being called forth: that price is being forced to listen to a narrative of enslavement being retold as one of liberation.

The language that calls forth slaves is also the language which subjectivises masters. Prospero is being made a subject in his performative use of the deconfinement myth that dominates so much of the play. The subject he is becoming uses language to vassalise others, and then uses those vassals to bamboozle additional subjects in turn. Ariel is told he has been emancipated from Sycoraxian torment, and is then subjected to the "grand hests" (1.2.274) of this new master (Baldo 123; Barker and Hulme 786). These hests are obeyed in ways that fluster, tease, and torment both the king's party and Caliban's weak-brained confederates. Deployment of Ariel's services thus puts the magus at twice remove from those subjects produced in the estranging language of Barmecide feasts (3.3), "spell-stopp[ings]" (5.1.60), and the raising of tempests. This *being at twice remove* certainly produces a particular kind of subjectivity for Prospero – and I am going to argue that this subjectivity is a liminal one – but it more obviously works to effect a disorientation in others. Subjects are affected by Prospero but they oftentimes do not know it. The authority of the magus is disseminated in ways that perplex others. By turning now to a study of the perplexity induced I wish to study further the subjectivity alignments at both ends of the "magical" power grid. Where do the spells start and where do they stop? What kinds of liminalisation are disclosed in this play?

The case study of Ferdinand demonstrates perfectly well that there are liminal pressures at work in Prospero's action-at-a-distance regime of "rough magic" (5.1.50)

and grand hests. Having been singled out for special disorienting treatment, Ferdinand is baffled and charmed by the island's music. This disorientation will give way to the chastisement that comes with his period of forced labour as "this patient log-man" (3.1.69/70). The tiresome and repetitive exercises that constitute this ordeal constitute his symbolic payment for the hand of his punisher's daughter. Prospero's express identification of his motive for putting this subject through such an ordeal makes this clear: "All thy vexations/ Were but my trials of thy love, and thou/ Hast strangely stood the test" (4.1.5-7). In the beginning of his conditioning Ferdinand's isolation ("landed by himself" (1.2.221)) works to heighten his sensitivity to difference ("I am the best of them that speak this speech" (428)). But this sensitivity gives way to patient log-man speech and to what comes, near the end of the play, as a limpid recap of what the island's language has taught him: "Though the seas threaten, they are merciful;/ I've cursed them without cause" (5.1.178/9). The ritual subject has learned to suppress his own illocutions in the service of what is being framed as a sequence of ordained instructions. I argue that, by sacrificing his speech, the speaker partakes of a more universalised discourse (viz., the discourse of "merc[y]"). The sacrifice involved here has strong liminal overtones.

Even in the case of Ferdinand there remain questions as to how *de*structuring the pressures exerted by this island language have been. The prince may have been immunised against the plague of cursing, but it is difficult to argue that he has learned to stop speaking the language of "Prince" altogether. When Juno and her entourage are lured down to masquefy his nuptials the bridegroom acquiesces to the protocol of a liminal phenomenology – "No tongue! All eyes! Be silent! (4.1.59) – only up to a point. When speech comes for him it comes to reinforce the obvious privileges of a

hierarchical standpoint: "This is a most majestic vision, and/ Harmonious charmingly" (118/9). For Ferdinand the triumph of such an aesthetically pleasing visitation is congruent with the highest point of structure – it is a *majestic* vision before it is anything at all. Provided aristocratic satisfaction can be inevitably prolonged, then it doesn't really matter where it is instantiated:

> Let me live here ever;
>
> So rare a wondered father, and a wife,
>
> Makes this place paradise. (4.1.122-124)

There is no reason why this ménage-à-trois cannot prosper in a nymph-rich world of sicklemen and baseless fabrics. Or is there? It is the very producer of these fabrics, after all, who testifies to their finiteness (4.1.148-158). That apparitions fade is not only a property they have that it is essential to recognise, but one which should be welcomed ("Be cheerful, sir,/ Our revels now are ended" (147/8) (Johnson 692). The conditioning phase for Ferdinand is over. The nuptualising discourse of Juno, Iris and Ceres has showered the princely subject with rhetorical confetti and he has begun to speak the language of mercy and "wonder" (123). His liminal vexation is due to be replaced by that of his instructor:

> Sir, I am vexed.
>
> Bear with my weakness, my old brain is troubled.
>
> Be not disturbed with my infirmity.
>
> If you be pleased, retire into my cell,

And there repose. A turn or two I'll walk

To still my beating mind. (4.1.158-163)

The interiorising of a private tempest ("my beating mind") accompanies the invitation that a happy couple pen themselves up in a confined space ("my cell"); all this so that a literal peripateia can materialise ("a turn or two I'll walk"). Prospero has more liminalising work to be done. His immediate concern is the oafish confederacy of a trio of "varlets" (170) against his life. My primary interest, however, is not to traipse after Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano as they blunder through the muck. I will focus, rather, on the manner in which the threatened magus himself swings from one suite of liminalising performances to another.

The best way to study how Prospero *performs* liminality in *The Tempest* is to look at how the subjects he is manipulating respond to his performance. In terms of this approach, the first thing to consider is whether these subjects recognise the power that is being articulated. In contemplating this question, it is important to remember that Prospero's liminality is flagged by his instituting of those powers that make him unrecognisable as Milan. The magus's cloak has made Prospero invisible in terms of his dissemination of that variety of inexplicable power that goes with it. Only those who are native to the island can recognise this power. Caliban is one, for example, who attempts to convey to us the "vassal[ising]" force of his master's "art" (1.2.372-375). Ariel is another who responds to the coercive literalism of Prospero's bidding in "every article" (195), lest punishment be exacted. Miranda, on the other hand, is less confident as to the reach and temper of her father's "project" (5.1.1). Is he behind what is unfolding, and if yes why? "If by your art, my dearest father, you have/ Put the wild waters in this roar,

allay them" (1.2.1/2). Others may encounter the voice and the name ("Prosper") without identifying either with the power. Where there is no "Milan" in these articulations of "torment, trouble, wonder and amazement (5.1.104) – where there is no *title* behind such shows of strength – then there can be no processing of authority. A name can be acknowledged in such a case without a suite of obligations being made annexable to it. Alonso makes this clear in his searching the "sentient landscape" for the voice particularising his guilt (Povinelli 31):

> O, it is monstrous: monstrous!
>
> Methought the billows spoke and told me of it,
>
> The winds did sing it to me, and the thunder,
>
> That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounced
>
> The name of Prosper. It did bass my trespass;
>
> Therefore my son i'th' ooze is bedded; and
>
> I'll seek him deeper than e'er plummet sounded,
>
> And with him there lie mudded. (3.3.95-102)

Clearly, one of the liminalising pressures of the island is that co-instantiated by the natural world in *speaking for others*; voices are mixed up and lines of agency confused. Subjectivity requires the awaking of faith by dint of a voice being hearkened; when the voice is rendered indistinguishable from its background, then the definition of a potentially subject-nourishing reponse is likely to be compromised (Althusser 174; J Butler 2005 30-40). A variation upon this theme comes with the Boatswain's pointing to the difference-abolishing deafness that is the tempest: "What cares these roarers for

the name of king?" (1.1.15/16). Waves are given names ("roarers") and cares, but this personification is not enough for them to distinguish between speakerly ranks. In like manner, the failure of subjects to discriminate between voices and environments has Ferdinand latching on to the nearest plausible agent in order to tie a speech act to a purpose: he fails. As far as he's concerned royalties for "Full fathom five" (1.2.396-403) belong to Miranda for the beauty of her proximity: "Most sure the goddess/ On whom these airs attend" (420/1). The presumption all the while is that language and music ("airs") index to an agent who can be identified and credited with its use. Part of the liminal phenomenology comes with the questioning of this presumption.

The sounding measures I have discussed also apply when a speaker is attempting to pledge words from her own mouth to a sense-making context. Just so, while zeroing in on Miranda as celestial ditty-producer, Ferdinand explores the duties of his own speakerly identity by positioning himself at the head of an absent language community:

> I am the best of them that speak this speech,
>
> Were I but where 'tis spoken. (1.2.428/9)

Ferdinand attempts to mediate the trauma of a father thought lost by means of projecting himself back to Naples ("[w]ere I but *where*"), and there to a group of speakers he would lead into speech. The projection has the eery attribute, however, of leaving the speaking "I" (that "I" making this claim to Miranda) outside the content of the projection. We are invited to process a claim here in terms of how *this speaking* would resound *there*: this cleaving of reception zones bifurcates the speaker and endangers the solidity of his speakerly identity. My argument is that it is the strangeness

of the island's language world which conditions for destabilising speech acts such as this. Authority's fracture and disguise have fashioned an environment where performative speech circulates without it being clear either who is speaking, or to what end.

There are subjects whose eagerness to explore alternative speech environments is noteworthy, Miranda and Gonzalo in particular. Miranda's wont is to empathise so instinctively with others that her language goes out, populating the world with a unified and forgivingly blank descriptive palette in the process (Tribble 158). Just as she reciprocates the emotional storms of third parties – "O, I have suffered/ With those that I saw suffer!" (1.2.5/6) – so she attempts to pacify and equalise the "brutish" private language of Caliban by teaching him her public version of it: "I endowed thy purposes/ With words that made them known" (357/8). The endowment is a dubious achievement, of course, given that the brute goes on to cursings of "red plague" (364) magnitude, but it nonetheless demonstrates Miranda's willingness to share discourse materials throughout this language habitat as evenly as possible. That the materials she promulgates are brutally inadequate to constitute much more than sentimentalese is unsurprising, given the limited and dualistic nature of her experience ("Thou think'st there is no more such shapes as he,/ Having seen but him and Caliban" (477/8)) (Hunt 1988 147). The limits of Miranda's perception are the limits of her language to give.

Gonzalo's eagerness to constitute the fate of his party in the island's speech is not only rosily indiscriminate – "Here is everything advantageous to life" (2.1.48) – but precocious, to boot:

Beseech you, sir, be merry. You have cause –

So have we all – of joy; for our escape

Is much beyond our loss. Our hint of woe

Is common; every day some sailor's wife,

The masters of some merchant, and the merchant

Have just our theme of woe. But for the miracle –

I mean our preservation – few in millions

Can speak like us. (2.1.1-8)

Gonzalo's "preserv[ed]" aristocrats here qualify as "few in millions" not simply because they have survived the waves, but because they have the chance to speak a new language. The king's "councillor" (1.1.18) wishes to jumpstart a discourse that embraces what he sees as the opportunities afforded speakers by this island: his "speak[ing] like us" (2.1.8) burgeons into the institutionalising tropes of a "commonwealth" (144) and the legislative obliteration of social distance:

Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,

And use of service, none; contract, succession,

Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;

No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;

No occupation, all men idle, all;

And women too, but innocent and pure;

No sovereignty – (2.1.147-153)

The speaker articulates a unilateral wishing-away of all forms of "enclosure" in a

language that marks the striking out of difference with a constellation of noes. Both the form and the substance of his visioning are liminal. That it is immediately and most corrosively problematised by Antonio and Sebastian – "The latter end of his commonwealth forgets the beginning" (154/5) – does not erode the egalitarian fervour with which Gonzalo proselytises his islanding discourse (Lindley 55; 77). The utopian language marks a contestation in its own right.

My interrogation of language use here depends on it throwing light upon how subjects are produced on the island. Antonio and Sebastian's reflexive contestation of Gonzalo's objectivity in his commonwealth-making is a case in point. They demonstrate that a speaker will find it difficult to leave themselves out of the leveling grammar of any utopian description. Sovereignty accrues to a speaker, they argue, insofar as he is the one formalising the stately construction of this sovereignless state. Where states have speakers they *eo ipso* have sovereigns. The utopian dream is to escape from this embeddedness of speakerly function (Jameson 172; Levin 43; Berger 1987 148). They have their own reasons for reminding us of the logic of this constructivity, of course. Dismissive of the performative force of "miraculous harp[s]" (2.1.82) (Norbrook 257), their preference is for the visioning work that manifests itself in the teasing out of weakness in aristocratic lineage. And the "voice" which they invoke to do this work must situate itself in a liminal space,

A space, whose ev'ry cubit

Seems to cry out, 'How shall that Claribel

Measure us back to Naples? Keep in Tunis,

And let Sebastian wake.' (2.1.254-257)

Here is a speaker anonymising the conspiratorial voice by situating it (and not situating it) over and above the Mediterranean. What Antonio fashions is distance *un*personified; and yet he picks out a gap constituting monarchical vulnerability remarkably well. The voice is constructed to "wake" the potential beneficiary of regicide (Sebastian) for two reasons: firstly, because Sebastian has thus far taken Antonio's message to be a kind of "snor[ing]" (2.1.213/4); and secondly, because the counsel to murder Alonso must be conveyed as impersonally as possible if it is to be spiritualised, automatised, and rendered compelling. The whisper that generates the thrown voice – "How shall that Claribel…?" – qualifies as the right kind of modulus for the task. Much the same technique was used in the dramatisation in which the conspiracy began: "Th' occasion speaks thee, and/ My strong imagination sees a crown/ Dropping upon thy head" (203-205). Both speech acts studied here work to condition a subject to read his environment in a usefully parochial fashion.

Sebastian is thus coaxed by Antonio into translating "snoring" into a bid for political power. Of course, it is one thing to bid, and quite another to achieve. The conspiracy that is roused dissolves in the ventriloquial suggestiveness of Ariel's dittying to Gonzalo:

> While you here do snoring lie,
>
> Open-eyed conspiracy
>
>   His time doth take.
>
> If of life you keep a care,
>
> Shake off slumber and beware.

Awake, awake. (2.1.297-302)

Wakefulness and drowsiness are states which subjects flit in and out of in the play; hibernation is not for these tropics. A "humming" (315) is quite sufficient to break the repose induced in subjects for the purpose of bringing plots to light. The perlocutory grammar constituted in this field of wakeful drowsiness fashions plot-makings which are perfectly harmless. For a spirit to whisper the most harmless of warnings into a counsellor's ear, is to condition for a threat-empty threat. The tone of the warning is so cute and playful – "If of life you have a care" – that it performatively reduces the seriousness of the conspiracy. The discourse of the plotters likewise fails to articulate what they would like to think is the urgency of their purpose. The "snoring" that went into the conspirators' strategising translates, upon Alonso's rousing, into the bogus projection of "a hollow burst of bellowing./ Like bulls, or rather lions" (308/9), not to mention "a din to fright a monster's ear" (311). Swords were drawn, true enough, but so flaccid and protean was the language surrounding and constituting the drawing that the "obedient steel" (280) called on for the stabbing was never going to be obedient enough.

Conspiracy is produced, however, as something ancillary to Prospero's main purpose – "My high charms work,/ And these, mine enemies, are all knit up/ In their distractions" (3.3.88-90). So what is its point? The "distraction" in which Antonio and Sebastian are so distracted is, as Prospero demonstrates, eminently distractable: it is not something they are "knit[ting]" but something which "knits [them] up." So feeble is the conspirators' agency, that we can scarcely argue that these subjects are being produced as conspirators. If this is true, then what is their subjectivity for? With the purposiveness of their malignity being so problematised, it makes sense to interrogate very closely the

conspirators' role.

Looking at the threat posed by the second conspiracy in the play will, I believe, help us assess the malign subjectivity implications of the first. Let us start with a difference of object: whereas Antonio and Sebastian are after Alonso's scalp, Caliban and his sidekicks target Prospero's "wezand" (3.2.83). Were bonus points to accrue to a plot for the materiality of its objectivising, then this particular effort would win hands down:

>...'tis a custom with him
>
>I'th' afternoon to sleep. There thou mayst brain him,
>
>Having first seized his books; or with a log
>
>Batter his skull, or paunch him with a stake,
>
>Or cut his wezand with thy knife. Remember
>
>First to possess his books; for without them
>
>He's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not
>
>One spirit to command – they all do hate him
>
>As rootedly as I. (3.2.79-87)

Here is a scheme murderous in its itemisation of a target's vulnerabilities. Armed with such a document – such is its weight: *brain*, *log*, *skull*, *paunch*, *sot* – an assassin could not go wrong. The tinkling of a fairy's wings will surely not interrupt him. For not only does Caliban have sound *material* knowledge of his opponent, but he also has a motive grounded in a felt solidarity of contempt: "[T]hey all do hate him/ As rootedly as I." It is also worthwhile exploring how the material presence of the magus in Caliban's

descriptions – he sleeps at *this* time; his gut is a fine place to strike – trades off against the knowledge of the power invested in his "books." The possession of these volumes does mark the possession of an occult power; without the books he is a "sot." And the order of the dispossession is important, no question: first texts, then wezand. Get it wrong and there will be trouble. But Caliban's Prospero is still a very palpable, "sottable" being; regardless of the immeasurability of his powers *now*, he is known (measured), and Caliban has his number (mass).

Caliban is at home in his hatred of his enemy, whereas Antonio and Sebastian are clutching at straws and answering to phantoms. Caliban's language builds up traction on this island (Greenblatt 1990 43; Troupp 112; Wilson Knight 24). He knows where he is with his speech, and those he speaks against occupy heavily the language of cursing and projection that he deploys (Palfrey 161-163; Singh 219). One feels that his plot reaches out and imperils the magus in a way that Antonio's does not.[12] And yet both plots come to nothing: Caliban's projections go the same way as the Italian's. In spite of the fact that Caliban speaks Prospero into existence with an intimacy that not even Miranda can muster ("Sir, are not you my father? (1.2.55)), the plot that hopes to build upon this Prospero-making speech misfires. Caliban is learning that having the ability to *describe* a subject is not enough to bring that subject within his power.

It is the idea of Caliban speaking Prospero into existence, of course, which would turn the received wisdom of power relations in this play on its head (Lindley 33-45; Johnson 693/4). Prospero's famous assessment of his "lying slave" (1.2.345) as "a devil, a born devil, on whose nature/ Nurture can never stick" (4.1.188/9) could, under my analysis, be directed back onto its assessor. What does Prospero's materialisation in

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[12] For an argument to the contrary see Meredith Anne Skura's suggestion that Caliban projects little in his rhetoric here save for "childish exaggeration" (64).

Caliban's treasonous projection of him tell us about this tempest-making subject? It tells us that Prospero eludes even those who best know how to reproduce him in their speech. Why so? Because Caliban can "sot" his master in description, and still fail to perform his undoing. The plot of the "beast" and "his confederates" (4.1.140) transposes, upon discovery, into the comic shambolicness of wading through foul waters, "dot[ing] on… luggage" and juggling "frippery" (228; 223). The magus was never in any danger; he was untouchable, even though "sottable" in the constativity of others.

Prospero's immunity from material challenge raises the question of how the magus *is present* to the subjects he stands over. The play dramatises a large number of postures being taken. Prospero's instructional profile in the case of Ferdinand has been remarkably intimate – there have been some sharp words, but for the most part the instructor has been *present* (relatively approachable) to his ritual subject. This is not the case with respect to the other liminalising relationships in which the magus has been involved. A "screen" has there stood between instructor and subject. The episode of the thunder articulating "[t]he name of Prosper" to "bass [Alonso's] trespass" (3.3.99) provided a good illustration of how this "screen" came down. Helpfully, it also offers a reworking of the technique of prosopopeia which has been deployed to good effect elsewhere in late romance (*Pericles* 3.2.87; *The Winter's Tale* 5.3). Prospero's name, in this case, goes out to circulate through a meterological agent (the thunder), which then speaks to the king. This circulation turns prosopopeiac logic on its head, given that the thunder speaks "Prosper" to Alonso. Dramatic subjects no longer speak to nature, nature speaks to them. What this reversing of the logic does is to unsettle Alonso, thanks to the distributing of "naming" so evenly through an estranging landscape. The tempest speaks to the king and he listens; he doesn't know quite what is being said, but he listens all the

same. We can compare this patience and receptivity with the manner in which he responded to Gonzalo's "Beseech you, sir, be merry…" (2.1.1-9). That attempt at persuasion was rebuffed: "You cram these words into my ears, against/ The stomach of my sense" (2.1.101/102). Gonzalo's was not a liminal language. Liminal language prefers a route other than that indexing to a counsellor's mouth. The proxying grammar takes advantage of this preference; it spreads out a name ("Prosper"), anonymises it (perversely), and then strikes in a flash of language purpose-unbuilt to confuse and surprise. The billows speak to Alonso (3.3.96), and the winds sing (97); the thunder "pronounce[s]" (98). There is nothing remotely digestible about such oracularising – the communicative posture taken by Prospero is very much shock and awe.

But there are variations of this communicative posture as liminalising protocols develop. The language and theatrical machineries used to bass trespass and to liminalise islanded subjects are multiform (Bruster; Johnson 689-692). The king's party, for example, does not get to enjoy peacocks and sicklemen, but they do get the "living drollery" (3.3.21) of creatures who frolic and leave "their viands behind" (41). What is given with one mysterious hand, however, is taken away with another in the introduction of a harpy's fulmination:

> You are three men of sin, whom Destiny –
>
> That hath to instrument this lower world,
>
> And what is in't – the never-surfeited sea
>
> Hath cause to belch up you. (3.3.52-55)

This outburst has Alonso's digestivity trope – "You cram these words into my ears,

against the stomach of my sense" – resurface only to argue that these washed-up subjects are the ocean's cud ("belch[ed] up"). Ariel goes on to emphasise the critical vulnerability of his "sin[ful]" addressees:

> And on this island,
>
> Where man doth not inhabit – you 'mongst men
>
> Being most unfit to live – I have made you mad;
>
> And even with suchlike valour men hang and drown
>
> Their proper selves. (3.3.56-60)

Faced with such incriminating grand narratives, the accused draw their swords on this accuser and his "fellow ministers/ …like invulnerable" (65/6). Defamation in the liminal mode is something against which there can be, by definition, no retaliation. Ariel's interpellating tirade is both inaccessible – they cannot touch him – and highly particularised: he speaks to these three men. His suggestivity, moreover, is particularly dire because it anticipates its own perlocutory effect. This speech act is part of a defamatory repertoire, says Ariel ("I have made you mad"), and having heard it the courageous thing to do would be to string yourselves up. The next tree, as Stephano would say (3.2.31).

Of the three victims of a harpy's abuse only Alonso is corrigible enough to find this dire suggestivity dire. Naples seeks the "ooze" where be believes his son "bedded" (3.3.100) while Antonio and Sebastian mutiny against interpellation:

> SEBASTIAN   But one fiend at a time, I'll fight their legions o'er.

ANTONIO   I'll be thy second.

(3.3.103/4)

Co-conspirators determine thus to stay nuance-deaf to island language where Alonso has tuned in quite plausibly to talk of "[l]ing'ring perdition" (77) himself. His ability to be exposed in accusation marks his ability to be remade in the play's liminal language. The nuances to which Antonio and Sebastian are deaf, meanwhile, concern the highly theatrical evocations of their historical partnership to deMilanise Milan by "supplant[ing] good Prospero" (70). But Ariel's reminding them of this does not bring them up to date. Both subjects are immune to this ritual voicing of the past. It is not that they contest the veracity of the story, it is simply that there is no language space in their subjectivities for anything to be retold in this fashion. Alonso is receptive to the possibility that the strangeness of the island's language is productively suggestive. The conspirators only see the distance and difference exemplified in crowns rising and descending on heads. Alonso is built (rebuilt) out of a fascination with strangeness. He cannot stomach advice, but murmurs and augurs he chews over. He ponders quite seriously, it seems to me, the identity of the creature responsible for devouring his son: "O thou mine heir,/ Of Naples and of Milan, what strange fish/ Hath made his meal on thee?" (2.1.106/108). While mulling over the import of the Barmecide dancers he also shows himself prone to endorsing their movements betraying "a kind/ Of excellent dumb discourse" (3.3.39). Finally, when reconciliation is dead and done, the king persists in exploring his appetite for the uncanny: "I long/ To hear the story of your life;/ which must/ Take the ear strangely" (5.1.309-311). It is this kind of receptivity which is totally alien to Antonio and Sebastian.

The speech acts that nourish Alonso's subjectivity testify to the fact that liminal pressures have been exerted on him, through him and in him. When he embraces Ferdinand near the end of the play it is clear that he recognises the importance of the continous appplication of discursive practices upon those subjects whose identity impinges on kingship: "Now all the blessings/ Of a glad father compass thee about" (5.1.179/180). It is by the dedication of illocutionary energies to one's heirs that the ideological co-ordinates of one's class successors are marked out. The king's openness to strangeness has not led to any major concessions to egality; on the contrary, his listening to billows and harpies has reminded him that the hierarchical upkeep of the state depends mightily upon the constant and reassuring interpellations of aristocratic subjects. When Alonso begs of a prince's understanding – "But O, how oddly will it sound, that I/ Must ask my child forgiveness!" (197/8) – the folding of patriarch back into dependent son is a potential liminal movement, but only in so far (here) as it presages the transition of power from king to surviving heir. Such an adumbration of structure's seamless recuperation gives evidence that this islanded period of sense's estrangement from language carries out a state-protective function. When Prospero ritually dramatises authority's *correction* by drawing a circle on the ground, and inviting resident nobles into it, he reinforces this hermeneutic. The perimetrical theatricalising of which I speak constitutes both a confinement and a fresh sowing of power.

In a sense, the circle-making is the logical culmination of the *deconfinement* myth that Prospero has relied so heavily upon to produce subjects. The tempest made the island the epicentre of shipwrecked journeying back to power. Confederacy between various troops of washed-up aristocrats and the corvée of various tricksy spirits have

reined this epicentre in to the lime grove outside Prospero's cell. Movement away from this costive zone has been stymied. With the plunging of the king's party into the raging seas and with their subsequent treading "[t]hrough forth-rights and meanders" (3.3.3) has come the unwitting recuperation of a ruling class. That recuperation is only to be made known when the beneficiaries of it are spell-stopped and sandily circumscribed. Even when made known, of course, the exercise of a rehabilitated authority is still – as is the "royal fleet" – "far off" (5.1.314). This island is neither Milan, Naples, nor Tunis. The ritual cleansing and refurbishing of power that takes place here is but a symbolic adumbration of what must take place elsewhere. That rituality has been made possible by the concentration of separation, *limen*, and aggregation into this dramatisation of a liberal artist's "closeness." I began my study of the play by pointing out this concentratedness. I should like to close by treating this concentratedness, and Prospero's liminal role in manifesting it, together.

The cramming of dramatic subjects into Prospero's circle (5.1.57-s.d.-58) marks the high point of both liminality and aggregation in the play. In it we see concentratedness most intimately supervised. Aristocratic subjects are conditioned for a return to power by being completely immobilised. This flags a liminal paradox. Their immobiliser is, and has been, their liminal instructor: Prospero. There is still undifferentiating pressure to bring on the likes of Alonso and Antonio. As they groggily return to their senses they feel power *materialise* with confirmation of Prospero's existence – "Thy pulse/ Beats as of flesh and blood" (5.1.113/4). Alonso's acknowledgement here immediately precedes his concession of Milan: "Thy dukedom I resign, and do entreat/ Thou pardon me my wrongs" (118/9). Thus Naples's first few steps back to speech and movement track the return of Prospero to undisguised,

unscreened presence. The posture of the ritual subjects within that circle – as mum "prisoners" (9) who "cannot budge" (11) – was inversely matched by the soliloquising expansiveness of the Prospero building up to this ritual climaxing of dependency. As the speaker who has all the way through been manipulating and handicapping the agency of his ritual subjects, he gets set to renounce his magus status with a rhetorical storm of abjuration. This storm energises his metamorphosis back into Milan. Farewelling the "elves" (33) and other "[w]eak masters" (41) who have helped him produced tempests large and small, he thus prepares to relinquish even the most sublimely recursive of his powers:

> …graves at my command
>
> Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth
>
> By my most potent art. But this rough magic
>
> I here abjure. And when I have required
>
> Some heavenly music – which even now I do –
>
> To work mine end upon their senses that
>
> This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
>
> Bury it certain fathoms in the earth.
>
> And deeper than did ever plummet sound
>
> I'll drown my book. (5.1.48-57)

This is a renunciation of "potency" which makes very sure that that potency is rehearsed in speech one more time. It is clear that it is the power over death which (among other things) is being given up. And, in my analysis, that power – together with the power

over "mutinous winds" (42), "the dread rattling thunder" (44), and so forth – signals the power of reversibility. It is this power to *bring things back* that is being sacrificed to smooth the way for a rapier-bearing duke (84) to retire unto his Milan.

There is something going in here, I suggest, which is very much akin to Leontes's ideological purging of the discourse of rebirth at the end of *The Winter's Tale*: "If this be magic, let it be an art/ Lawful as eating" (5.3.110/111). In that case it was required that magic be routinised by the state by being co-opted into its institutional mythology. Here Prospero snaps his wand and drowns his sacred texts in order to make his power recognisable to those who share in it. He abjures the power to revive the dead in favour of resuscitating his political career.[13] Why does he do it in this way? It was necessary. So long as Prospero has exerted the power of the magus, the likes of the king's party have been unavailable to him as subjects. He has been unable to perform himself as one of them; they, likewise, have been unable to participate in his power-wielding subjectivity. Prospero, as Prospero, has been unapproachable. He has had his slaves and functionaries and his cognitively floundering visitors-of-state, but he has never had subjects able to circulate his power in discursive suites of language that resonate with his own ideological and aesthetic preferences. The strangeness and inexplicability of the tempest-making has not sat well with the court. Speakers of the courtly discourse of power – no matter how susceptible they may be to "excellent dumb discourse" (3.3.39) – must be convinced that power makes a subject (Prospero; Milan) in ways that they understand, and to which they may contribute. Hence Prospero's assurance to these speakers "that a living prince/ Does now speak to thee" (5.1.108/9) in words of "natural

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[13] That Prospero resuscitates his career with the intent of ending it in retirement to his Milan does not detract from the fact that he must retire *as* Milan before any renunciation of career takes effect.

breath" (157). This marks the return to material speech, and the collapse of the screen between the player-prince and the part he plays.

A brief look at the subjects who have challenged power on this island reveals how the return of that power negotiates various liminal subjectivities. Prospero's forgiving Antonio his conspiratorial "fault" (5.1.132), for example, speaks him (Prospero) back into his Milan because with dukedom-speech comes ducal mercy and ducal necessity: "[I] require/ My dukedom of thee, which perforce I know/ Thou must restore" (5.1.132-135). Other than the receipt of this ducal knowing, absolutely no change is required in the likes of Antonio and Sebastian. They have not been required to awake their faith in and through the experience of strange, distantiated power structures (Greenblatt 1988 146). The pair have leapfrogged the limen because their intuitions as to the inevitability of hierarchy's magic has not been disturbed one jot. Their confinement in various circles of drowsiness has never been successfully ritualised. Antonio and Sebastian are drafted into Prospero's circle precisely because they have not wavered in their stinging opposition to alternative solutions ("miraculous harps" (2.1.82)) to the symbolic management of power.

Those dramatic subjects who have felt Prospero's powers most materially are those who provide its only subversive challenge. Caliban's intuitively recalcitrant perceptions of his master's vulnerabilities have been studied. This perceptiveness ensures that he, together with his doltish confederates, will be penned in at the end of the play. Make no mistake that, in spite of his peripeteia ("I'll be wise hereafter,/ And seek for grace" (5.1.292.3)), Caliban will be sent to Prospero's cell and made to "trim it handsomely" (291). Hard-rock confinement (with featherduster) is his end. This end demonstrates that a vassal can be emancipated in the conceptual space of his master

("This thing of darkness, I/ Acknowledge mine" (274/5)) with one natural breath, and locked up to service with another.

Confined emancipations are not the only way to go for Prospero's vassals. Ariel, a subject perfectly familiar with the concept of "more toil" (1.2.242), anticipates a retirement less exacting:

> Where the bee sucks, there suck I;
>
> In a cowslip's bell I lie;
>
> There I couch when owls do cry;
>
> On a bat's back I do fly;
>
> After summer merrily.
>
> Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
>
> Under the blossom that hangs on the bough. (5.1.88-94)

Ariel ditties this while dressing his master in courtly attire. The verse qualifies as something of an ode to a pageant-thick way of life on the island. These pageants – masques and flauntings of harpies – went to condition a host of shipwrecked subjects. These subjects could make neither head nor tail of speech acts divorced from agent and warrant. That kind of speech is on the way out, soon to be replaced with courtly discourse (hat and rapier-speech). Ariel meanwhile fancies attending to noises that are exquisitely non-referential (cries and suckings), to postures that are parasitic and utility-free (lyings, couchings, and hangings). Ariel's song thus foreshadows an essenceless (and almost bodiless) existence. That he foreshadows this as he dresses Prospero in Milan-garb is interesting. At the very same time that Prospero materialises as Milan, the

most durable and resourceful of his proxying spirits dreams of a comprehensive plasticity.

Milan's return to Milan is not complete with the return of courtly dress, manner and language. Before he disappears, Prospero must produce his final batch of subjects. Just as he has expelled key differentiating properties from his person in the form of dress (staff, cloak) and language (books, spells) to coax recognition from his fellow aristocrats, now he must win support from those who have enjoyed the tempests provoked by what he is giving up: he must produce *the audience* as his supporters. The epilogue informs us that we are "confin[ing]" him and that unless we send him there he will not get to Naples. The closing address boasts that it marks a liminal phase: the addressor is no longer Prospero, not yet Milan. Our "pardo[n]" (Epilogue 19) will classify him as this last. To clap, or not to clap? That is up to us. But we have to ask to what it is that our "indulgence" (20) is going to relate? My analysis has it that the only crime for which Prospero is guilty is the crime of translating his authority into a language that can only be imperfectly recognised by courtly subjects. The concomitant accusation is that Prospero's choice of magus "language" forces subjects to undergo those sea-changes which culminate in this reproduction of the status quo.

Conclusion

In line with the hermeneutic of liminality adopted to examine Shakespearean late romance, my investigation has focused on the production of dramatic subjects. These subjects are produced, I have argued, within structures which instantiate liminal sequences: the courtly worlds from which late romance narratives spring fracture and the aristocratic subjects constituting those worlds are left, at fracture, to explore an interregnum of significant destructuration. The state which has hitherto policed difference and structure with various degrees of tenacity withdraws, leaving subjects without its discursive apparatus of subject-production. The questions I have been interested in at this point include the following: What kind of performative language produces subjects in this zone of destructuration? And how durable are the changes which are induced in the subjects produced? I have pointed out that both containment and utopian readings of late romance depend on answering these questions.

My study has shown dramatic subjects produced in the liminal phases of each play. The subjectivising pressures exerted upon key aristocratic subjects have contained elements which challenge the identities of those subjects discursively conceived in difference. Such pressures are consonant with those found in the *limen*. The likes of Pericles, Innogen, Perdita and Alonso have had the certainty of their privileged subjectivities as prince, princess or king problematised by sequences of language to which they have been exposed. Once the trappings of state and the reliability of state-nourishing discourse have been denied them, these subjects are forced to cope with whatever is thrown their way: Antiochan riddles, limb-meal curses, face-scratchings with briars, living drolleries. The subject is produced in an estranging landscape and is

largely bewildered by what is going on around her to produce her. Being thrown over the shoulder of a pirate and then sold into prostitution, as is the case with Marina, provides an example of the disorientation on offer. What is a girl to think?

Romance pays subjects not to think, not even to struggle; how the plot unfolds will tell you whether you are a princess or not. The *limen* has subjects obey a similar logic: submit yourself to ritual, which ritual will purge you of difference, and then return you to the world of your particular hierarchical slot. The logic is binding, and it unfolds according to various patterns. I propose to make a brief survey of the liminal patterns uncovered in the plays. Having done this, I will draw some general conclusions with respect to the import of late romance's liminality on the subjects produced therein.

Let us start with *Pericles*. The separative fractures studied herein were tracked in terms of how romance language – the idioms of chivalric questing – breaks apart when faced with the brutal coerciveness of ritual. This coerciveness negotiates for the dominant structures in the play to be restrained, choric and programmatic. Subjects are produced in these structures. Pericles himself provides an exemplar case-study of liminal effect. Having fled one ritual, he simply acquiesces to a series of others; his language moves him toward a flatter, more emblematic representation of his princely self. And it is at that point that, for him, reversibility has to be cashed out as repetition: by publicly mourning crosses in ritual language, his fortunes are reversed. Reversals in *Pericles* are characteristically produced in such speech; it is made perfectly clear that once language can be simplified and projected in a fashion communal enough, the speaking of life into blocks is made possible. In this speech – in the adoption and promulgation of a retroactive, liminal, concatenatising voice – the aristocratic body is resuscitated.

Cymbeline dramatises resuscitation in a much more violent fashion. The liminal pressures exerted on subjects in this play – the pressures to make them "new o'er" – are decapitative and ventriloquial pressures. Subjects are disassembled and their voices, bodies, are thrown from one reassembling subject to another. When the radically undifferentiating pressures of *sparagmos* tropes and the like subside, then subjects begin to register the effects of more aggregative discourse sets. The transitivising of descriptionality belongs with these effects, and Posthumous is its primary victim/ beneficiary. This language produces a non-subject who is then prone to be welded together by the liminal counters of story, primitivising speech, and mythological sloganeering. Belarius uses story to rehabilitate a pair of cave-stooping princes. The Briton Lord gouges a rut in the historiographical discourse of state – a *narrow lane*, in fact – into which these very subjects are propelled. Posthumous reacts with mixed feelings to such reductive instantiations of liminality. While answering to the call of a superannuated divine, he resists the approach of the sound bites pressed into service *as* a nation's return to power. This resistance produces a marginality to match that of his mistress. Liminal language has fiercely abridged a state by leaving two of its dramatisation's most important subjects on the sidelines.

In the case of *The Winter's Tale*, I have argued that liminality instantiates a pastoral counter to the paranoiac state. Sicilia effectively liminalises itself off the stage thanks to its over-zealous policing of difference. A sheep-shearing Bohemia moves into the vacuum. This pastoral mobilises the liveliest challenges to structure – the jigs and shapechangings of a scene-stretching feast, and the surreal ballads of Autolycus, a structure-problematisor extraordinare. When the pastoral challenge/ affirmation withdraws, the chief representatives of structure (Leontes and Bohemia) find themselves

reconciling in a fog of indeterminacy. Nobody can tell whether they are happy or sad. Their speech fails to map out the bearings of difference. This performance of inarticulateness leads to a redemption sequence for a long-tongue-tied queen. Her descent into a deeply conservative paragonality reminds everybody where difference is to be concretised. I read the idealisation that is her revival as the naturalising discourse of power manufacturing its own centre.

In *The Tempest*, the state's naturalisation begins with the wholesale transplantation of the court across the still-vexed Bermudas. Where aristocrats materialise here they do so in a drowsy speech distracted by numerous sideshows; in terms of the island language which confronts them, they meet it dispersed in troops, and are then subjected to ventriloquial delegations of an authority they cannot digest. Bafflement runs headlong into highly theatricalised performances of fulmination and all this is punctuated by the music of marmosets and three-unities clocks. The real language of power hereat appears to be a language of spells that stop, masques that nuptualise and emancipatory narratives that enslave. The symbolic management of this power only changes when its speaker, having previously favoured concealment, reveals himself in natural breath. Recognisably aristocratic power foreshadows its own recuperation in this normalising movement. The voice of normalisation then segues into another liminality when it drafts the audience into the performance of its recognition. Indulgence up in the air, the dramatisation of its need to be aired is over.

Throughout these plays, the role of *institutionalising* speech is accentuated. Speakers do not simply reconcile to some pre-existing superstructure from which they have unfortunately detached over the course of a liminal phase; it is their speech which is called on to produce the illocutionary fields on which such institutions depend for

their structured continuation. The property of *stirring* is spoken into blocks; "sympathy" is read into tabletised prophecy before sense there hardens; it is assumed that marmorealised queens can be induced into descending; and vassals are sent on conspiracy-shortcircuiting errands which to all intents and purposes have already been done. To ask here what it is that the state is doing to ensure its own reproduction by producing subjects is to get things slightly askew, because when the speech goes, the institutions that are nourished by that speech go with it. The logic of this notion needs to be discussed before we move on.

It is, as I have shown, the speech acts deployed by liminal subjects which function as the reservoir of the state's power to put itself together again after fracture. As those speech acts detach from recognisable power structures – as princesses become blood-stained and as dukes closet their rapiers – they disperse. Sooner or later, one might think, weatherbeaten rustics are bound to start expressing themselves in verse and shedding gentlemen's tears. But why does this not happen more often? The liminal zones dramatised when state-nourishing language decenters finds performativity gravitating to diasporic representatives of structure who are either estranged or otherwordly: Cerimon, Diana, Gower, Belarius, Jupiter and Briton Lord are good examples of this. These subjects are structure's *double-agents*, as it were, and they seem to act as magnets for whatever performative language has been strewn about the liminal world; they compress language, and transform it into a story, a prayer, a riddle, or a slogan. This compression tends to ritualise speech and kickstart movement toward more stabilising forms of discourse.

My list of structure's double-agents has petered out before we arrived at our last two plays. Is there a reason for this? There is. I argue that *The Winter's Tale* and *The*

Tempest allow for nothing like the same multiplication of perspectives and crossover of narratives as do *Pericles* and *Cymbeline*. The chore of monopolising and redirecting the performative speech on whose fate the state's integrity depends is carried out in a slightly different way. In *The Winter's Tale,* the gentlemen who recount the "dumbness of gesture" of Leontes and Polixenes's reconciliation *do* function to translate regal behaviour into the inarticulateness that constitutes their liminality. Autolycus is another dramatic subject who, surprisingly, preserves some integrity for structure precisely by so dominating the alternative languages to it. His openness to wearing "three-pile" again never extends to his wanting that everybody receive the same opportunity as he. His ballads exhaust logic as well as they confound it, and this exhausting carries something of a structure-protective function.

When it comes to *The Tempest,* it is fairly clear that Prospero is the only performative magnet in town. Caliban does have his moments and, as has been demonstrated, he can reduce the magus to a "sot" in his descriptive speech. But that descriptiveness is as far as it goes. Prospero is never *performatively* challenged in the play. He must dramatise the weakening of his own speech before we get to see a Milan whose pulse beats, and whose conjurations fail. Where the great vassal-maker does serve to liminalise *his own speech* (and thus prepare its illocutionarity for being renounced) is in turning that magical discourse of tempest-makings and deconfinement into something of a vassal itself. Prospero's experimentation with absolute performativity – shown best when all his enemies are *in* his power – leads to the point where it is not recognised. Where performativity is not recognised, there is no power; and where there is no power, there is no performativity. Sometime Milan's speech must find its *limit* before it can recuperate something of its own ducality.

These plays, when seen through the lens of liminal subjectivity, dramatise the power of speech acts to produce the institutions in which they can function. The question of whether it is liminal subjects who respeak the state in their negotiation of destructuration or the state which respeaks them, however, is one I wish to reformulate. These plays collapse the state into the subjects who speak it and vice versa. Both the essence of the state and the essence of subjects is emulsified and filtered back into a *state* discourse when and only when language deliminalises. The performativity that nourished the state prior to its fracture is dispersed throughout the liminal zone and finds its way back into those speakers who are collaboratively learning to repeat it.

Dramatisation of this repeating varies in its effect from play to play. In *Pericles*, the efficacy of this repetition is valorised, and deliberately antiquated forms are used to streamline its negotiations of hardship. Two speakers in *Cymbeline* – Guiderius and Arviragus – find nothing easier in the world than to reconnect to a performativity which is sloganised and which catalyses their return to power. Posthumous, however, finds the efficacy of the reductive speech to which he adapted less than fully satisfying. I argue that in, *The Winter's Tale*, the discourse of cuckoldese accelerates the discourse of difference-supervision to breaking point. Leontes and Polixenes are taught to revert to the language of a more faithful policing of hierarchy in the liminal phase; they then concentrate that faithful language on Hermione. Prospero's return to recognisability in *The Tempest* dramatises once more this speaking of a power that has gone before and simply needs to be acknowledged for it to reveal its presence. The discourse of power is shown to be the *discourse* of power, nothing more and nothing less.

These statements concerning *repetition* are broadly consistent with containment readings of late romance liminality. If subjects are being constituted as speakers of a

discourse set which has spoken power before, then this would explain why only those who have spoken that power before find this discourse gravitating to them. Aristocratic subjects lose the speech which is then theirs to relearn. The relearning of this speech is the relearning of an aristocratic (and not an egalitarian) subjectivity. The only allowance subversive change has in this circular performance is that the speech which is repeated *as* the return of privileged subjects to power need not be repeated word for word. Corrections – perhaps even variations – are permitted. The language of the state in *Pericles*, for example, has moulded itself into a more communal and genealogically perspicacious discourse set than was the case pre-*limen*. *Cymbeline*, for its part, dramatises the reproduction of the court in slogans and riddles that expose, *in* Posthumous at least, the hollowness of some of its discursivity. In the case of Sicilia, aristocratic subjects may speak a more forgiving register of propagation-supervision than was permitted before Leontes's language game of cuckoldese jumpstarted certain *limen*-sundering fractures. When it comes to *The Tempest*, Milan is shown finding its/ his political voice with the renunciation of an estranging and disorienting magical tongue; from now on, authority will be spoken in a less distracting manner. In all the cases studied there is no question of state-instituting and subject-instituting discourse not marking a *return* to power. Late romance exposes the logic and symbolic grammar of this return to power, this much is true, and is something which containment readings must take into account; it is nevertheless granted that the exposure of power's return by no means constitutes a dramatisation of alternatives to that process.

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