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## **Mémoire de Master 1 Recherche Etudes du Monde Anglophone**

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### ***Zoon Logikon? Dogs in Shakespeare's Drama***

*A Study of the motif of the dog and the rational animal in Titus Andronicus, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and Timon of Athens.*



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Cover picture: Image from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. P.J. Paparelli. Washington DC, Shakespeare Theatre Company. 2012.

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***Zoon Logikon?* Dogs in Shakespeare's Drama.**

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## Introduction

Tom will throw his head at them.  
Avaunt, you curs!  
Be thy mouth or black or white,  
Tooth that poisons if it bite;  
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,  
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,  
Bobtail tyke or trundle-tail,  
Tom will make them weep and wail;  
For, with throwing thus my head,  
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

(Edgar, *King Lear*, 3. 6. 63-72<sup>1</sup>)

Edgar's list of types of dogs is very peculiar in *King Lear*. Animals are commonly used in the play which features an extensive bestiary: "A fox when one has caught her" (Fool, *King Lear*, sc. 4. 311), "she'll taste as like this as a Crab doth to a Crab" (Fool, sc. 5. 18), "Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house." (Fool, sc. 5. 27-28), "Those pelican daughters" (Lear, sc. 11. 68), "False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey." (Edgar, sc. 11. 83-85). Yet no other animal is associated with such a broad spectrum of incarnations as the dog in the play. This unusual list of types of dogs can leave the audience puzzled. In fact, Edgar uses this list of dogs as a response to Lear's comparison of his daughters with barking dogs. Actually the dog stands apart in the Shakespearean bestiary as its comparison with man often brings them very close. Making man closer to a dog mirrors a humanist questioning of man's ambiguous nature. Shakespeare uses the dog to characterise twofold characters, most of the time villains such as Gloucester in *Richard III*. Speaking of Gloucester, Margaret wishes she "may live to say, the dog is dead!" (Queen Margaret, *Richard III*, 4. 4. 78). The dog is overall a motif of ambiguity which reflects the vice and virtue of characters.

In this dissertation I shall examine how the topos of the dog is used so as to challenge the Aristotelian definition of man as a rational animal. Shakespeare was part of a cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Except for *Timon of Athens*, *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. All other plays by Shakespeare to which I am referring are from this edition: Wells, Stanley, and Gary Taylor (eds.). *William Shakespeare The Complete Works*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005.

and intellectual movement called Humanism. This literary, artistic and philosophical current can be summed up as a European cultural drift from the “darkness” of Middle Ages’ scholasticism. The 16th century French intellectual Pierre Belon witnesses in 1553 that

“The minds of men ... have begun to awake and go out of the darkness...”<sup>2</sup>

The sources of Renaissance Humanism are in the Latin and Greek literature, art and ideas. Humanist thinkers, writers and artists revisited classical culture so as to create a new one. In some ways they went back to the classics so as to rethink who and what they were, for Humanism is a human centred philosophy. Thus this dissertation will try to show that by comparing man to a dog Shakespeare subverts the classical idea that man is an animal with the faculty to think.

Although animals are a recurring topos in Renaissance literature, contemporary scholarly studies often overlook them. Nevertheless, Erica Fudge’s recent seminal study of animality in early modern England emphasises the epistemological importance of the motif:

What is clear is that early modern writers were fascinated by animals to an extent that is surprising in relation to the relative absence of animals in modern critical interpretation of that period. Where modern commentators dismiss animals after an initial statement of difference (animals do not have rational souls), early modern writers continue to invoke and discuss them.<sup>3</sup>

Inherited from classical and medieval literatures, the place of animals in Renaissance literature is part of an anthropocentric reflection. The dog is a recurring motif in Shakespeare’s drama but its representation can convey confusion. The symbols associated with this animal seem to be rooted in early modern sayings referring to false friendship, — ‘the fawning of a dog’<sup>4</sup> — tracking, death, or madness. In the *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*<sup>5</sup>, three derivations of the word ‘dog’ are given:

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in Hamon, Philippe. *1453-1559 Les Renaissances*. Cornette, Joël (ed.). Paris: Belin, 2009. 5. (my translation) “Les esprits des hommes ... ont commencé à s’éveiller et sortir des ténèbres...”

<sup>3</sup> Fudge, Erica. *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Jackson, J. L. « Dog-and-sugar Imagery and the Friendship Tradition.» *Shakespeare Quarterly* 1.4 (1950): 260 - 263.

<sup>5</sup> Schmidt, Alexander. *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*, Vol. 2. Newburyport: Dover Publications, 2012.

“dog n.” 1. domestic animal 2. a term of reproach  
 “dog v.” 1. to follow 2. to hunt, to track like a hound 3. to attend with molestation.  
 “dogged adj.” bloody-minded, cruel, unfeeling.  
 “dog-hearted adj.” unfeeling, inhuman.

The last entry, “dog-hearted,” associates the human heart with the dog to convey madness. The heart was believed to be the refuge for the human mind, and the sources of emotions, hence Prospero’s “beating mind” (Prospero, *The Tempest*, 4. 1. 163)<sup>6</sup>. Often, comparisons with the dog refer to the instability of a human character and thus deal with the humanist conception of the self: “The human is a self divided against itself, a constant struggle of mind against body, reason against desire.”<sup>7</sup> Macbeth uses the dog in a similar fashion as Edgar. They both compare the diversity of human kinds with the diversity of kinds of dogs and thereby draw a comparison between the dog and man which asserts for their similarity:

MACBETH Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;  
 As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,  
 Shoughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves, are clept  
 All by the name of dogs: the valued file  
 Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,  
 The housekeeper, the hunter, every one  
 According to the gift which bounteous nature  
 Hath in him closed; whereby he does receive  
 Particular addition  
 (*Macbeth*, 3. 1. 102-110)

Yet the comparison with the dog pinpoints particular traits of the human kind. In *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* for example Gertrude refers to the hypocrisy and betrayal of the rebellious citizens of Denmark who “cry ‘Choose we! Laertes shall be kind!’” (4. 5. 78): “How cheerfully on the false trail they cry! / O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!” (81-82) The dog is also used as a synonym to ‘follow closely’ or tracking. Most of the time it is associated with death to evoke the deadly fate of one character as Queen Elizabeth tells Gloucester in *Richard III* “Death and destruction dog thee at the heels;” (4. 1. 45) or even in *All’s Well That Ends Well*:

STEWART Where death and danger dogs the heels of worth:  
 He is too good and fair for death and me:  
 Whom I myself embrace, to set him free.  
 (3. 4. 17-19)

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<sup>6</sup> Cited in Johnson, Lawrence, John Sutton, and Evelyn B. Tribble (eds.). *Embodied Cognition And Shakespeare’s Theatre*. N.p.: Taylor and Francis, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Fudge, Erica. *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England*.

The dog, if used to announce or foreshadow death is however, in most cases, a metaphor for the madness, villainy or irrationality of characters. Sir Hugh Evans in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* emphasises the common use of the dog to refer to madness: “Why, this is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog!” (4. 2. 59). Cleopatra also uses the madness of a dog to personify her unendurable impatience “impatience does / Become a dog that's mad” (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 4. 13. 98). All in all the reference to the wild madness of a dog —

HENRY IV For the fifth Harry from curb'd license plucks  
The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog  
Shall flesh his tooth on every innocent.  
(*Henry IV, Part II*, 4. 5. 138-140)

— seems to be an exaggeration of the inhumanity of characters, or rather of their sinful nature. Cleopatra uses the dog as a synonym for “slave” and “soulless villain”: “Though they had wings: slave, soulless villain, dog! / O rarely base!” (5. 2. 190-191). The association of “slave,” “soulless villain” and dog is telling of the dual symbolism of this animal. On the one hand the dog is a symbol for extreme fidelity and on the other a symbol of extreme decadence and betrayal. It is used to tell of the excessive fidelity of a character, or conversely, to gauge the inhumanity and immorality of villains such as Iago, Gloucester or Tarquin: “O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!” (Roderigo, *Othello*, 5. 1. 74);

He like a thievish dog creeps sadly thence;  
She like a wearied lamb lies panting there;  
He scowls and hates himself for his offence;  
She, desperate, with her nails her flesh doth tear;  
He faintly flies, sneaking with guilty fear;  
She stays, exclaiming on the direful night;  
He runs, and chides his vanish'd, loathed delight.  
(*Rape of Lucrece*, 787 - 793)

While Macbeth asserts the similarity of a dog and a man Shylock, on the contrary, tries to prove that they are similar in nothing:

SHYLOCK What should I say to you? Should I not say  
'Hath a dog money? is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or  
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,  
With bated breath and whispering humbleness, Say this;  
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;

You spurn'd me such a day; another time  
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys'?  
(*Merchant of Venice*, 1. 3. 102-110)

His advocacy for his humanity reinforces the inhumanity of the dog. Likewise in *Coriolanus* mutinous citizens compare Coriolanus to a dog to signify his exclusion from the community of men: "he's a very dog to the commonalty." (All, 1. 1.14). The comparison with the dog thus serves, most of the time, to qualify what is not human. It is the irrationality of the dog that is often at stake. In the few particular traits of humanity which it pinpoints — fidelity, hypocrisy, madness, deadly fate, villainy, violence, immorality — the dog often points at the irrational behaviour of a character. For example in *King Lear* the Earl of Kent compares Lear's blindness with the irrational fidelity of the dog "Knowing naught, like dogs, but following." (2. 2. 51). Likewise in *Julius Caesar* Brutus wishes he were a faithful dog rather than a traitor "I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon, / Than such a Roman." (*Julius Caesar*, 4. 3. 30-31).

Despite its duplicity and its recurrence in the Shakespearean canon<sup>8</sup>, little interest has been given to the image of the dog in Shakespeare's drama. The dog is on the one hand a symbol of friendship, fidelity or submission to order and on the other hand a symbol of villainy, betrayal or exclusion from society. It is the name of the enemy in *Romeo and Juliet* and the (al)most faithful friend in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the human and the inhuman at once, "the extremity of both ends."<sup>9</sup> Due to such duality, this dissertation will posit that the comparison of human characters with dogs represents the dual nature of man. And in this sense, the dog challenges the conception of man as a rational animal, that is to say an animal endowed with reason. Dog imagery seems to have a connection with the classical concept of rational animal, that is to say the conception of man as an animal endowed with rationality.

The link between the dog and human rationality was never evoked in the literature on dog imagery. At first sight, the correlation may seem far-fetched. However, the dog in Shakespeare's drama is as much close to humanity as removed from any human features.

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<sup>8</sup> The term is used 193 times in the entirety of Shakespeare's work: <http://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/search/search-results.php>

<sup>9</sup> *Timon of Athens*, Apemantus "The middle of humanity thou never knewst, but the extremity of both ends" (4. 3. 300-301).



The comparison displays an analogical intimacy between dog and man which enables to bring two things closer in order to make them clearly distinct. In the corpus under study, the dog is compared by analogy to human characters so as to make human nature distinct. I have chosen a corpus as much as possible representative of the multifold usages of dog imagery. This study focuses on a comedy, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, a tragedy, *Titus Andronicus*, and a ‘problem play’<sup>10</sup> *Timon of Athens*.

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (c.1589/1593) is the only play of the Shakespearean canon featuring a dog onstage. Some recent editions of the play include Crab, the dog, in the *dramatis personae* (Oxford 2008 for example), although it was not included in the play’s 1623 Folio edition. Crab, the faithful companion of Lance, one of the play’s two clowns, most evidently brings comic relief. However, Crab does not perform tricks as expected and is rather a stoic figure.

*Titus Andronicus* (1593) is famous for its classical influences. Yet, if the myth of Philomela is the most evident another myth significantly impacts the unfolding of the tragedy: the myth of Actaeon, concealed under the motif of the hunt.

Finally, *Timon of Athens* (c.1605/1606) displays a rhetoric full of canine imagery. The dog is part of a misanthropic verbalisation. Timon, the prodigal lord of Athens, is betrayed by his friends who he calls dogs to qualify their unethical behaviour.

This dissertation will fall into three parts following a dialogical line of argument. The first part will examine the classical roots of the analogy. From its most classical usage, the symbolical representation of cynicism, the analogy is transformed into a motif of friendship. Thus the literary device shows the humanist mechanism at stake: revisiting classical ideas and classical aesthetic so as to create new ones. However if the analogy is a topos of cynicism transformed into a topos of friendship, it is also a classical emblem of the finitude of man. This part shall show that the analogy has classical roots but also two dimensions: a political one (cynicism and friendship) and a metaphysical one (death). Thus

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<sup>10</sup> For the definition of the term ‘problem play’ which I use here, see Fox, Levi. *The Shakespeare Handbook*. Boston, Mass.: G.K. Hall, 1987. Problem plays include *All Well’s That Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Timon of Athens*. These plays are problematic for critics in the sense that they do not show features of tragedy nor of comedy and are about problems: the “situation is evidently desperate and deadly and the questions are those of life and death,” “the actions performed by characters equally ask an audience to consider some of the central ethical and historical problems of humanity.”

one can wonder whether the comparison deals with man as a rational and/or political animal. This will be the object of the second and third parts.

The second part will analyse how the analogy of human characters with dogs challenges the assumption of man as a rational animal. The idea of man as a being endowed with reason is put into perspective by the degradation or the parody of the characters' ability to speak and also the gradual animalisation of their bodies. The dog's role in this essentialist quest is to emphasise the animality of human characters. However the animality of human characters seems to be a source of political chaos to the extent that the reflection on man's rational nature is also a reflection on man's political nature.

The third part of this dissertation will deal with the depiction of the hybrid nature of man which prevents him from being a political animal, that is to say a being prone to live in community. Shakespeare takes Aristotle's concept to the word: man is an animal before being rational. Thus Shakespeare depicts societies of beasts where human characters can perform the noblest civilisation as well as the basest savagery. All in all Shakespeare provides a hybrid definition of man. Torn between their humanity and inhumanity, human characters are prone to vice and to virtue. The analogy serves to highlight this hybridity due to the dog's duality. Crab overall parodies the Gentlemen's vice and cynically points at their artificiality. In *Titus Andronicus* men's vice is compared to that of blind hounds. Likewise in *Timon of Athens* the invective use of dogs serves to underline the sinful greed of citizens of Athens but is also a preferable condition to that of being a man.

## **I. The Humanist Reception of a Classical Analogy Between Dog and Man.**

The analogy between dog and man can be traced back to the classical period when it was a symbol for cynicism. Yet Shakespeare's analogy, if it inherits from a classical tradition, transforms the comparison of man with a dog into a topos of friendship. The analogy has therefore a political dimension for it serves to challenge the role of man in society. Thus the dog is at the heart of a dialogue between the animality and humanity of man centred around his belonging to the community of men or his exclusion from it. But the analogy has also a metaphysical dimension and remains emblematic of classical literature as the dog is a symbol for the finitude of man. Thus if the analogy challenges the animal side of man, it is also at the heart of a dialogue between classical and humanist cultures.

### **I. A. Cynicism and Dogs.**



Fig. 1. Gérôme, Jean-Léon. *Diogenes*. c.1860. Oil on canvas. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

In his representation of Diogenes, the precursor of cynicism, Jean-Léon Gérôme imagines the Greek philosopher isolated and surrounded by dogs in the middle of a city. This nineteenth century representation shows the cultural association of cynics with dogs

since Antiquity. The word ‘cynicism’ comes from the Greek word for ‘dog’ ‘kuon.’<sup>11</sup> The Cynics in Ancient Greece were called dogs because they were meeting in front of the door of dogs in Athens. In the scope of cynicism, being compared to a dog means to be uncivilised and inhuman. For cynicism is a philosophical doctrine that aims to restore the *true nature* of man and, for this purpose, advocates asceticism, nudity, parricide and cannibalism, hence the comparison with animals:

Cynics, so as to return to a state of primal wildness, attack the *polis* itself and to the entire society. Their attitude aims at destabilising the foundations of the civilised state. They refer to primitive tribe, or to the first men, or even animals.<sup>12</sup>

According to Donald R. Dudley, the Cynics are remarkable for their “rejection of all current values, and the desire to revert to a life based on the minimum of demands.”<sup>13</sup> Cynicism endorses an opposition to any social, ethical or political values, in other words it opposes man as a political animal, that is to say a social animal living in community. They reject the Aristotelian philosophical belief in *zoon logikon* but also the belief in *zoon politikon*.<sup>14</sup> For Cynics, a virtuous life is one lived in accordance with the laws of nature as Diogenes defines the doctrine as such: “Nature is mighty and, since it has been banished from life by appearances, it is what we restore for the salvation of mankind.”<sup>15</sup>

In short, cynicism opposes civilisation, human development and the comfort of a political existence. In this sense, Cynics are closer to animals than to humans. In Shakespeare’s plays, the opposition between civilisation and savagery can take on cynical aspects. In *Titus Andronicus* the opposition of the woods and the city, the Goths and the Andronici is centred around the political or bestial nature of character. This opposition is emphasised by the hunt which stresses the play’s conflict between nature and culture. In

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<sup>11</sup> Collet, Francis. *Histoire des Idées de l’Antiquité à nos jours: Précis de culture générale*. Paris: Ellipses, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> De Fontenay, Elisabeth. *Le Silence des Bêtes: La Philosophie à l’Epreuve de l’Animalité*. N.p.: Fayard, 2007. (my translation) “Afin de faire retour à la sauvagerie première, les Cyniques s’attaquent à la cité et même à l’ensemble de la société ; leur attitude vise à déstabiliser les fondements de l’état civilisé. Ils se réfèrent aux modèles des peuples sauvages, ou des premiers hommes, ou même des animaux”

<sup>13</sup> Dudley, Donald R. *A History of Cynicism*. London: International Literary Agency, 1937.

<sup>14</sup> De Fontenay, Elisabeth. *Le Silence des Bêtes: La Philosophie à l’Epreuve de l’Animalité*. N.p.: Fayard, 2007. “Car le paradoxe qu’ils n’ont aucunement contrôlé, c’est qu’à vouloir faire la bête, ils ont fait l’ange, et qu’à force de répudier le *zôon politikon* et le *zôon logikon*, à force de vouloir faire les *zoa* (bêtes ou bestiaux) ou les prétendus vrai chien, ils ont plutôt réussi à s’égaliser à des dieux impassibles et autarciques.”

<sup>15</sup> Malherbe, Abraham J. (ed.). *The Cynic Epistles: A Study Edition*. 1977. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006. 97.

*Timon of Athens* Timon isolates himself in the woods and chooses a life of asceticism so as to oppose the lords of Athens whom he compares to dogs. The cynicism of *Titus Andronicus*, *Timon of Athens* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* results in hybrid characters which are caught between opposing or not opposing the society of men. All in all, cynicism is at the heart of a conflict between human and animal nature which is canonised by hybridity. The dog is at the centre of this conflict as it is at once synonymous of humanity and animality.

### **I. A. 1. *Titus Andronicus*'s Conflicting Spaces.**

*Titus Andronicus* opposes the theatrical space of the *polis* to the theatrical space of the woods. The entrance in the woods in 2. 2 marks the beginning of the hunt ("The hunt is up, the morn is bright and grey / The fields are fragrant, and the woods are green." Titus, 2. 2. 1-2). This space is a space of liberation. Titus uses the lexical field of awakening, which symbolises, as they enter the woods, that their primal, essential, barbarous instinct is "unleashed":

TITUS Uncouple here, and let us make a bay,  
And wake the Emperor and his lovely bride,  
And rouse the Prince, and ring a hunter's peal,  
That all the court may echo with the noise.  
(2. 2. 3-6)

"Uncouple" is polysemous, it both refers to disconnection and it also refers to the releasing of the hounds. In that context, the idea conveyed is of citizens of Rome breaking away from civilisation to enjoy the sport of a hunt. This use of language is highly symbolical regarding the dramatic evolution and the division between the civilised space of the *polis* and the barbarous and savage space of the woods. Lavinia's murder is a canonical example of this division. In Julie Taymor's *Titus* (1999), Lavinia is found by Marcus in a meadow between two woods. The latter is wearing a tuxedo while she is half-human, half-vegetal. Chiron and Demetrius who just left their prey for the Andronici to find her, are shown stripped to the waist, winking at their literary origin. This passage in this production shows the encounter between civilisation and the mutilation of civilisation at work in the woods.

Chiron and Demetrius, reminiscent of centaurs, are marginal creatures because of their hybridity. The mutilation of Lavinia is thereby a hybridisation, she is not half human half animal but after her mutilation she remains with only half of her human capacities, her communication abilities being replaced by “a crimson river of warm blood” (Marcus, 2. 4. 22) and “two branches” which Marcus romanticises as two “sweet ornaments.” Titus later in the play associates the woods and the hunt with barbarity in Act 4 scene 1,

Lavinia, wert thou thus surprised, sweet girl?  
Ravished and wronged, as Philomela was,  
Forced in the ruthless, vast, and gloomy woods?  
See, see ; ay, such a place there is, where we did hunt —  
O, had we never, never hunted there! —  
Patterned by that the poet here describes,  
By nature made for murders and for rapes.”  
(4. 1. 51-57)

Along with the division between civilisation and barbarity, *polis* and woods, there goes a poetic of the edges which questions the nature of man and its limits. The dog is present in the motif of the hunt in *Titus Andronicus* which is heavily symbolical. Often in the play characters refer to the boundaries of the *polis*. This poetic of limits is in the focus of the long and only scene of Act 1 which is set within the *polis* and stages a political tumult. The democratic elections in Rome lead to a “civil wound” (Marcus, 5. 3. 86) and Saturninus’ Rome is repeatedly compared to Priam’s Troy. The motif of the besieged *polis* symbolises the asphyxiation of civilisation. Moreover, Titus is described straight from 1.1 as a regulator of limits:

MARCUS A nobler man, a braver warrior  
Lives not this day within the city walls.  
He by the senate is accited home  
From weary wars against the barbarous Goths  
(1. 1. 25-28)

CAPTAIN Romans, make way. The good Andronicus,  
Patron of virtue, Rome’s best champion,  
Succesful in the battles that he fights,  
With honour and with fortune is returned  
From where he circumscribèd with his sword,  
And brought to yoke, the enemies of Rome.  
(1. 1. 64-69)

In these two excerpts, Titus’s military function is emphasised as the promoter of order in the *polis*. Marcus extols his exceptionality “within the city walls” and the captain praises

his military success. The use of the adjective “circumscribèd” in line 68 enhances his function of the warrant of order: he is in charge of the limits of humanity within the polis. The recurrence of images of limbs and dismemberment also participate in this poetic of edges. They put the stress on the representation of the dismantlement of the *body politics*. In mutilating bodies Shakespeare creates a metaphor for the mutilation of the city-state. Such images of the limits are singular to both Act 1 scene 1 and Act 5 scene 3; the beginning and the ending of the play.

Thus, the play opens on the degradation of limits and ends on the wounded city and citizens: Rome has become “a wilderness of tigers” (3. 1. 54) and is rotting from the inside as Aaron explicitly claims “Vengeance rot you all” (5. 1. 58). Civilised Rome and the “gloomy woods” are superimposed in the revenge process shaped as a man hunt; the *polis* is no longer a place of civilisation (“wicked streets of Rome,” 5. 2. 98). Yet, the last scene of the play is dedicated to the conventional return of harmony at the end of a tragedy. Marcus’s and Lucius’s speeches use images of reconnection. Whereas the hunt brings disconnection and confusion in the superimposition of barbarity upon civilisation, Marcus and Lucius reconnect men with civilisation through iconographic language:

MARCUS You sad-faced men, people and sons of Rome,  
By uproars severed, as a flight of fowl  
Scattered by winds and high tempestuous gusts,  
O, let me teach how to knit again  
This scattered corn into one mutual sheaf,  
These broken limbs again into one body;  
Lest Rome herself be bane unto herself,  
And she whom mighty kingdoms curtsy to,  
Like a forlorn and desperate castaway,  
Do shameful execution on herself.

(5. 3. 66-75)

MARCUS The poor remainder of Andronici  
Will hand in hand all headlong hurl ourselves,  
And on the ragged stones beat forth our souls,  
And make a mutual closure of our house.

(5. 3. 130-4)

Images of solidarity and social bond such as “knit again / this scattered corn into one mutual sheaf, / These broken limbs into one body” and “hand in hand [...] make mutual closure of our house” evoke the return of order in the *polis* after barbarity has reached its paroxysm (cannibalism).

In *Titus Andronicus*, civilisation and barbarity cannot be distinguished from each other. Blurring seems to be a motif in this parody of the revenge tragedy which enjoys the fertility of chaos.<sup>16</sup> In this context, where chaos becomes order, the use of canine motif such as the wolf in Julie Taymor's filmic production echoes man's animality as a symbol of the inherent savagery of civilisation.

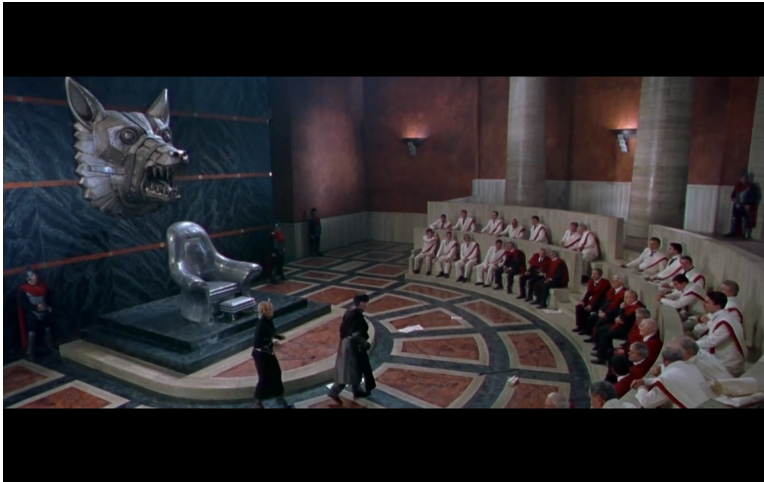


Fig. 2. Taymor, Julie. *Titus*. Screenshot. Italy ; United States ; United Kingdom : Clear Blue Sky Productions ; Overseas Filmgroup. 1999.

The Roman set in this filmic production is inspired both from Roman architecture and its reinterpretation in modern colonial ages. The blending of rectilinear black and red shapes also reminds of nationalist propaganda of the first half of the twentieth-century, emphasising a period when the limits of man blasted. Julie Taymor's choice of set is built against the backdrop of the reinterpretation of classical culture. The motif of the hound is reinterpreted as a wolf and hints at the greedy and unethical nature of man. The metallic sculptures of wolves which adorn the Roman polis represent the blending of civilisation and barbarity which creates a chaotic order in the play. Cynicism impacts the hunt, the woods and barbarity but it seems that it is challenged by a difficulty to tell who is actually human and who is not.

<sup>16</sup> Peyré, Yves. *La Voix des Mythes dans la Tragédie Elisabethaine*. Paris: CNRS, 1996. "Les signes ne fonctionnent plus, et la distinction entre la civilisation et la barbarie se brouille. La Forêt, lieu de la confrontation entre la civilisation et la sauvagerie, combine les images de végétation perverse et de confusion."



### I. A. 2. Timon's Ascetic Nakedness.



Fig. 3. Image from *Timon of Athens*. By William Shakespeare.  
Dir. Bailey, Lucy. The Globe Shakespeare, London. 2008.

In *Timon of Athens*, there are two theatrical spaces based on the conflict between nature and culture as well. These conflicting spaces are enhanced by the use of canine imagery. However, *Titus Andronicus*'s canine imagery belongs to the motif of the hunt whereas *Timon of Athens*'s canine imagery resides in characterisation. Timon, choosing the space of the woods, develops an ascetic nature as a response to his hate of mankind.

The conflicting spaces have a structural function centred around Timon's transformation. The first part of the play is set in Athens, the *polis par excellence*, where Timon plays an influential role in the life of the city. His "prodigality"<sup>17</sup> and "bounty" are his initial marks of character and a source of fortune for the other lords. Act 3 is a turning point because it stages Timon's radical transformation after his loss of faith in mankind. After cursing the other lords Timon turns into a misanthrope. Then a civilised and wealthy lord, he chooses now the life of an animal, isolates himself in a cave in the woods and refuses all contact with mankind which he 'abhors'. Timon's misanthropy is mainly expressed through the representation of asceticism which is one of the key principles of cynicism. Asceticism is symbolised by Timon's fall<sup>18</sup> from man to beast. Dog imagery is polysemous. It refers both to the inhuman greed of Athens' lords and to Timon's status as

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<sup>17</sup> Davidson, Clifford. "'Timon of Athens': The Iconography of False Friendship." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 43.3 (1980): 181-200.

<sup>18</sup> See Clifford Davidson's article for the connection between Timon's fall and Lucifer's fall.

Timon refuses all marks of civilisation. The second part of the play is set in the wood and composed of three parts: the self-banishment, three meetings between Timon and citizens in the woods, and Timon's death. The meetings emphasise Timon's opposition to civilisation as the other characters remark his appearance and behaviour and we tend to associate Timon with beastliness rather than humanity. All the characters who meet Timon in the woods try to reason him which always results in agonistic dialogues. The inner stage directions included in these dialogues reveal Timon's physical, behavioural and mental transformation. Alcibiades, for example, does not recognise Timon:

(4. 3. 49-56)

TIMON                        Itches, blains,  
Sow all th'Athenian bosoms, and their crop  
Be general leprosy; breath, infect breath,

That their society, as their friendship, may  
Be merely poison. Nothing I'll bear from thee  
But nakedness, thou detestable town.

(4. 1. 28-33)

Timon is never naked on stage but through language we understand the metaphor which is implied in the idea of nakedness. When Timon proclaims his nakedness, he announces the renouncement to civilisation characterised by clothing. His nakedness is metaphorical and symbolises his entrance in the natural world, a world free of civilisation. It is later in the play associated with beasts by Apemantus:

APEMANTUS            Call the creatures  
Whose naked natures live in all the spite  
Of wreakful heaven, whose bare unhoused trunks  
To the conflicting elements exposed  
Answer mere nature, bid them flatter thee.  
O, thou shalt find —

TIMON                    A fool of thee. Depart.

(4. 3. 226-231)

Timon's civil nakedness is the result of a cynic conviction. His remark about Timandra's appearance shows that clothing is an appearance and hide true character: "It is her habit only that is honest, / Herself's a bawd;" (Timon, 4. 3. 113-114). The alliteration in [h] enhances his passionate cynicism and stresses the association based on appearance between one person, one's honesty and one's self: "her habit," "honest," "herself." Clothing is an illusion, a cultural construction and, in Timon's words, a cause of hypocrisy and social betrayal. Therefore the latter prefers living a life of asceticism, metaphorically 'naked' of all mark of civilisation with the conviction that if they "Let it go naked — men may see't the better." (Timon, 5. 1. 65).

Timon, is the embodiment of cynicism by his civil nakedness representing his refusal to be a citizen, his exile, his isolation and fierce opposition to society.<sup>19</sup> Juliette Vion-Dury states that both of them are voluntary denuding themselves which make them emblems of Renaissance cynicism due to their asceticism. The association of the dog with a nakedness, emblematic of cynicism because it opposes social conventions, brings a conflict between

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<sup>19</sup> We can compare his excess and death to King Lear's. See Vion-Dury, ed. *La Misanthropie au Théâtre*. Paris: Editions Sedes. 2007.

the human status and the animal status. This conflict is at its paroxysm in the creation of hybrid characters.

### **I. A. 3. Hybrid Characters.**

Hybrid characters symbolise the conflict between human status and animal status. Lance and Crab can be seen as one character; Chiron is a centaur in Greek mythology, ~~him~~ he and Demetrius wear animal skin in some productions and disguise into animals, furthermore by comparing Lavinia with a “dainty doe,” a deer, they cast themselves as predators. Lavinia, after her mutilation becomes a hybrid character as well but her hybridisation does not follow from the animal but from natural elements. Her hands made of two branches, her incapacity to speak after her rape and her hybrid body put her in a position half-way through an elemental state and a human state. Her incapacity to speak does not make her unable to produce action. In the contrary, her struggle and hybrid body makes her one of the most powerful character of the play.

Therefore, the hybridity of some characters torn between humanity and ‘nature’ in the sense of non-human puts forward a tragic dilemma. Lavinia, Lance, Timon, Chiron and Demetrius are emblems of a confrontation between humanity and non-humanity. In the contrary, Timon does not show hybridity but rather radical postures. The play falls into two part radically opposed by Timon’s love of mankind in the first half of the play and Timon’s hate of mankind in the second part.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Lance and Crab are indissociable to the extent that Lance confuses himself with his dog Crab “I am the dog. No, the dog is himself, and I am the dog. O, the dog is me, and I am myself. Ay, so, so.” (2. 3. 20-22). Lance is a clown and his character was probably written for William Kemp who was renowned for his performances as a clown. His being part of the cast would supposedly assure the play a commercial success. His text was probably not written since most of clowns’ performances were improvised. However, Lance’s monologues are somehow witty in the sense that the comic relief mirrors the love and friendship plot of the play. The first monologue (2. 3) is about his human ability to have emotions and feelings. He compares his crying to Crab’s unresponsiveness, “Now the dog all this while sheds not a tear not speaks a word; but see

how I lay the dust with my tears.” (2. 3.29-30). Lance and Crab’s episodes balance the love and friendship plot of the play due to Lance being inevitably compared to his dog Crab. They have a marginal position in the play due to their hybridity; Lance and Crab are one character made of two, composed of a man and his dog. Despite Crab’s silence and inaction, one cannot go without the other. The pair is still dramatically powerful because of the comic comparison they bring. Lance’s human stories are balanced by Crab’s unresponsiveness and their episodic subplot balances the over sentimental love and friendship plot.

Despite their inability to speak, Crab and Lavinia somewhat hold a dramatic function. Their marginality is enhanced by their hybridity and their speechless characters. Crab’s dramatic function is to be silent as a stone — “He is a stone, a very pebblestone, and has no more pity in him than a dog.” (Lance, 2. 3. 9-10) — and Lavinia’s dramatic function is to struggle with her mutilated body to communicate. Both of them are hybridised and marginalised from one human characteristic: speech. However, Crab is the animal part of the hybrid pair Lance and Crab, whereas Lavinia is half nature, half human. Her mutilated body is the result of the lust of characters hybridised as well: Chiron and Demetrius. Whereas these two characters are inspired from centaurs and thus half-animal half-human, Lavinia is half dead half alive. Moreover, Marcus describes her body with an elegiac tonality. His discovery of Lavinia after her rape is a florilegium of natural elements<sup>20</sup> and of references to Greek mythology, revealing the inspiration from the Ovidian myth of Philomela. Her mutilation is described as a hybridisation of her body between death and life. Lavinia’s rape and mutilation is a turning point in the play enhanced by the disfiguration of Lavinia. Marcus describes in a very poetic way how Lavinia’s character has been ‘deflowered’ (2. 4. 26):

MARCUS Speak, gentle niece, what stern ungentle hands  
Hath lopped and hewed and made thy body bare  
Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments,  
Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in,  
And might not gain so great a happiness  
As half thy love?

(2. 4. 16-21)

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<sup>20</sup> Funeral sermons often used “flowery adulation.” See Greaves, Richard L.. *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England*. Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1981. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 8 May 2016.

His half elegiac description enhances the transformation of Lavinia into a hybrid character, half dead, half alive. Her death is represented by natural elements 'two branches' and is in the meantime embellished 'sweet ornaments'. His speech is nostalgic of non-hybrid Lavinia, in whose arms 'kings have sought to sleep in'. Lavinia's hybridity symbolises an unaccomplished death. Marcus also questions her new hybrid form and her ability to be human; will she be able to feel anything, 'as half [her] love?'

Hybridity deals with the humanity of characters. Likewise, Chiron is related to hybrid mythological creatures half human half horse, a centaur. The mythological centaur Chiron is a preceptor. He has educated heroes and gods such as Achilles or Apollo. Whereas the preceptor can be an emblem of reason, Shakespeare's Chiron and his twin brother Demetrius are symbols of passion. Their relation with horses or hounds is not evident in the play, yet we can easily apparent them to the hunt. By preying on Lavinia they launch the ongoing (man)hunt which gives the play its savage destructive pace. Despite Aaron's precepts, they fight for Lavinia's 'love' which is confused with their implicit lust. Lavinia is compared by Aaron to Lucrece, victim of Tarquin's rape which is also marked by the confusion between love and lust. Aaron tries to reason Chiron and Demetrius who both want to "achieve," "speed" and "compete" for Lavinia who becomes their prey (2. 1). The intertwining with the motif of the hunt reveals Chiron's and Demetrius's beastly nature. The confusion between love and lust shows that they are governed by their passion which can be associated with an animal nature. There is therefore an implied analogy between the brothers and predators as they launch the "solemn hunting" (Aaron, 2. 1. 113). As their preceptor, Aaron encourages them in the process which thereby divides the conflicting spaces of the play. The woods are the space of savagery and barbarity whereas the city is a space of order. Chiron's and Demetrius's mutilation of Lavinia starts the hunting process and threaten the political order of the city which Aaron's speech foreshadows in 2. 1:

AARON The Emperor's court is like the house of fame,  
The palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears;  
The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf and dull.  
There speak, and strive, brave boys, and take your turns;  
There serve your lust, shadowed from heaven's eyes,  
And revel in Lavinia's treasury.

(2. 1. 127-132)

Demetrius concludes the first scene of Act I by settling the end of ethics and moral as the dynamic of the hunt:

DEMETRIUS *Sit fas aut nefas*, till I find the stream  
To cool this heat, a charm to calm these fits,  
*Per Styggia, per manes vehor.*

(2. 1. 134-136)

The latin quote is translated in the Oxford edition of the play as “be right or wrong” and “I am borne through the Stygian regions among shades (Latin, adapted from Seneca’s *Hyppolytus*, l.1180) i.e. I am in hell.” Hybrid characters Chiron and Demetrius are related to centaurs but have more in common with hounds. They are predators preying on Lavinia. Under the precepts of Aaron and driven by lust, they set a (man)hunt in Rome. Their hybridity introduces the hellish atmosphere which later in the play results in Titus’s qualification of Chiron and Demetrius as “hell-hounds” and Aaron as a “black dog” (5. 1). *In fine*, the play’s conflicting spaces correspond to the hybrid conflict of characters divided between a state of human and a state of animal.

Lance and Crab, Lavinia, Chiron and Demetrius stand apart. Their hybridity goes along with their marginality. All of them are half-human half-animal or dead nature for Lavinia. Their hybridity challenges their ability to communicate. Likewise, Timon’s radical transformation into a misanthrope and seclusion in the woods marginalises him. However, because of his radicalism he cannot be considered as a hybrid character although he is as marginal as hybrid characters.

We can conclude that Lance and Crab, due to their balanced hybridity, express a cynic vision of love and friendship through mockery and ridicule. Lesley Kordecki considers Crab as a ‘stoical presence’ towards love, friendship and feelings:

Impressively, Crab's stoical, possibly cynical presence undercuts the banal accusations of his clearly adoring master, and he operates no longer as a simple metaphor for the human, for the monologue scenes become something almost uncanny on the stage.<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, Crab’s unresponsiveness to Lance’s mockery can be interpreted as a cynic response. The silence of the dog ridicules the agitation provoked by the love and friendship plots. Lance and Crab are cynics because they turn in ridicule the ‘ado’ of social

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<sup>21</sup> Kordecki, Lesley. “True Love and the Nonhuman: Shakespeare’s Dog Crab and the Animal/Human Connection” *Social Alternatives* 32.4 (2013). 28-33.

conventions through silence contrary to *Much Ado About Nothing* which turns courtly love into ridicule through a dense rhetoric. The man-dog pair performed by Lance and Crab cynically compares social conventions to animal earthly character. In quite a different way, the comparison with hounds in *Titus Andronicus* brings a cynic view on political order through hybrid characters. Those characters are on the margin of civilisation and barbarity in this play whereas the limits between the two spaces are not always sharply defined. Hybridisation is yet a powerful and omnipresent motif in *Titus Andronicus*, especially because of the hunt dynamic. Furthermore, the hunt is itself a hybrid sport, mingling savagery and courtesy.

Hybridity deals with a conflict between nature and culture. It results in violence in *Titus Andronicus* and stoic cynicism in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. One common point expressed by hybridity in *Titus Andronicus*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Timon of Athens* is the marginality of some characters which results in a cynic attitude. Timon on the other hand displays cynicism through radical opposition of philanthropy and misanthropy. The conflict between a human state and an animal state results in a cynic opposition to civilisation. However, this conflict is conveyed either by a radical opposition or by confusion: hybridity.

Initially related to the dog by anecdote, cynicism seems nonetheless to have a powerful dramatic function and to be related to dogs. It is imbued in the hunting process in *Titus Andronicus* in which the hounds blur the boundary between the civilised and the savage. Timon's radical opposition to the *polis* and ascetic life in the woods makes him an embodiment of cynicism. Quite similarly, hybrid characters edge away from their humanity to put into perspective its very nature. Therefore, cynicism in those three plays questions the political nature of man, enhancing the indistinctness of the state of nature and the state of culture. Dogs are the shadows of human characters. They serve to put forwards their vice as well as their virtue.

Elisabeth de Fontenay analyses cynicism as “an ideal of superhumanity, and not denaturation as a new nature,”<sup>22</sup> that is to say that cynics do not claim ‘denaturation’ as an

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<sup>22</sup> De Fontenay, *Le Silence des Bêtes*. (my translation) “Car, quand les Cyniques disent que l’homme doit surmonter la facticité de l’artificialité de la logique, de la connaissance, de l’art et de la technique afin de parvenir par un dépouillement toujours plus radical, à un élémentaire strict nécessaire, c’est un idéal de surhumanité qu’ils proposent, et non de dénaturation renaturante.”



ideal for human life, but rather questions human nature so as to meliorate it. The ‘superhumanity’ lies in man’s capacity to reflect on his condition. In this sense, cynicism in Shakespeare’s plays under study brings a sceptical view on a classical definition of humanity. However, rather than putting into perspective man as a rational animal, cynicism puts into perspective man as a political animal since the definition of human nature seems to always be linked to the city.

### **I. B. Friendship: Of Dogs and Men.**



Fig. 4. Riviere, Briton. *Fidelity*. Oil on canvas. 1869. Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool.

In comparing man to a dog, Shakespeare confronts man to the duality of his nature. The dog as an emblem of cynicism tackles the political nature of man. Yet dog imagery also brings friendship into perspective, another topos dealing with man’s political nature. One can indeed consider friendship as a social bond, a noble form of civility. The dog being a symbol for both cynicism and friendship, the two topoï seem to combine so as to question man’s political nature. Yet if cynicism is a classical symbol associated with the dog, friendship seems to be its humanist reconversion.

Most often dogs are associated with false friendship through flattery. This traditional use of dog imagery has its legacy in idioms and maxims. In Thomas Cooper’s *Thesaurus Linguae Romanae & Britannicae*, he defines *adulatio* as “*Properly the faw|ning of a dogge: Flattery.*” There are several types of ideals of friendship: *adulatio*, *amicitia*, *phillia*. *Adulatio* is the false friendship and is commonly associated with the fawning of a dog as a

symbol of hypocrisy. J. L. Jackson statement on the “dog-and-sugar imagery” in Shakespeare’s plays is that dogs are symbols of flattery and false friendship. Timon is an icon of *adulatio*. He is used in Cicero’s *De Amicitia* as the iconic character experiencing false friendship from which Shakespeare might have been inspired. Cicero’s writings on friendship were inspired in part from Aristotle’s *Ethics*, Plato and Epicurian philosophy<sup>23</sup>.

Contrarily to *adulatio*, true friendship, *amicitia*, can only be natural and benevolent. Clifford Davidson explains, “Friendship is understood as a bond which is not only a radiant ideal but is also an expression of a most necessary kind of good will that makes society cohesive.” Just like cynicism, friendship has a political object. He continues by explaining that true friendship “cannot be forced or false, but must flow spontaneously from the heart.” Montaigne’s exploration of friendship in his essay *On Friendship* defines the “noble relationship” as the natural union of two men. Women and children are excluded from friendship because they do not have the maturity to experience such feelings.

For Montaigne friendship is as simple as complex, as natural as unique. “Superficial acquaintanceships”<sup>24</sup> are easy to find but for friendship “in which we are dealing with the innermost recesses of our minds with no reservations, it is certain that all our motives must be pure and sure to perfection.”<sup>25</sup> Montaigne revisits classical visions of friendship as pure as divine creation:

they mix and work themselves into one piece, with so universal a mixture, that there is no sign of the seam by which they were first conjoined. If I a man should importune me to give a reason why I loved him, I find it could no otherwise be expressed, than by making answer: because it was he, because it was I. There is beyond what I am able to say, I know not what inexplicable and fated power that brought on this union. We sought one another long before we met, and by the characters we heard of one another, which wrought upon our affections more than, in reason, mere reports should do; I think ’twas by some secret appointment of heaven.

He makes clear the distinction between common friendship and *philia* but above all underlines the political function of friendship as a bond between men — “There is nothing to which nature seems so much have inclined us, as to society; and Aristotle, says that the good legislators had more respect to friendship than to justice.”

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<sup>23</sup> Cicero. Powell, J. G. (ed.) *Laelius, On Friendship & The Dream Of Scipio*. Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1990.

<sup>24</sup> Montaigne, Michel de. “On Friendship.” In *Essays*. c. 1580. Translated by Charles Cotton, Esq. 6th edition. 1743. Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale. University of Birmingham. 8 May 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

In analysing Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* and the "friend," the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben defines friendship as a community. The initial meaning of friendship, based on *philia*, linked the philosopher and the friend. Thus, in his essay "The Friend"<sup>26</sup> Agamben comments upon this semantic change from the "near consubstantiality, of the friend and the philosopher" to the common usage of friendship to designate a community. He quotes Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*...

For good men, "con-senting" [*synaisthanomenoi*, sensing together] feels sweet because they recognize the good itself, and what a good man feels with respect to himself, he also feels with respect to his friend: the friend is, in fact, an other self [*heteros autos*]. And all people find the fact of their own existence [*to auton einai*] desirable, the existence of their friends is equally — or almost equally — desirable. Existence is desirable because one senses that it is a good thing, and this sensation [*aisthesis*] is in itself sweet. One must therefore also "con-sent" that his friend exists, and this happens by living together and by sharing acts and thoughts in common [*koimonein*]. In this sense, we say that human live together [*syzen*], unlike cattle that share the pasture together...

... and comments:

Friendship is, in fact, a community; and as we are with respect to ourselves, so we are, as well, with respect to our friends. And as the sensation of existing (*aisthesis hoti estin*) is desirable for us, so would it also be for our friends.<sup>27</sup>

The human community is "defined here, in contrast to the animal community, through a living together [...] that is not defined by the participation in a common substance, but rather by a sharing that is purely existential, a con-division that, so to speak, lacks an object: friendship as the con-sentiment of the pure fact of being." Agamben's analysis enlightens the modern definition of friendship as a community. This community is the mark of civilisation in opposition to animals. Aristotle distinguishes the human consent of living together which Agamben interprets as the existential nature of community. Friendship is the mark of an existential knowledge proper to humans which echoes Montaigne's words: "because it was he, because it was I."

In this respect, dog iconography reflects false and true friendship as the duality of man's political nature, as characters compared to dogs are torned between inclusion and

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<sup>26</sup> Agamben, Giorgio. "The Friend." *What is An Aparatus? And Other Essays*. trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

exclusion from the community of men.

### **I. B. 1. A Parodic Duologue: Lance and Crab.**

Lance and his dog Crab are so indissociable that they seem to form one character out of two. It is in many respects a hybrid pair. Lance, the human character, completes and opposes Crab, the dog character. Thus, friendship between Crab and Lance is not so evident since there is barely any exchange between the two, except maybe their mute devotion to each other. However, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* displays several pairs of characters and the play, which straight from the first lines sets friendship and love as the main themes, explores mad love and reciprocity.

Like Giorgio Agamben, Christopher Marlow associates the sources of the Renaissance conception of friendship with “Aristotle’s *Nichomachean Ethics* and Cicero’s *Laelius, On Friendship* with their emphasis upon the interlinked properties of similitude, equality, and reciprocity.”<sup>28</sup> Shakespeare’s comedy ends with harmony with the traditional double marriage. This social harmony is expressed by the anaphora: “One feast, one house, one mutual happiness.” (5. 4. 172) and is the re-establishment of order among the community. Indeed, *The two Gentlemen of Verona* traditionally displays two pairs of lovers whose feelings are challenged by love letters, false love letters, cross-dressing, the immersion out of the city etc. Compared to friendship pairs, love pairs and master-servant pairs, the man-dog pair that Lance and Crabs form is a parodic duologue which contrasts passion, false friendship and unrequited love which punctuate the main plot and characterise courtly love.

In his article “Comic duologues in three plays by Shakespeare,” Robert Wilcher argues that there are three kinds of “comic duologues.” He considers Lance and Speed as a “double-act,” Lance as a “clown confronting a theatre audience,” and “at the other end of the social scale [...] the duologues between characters from the main plot.” Based on his overview of the comic duologue in Shakespeare’s drama, there are two types of duologues: duologues between two characters and duologues between audience and a character which

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<sup>28</sup> Marlow, Christopher. “Friendship in Renaissance England.” *Literature Compass* 1.1 (2004).

the pair both explores. Yet, even if the pair is a comic duologue, one can argue that they are also a parodic duologue.

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona* contrasts pairs of characters belonging to different backgrounds, — gentlemen vs. servants — to different plots, — main plot vs. interludes — and to different registers — witty interludes vs. comic interludes. Lance and his dog Crab bring comic relief to the main plot and more particularly to courtly civility. Contrarily to other pairs, the pair creates a parodic comparison between a dog and a gentleman. Likewise, Elizabeth Rivlin argues that,

In his histrionic relationship with his dog/servant, Launce both recreates and parodies the servant's mimetically derived control over his master. The monologues function in dual fashion: they reinforce the dynamics of mimetic service elsewhere in the play, and they reduce the relation of servant and master to an absurd, animalistic one, alluding thereby to the falseness of claims that hierarchical distinctions are natural rather than performed.<sup>29</sup>

Indeed, in act 4 scene 4, Lance denounces the hypocrisy of courtly manners. He compares a gentleman with a dog. The comparison is even more powerful for Lance negatively attributes a dog “gentleman-like” features: “He thrusts me himself into the company of three or four gentlemen-like dogs under the Duke’s table.” (16-18). He uses a metaphor to describe the main male characters as dogs and emphasises the hypocrite nature of gentlemen with the epithet “gentlemen-like.” There is here an inversion between the common early modern understanding of the image of a dog, representing false friendship, and the civility and courtesy of a gentleman.

This kind of parody is essential to Lance and Crab as a hybrid pair. In the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* ‘parody’ is defined as “the imitative use of the words, style, attitude, tone and ideas of an author in such a way as to make them ridiculous [...] achieved by exaggerating certain traits”<sup>30</sup>. The pair is in itself a comparison of man and dog since Lance and Crab are indissociable. Lance repeatedly compares his human attribute to his dog’s indifference. However, when Lance compares gentlemen to dogs, Crab is “the sourest”: “I think Crab my dog be the sourest-natured dog that lives.” Whereas the “gentlemen-like” witty interludes serves to express their mad, passionate, excessive

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<sup>29</sup> Rivlin, Elizabeth. “Mimetic Service in “the Two Gentlemen of Verona.”” *ELH* 72.1 (2005): 105–128.

<sup>30</sup> Cuddon, J. A, Claire Preston, and J. A Cuddon. *The Penguin Dictionary Of Literary Terms And Literary Theory*. London: Penguin Books, 1999.

love, — “that hath dazzled my reason’s light” Proteus says of Sylvia — Crab’s sour nature contrasts with the gentlemen’s effusion. Sylvia being initially Valentine’s lover, the two noble friends face jealousy and false friendship as Proteus, deceived by Julia, falls in love with his friend’s lover. Proteus extravagantly expresses the dilemma as soon as he meets Sylvia: “Is it mine eye, or Valentine’s praise, / Her true perfection, or my false transgression / That makes me reasonless to reason thus?” (2. 4. 193-195). Their flattery of the same woman results in a comparison with the cynic sourness of a dog. Moreover, the comparison reminds of the early modern saying “the fawning of a dog” which inspires disloyalty. The Elizabethan idiom reveals itself key to the plot. Lance and Crab comic interludes parody the love and friend pairs of gentlemen and satirise their hypocrisy.



Fig. 5. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Simon Godwin. RSC, Stratford-Upon-Avon. 2014. Performance.

“Why, he that’s tied here, Crab, my dog.” (Lance, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 2. 3. 38)

Crab seems to be the extension of Lance. In Simon Godwin’s production of the play at the RSC in 2014, the two are linked by a leash which enhances their platonic relationship (picture above). Together they represent *amicitia* in contrast to their satire of *adulatio* characteristic of courtly friendship they comment upon. The reciprocity between Crab and Lance defies both the thematic and dramatic elements of the play. The pair brings a moralistic contrast to the other pairs and has a metatheatrical function as Boehrer states: “Launce and Crab invite the audience to see them in a doubling relation to the play’s other characters, and to extract from that doubling a particular message or moral that is commensurate with the play’s broader social and ethical investments.”<sup>31</sup> Louis B. Wright

<sup>31</sup> Boehrer, Bruce Thomas. *Shakespeare Among the Animals: Nature and Society in the Drama of Early Modern England*. Gordonsville, VA, USA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

claimed in 1927 in an essay on “Animal Actors on the English Stage Before 1642” that the only function for animals was to carry tricks:

The use of a trick dog by a clown in variety show acts is well illustrated by the performances of Launce and his dog, Crab, in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1595?). The clownery of this comedian and his dog has no relation to the dramatic structure of the play and in no way advances the action. There is no definite sub-plot, and Launce and his dog, with the help of Speed at times, merely furnish a series of variety show performances.<sup>32</sup>

However, Crab barely does anything and is rather, in the contrary, the representation of the “failures of playing” according to the Bruce Boehrer<sup>33</sup>:

Much of *Two Gentlemen’s* metadrama is clearly calculated, and calculated to draw attention to the inherent theatricality of the courtship (and friendship) behavior that is the play’s principal subject. Launce and Crab were deliberately constructed to serve as theatrical anomalies: central failures in a play about the failures of playing.

Crab and Lance form a complete duo with on the one hand speech and on the other hand (in)action. They contrast each other and also other pairs, the human attributes of Crab reinforce this contrast through comic relief. Crab does not bring a comic relief based on the entertainment of trick shows but because his function as a dog contrasts human attributes which echoes Bergson’s definition of the comic. According to Bergson, in his essays *Laughter: An Essay On the Meaning of The Comic*,

the comic does not exist outside the pale of what is strictly human [...] You may laugh at an animal, but only because you have detected in it some human attitude or expression. [...] Several have defined man as “an animal which laughs.” They might equally well have defined him as an animal which is laughed at; for if any other animal, or some lifeless object, produces the same effect, it is always because of some resemblance to man, of the stamp he gives it or the use he puts it to.<sup>34</sup>

Crab therefore shall not be taken as an “early modern animal performance” but rather “a postmodern animal” as Lesley Kordecki states:

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<sup>32</sup> Wright, Louis, B. “Animal Actors on the English Stage Before 1642.” *PMLA* 42.3 (1927). 656 - 669.

<sup>33</sup> Boehrer, Bruce. *Shakespeare Among the Animals: Nature and Society in the Drama of Early Modern England*.

<sup>34</sup> Bergson. *Le Rire: Essai Sur la Signification du Comique*. 1900. Paris: Editions Payot & Rivages, 2011. Translation by Brereton Cloudesley and Fred Rothwell, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4352/4352-h/4352-h.htm> “Il n’y a pas de comique en dehors de ce qui est proprement *humain*. [...] On rira d’un animal, mais parce qu’on aura surpris chez lui une attitude d’homme ou une expression humaine. [...] Plusieurs ont défini l’homme “un animal qui sait rire”. Ils auraient bien pu le définir un animal qui fait rire, car si quelque autre animal y parvient, ou quelque objet animé, c’est par une ressemblance avec l’homme, par la marque que l’homme y imprime ou par l’usage que l’homme en fait.”

we can more fully comprehend the dog if we look at Crab, an early modern animal performance, purposely and strategically as what we now call a postmodern animal, wherein we can reconfigure the duo of Lance and Crab as breaking the boundaries separating human and nonhuman.

Her conception of Crab as a postmodern animal, “breaking the boundaries separating human and nonhuman” agrees with Bergson’s definition of the comic and reinforces the idea of contrast between the animality of the dog and the excess of courtly manners: the gentlemen’s *hubris* — passionate love — and one of its consequences, false friendship.

Civility and friendship are tightly linked in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* where the animality of Crab satirises the civility of gentlemen. Crab can be seen as the extension of a human character, Lance. Their pair, based on the analogy between dog and man, diffuses this contrast to the main thematic questions: the reciprocity of friendship and love. Lance and Crab question the definition of friendship in theory and in practice, distinguishing ideal from false friendship — *amicitia* and *adulatio*.

### **I. B. 2. The Myth of Actaeon.**

The illusion of friendship is central to the myth of the dogs hounding Actaeon. Actaeon was in classical mythology a hunter. He was accompanying Diana and her nymphs. Diana is the goddess of natural balance as well as the goddess of hunting. Excess, such as lust or excessive hunting is prohibited on her hunting ground. She maintains a balance between savagery and civilisation in the woods. Therefore when Actaeon surprises Dian’s nymphs having a bath, Diana must punish him. Actaeon’s mistake is to have seen the nymphs naked which is perceived as an excess, lust. Thus, Diana changes Actaeon into a stag. The latter who had faithful hounds, turned into a prey, is not recognised by his own dogs...

With piteous looke in stead of handes his head about to waue.  
Not knowing that it was their Lord, the huntsmen chéere their hounds  
With wonted noyse and for *Acteon* looke about the grounds.  
They hallow who could lowdest crie still calling him by name,  
As though he were not there, and much his absence they do blame  
In that he came not to the fall, but slackt to sée the game.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Golding, Arthur. *The. xv. bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis, translated oute of Latin into English meeter*. 1567. Early Modern Books Online. University of Birmingham. 10 June 2016.



... and the hunter is hunted by his faithful “servants.” Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux stresses the significance of illusion and confusion in the myth of the dogs hounding Actaeon<sup>36</sup>. Shakespeare uses the myth of Actaeon in both *Titus Andronicus* and, less evidently, in *Timon of Athens*. *Titus Andronicus* is structured against the backdrop of two myths: the myth of Philomela and the myth of Actaeon. The hunt, the blindness of characters and the inescapability of a deadly fate structure dramatic action in the revenge tragedy. References to the myth are stressed by common motifs such as blindness, the hunt, Diana and hounds. While Lavinia is the embodiment of Philomela, Tamora appropriates the figure of Diana and the myth of Actaeon seems to characterise the Goths’ barbarity:

TAMORA Saucy controller of our private steps!  
Had I the power that some say Dian had,  
Thy temples should be planted presently  
With horns, as was Actaeon's; and the hounds  
Should drive upon thy new-transformed limbs,  
Unmannerly intruder as thou art!

(2. 3. 60-65)

The myth of Actaeon structures the revenge tragedy by enhancing a blind, irrational, cycle of revenge which destroys the city of Rome. As for *Timon of Athens*, the myth of Actaeon is used to stress the hypocrisy of the lords of Athens and Timon’s illusion. Timon the philanthrope can be compared to Actaeon changed into a stag, eaten by the lords who are moreover compared to dogs. The play does not refer to the myth but somehow shows some ironic similarities and seems nonetheless to use the myth.

The myth of Actaeon can be compared to the mythological figure of Argos, Ulysses’s dog. Actaeon’s dogs are not able to recognise their master whereas, the old and blind Argos is the only one in Ithaca who recognises Ulysses even when he is disguised as an old beggar. These two types of dogs are the embodiment of fidelity and infidelity. They are the two tokens of the representation of the dog as man’s friend. Argos is an ideal of fidelity whereas Actaeon’s dogs are the embodiment of infidelity. They correspond to the two early modern definitions of friendship: *amicitia* and *adulatio*. Besides, contrary to Argos, Actaeon’s hounds are not individualised and are envisaged as a pack of hounds. Argos

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<sup>36</sup> Frontisi-Ducroux, Françoise. “Actéon, Ses Chien et Leur Maître.” Cassin, Barbara, J.-L. Labarrière, (eds.). *L’Animal dans l’Antiquité*. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1997.

instead is unique. These two mythological clusters bring into focus the nature of friendship both as affection and social cohesion.

*Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens* share the myth of Actaeon and the incapacity to recognise one's friend(s). Both plays are tainted with betrayal. Timon turns misanthropic because he feels betrayed by his friends, the lords whom he compares in many occasions to dogs. *Titus Andronicus*, on the other hand, is a civil mutiny where the social bounds are destroyed by the yearning for vengeance. The play is punctuated by a hunt between opposite clans. The opening of the hunt is worth a comparison with Arthur Golding's 1567 of Ovid's text:

It was the time of day  
That mid betwéene the East and West the Sunne doth séeme to stay.  
When as the Thebane stripling thus bespake his companie,  
Still raunging in the waylesse woods some further game to spie.  
Our weapons and our toyles are moist and staine with bloud of Deare:  
This day hath done inough as by our quarrie may appeare.  
Assoone as with hir scarlet whéeles next morning bringeth light,  
We will about our worke againe. But now *Hiperion* bright  
Is in the middes of Heauen, and seares the fieldes with firie rayes.  
Take vp your toyles, and cease your worke, and let vs go our wayes.  
They did euen so, and ceast their worke. There was a valley thicke  
With Pinaple and Cipresse trées that armed be with pricke.  
*Gargaphie* hight this shadie plot, it was a sacred place  
To chaste *Diana* and the Nymphes that wayted on hir grace.  
Within the furthest end thereof there was a pleasant Bowre  
So vaulted with the leaue trées the Sunne had there no powre:  
Not made by hand nor mans devise: and yet no man aliue,  
A trimmer piece of worke than that could for his life contriue. <sup>37</sup>

TITUS The hunt is up, the morn is bright and grey,  
The fields are fragrant, and the woods are green.  
Uncouple here, and let us make a bay,  
And wake the Emperor and his lovely bride,  
And rouse the Prince, and ring a hunter's peal,  
That all the court may echo with the noise.

(2. 2. 1-6)

In the translations of Ovid's description of the end of a day of hunt, astral elements punctuate time: "It was the time of day That mid betwéene the East and West the Sunne doth séeme to stay." ; "next morning bringeth light," ; "seares the fieldes with firie rayes." ; "this shadie plot" ; "the Sunne had there no powre." In Golding's translation the hunt is

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<sup>37</sup> Golding, Arthur. *The. xv. bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis, translated oute of Latin into English meeter*. 1567. Early Modern Books Online. University of Birmingham. 10 June 2016.

regulated by the sun whereas Shakespeare's description of the opening of the hunt is not regulated by sunlight but by noise. Shakespeare enhances the function of hounds in the hunt by using several synonyms which echo the barking of hounds. This reminds of the description of Rome in the previous scene (2. 1.):

AARON The Emperor's court is like the house of fame,  
The palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears;  
The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull.  
(2. 1. 127-129)

At this point of the play Rome is ruled by Saturninus whose name reminds of the planet Saturn associated with the latin god Saturnus, the god of the Capitol, wealth and liberation. Moreover, the emperor Saturninus calls himself a sun:

SATURNINUS What, hath the firmament more suns than one?  
LUCIUS What boots it thee to call thyself a sun?  
(5. 3. 17-18)

In Greek mythology, his equivalent is Kronos, the father of the first generation of Gods and the leader of the Titans. In the Oxford notes to the text, Eugene M. Waith states that "Shakespeare may have taken from Roman history [...] but may also have been influenced by astrological theory that saturnine men (those under the influence of saturn) were 'false, envious,...and malicious'."<sup>38</sup> Saturninus is a leader and a dual figure, capable of promoting either prosperity or chaos. After Saturninus becomes emperor, Tamora is released and her sons with the support of Aaron prepare to mutilate Lavinia. The election of Saturninus appears as the beginning of the hunt, and unleashes a cycle of violence. The reference to a star and to a figure of excess in Shakespeare's text hints at Ovid's description of the hunt regulated by the sun. Nevertheless, Titus's opening of the hunt with an emphasis on the hounds' noise — "make a bay" ; "hunter's peal" ; "uncouple here" — sets the myth of Actaeon as a structuring motif. Shakespeare seems to have borrowed the motif of the hunt from the myth of Actaeon but adapts it to the play. Instead of emphasising the structuring function of the sun in the myth, Shakespeare enhances the structuring function of the noise which characterises the savagery of the hunt.

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<sup>38</sup> Shakespeare, William. *Titus Andronicus*. Waith, M., Eugene (ed.). Oxford World's Classics. 1984. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

The motif of the hunt, influenced by Ovid's myth, serves to create a climate of confusion as soon as the dogs are unleashed. Shakespeare's use of the myth in *Titus Andronicus* relies on the thematic significance of honour. The struggle between the Andronici and the Goths is centred around duty and honour to one's clan. The myth of Actaeon manifests the incapacity to recognise one's peers. The play is not concerned by friendship in the sense of *amicitia* and *adulatio* but friendship in the sense of a social contract between citizens. The political community is however destroyed by confusion led by a cycle of excessive violence and savagery.

Titus's Rome suffers from a civil war which leads to a succession of violence reinforced by the myth of Actaeon. The myth spreads through all elements of the play to let confusion, chaos and bewilderment be the dramatic pillars of the play. Confusion is so predominant in the play that despite the evident use of the myth to emphasise dishonour, it is difficult to tell who the hounds are and who Actaeon is. *In fine*, it seems that Rome is devoured by its own citizens who are leading a chaotic civil war between themselves, but most of all against civility.

### **I. B. 3. Timon of Athens: "Devoured by the Dogs he Has Fed."**

"promise me friendship but perform none"  
(Timon, 4. 3. 73)

In contrast with *Titus Andronicus* Timon's Athens is not devoured by its citizens. In this play, the playwright does not use the myth of Actaeon to destroy the essence of friendship, the city. The characters of the myth are easy to associate with the characters of the play. Then, Timon is "devoured by the dog he has fed," the lords of Athens.<sup>39</sup> Françoise Frontisi Ducroux explains the importance of illusion in the myth of Actaeon. The question of the illusion of the hounds outspreads to the blindly unethical violence in *Titus Andronicus* and instead of only characterising the dogs (the lords) who cannot recognise their master in *Timon of Athens*, illusion outspreads to both the lords and Timon who are antagonised.

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<sup>39</sup> Davidson, Clifford. "'Timon of Athens': The Iconography of False Friendship." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 43.3 (1980): 181-200. "they symbolically devour the lord who has kept and fed and pampered them, the false friends are indeed like Actaeon's 'dogs'."

The motif of illusion, of turmoil which prevents the hounds to recognise their master, and urges them to see a stag, falls within the problem of the gaze [...]. Victim of the visual mistake of his hounds, Actaeon reveal himself guilty of another level for seeing, knowing and being acquainted with are equivalent. While his hounds did not know how to see him, it because he did not know himself not seeing what he should not have seen, Artemis's bathing and the goddess's body.<sup>40</sup>

The myth, instead of destroying a community, tackles the illusion of true friendship, *amicitia*. *Timon of Athens* is concerned by the question of betrayal. However, the betrayal of which Timon suffers is directly linked to *adulatio*. *Titus Andronicus* stages the illusion of civility whereas *Timon of Athens* stages the illusion of friendship. Through the iconic misanthropic Timon, Shakespeare contrasts true and false friendship.

In 4.1, the visual effect of the wall has a metaphorical value regarding Timon's isolation from society. It represents the frontier between nature and civilisation, but also between Timon's excessive *philia* and his excessive hate of mankind:

TIMON Let me look back upon thee. O thou wall  
That girdles in those wolves, dive in the earth  
And fence not Athens!

(4. 1. 1-3)

He blames the corrupted *polis* for being infected by its citizens which he compares to wolves encircling the city. Like Titus's Rome, Athens is threatened by itself; the community of friends becomes an illusion. Timon attributes images of disease and savagery to the city, and we understand finally, that the limit between civilisation and nature is somewhat blurred, bringing Apemantus to say that "[t]he commonwealth of Athens is become a forest of beasts" (4.3.346-7). In both tragedies, civilisation procures savagery. Timon compares the lords to dogs to emphasize their disloyalty, greed and false

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<sup>40</sup> Frontisi-Ducroux, Françoise "Actéon, Ses Chiens et leur Maître." Cassin, Barbara, J.-L. Labarrière, (eds.). *L'Animal dans l'Antiquité*. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1997. (my translation) "Le motif de l'illusion, de l'égarement qui empêche les chiens de reconnaître leur maître, et les pousse à voir une proie animale, s'inscrit dans la problématique du regard, qui doit être présente, très tôt, dans les versions figuratives et verbales du mythe, comme nous le fait soupçonner l'association, sur l'amphore d'Hambourg, avec l'histoire d'Argos le Tout-Voyant. Cette thématique sous-jacente fait surgir secondairement la variante visuelle de la faute d'Actéon, par un processus de développement caractéristique du récit mythique, qui procède par récurrence, par reprise d'un motif exploré dans toutes ses dimensions, à l'aide d'opposition, d'inversion, de symétries. Actéon, victime de l'erreur visuelle de ses chiens, se révèle coupable d'une faute visuelle d'un autre ordre. Car voir, savoir et connaître sont équivalents. Si ses chiens n'ont pas su le voir c'est qu'il n'a pas su lui-même ne pas voir ce qu'il ne devait pas voir, le bain d'Artémis et le corps interdit de la déesse."

friendship. Their ideal true friendship becomes a false friendship and *adulatio* provokes the end of civilisation.

Clifford Davidson notes the link between the myth of Actaeon and the “iconography of false friendship” in *Timon of Athens* by referring to allegories of prodigality and ingratitude. Such allegories can be found in *Iconologia, Or Moral Emblems*, by Cesare Ripa, Pierce Tempest, and Isaac Fuller, published in 1709 but “Wherein are Exprefs’d, Various Images of *Virtues, Vices, Paffions, Arts, Humours, Elements* and *Celestial Bodies*; As DESIGN’D by The Ancient *Egyptians, Greeks, Romans*, and Modern *Italians*.”<sup>41</sup> Prodigality is represented by a blind woman spending or giving “without reason, to those who are unworthy [...] observing neither Rule or Meafure” (see Fig. 6 below).



Fig. 6. Ripa, Cesare, Pierce Tempest, and Isaac Fuller. “Prodigality.” *Iconologia: Or, Moral Emblems*. London: Printed by Benj. Motte, 1709.



Fig. 7. Ripa, Cesare, Pierce Tempest, and Isaac Fuller. “Bounty.” *Iconologia: Or, Moral Emblems*. London: Printed by Benj. Motte, 1709.

Timon the prodigal is a figure of excess, just like Actaeon who is punished by Diana to restore measure. Actaeon and Timon are both eaten by their dogs for their excess. The iconography of bounty shows a corpulent woman, meaning that she is wealthy, feeding animals which look like dogs but are described as “feveral Animals [which] drink up [her milk]” (see Fig. 7 above). According to Davidson, under Ripa’s iconology of prodigality “in the Hertel edition the following words appear: “Nutri canes, ut Te edant” (“Feed dogs, that they may eat you”).” Davidson concludes that Timon the prodigal, “becomes the

<sup>41</sup> Ripa, Cesare, Pierce Tempest, and Isaac Fuller. *Iconologia: Or, Moral Emblems*. London: Printed by Benj. Motte, 1709. Web. May, 5. 2016. <https://archive.org/stream/iconologiaormora00ripa/page/n7/mode/2up>

victim of those whom he has fed, [and] recognises at last his position in relation to these false friends.” Timon seems to be a victim of his excess, prodigality, and a victim of his illusion which according to Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux is the main element of the myth of Actaeon: the incapacity to recognise one’s peers or friends. Furthermore, Davidson gives a biblical resonance to the “partaking banquet” in 3.6. which he associates to the last supper; Timon’s fall would correspond to the crucifixion of the Christ, the crucifixion being materialised in the play by the devouring of the master by his dogs, the lords. His interpretation of the “partaking” is the dismantling of community:

Because the basic ingredient of trust and friendship is missing from the hearts of those attending the supper, his love feasts are no more successful than Macbeth's banquet for Banquo: none of these are able to produce a community knit together in peace and good will.<sup>42</sup>

However, Timon’s isolation from the Athenian community is first and foremost an isolation from the civilised world. Contrary to Actaeon whom Diana has changed into a stag, Timon decides of his own banishment, expressing his feeling of not belonging to the community of men: “Timon will to the woods, where he shall find / Th’unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.” (4. 1. 35-36). His ascetic nature and his nakedness symbolise his opposition to civilisation. Moreover nakedness also refers to true and pure friendship as is represented by the allegory of *amicitia* in *Iconologia*:



Fig. 8. Ripa, Cesare, Pierce Tempest, and Isaac Fuller. “Amicitia: FRIENDSHIP.” *Iconologia: Or, Moral Emblems*. London: Printed by

A young woman whose “shoulder is naked” and has “bare feet” represents pure and true friendship by her lack of artifice: she “delights to be barefoot” and “without artifice.” Thus, when Timon isolates himself in the woods and claims his nakedness — “Nothing I’ll bear

<sup>42</sup> Davidson, Clifford. “‘Timon of Athens’: The Iconography of False Friendship.” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 43.3 (1980): 181-200.

from thee / But nakedness, thou detestable town.” (3. 1. 33-34) — he asserts his opposition to civilisation and his disillusion. The cave is also a significant motif of his confusion calling at Plato’s allegory. Timon in front of his cave is often represented holding his head, naked or wearing animal skin. His cynic figure nonetheless reminds of the philosopher due to his posture. Secluded in the woods, Timon is thinking in front of his cave, reflecting on mankind as it is suggested by the engraving below.



Fig. 9. Print made by William Blake after Hery Fuseli. Known as “Timon and Alcibiades.” 1783. Etching. The British Museum, London.

“Timon, nude, is seated in his cave, a spade beside him; in the foreground, Alcibiades has entered wearing a helmet; with him are partially draped women, Phrynia and Timandra; image framed by trees.”

By secluding in the woods Timon choses another extremity: misanthropy. His reflection on mankind is sceptical: “Not nature, / To whom all sores lay siege, can bear great fortune / But by contempt of nature.” (4. 3. 6-8). Therefore, the play is divided into two radical ideologies: faith in mankind and scepticism. These two ideologies correspond to Timon twofold radical characters — the prodigal vs. the misanthrope. Timon’s radicalism also dismantles the community of friend by opposing *amicitia* and *adulatio*.

Friendship is a vector of social order. In opposition to animals, the community of men is a community of friends who share the experience of existence. The concept of man as a rational animal supposes that animals, because they do not have phenomenal experience, do not live in community. Therefore, the use of dogs, traditionally symbolising either *adulatio* or *amicitia*, mirrors the vice and virtue of society.

Often, friendship as the link between men of a same society is a source of illusion which results in the destruction of social order. The analogy with dogs corresponds to the questioning of man’s rationality. In the context of those plays, characters subjected to the analogy are all characterised by *hubris*. The gentlemen are dazzled by their passion, the Roman citizens are blinded by violence, revenge and barbarity, the lords of Athens are



dishonest and greedy, as for Timon he is either radically philanthropic or radically misanthropic.

The dog therefore mirrors extremes of humanity. Yet, questioning man's rationality, the animal also reminds of man's earthliness. While the dog in its most classical use embodies cynicism, this topos is transformed as a topos of friendship via the cynic satire of the community of men that the analogy with the dog brings. Lance and Crab are a comic duologue parodic of the courtesy of gentlemen and the rewriting of the myth of Actaeon taints civilisation with savagery. All in all, friendship as the cement of society is satirised by means of an analogy which is traditionally symbolical of cynicism. Thus Shakespeare uses it in its most classical function, transforms it into a topos of friendship but the analogy remains nonetheless true to a classical and christian symbolism. The dog, as a faithful companion guides man towards death and is emblematic of the finitude of man. It appears on every level of the existence of man — political, social and ontological — and its proximity with man enables an astute analogical exploration of humanity.

### **I. C. Pathways to Death.**

In classical and Christian mythology, dogs are psychopomp animals, they carry the soul of a dead person in the afterlife. However, in Shakespeare's plays, if often associated with the end of life, the dog is an agent of death. Contrary to Cerberus who guards dead souls in the underworld, the dogs in the three plays under study provoke savage deaths. Cerberus protects the dead whereas Actaeon's dogs are vectors of a savage death. In both *Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens* hunting dogs kill for sport and to maintain a natural balance on earth. In this respect dogs are pathways to death. Since they are warrant of death, they recall man's mortality and thereby man as an animal.

In Greek mythology, the mortality of men is decided in the conflict between Zeus and Prometheus which *in fine* attributed meat to men and smoke to gods, thus attributing decomposition and mortality to men, and insubstantiality and thereby immortality to gods. Men are therefore essentially different from gods due to their mortality. Now if one would ask *what is the nature of death?* One could answer that death is the end of life, i.e. the end

of the functioning of one's body.<sup>43</sup> This existential process brings closer man to animals since they share a physical essence, life.<sup>44</sup>

Dogs provoke savage death but are also symbols of mortality salience, the awareness of man's mortality. The myth of Actaeon in *Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens* symbolises the death of society, that is to say the end of the community of living beings. By destroying human bonds, dogs bring savage deaths which recall man of his state of animal. This is ostentatiously represented by cannibalism in *Titus Andronicus* but also by Timon's self annihilation.

### **I. C. 1. Cannibalism in *Titus Andronicus*.**

*"What could be more barbaric than consuming one's own kin?"*<sup>45</sup>



Fig. 10. *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Lucy Bailey. The Globe Shakespeare, London. 2014.

Cannibalism in *Titus Andronicus* appears at the peak of violence which ends the tragedy. Timon, similarly, in turning misanthrope chooses an ascetic life and a cynical stance which recommends parricide, and cannibalism as the opposition to civil order. In his essay *On Cannibals* Montaigne brings to light a cynical view of civilisation:

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<sup>43</sup> Kagan, Shelly. *Open Yale Courses : Death*. New Haven, US: Yale University Press, 2012. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 7 May 2016.

<sup>44</sup> "a living being" *animalis* lat. entry in Perseus Digital Library, Latin Dictionary Headword Search Results.

<sup>45</sup> Villagra, Analía. "Cannibalism, Consumption, and Kinship in Animal Studies." in Kalof, Linda, and Montgomery, Georgina M., eds. *The Animal Turn : Making Animal Meaning*. East Lansing, US: Michigan State University Press, 2011. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 7 May 2016.

There is nothing Barbarous and Savage in this Nation that I know of, except that every one gives the title of Barbarity to any thing that is not in use in his own Country ; as, indeed, we have no other Idea of Truth and Reason, but what we derive from the Customs and Examples of the Country wherein we live<sup>46</sup>

Civilisation, human culture, is part of an anthropocentric reflection. The definition of barbarity depends on our definition of its contrary, civilisation. However, in *Titus Andronicus* Shakespeare pushes the opposition between civilisation and barbarity to its extreme in a culminating ending with parricide and cannibalism. As an ultimate means of revenge Titus executes Tamora's sons and bakes them into pies for their mother to eat them at the final banquet.

Cannibalism is a "reminder of what humanity has been and it can become again at any time under the contamination of savagery"<sup>47</sup> and is justified by the Goths' sub-humanity: Titus accuses them of being "Inhuman traitors" (5. 2. 177) symbolised by their "guilty blood" (183). He then announces that he is going to decompose their body and make them into pies:

TITUS Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust,  
And with your blood and it I'll make a paste,  
And of the paste a coffin I will rear,  
And make two pasties of your shameful heads,  
And bid that strumpet, your unhallowed dam,  
Like to the earth swallow her own increase.  
(5. 2. 186-191)

The baking of Chiron and Demetrius appears as a ritualistic vengeance as well as a perverse pleasure due to the anaphoric and paratactic description of action. He continues:

An now prepare your throats; Lavinia, come,  
Receive the blood, and when that they are dead,  
Let me go grind their bones to powder small,  
And with this hateful liquor temper it,  
And in that paste let their vile heads be baked.  
Come, come, be every one officious  
To make this banquet, which I wish may prove  
More stern and bloody than the Centaur's feast.  
(5. 2. 197-223)

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<sup>46</sup> Montaigne, Michel de. "On Friendship." *Essays*. c. 1580. Translated by Charles Cotton. 1743. Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale. University of Birmingham. 8 May 2016.

<sup>47</sup> Niayesh, Ladan. *Aux Frontières de l'Humain: Figures du Cannibalisme dans le Théâtre Anglais de la Renaissance*. Paris: Honoré Champion Editeur, 2009. 18. "le cannibalisme accompagne l'humanité tel un rappel constant de ce qu'elle a été et de ce qu'elle peut à tout moment redevenir sous l'effet d'une contamination sauvage."

The reference to the Hippodamia and Pirithous<sup>48</sup> — “the Centaur’s feast” — is slightly ironic given Chiron’s mythological origins and the brothers’ hybridity. The two are considered as animals and thus, according to Titus, the “pair of cursèd hell-hounds and their dame” (5. 2. 144) deserve an animal ending: cannibalism. The cannibal ending is still stained with confusion. Reminiscent of Actaeon’s dogs’ confusion, Roman citizens cannot recognise their kin and devour each other. This effusion of savage murders qualifies the doers of “unnatural and unkind”:

TITUS Die, die, Lavinia, and thy shame with thee,  
And with thy shame thy father’s sorrow die.  
*He kills her*  
SATURNINUS What hath thou done, unnatural and unkind?  
TITUS Killed her for whom my tears have made me blind.  
(5. 3. 45-48)

The unkindness and unnaturalness bring them closer to a state of animal, opposing barbarity to civilisation. Nevertheless, Titus emphasises the natural cycle of savage death, ...

TITUS Why there they are, both bakèd in this pie,  
Whereof their mother daintily hath fed,  
Eating the flesh that she herself hath bred.  
(5. 3. 59-61)

... a logic which his son Lucius follows: “Can the son’s eye behold his father bleed? / There’s meed for meed, death for a deadly deed.” The assonance in [i] makes Lucius’s words echo the basic principle of the dramatic logic of the play: vengeance in accordance with Lex Tallionis implies that there is a natural balance to respect. Yves Peyré analyses the infertility of the earth in the play. He states that “the earth, disembowelled, becomes a tomb” “which swallows back what she has produced.” He interprets this infertility as the period of transition between “an ancient political practice [...] to a new one”<sup>49</sup>. In this respect Marcus marks this transition between old and new:

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<sup>48</sup> Shakespeare, William. *Titus Andronicus*. Waith, M., Eugene (ed.). Oxford World’s Classics. 1984. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 184.

<sup>49</sup> Peyré, Yves. *La Voix des Mythes dans la Tragédie Elisabethaine* “Au lieu de porter ses fruits, la terre éventrée devient tombe.”; “Titus transforme Tamora en image de la Terre qui réengloutit ce qu’elle a produit : “Like to the earth swallow her own increase” (5.2.191)”; “La tragédie marque la difficile et douloureuse transition entre une pratique politique ancienne [...] et une pratique politique nouvelle [...]. La tradition laisse place à la création.”

MARCUS Lest Rome herself be bane unto herself,  
 And she whom mighty kingdoms curtsy to,  
 Like a forlorn and desperate castaway,  
 Do shameful execution on herself.  
 But if my frosty signs and chaps of age,  
 Grave witness of true experience,  
 Cannot induce you to attend my words,

*To Lucius*

Speak, Rome's dear friend, as erst our ancestor,  
 When with his solemn tongue he did discourse  
 To lovesick Dido's sad attending ear  
 The story of that baleful burning night  
 When subtle Greeks surprised King Priam's Troy.  
 Tell us what Sinon hath bewitched our ears,  
 Or who hath brought the fatal engine in  
 That gives our Troy, our Rome, the civil wound.

(5. 3. 72-86)

Titus's son witnesses his kin's barbarity and describes the passing of time to appeal for the rebirth of Rome. By referring to his old age "frosty signs and chaps of age / Grave witness of true experience" and to classical myths Marcus blames the incapacity of his peers to take lessons of past mistakes. To some extent he considers their non-evolution from animal to a rational animal.

In the history of cannibalism, the practice was associated with sub-humanity and indigenous practices in the New World which justified colonialism based on a western supremacist discourse. According to Analía Villagra, "[t]he eating of human flesh is one of a number of Native practices that incorporates indigenous peoples into the animal kingdom." In the 2014 production of the Globe, characters' costumes are inspired from indigenous tribes, which emphasises their sub-humanity:



Fig. 11. *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Lucy Bailey. The Globe Shakespeare, London. 2014.



Fig. 12. *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Lucy Bailey. The Globe Shakespeare, London. 2014.

Analia Villagra stresses the “permeability of the human-animal boundary” with cannibalism: “[n]ature and culture are folded into one another.” She describes “[t]he act of cannibalism” as “entwining the human with the animal”:

Clearly, cannibalism is not a wild act of aggression, but rather a deeply social process that absorbs eating and eaten humans into the animal kingdom. The reinsertion of human sociality into the wider natural world requires the employment of more animal terms of relation.

Likewise, the perpetrating of cannibalism by Titus and its involuntary reception by the Goths establishes Titus and the Goths within “the animal kingdom.” Their state of savagery shows extremes of humanity; cannibalism blurs the limits between man and animal.

Yet, cannibalism has also the role to delimit nature from culture. Ladan Niayesh provides a detailed analysis of cannibalism in early modern drama. She examines cannibalism in *Titus Andronicus* as the ending of a tragedy of which the *nemesis* is to evict the strangers — the barbarous Goths — from the city<sup>50</sup>. She states that cannibalism closes “a tragic crisis which was a crisis of the definition of the culture.”<sup>51</sup> The eviction of barbarity is the redefinition of what is and what is not human and this culminates in the symbolism of cannibalism. When Tamora swallows back her own increase, it symbolically represents savagery beating a retreat, bringing back order to Rome.

<sup>50</sup> Niayesh, Ladan. *Aux Frontières de l'Humain: Figures du Cannibalisme dans le Théâtre Anglais de la Renaissance*. Paris: Honoré Champion Editeur, 2009. 36.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. 36. (my translation) “La crise tragique, qui était crise de définition culturelle”

### **I. C. 2. “Timon has done his reign”: Dogs and The Mortality Saliences.**

Graves only be men’s works and death their gain,  
Sun, hide thy beams, Timon hath done his reign.  
(*Timon of Athens*, 5. 2. 107-108)

Instead of bringing forwards man’s bestiality, mortality in *Timon of Athens* is self-reflexive and brings forward man’s inevitable death. Timon’s choice of an ascetic life, secluded from mankind leads him to death which turns to be his escape from humanity but also the purpose of human life. Because of his disgust of mankind Timon renounces to life:

TIMON                                      Rogue, rogue, rogue!  
I am sick of this false world and will love naught  
But even the mere necessities upon’t.  
Then, Timon, presently prepare thy grave:  
Lie where the light foam of the sea may beat  
Thy gravestone daily; make thine epitaph,  
That death in me at others’ lives may laugh.  
(4. 3. 370-376)

When Timon claims that he “will love naught / But even the mere necessities upon’t,” he “[p]robably refers not only to the basic needs of life, but to death as life’s most necessary outcome.”<sup>52</sup> Timon’s misanthropy has indeed two issues: an ascetic life and then death. The first one leads him to live elementary and symbolises his cynicism. The play is divided into Timon’s philanthropy and Timon’s misanthropy. The second part of the play is centred on Timon’s mistrust and hate of mankind, manifested by a nihilistic discourse. Timon repeatedly refers to his grave. Death becomes the only outcome of his life. On the one hand, it is an escape from mankind (“I am sick of this false world”) and on the other hand death appears as the essence of life, “the mere necessities.” However, given the plural, this could both refer to principles of an ascetic existence or death as an existential outcome. In this case, Timon’s death is a purification.

Timon and Apemantus, the cynic characters of the play, assert that all men are beasts. Thus, Timon confounds lords, thieves, dogs, beasts and men: “Of man and beast the infinite malady” (3. 7. 93). Cannibalism, in relation to their cynicism, is put into

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<sup>52</sup> Shakespeare, William. *Timon of Athens*. Dawson, Athony, B., and Gretchen E. Minton (eds.). 3rd ed. London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2008.

perspective as well as Timon says, by witnessing the thieves: “Nor on the beasts themselves, the birds and fishes — / You must eats men.” (419-420). The Athenian society is described as a “forest of beast,” the animal kingdom, where men figuratively devour each other, leaving the remaining question: “What beast couldst thou be that were not subject to a beast?” (Timon, 4. 3. 341-342). In this context of methodic savagery, society is corrupted:

TIMON            Piety and fear,  
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,  
Domestic awe, night-rest and neighbourhood,  
Instruction, manners, mysteries and trades,  
Degrees, observances, customs and laws,  
Decline to your confounding contraries —  
And let confusion live! Plague incident to men,  
Your potent and infectious fever heap  
On Athens, ripe for stroke.

(4. 1. 15-23)

The metaphor of the infection or the plague is highly evocative of the “confounding contraries,” the “confusion” that, according to Timon, destroys Athens. Flavius takes pity on Timon’s excess that flows from his illusion: “Who would be so mocked with glory, or to live / But in a dream of friendship —” (4. 2. 33-34).

Timon’s death is a refusal of humanity but also his *nemesis*. Due to his excessive illusion, Timon cannot decipher the true friends and the false friends. Whereas the lords are comparable to Actaeon’s dogs, Flavius and Timon’s servants represent the other extreme, an inalienable fidelity. Just like Argos, they would follow their master even in death:

3 SERVANT            We are fellow still,  
Serving alike in sorrow; leaked is our bark,  
And we poor mates stand on the dying deck  
Hearing the surges threat — we must all part  
Into this sea of air.

(4. 2. 18-22)

As they witness their master’s decay, they use same images as Timon to insinuate the end of life. Thus, the image of the sea “Lie where the light foam of the sea may beat / Thy gravestone daily,” the “leaked [...] bark” and the “dying deck” are symbols of death. The inevitability of death is reinforced by the image of the incessant backwash of waves controlled by the moon and the sun, symbolising equally the inevitable passing of time:



TIMON The sun's a thief and with his great attraction  
 Robs the vast sea; the moon's an arrant thief  
 And her pale fire she snatches from the sun;  
 The sea's a thief whose liquid surge resolves  
 The moon into salt tears; the earth's a thief  
 That feeds and breeds by a composture stol'n  
 From general excrement. Each thing's a thief.  
 (4. 3. 431-437)

It seems that Timon, the nihilistic misanthrope, cannot see any finality in life but death, “the mere necessities” which causes him to “presently prepare his grave.” The disjointed society is described similarly to his breaking away from life using astral imagery which symbolises the inevitability of man to be a beast and die like any animal.

Timon's death has a didactic function. His epitaph as well as his repetitive announcements of his death compose a sermon which “served as a model of conduct for the living”<sup>53</sup> in Elizabethan England.

TIMON Come not to me again, but say to Athens  
 Timon hath made his everlasting mansion  
 Upon the beached verge of the salt flood,  
 Who once a day with his embossed froth  
 The turbulent surge shall cover; thither come,  
 And let my gravestone be your oracle.  
 Lips, let sour words go by, and language end:  
 What is amiss, plague and infection mend;  
 Graves only be men's works and death their gain,  
 Sun, hide thy beams, Timon hath done his reign.  
*Exit*  
 (5. 2. 99-108)

Timon's last wish is that his death serves as a model, “let my gravestone be your oracle.” Despite the ambiguous genre of the play, his death is nonetheless tragic. Timon sacrifices himself for the return of harmony. His death has a cathartic function and serves as the purification of himself in death and the purification of Athens. References to the infected air are common in *Timon of Athens* and *Macbeth* to signify the inescapable corruption perpetrated by men's “cursed natures” (*Tim.* 4. 3. 19).

Timon's death is highly metaphorical. Not only the sea and the shore are a metaphor for life and death but his death is unclear. Contrary to many of Shakespeare's characters

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<sup>53</sup> Greaves, Richard L., “The Social Order and Death” *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England*. Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1981.

who have a well defined death, Timon just disappears, “swallowed back”<sup>54</sup> by nature “That feeds and breeds by a composture stol’n / From general excrement.” His suicide appears as a sacrifice which aims to carry a nihilistic message; man, like any other animal, will die as it is the finality of existence. Thus the methodic savagery of Athens leads Timon to find in death an existential satisfaction.

Part of an anthropocentric spectacle, the dog that pushes humanity to its extreme also brings on the foreground man’s mortality. Since in cannibalism man is both the predator and the prey, the murderous practice mirrors man’s mortality as an animal. The hierarchy between gods, men and animals is organised around death which is a vector of social and natural order. The comparison of man with an animal reminds of man’s belonging to the animal realm prior to his belonging to society, marking the difference between the two: rationality.

Just as Hamlet exalts and then scorns...

What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals—and yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?

(*Hamlet Prince of Denmark*, 2. 2. 305-310)

... dog imagery brings in the foreground a diffracted mirror of man as a rational animal showing extremes of human nature, covering a broad range of human possibilities from the “paragon of animals” to “dust.” The dog as the epicentre of a dialogue between humanity and inhumanity and between classical philosophy and humanism questions the nature of man in relation to his rationality and society.

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<sup>54</sup> See Yves Peyré, *La Voix des Mythes dans la Tragédie Elisabethaine*, for the description of the cycle of infertile nature in *Titus Andronicus*.

## **II. The Sceptical Decomposition of Human Nature.**

By removing elements of rationality, Shakespeare performs a sceptical decomposition of human nature by means of the analogy which brings man closer to a dog. He removes the soul from the body of human characters so as to question the conception of man as a rational animal. Thus he offers us a classically essentialist exploration of man. Aristotle's definition of man as a rational animal maintains that man is superior to animals, due to his rationality. The human faculty of logically reasoning is made prominent by the human capacity to speak compared to the silence of animals. Early modern thinkers, in the continuity with the Aristotelian ontology, differentiated animals from humans based on rationality as Erica Fudge explains:

the animal emerged as humanity's other; as the organism against which human status was asserted." However, animals were used not only in order to establish and reinforce human status in discussions of reason, or even required in such discussions. As well as this, it became clear that, as the human possession of reason was cited as the primary source of the difference between humans and animals in the early modern period<sup>55</sup>

Likewise, in Shakespeare's drama the dog is used to discuss the "human status is discussion of reason." In the comparison, reason is a great source of tragedy or comedy. The tripartite division of the souls in Aristotle's philosophy lays the foundation for the great chain of beings. The vegetative, sensitive and rational souls corresponds to three types of existences: being, being alive, being conscious of one's existence. "[W]ill, intellect, and intellective memory"<sup>56</sup> are the three faculties that differentiate humans from animals. These three components of human rationality are at stake in Shakespeare's use of the dog / man analogy to participate into the creation of tragedy and comedy. Verona's court, Athens and Rome are all characterised by inhuman behaviour.

The analogy with the dog participates into the progressive characters' dehumanisation but plays a dubious role. The dog reflects both savagery and civility and while it is used to mirror both the inhuman and the human it produces a puzzling overlap of civilisation and savagery. The decomposition of human nature seems to have a logical unfolding. The loss or degradation of speech has consequences on the body and thus, starting from the removal

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<sup>55</sup> Fudge, Erica. *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England*.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

of logos, the human body is animalised or, vice versa, the animal body is humanised. The canine motif is central in this process, and its use spans from the toy dog (Crab) to the wolf (*Titus*, Julie Taymor, 1999) or the hound (*Titus Andronicus*; Crab, RSC, Godwin, 2014) so as to reflect the dual nature of man. The degradation of language and the animalisation/humanisation of the human/animal body constitutes an essentialist quest which turns the hierarchy of beings upside down so as to make the essence of humanity emerge: rationality. The loss of rationality is a source of disorder which enables the exploration of a classical definition of what is a man.

## **II. A. Silence, Sounds, Speech and Reason.**

If language be the food of reason, play on. The characters' silencing can echo a loss of reason since language is the expression of conscious, rational behaviour. As the tragedy or the comedy unfolds, characters' irrationality is expressed through a loss or a degradation of language. Erica Fudge explains that for early modern thinkers the "possession of a rational soul *precedes* and *allows* for language and speech."<sup>57</sup> Therefore, in certain contexts, the absence of language hints at a loss of the rational soul and humanity. In 1610 Sir William Cornwallis evokes the *precious* link between language and society:

our preciousness is reason, reasons seruant is speech, which is the messenger of reason, and reasons meditation: these are the cement of societies, to beare these with solitarines is to contend with strength, others hornes what reckon we them but brutish, and reasonles? In language, reason becomes 'the cement of society,' and society — living communally, within rules — is human.<sup>58</sup>

Language is the "messenger," the "servant" of reason, it enables to think ("meditation") and is a proof of logical reasoning. His metaphor "[i]n language, reason becomes 'the cement of society'" puts forward man as the only being capable of living in community. Thus the human existence is strictly different from the animal existence due to language

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. "The essayist Sir William Cornwallis took the human capacity for speech a stage further in 1610, writing, "our preciousness is reason, reasons seruant is speech, which is the messenger of reason, and reasons meditation: these are the cement of societies, to beare these with solitarines is to contend with strength, others hornes what reckon we them but brutish, and reasonles?" In language, reason becomes 'the cement of society,' and society — living communally, within rules — is human.""

and reason. The loss of *communication*, emblematised by the analogy, denatures man and the *community* of men<sup>59</sup>.

In *Titus Andronicus*, civil mutiny transforms the Roman Republic into a “wilderness of tigers,” the struggle is not only political but also rhetorical. The mutilation of Lavinia — hands chop off, tongue cut out — symbolises the rhetorical mutiny. Likewise, in *Timon of Athens*, language has a performative effect. Timon’s downfall is correlated to his philanthropic or misanthropic discourse. Timon’s out of joint discourse represents his breaking away from society. Language in *Titus Andronicus* reflects Rome’s political confusion, where savagery and civility converge instead of diverging. Likewise, Timon’s language decomposes, his rhetoric is disjointed as he despises the community of men. The two plays show two different ways to remove language so as to represent the dehumanisation of characters.

In losing language, the rationality of human characters is caught up by their animality of which the dog is a symbol. Titian’s painting *The Allegory of Prudence* (c.1550) is an allegory of time: the three ages of man, youth, middle age and old age which are represented by the dog, the lion and the wolf.



Fig. 13. Titian, *The Allegory of Prudence*. Oil on canvas. (c.1550), London: National Gallery.

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<sup>59</sup> See Agamben, Giorgio. “The Friend.” *What is An Aparatus? And Other Essays*. trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009. for the significance of community and communal life in his interpretation of Aristotle’s definition of man.

The animals seem to symbolise the threat to human rationality. The analogy in this painting shows the dual nature of man, that is to say his capacity to be as human as animal. Thus, in Titian's painting as well as in Shakespeare's plays, the dog has a symbolic role in foreshadowing the capacity of man to be inhuman. However, in Titian's painting and in Shakespeare's plays each animal bears a singular symbolism. Simona Cohen explains the mythological, biblical and ecclesiastic influences of Titian's animal symbolism and says that the dog is a symbol of *luxury*.

In Titian's *Allegory*, the three-headed beast mirrors the three headed man and echoes the infernal threat of vice<sup>60</sup>. This representation is charged with Christian and popular imagery of which Shakespeare's dog imagery is reminiscent. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, youth and luxury are a threat to order. The blind passion of the main protagonists — Valentine, Proteus, Sylvia and Julia — is balanced by the parodic imitations of their servants<sup>61</sup>. The maxim coined by Speed in Act 2 — "Love is blind" — is very emblematic of the play which is centred around the gentlemen's excessive desire. The use of a dog, namely Crab, could recall the threat of sin. Yet, instead of presenting Crab as an infernal beast as Titian does, Crab is mostly associated with a lapdog.<sup>62</sup> The comparison between Titian's infernal dog and Shakespeare's lapdog confirms the twofold representation of the dog.

In both Shakespeare's drama and Titian's painting the dog represents either the vice or the virtue of man. In *Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens* the dog highlights vice — wrath and greed —, while, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the dog represents virtue. Crab conveys comic relief thanks to his silence. His silence, compared to the gentlemen's overwhelming desire, conveys wisdom and prudence. By contrast, Crab foreshadows the gentlemen's vice, envy. His silence contrasts the gentlemen's colourful discourse, a discourse which conveys irrationality. The wise silence of the animal opposes the unreasonable discourse of the gentlemen.

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<sup>60</sup> Cohen, Simona. *Brill's Studies in Intellectual History : Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*. Boston, MA, USA: BRILL, 2008. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 25 May 2016.

<sup>61</sup> Rivlin, Elizabeth. "Mimetic Service in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona."" *ELH* 72.1 (2005): 105–128. Web.

<sup>62</sup> Shakespeare, William. *The Two Gentlemen Of Verona*. William C. Carroll (ed.). London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2004.

From Crab's silence, to *Titus Andronicus*'s sounds and Timon's disarticulated speech we will see that language is at the origin of a dehumanising metamorphosis. Language is torn apart just as characters' humanity is put to the test.

## **II. A. 1. Crab's Silence.**

Crab's silence is a sceptical response to the hubris of human characters in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. The gentlemen's speeches express passion and excess, and their artificiality is contrasted by Crab's sourness which renders the effect of a parodic comparison. Lesley Kordecki explains that in the comedy "[t]he silent nonhuman other [Crab] rises above the romantic fray, the artifice of human affection."<sup>63</sup> The love plot's artificiality is announced straight from act one as the action starts *in medias res* in exhibiting Valentine's and Proteus's overwhelming desire:

PROTEUS He after honour hunts, I after love:  
He leaves his friends to dignify them more;  
I leave myself, my friends and all, for love.  
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphosed me:  
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,  
War with good counsel, set the world at naught;  
Made wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.  
(1. 1. 63-69)

Proteus reveals his irrational behaviour which is ascribable to his unconditional desire. The long and short /i/ sounds of "wit" and "weak" echo the phrase "heart sick with thought" so as to enhance his excessive melancholy. In addition to the assonance in /i/ sounds which evokes his fickleness, the blending of the lexical fields of reason and war brings a sense of inner conflict. Proteus is called a "hot lover" by his servant, Speed, who alludes to the theory of humours and thereby to his master's excessive masculinity. Proteus is a hubristic character, sick with desire, paradoxically both hot and moist, choleric and melancholic. His excessive desire is characterised by hyperbole — "set the world at naught." Excessive masculinity is rendered by figures of exaggeration and metaphors which, for example, bring man closer to a predator — "He after honour hunts, I after love." The excess and

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<sup>63</sup> Kordecki, Lesley. "True Love and the Nonhuman: Shakespeare's Dog Crab and the Animal/Human Connection" *Social Alternatives* 32.4 (2013). 28-33.

irrationality of male characters is exaggerated to the extent that they almost are allegories of excess.

Crab, on the contrary, contrasts their excess thanks to his stoicism and scepticism embodied by his silence. Lesley Kordecki states that the effect of Crab on the audience “deconstruct[s]” our “cultural representation of human desire”:

The dog's non-civilised essence, perpetually reinforced by our habits of language in which animals are negatively contrasted to humans, now appears within our cultural artifice, a silent dog stealing the show, usurping the highly controlled artistic fabrication in front of us. His very unconcern for Lance's wishes ironically deconstructs the play, the cultural representation of human desire. Productions cannot control the animal like the human actors, and in this way, Shakespeare has devised a nonhuman element that humorously authenticates his verbal construct.<sup>64</sup>

Crab's dramatic function is often described as the failure of acting<sup>65</sup>. Due to his inability to act and to speak Crab cannot produce any action but only counter-action. Likewise, his silence can be interpreted as a counter-speech. His counter-character's role is to inevitably satirise the gentlemen's speech and actions related to desire. By contrast Crab seems more rational than the gentlemen and brings parodic comic relief as well as a sceptical vision of human desire.

The French essayist Pierre Charon attributed speech to all animals, that is to say to all beings with a sensitive soul.<sup>66</sup> His view on the rational essence of man is sceptical as he considers that man, despite his “celestial” intelligence, can use rationality against himself and thus provoke his own “ruin”<sup>67</sup>. Proteus and Julia are examples of the ruinous effect of desire on rationality which language cannot but reinforce:

PROTEUS Is it mine eye, or Valentine's praise,  
Her true perfection, or my false transgression  
That makes me reasonless to reason thus?  
(2. 4. 193-195)

JULIA Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Boehrer, Bruce Thomas. *Shakespeare Among the Animals: Nature and Society in the Drama of Early Modern England*. Gordonsville, VA, USA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. and Kordecki, Lesley. “True Love and the Nonhuman: Shakespeare's Dog Crab and the Animal/Human Connection” *Social Alternatives* 32.4 (2013). 28-33.

<sup>66</sup> Cited in De Fontenay, Elisabeth. *Le Silence des Bêtes: La Philosophie à l'Epreuve de l'Animalité*. N.p.: Fayard, 2007.

<sup>67</sup> Cited in De Fontenay, Elisabeth. *Le Silence des Bêtes: La Philosophie à l'Epreuve de l'Animalité*. N.p.: Fayard, 2007. “Ces armes “célestes” de l'intelligence, “il les tourne contre soy à son mal et à sa ruyne.””



As seek to quench the fire of love with words.  
LUCETTA I do not seek to quench the fire of your love's hot fire,  
But qualify the fire's extreme rage,  
Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason.  
(2. 7. 19-23)

Their desire is expressed with oxymora — “reasonless to reason” — and metaphors — “love's hot fire” — . Their desire exceeds the limits of reason which dignifies their love as well as enhance their hubris. Lucetta, Julia's lady in waiting, tries to reason her mistress and uses Julia's metaphor to highlight the flaw of Julia's reasoning. Julia would desire to control “the fire of love with words” but Lucetta doubts language's power to do so — “Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason.” Instead of being a source of rationality, language is denied the power to be a regulator of human actions as characters realise that it conveys excess as well as moderation. Desire has a hedonistic dimension in the play as “[L]ove delights in praise” (Valentine, 2. 4. 144). Yet the communicative functions of language are overwhelmed by the aesthetic function of poetic language which denotes the artificiality of language. Proteus reckons the malleability of language and the possible falsity that words can convey. Metaphors comparing words or emotions to changing elements such as wax, fire or snow are very emblematic of the artificiality of language.

PROTEUS      now my love is thawed,  
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire  
Bears no impression of the thing it was.  
(2. 4. 197-199)

Love is challenged by the artificiality of language as the characters are constantly trying to decipher the others' desire and reciprocity in love (or friendship) as Julia complains “I would I knew his mind” (1. 2. 33).

Letters and discourse are sources of doubt and confusion which Crab has a satirical response to: silence. Lance, Crab and Speed are satirists of the love and friendship plot which is thwarted by language. Language is a source of instability and the artificiality of speech is characterised by images such as melting snow or melting wax which symbolise the natural artificiality of perception or understanding. Everything is subjected to change, nothing is as it seems which reminds of the duality of human nature, shared between vice and virtue. The image of melting refers to changing appearances and also to disguise which Iago, the villain in *Othello*, assumes as his technique “I am not what I am” (Iago, *Othello*,

*The Moor of Venice*, 1. 1. 67). Communication becomes a tool for confusion and in respect with Charron's scepticism, language can lead to both virtue and vice. By means of metalinguistic rhetorical figures, language is sceptically deconstructed as the "messenger of reason" (Sir William Cornwallis). The artificiality of language is pinpointed by language itself and by the parodic effect of Crab's silence.

Lance seems to speak for Crab and with Speed, they give a satiric response to the misuse of language playing on puns: "Why, stand-under and under-stand is all one." (Lance, 2. 5. 29). They satirise the incapacity of the gentlemen to understand each other despite their blatant display of rhetorical wit. By opposing the meaning of "stand-under" which conveys a concrete image to "under-stand" which conveys an abstract idea, Lance and Speed points at the malleability of words and the artificiality of the gentlemen's colourful language. Truth in the play is as palpable as Crab. Lance and Speed voice the parodic function of Crab. They even reveal their rhetorical device, and emphasise the "parable" that Crab represents:

SPEED But tell me true, will't be a match?  
 LANCE Ask my dog. If he says 'Ay', it will; if he say 'No', it will; if he shake his tail and say nothing, it will.  
 SPEED The conclusion is, then, that it will.  
 LANCE Thou shalt never get such a secret from me but by a parable.  
 (2. 5. 31-35)

Crab's silence nonetheless conveys a "mute judgement" comparable to the way Jacques Derrida describes the silence of animals as a "language of mute signs."<sup>68</sup> Lesley Kordecki considers that "Crab's dumbness becomes eloquent, for as we see with many nonhumans, his articulate silence speaks volumes."<sup>69</sup> The performative effect of Crab's silence bears a sense of Wittgenstein's philosophy. Two of his propositions on language are of interest here: "A thought is a proposition with sense." and "What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence."<sup>70</sup> The comparison of Crab's silence with the gentlemen's colourful discourse conveys the idea that *silence is golden*, and brings a judgement midway between scepticism and cynicism. The implication of a dog, of a silent character, in a play where

<sup>68</sup> Derrida, Jacques. *L'Animal que Donc Je Suis*. Paris: Gallilée, 2006.

<sup>69</sup> Kordecki, Lesley. "True Love and the Nonhuman: Shakespeare's Dog Crab and the Animal/Human Connection" *Social Alternatives* 32.4 (2013). 28-33.

<sup>70</sup> Biletzki, Anat and Anat Matar. "Ludwig Wittgenstein." *Plato.stanford.edu*. N.p., 2002. Web. 26 May 2016. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/wittgenstein/>

language is a source of disorder cannot but question human conventions. Crab's "mute judgement" is actually an "articulate silence" which indeed "speaks volumes." The performative effect of silence overtakes language and echoes Charron's scepticism towards the supremacy, the "preciousness"<sup>71</sup> of language.

Likewise, Lesley Kordecki considers Crab as "a flagrant sign of the human instrumentality of the nonhuman"<sup>72</sup> and she develops his relation to human character's fallacy:

an actual canine straining against the artificiality of the stage, literally straining in most productions at the end of a leash to disentangle himself from the haranguing human, and hence a distinctly performative reminder of the alterity of the other. No longer serving as some abstract metaphor for the deficiency of humanity, as with most canine metaphors in Shakespeare, this dog simultaneously denotes both the beloved and the perverse.<sup>73</sup>

In her view dog imagery in Shakespeare's drama conveys "some abstract metaphor for the deficiency of humanity" which is justifiable by the biblical use of animal imagery in general explained by Claudia Egerer as such:

The Word. Logos. Reason. The naked word is a neat pun on prelapsarian beginnings [...] Derrida observes that what "distinguishes [animals] from man is their being naked without knowing it" (ibid. 4– 5). Hence, still in biblical parlance, animals are "without consciousness of good and evil" (ibid. 5), prelapsarian beasts, "naked without knowing it, [they] would not be, in truth, naked" (ibid.).<sup>74</sup>

If the absence of language symbolises the nakedness of prelapsarian beasts, and therefore the alterity of humanity, Crab despite his silence can be seen as conveying both the vice and the virtue. Crab's singularity lays in the fact that "this dog simultaneously denotes both the beloved and the perverse"<sup>75</sup>. Crab is humanised, and in this respect the dog reflects both the vice and the virtue of human characters — "the beloved and the perverse." The comparison between Crab and human characters does not animalise human characters as in

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<sup>71</sup> Sir William Cornwallis, cited in Fudge, Erica. *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England*.

<sup>72</sup> Kordecki, Lesley. "True Love and the Nonhuman: Shakespeare's Dog Crab and the Animal/Human Connection" *Social Alternatives* 32.4 (2013). 28-33.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Egerer, Claudia. "The Speaking Animal Speaking the Animal: Three Turning Points in Thinking the Animal" *Turning Points*. Nünning, Ansgar, and Sicks, Kai Marcel, (eds.). Berlin/Boston, DE: De Gruyter, 2012. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 26 May 2016.

<sup>75</sup> Kordecki, Lesley. "True Love and the Nonhuman: Shakespeare's Dog Crab and the Animal/Human Connection" *Social Alternatives* 32.4 (2013). 28-33.

*Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens* but instead humanises the dog. Despite this humanisation, Crab does not merely reflect both the vice and virtue of man but rather the limit of man's essential virtuosity. The dog is here part of an anthropocentric and humanist spectacle which instead of praising man's superiority upon beasts shows the limits of man's essential rationality. Crab inscribes itself in a sceptical vision of man, similar to Charron's postulate that all animals including man have language but this shall not establish the superiority of man by essence, instead the assumption that man is good and superior by nature is, in Charron's view, not accurate. One could even go further and state that Charron presents a sort of anti-humanism derived from scepticism and in this respect, Crab's position is also an anti-humanist one.

Crab's silence can be compared to this extract from *Ecclesiast* in the *Great Bible* (1540):

Some man kepeth silence, and is founde wyse: but he that is not ashamed what he sayeth, is hatefull. Some man holdeth hys tonge, because he hath not ye vnderstadyng of the language: & some man kepeth silence, waytyng a couenient tyme. A wyse man wyll holde hys tonge tyll he se oportunte, but a waton and vndyscrete body shall regarde no tyme.<sup>76</sup>

Silence is defined as a source of wisdom and preferable to "thoughts without sense"<sup>77</sup>. Thus Crab's silence has a biblical resonance which sets the limits of a faith in man's essential rationality based on language which can be considered to constitute, to some extent, an anti-humanist view.

Human characters are like Charron's 'talking animals'; the 16th century French essayist considers that child and animals are not rational but still have the faculty of language. Therefore, language does not necessarily imply rationality and rationality seems to be a faculty to develop. According to Montaigne in his essay *On Friendship*, women and children are emotionally too unstable to experience friendship.

Youth, desire and luxury are intertwined in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and constitute the characters' hubris. The artificiality of a language which connotes youth and immaturity is contrasted by Crab which symbolises, as a dog, the limit of man's propensity to be virtuous or sinful. The animal in both Titian's painting and Shakespeare's comedy

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<sup>76</sup> "The Bible In English." Collections.chadwyck.co.uk. N.p., 2016. Web. 10 June 2016. <http://collections.chadwyck.co.uk/bie/htxview?template=basic.htx&content=frameset.htx>.

<sup>77</sup> Biletzki, Anat and Anat Matar. "Ludwig Wittgenstein." Plato.stanford.edu. N.p., 2002. Web. 26 May 2016. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/wittgenstein/>

stands as a warning to the limits in the conviction that man is rational and virtuous by nature. The opposition of the wise silence of a dog to the artificial language of human characters puts Aristotle's definition of man as a rational animal by essence in perspective and suggests, in the wake of Charron, that man then would rather be a rational animal by existence. Crab's silence shows the limits of man's rational nature based on language as well as it ridicules the artificiality of the gentlemen's discourse. Similarly to Charron's sceptical claim that 'all animals have language' Claudius in *Hamlet* reveals the hypocrisy of his speech — "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below: / Words without thoughts never to heaven go" (3. 3. 100-102). Likewise, Crab's counter-speech brings a reflection on the capacity of man to have a discourse devoid of sense. In accordance with Wittgenstein's propositions on language, silence in the play proves to be more rational than a discourse made of noises.

## **II. A. 2. The Sound of Savagery in *Titus Andronicus*.**

In Charron's view all animals possess language which is made of noises and sounds. The loss of language in *Titus Andronicus* is part of an animalising process. Reminiscent of the myth of Actaeon, the motif of the hunt and the hounds symbolises the sinful nature of man. The tragic downfall of the Andronici parallels the loss of language which is reminiscent of postlapsarian beasts.

Collin Burrow considers the play to be "about the relationship between a civilization founded on eloquence and barbarism"<sup>78</sup>. He insists on the significance of the etymology of "barbarity" for the interpretation of the play. Furthermore the significance of this word for this play can be linked to the Senecan tradition from which this revenge tragedy is drawn.

Tereus, the king of Thrace, married Procne, the daughter of the king of the ultra-civilized Athens. He is consistently called 'barbarus' (6.515, 532) — a word which was even in the ancient world etymologically associated with inarticulacy ('barbaroi' are those whose language sounds like 'bababababble'), and which was defined in Thomas Cooper's Latin Dictionary (the most popular aid in translating Latin into English in the sixteenth century) as 'churlish, without eloquence, uncivil'.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Burrow, Collin. "Ovid" *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 92-132.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

The play is centred on political rhetoric. The first scene begins with a lexical ambiguity between democratic election and the arbitrary choice of an emperor. Titus who refuses to be emperor, arbitrarily chooses Saturninus as the eldest son of the deceased emperor to be his successor. Not only the play begins with the establishment of a hereditary autocratic emperor but also the political turn from democracy to autocracy institutes a confusion between barbarity and civility.

TITUS People of Rome, and people's tribunes here,  
I ask your voices and suffrages.  
Will ye bestow them friendly on Andronicus?  
TRIBUNES To gratify the good Andronicus  
And gratulate his safe return to Rome,  
The people will accept whom he admits.  
TITUS Tribunes, I thank you, and this suit I make,  
That you create our emperor's eldest son,  
Lord Saturnine, whose virtues will, I hope,  
Reflect on Rome as Titan's rays on earth,  
And ripen justice in this commonwealth.  
(1. 1. 17-27)

The new political system is compared to "Titan's rays on earth." The comparison is telling of the despotism of Saturninus who will literally and figuratively unleash barbarity on the city. In Greek mythology, the Titans were a threat to patriarchal power, firstly to Ouranos and secondly to Kronos. The comparison with Titans is not a mere coincidence since Saturninus is Kronos' Latin name. The coronation of Saturninus transforms Rome into a "wilderness," explicitly compared to the chaotic golden age of Titans:

TITUS foolish Lucius, dost thou not perceive  
That Rome is but a wilderness of tigers?  
Tigers must prey, and Rome affords no prey  
But me and mine: how happy art thou, then,  
From these devourers to be banished!  
(3. 1. 53-57)

TITUS For now I stand as one upon a rock,  
Environed with a wilderness of sea,  
Who marks the waxing tide grow wave by wave,  
Expecting ever when some envious surge  
Will in his brinish bowels swallow him.  
(3. 1. 93-97)

In the second example, Titus realises after Lavinia's mutilation that his choice for the new emperor of Rome was a mistake. After Lavinia's mutilation he compares himself to Prometheus, eternally chained to a rock. The play uses a comparison with the Titanomachia

to magnify the struggle between generations which is based on miscommunication. The reference to Prometheus who was chained to a rock by his father, condemned to have his liver devoured every day, exaggerates Titus's punishment, his grief.

According to Aristotelian political naturalism, "the legal system of the city-state makes human beings just and virtuous and lifts them from the savagery and bestiality in which they would otherwise languish (*Politics*, 1253a29–39)."<sup>80</sup> However *Titus Andronicus*'s Rome is a political system which instead of lifting humans from their animal states dehumanises them; the political system is bewildering. The bestial chaos results from the lexical confusion which has established a titanic tyranny on "headless Rome" (Marcus, 1. 1. 186), or rather speechless Rome. For Collin Burrow the myth of Procne, one of the play's sources, is "the super-articulate Ovid's tragedy of inarticulacy." The tragic development of *Titus Andronicus*, modelled on that of the myth of Procne, is driven by the loss of language as symbol of dominant barbarity. replaces language which emphasises the fall of man.

Instead of staging the downfall of a fortunate man, the tragedy rather seems to stage the downfall of an allegorical Rome ("the eyes of Rome" 1. 1. 170). In this downfall citizens are reduced to animals and lose their humanity. Language being the "cement of society," the failure of communication destroys the city. The loss of discourse parallels the loss of humanity. Language however is not lost but rather articulate discourse is replaced by noises. Jonathan Hope explains the difference between voice and discourse in the early modern period and thus reiterates Charron's idea that all animals have language:

Voice was physical and 'natural' (humans and animals made noises by instinct) — and the sounds of speech could be learned by imitation and retained by lower-level cognitive faculties like memory (children could do it, animals could do it [...]) — but 'discourse' — intentional, reasonable communication of ideas with speech — was only done by fully sentient humans.<sup>81</sup>

The citizens of Rome are little by little deprived from discourse. Rome's downfall is symbolised by the fall of its citizen. In Aristotelian logic, the citizen and the city are one: if the city is dismantled the citizens return to the animal state. Simona Cohen notes that "[i]n

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<sup>80</sup> Miller, Fred. "Political Naturalism." Plato.stanford.edu. N.p., 2016. Web. 10 June 2016. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-politics/supplement3.html>

<sup>81</sup> Hope, Jonathan. *Shakespeare & Language: Reason, Eloquence and Artifice in the Renaissance*. London: Arden Shakespeare, 2010.

the middle Ages and Renaissance it was often said that man becomes a beast when he has lost his reason,” “a silent human, or one producing disordered speech, was in danger of not being human at all.”<sup>82</sup> When Marcus discovers Lavinia mutilated he describes her mouth as “a bubbling fountain.” The mutilated Lavinia becomes an emblem of barbarity and is reduced to producing sounds. The verb *to bubble* comes from the Middle English verb *to burble* which means “to imitate a sound”. Thus, Marcus’ use of the word “bubbling” to characterise Lavinia’s inarticulacy refers to two things: the first is the sound and the image of the blood coming from her mouth — “a crimson river of warm blood” — and the second is her inarticulate speech. Lavinia’s language is reduced to that of an animal or a child (as shown by the phonetic proximity of the verbs *bubble* and *babble*). While the word *bubble* evokes fragility and insubstantiality, the word *babble* comes from Latin, *babulus* (babblers), and Greek *barbaros* (non-greek-speaking). Tamora uses the verb *babble* to describe the sound of the hunt which is alienating from human nature:

TAMORA And, whilst the babbling echo mocks the hounds,  
 Replying shrilly to the well-tuned horns,  
 As if a double hunt were heard at once,  
 Let us sit down and mark their yelping noise  
 (2. 3. 17-20)

The loss of human status is provoked by the hunt and the unleashing of hounds. Chiron and Demetrius’ preying on Lavinia initiates the hunt and introduces it as the main dramatic logic of the play, metamorphosing citizens into preys or predators. In the comparison with the myth of Actaeon we can note that Shakespeare replaces Ovid’s astral imagery by noises to describe the hunting process. The sound of hounds in 2. 2. “[t]hat all the court may echo with the noise” (Titus, 2. 2. 6) replaces discourse. The chaos of Saturninus’ Rome is enhanced by a cacophony which Aaron describes as the embodiment of the perversion of Rome:

AARON The Emperor’s court is like the house of fame,  
 The palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears;  
 The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull.  
 (2. 1. 127-129)

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<sup>82</sup> Cohen, Simona. *Brill's Studies in Intellectual History : Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*. Boston, MA, USA: BRILL, 2008. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 3 May 2016.



Noise and sounds replace discourse as the consequence of a titanic tyranny based on miscommunication. Due to the loss of discourse human characters are destitute of their rational soul and remain with their sensitive soul. Aaron, by personifying the Roman city, — “the palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears” — emphasises the dominance of sensitivity over rational reasoning. Despite the personification of the city, Rome and its citizens are animalised because of the attention drawn to senses, language and the body. Thus, the replacement of discourse by noises metamorphoses the *polis*. The city — which used to rely on political rhetoric — is made savage.

Collin Burrows has analysed the tongue as a symbol of the failure of rhetoric: “Struggling to speak, the tongue becomes a thing, a dying snake. It is a mini-metamorphosis of eloquence into a bubbling hiss of barbarism.”<sup>83</sup> Speaking is a source of questioning in this “tragedy of inarticulacy.” Speaking is either subjected to possibility or an imperative — either an interdiction or an order — which expresses the infertility of language. In the context of a tyranny of barbarity emblematised by the Titanomachia the capacity to speak is questioned: “So, now go tell, an if thy tongue can speak, / Who 'twas that cut thy tongue and ravish'd thee.” (Demetrius, 2. 4. 1-2) ; “Why dost not speak to me?” (Marcus, 2. 4. 21) ; “Shall I speak for thee? shall I say 'tis so?” (Marcus, 2. 4. 33) ; “speak with possibilities” (Marcus, 3. 1. 213) ; “For these two heads do seem to speak to me” (Titus, 3. 1. 270) ; “How now, good fellow! wouldst thou speak with us?” (Tamora, 4. 4. 39) ; “Why dost not speak? what, deaf? not a word?” (Lucius, 5. 1. 46) ; “What would you say, if I should let you speak?” (Titus, 5. 2. 178) ;

TAMORA Titus, I am come to talk with thee.  
TITUS No, not a word; how can I grace my talk,  
Wanting a hand to give it action?  
(5. 2. 16-18)

This last example encapsulates the infertility of speech. Titus refuses to speak for it has no performative effect: whatever the words would be they can never honour an action.

The so-called election of Saturninus establishes barbarity and the fall of civilisation. The new political system is analogous of Kronos’s golden age which symbolises the struggle between two generations. This struggle is emphasised by the infertility of

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<sup>83</sup> Burrow, Collin. “Ovid” *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 92-132.

communication which is symbolised by the hunt. The hunt and the analogy between citizens and hounds transform the city into a wilderness of predators and preys, each citizen is one and the other at the same time. In this context, the election of Saturninus, based on a lexical confusion, establishes the fall of civilisation which is enhanced by the loss of language

### **II. A. 3. Misanthropy and Disjointed Rhetorics in *Timon of Athens*.**

In *Timon of Athens* man's downfall does not result in a comparison with dogs but originates from the comparison. The fall of citizens in *Titus Andronicus* results in a hunt which transforms characters into preys or predators whereas in *Timon of Athens*, the fall of Timon is the consequence of the realisation that the lords of Athens are like dogs, greedy, hypocrites and false friends: "Uncover, dogs, and lap!" (Timon, 3. 7. 84).

After the mock-banquet scene (3. 7.) which is a parody of the last supper, the play focuses on Timon's downfall which is symbolised by Timon's radically different rhetoric. Similarly to *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Titus Andronicus* language is deceptive. This is why Timon calls the lords of Athens *dogs*, because they are hypocrites and false friends. According to Davidson "[t]he most important emblem of the deceptive language of flattery is the dog, a creature to which Timon's friends are constantly being compared."<sup>84</sup> As a response to the fallacy of the lords' discourse and as the direct expression of his hatred for mankind, Timon abandons language. He does not become silent but adopts a disjointed rhetoric, his discourse is dryly scanned by paratactic enumerations, invectives and his refusal to belong to the community of men.

TIMON            Live loathed and long,  
Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,  
Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears —  
You fool of fortune, trencher-friends, time's flies,  
Cap-and-knee slaves, vapours and minute-jacks!  
Of man and beast the infinite malady  
Crust you quite o'er!

(3. 7. 92-98)

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<sup>84</sup> Davidson, Clifford. "'Timon of Athens': The Iconography of False Friendship." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 43.3 (1980): 181-200.

The moment he becomes a misanthrope, Timon adopts a new rhetoric which enhances his refusal of being part of the Athenian community. His language is sporadic, scanned, composed of parataxes and invectives to convey in content and in form his hatred of mankind; if discourse makes him a man then he would rather not produce any.

Language is a symbol of humanity but instead of reflecting man's virtuosity it reflects his vice: "the common tongue" (Merchant, 1. 1. 177) "Which all men speak with him" (178). The merchant hints at Timon's inability to understand that people surrounding him are his "dogs" as they use language to flatter him. Once this realised, Timon invokes an invective rhetoric centred around an insult, being *like a dog*:

TIMON Hence, pack! there's gold; you came for gold, ye slaves:  
[To Painter]  
You have work'd for me; there's payment for you: hence!  
[To Poet]  
You are an alchemist; make gold of that.  
Out, rascal dogs!  
(5. 1. 110-113)

TIMON Away, thou issue of a mangy dog!  
Choler does kill me that thou art alive;  
I swoond to see thee.  
(4. 3. 365-367)

TIMON Rogue, rogue, rogue!  
I am sick of this false world, and will love nought  
But even the mere necessities upon't.  
(4. 3. 370)

"Dog," "rogue," "rascal" all refer to the "cursed nature" (4. 3. 19) of men. Human nature is associated with insults related to the animal condition of man. The dog is synonymous of "rogue" or "rascal" which also refer to dubious characters. The Doubt has therefore a significant place in *Timon of Athens*. The sceptical enquiry of man's nature as a rational animal is as radical as expected. The comparison of man with a dog is an insult and, instead of progressively giving prominence to the animal essence of man, the analogy with the dog relates to the sinful nature of man. Part of a misanthropic rhetoric *dog* is an insult which points at man's dubious nature and thus sketches a sceptical view of man as a rational animal by nature.

Timon, in his rage against mankind, stresses the sinful nature of man and thus debunks the idea that man is virtuous by essence. His language echoes his scepticism in content and

in form. Thus the paratactic list of insults enhances the intensity of his rage. The rhetoric is disjointed because it isolates Timon from the community of men and this dislocation is rendered by the paratactic lists of insults that Timon uses to distance himself from the community of men.

Starting from the hatred of mankind which is so perverted that it is comparable to a dog, a animal which has the potential to forget his domesticity, Timon's radical transformation is built upon a misanthropic rhetoric which isolates himself from the community of men. The disjointed rhetoric embodies Timon's dislocation from the community of men and is most of all a negation of Timon's humanity.

The three plays show three different treatments of the degradation of language which all convey a sceptical decomposition of man as a rational animal. Crab's silence opposes the artificiality of the gentlemen's "chameleon love" (Speed, 2. 1. 159). In a chaotic political context the citizens of Rome lose language which little by little becomes only noise. Language has no performative effect and is replaced by action denoting an instinctive, primal nature alike the politics of Lex Tallionis ruling over Titus' Rome. In those two visions of the ineffectiveness of language, the essential rationality of man is subjected to doubt. As for Timon, he abandons language in his rage against humanity.

In the three plays, language is deceptive. The analogy with the dog enhances the artificiality, infertility or the hypocrisy of language which Macbeth links with the insubstantial nature of a man's existence.

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more; it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

(*The Tragedy of Macbeth*, 5. 5. 18-27)

The "sound and fury" of characters debunks the preciousness of language in the definition of humanity and brings man closer to an animal. The analogy between the dog and man doubts the conception of man as a rational animal by questioning the association of language with rationality, following Charron's thesis.

Language is no longer a proof of humanity since it can convey both the virtuosity of man and his vice. The dog once again refers to the duality of man, pointing at the dubious

nature of language which is not always the “messenger of reason” as it can be silence, noises, speech or discourse.

## **II. B. Animalisation of the Body.**

The degradation of language as the “messenger of reason” reflects a sceptical view of the rational essence of man which results in an animalisation of the body. The three plays display three different treatments of language which result in three different treatments of animalisation. In the analogy between dog and man, either man is animalised or the dog is humanised. The confusion between the animal body and the human body brings them closer, doubting the rational essence of man.

In *The Taming of the Shrew* Petruchio describes the supremacy of the mind over the human body: “For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich (Petruchio, *Taming of the Shrew*, 4. 3. 170-171). Similarly, Gloucester in *Henry VI, Pt. III* ridicules the thin frontier that the body is between the animal and man, using the dog to enhance the comparison:

The midwife wonder'd and the women cried  
'O, Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth!'  
And so I was; which plainly signified  
That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.  
Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so,  
Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it.

(Gloucester, *Henry VI, Pt. III*, 5. 6. 74-79)

Dog and man both having teeth, Gloucester seems to ridicule the quick comparison between a dog and a man. If far-fetched at first sight, the analogy eventually proves to be meaningful. Because of the confusion between the dog's animal body and the human body, man's rationality is put to the test. The loss of language leaves man with an animal body, a body without a mind, revealing the animal side of man. As a result, the senses and instinct rather than rationality are stressed. Consequently, the animalisation of characters also provokes the confusion of ethical behaviour due to the animal-like irrationality of characters. The sceptical decomposition of human nature impacts the mind and the body of characters and this has an impact on their political nature.

### II. B. 1. Becoming Human: Crab.



Fig. 14. Image from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Augustin Daly. Daly's Theater, New York. 1895

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* Crab is humanised. The dog is inseparable from his master Lance to the extent that they form one hybrid character . Crab is all the more humanised by his dramatic function but also because Lance attributes him human traits. The photograph above shows Lance and Crab in a 1895 performance at the Billy Rose Theatre in New York. Both Crab and Lance are sitting and are dressed, yet their human/ animal difference is enhanced by a funny symmetry underlined by the wood stick. The comic relief that Crab brings is enhanced by a hat with a feather, a visual symbol of the gentry.

Lance considers Crab like his kin and is astounded when the dog deconstructs the human traits Lance gives him. Lance compares Crab's indifference to that of a stone: "he is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog" (2. 3. 9-10). The paradox in Lance's speech is that he presents us a dog for whom it is astounding to behave like a dog. In this sense Crab is humanised, for his unresponsiveness shocks Lance: "Now the dog all this while sheds not a tear nor speaks a word; but see how I lay the dust with

my tears.” (2. 3. 29-30). The humanisation of Crab is all the more stressed by his education:

When a man's servant shall play the cur with him, look you, it goes hard: one that I brought up of a puppy; one that I saved from drowning, when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters went to it. I have taught him, even as one would say precisely, 'thus I would teach a dog.'

(Lance, 4. 4. 1-6)

According to Erica Fudge, education in the early modern period was part of the process of becoming human: “What is required to avoid or at least lessen this possibility of the human’s becoming merely sensual is a training of the will; is, in short, education” so as to develop the “preexistent state of the human”<sup>85</sup>. In teaching Crab, Lance asserts the preexistent rationality of his dog; he asserts his human trait. This enters a scepticism towards the idea that man is essentially human, essentially rational. Erica Fudge explains that scepticism, influenced by Sextus Empiricus and led by Montaigne, Charron and supposedly Sir Walter Raleigh, played a major role in the revision of human rational nature in the early modern period. The idea is that rationality is preexistent and that animals and humans have a preexistent rationality which via education creates the human status. The sceptics also consider human status to be a category constructed against the animal status.

While Lance asserts Crab’s humanity, the dog deconstructs it by acting as “a dog at all things,” and Lance’s education of Crab fails to humanise him:

O, 'tis a foul thing when a cur cannot keep himself in all companies! I would have, as one should say, one that takes upon him to be a dog indeed, to be, as it were, a dog at all things.  
(Lance, 4. 4. 9-13)

In this respect, Crab echoes “the zooontology [that] Derrida’s writings lay claim to” which “probe the experience of a shared embodiedness beyond and outside of language, resulting in the recognition of the limits of rationality and the singularity of all animal life.”<sup>86</sup> On the one hand the dog shows the limits of the definition of humanity based on a supposed essential rationality itself based on *logos* ; on the other hand, by rejecting his being humanised, he satirises the very idea of human rationality. Crab brings a sceptic response

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<sup>85</sup> Fudge, Erica. *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England*.

<sup>86</sup> “The Speaking Animal Speaking the Animal: Three Turning Points in Thinking the Animal” *Turning Points*. Nünning, Ansgar, and Sicks, Kai Marcel, (eds.). Berlin/Boston, DE: De Gruyter, 2012. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 26 May 2016.

to the conception of man as a rational animal. Lesley Kordecki argues that Crab can be classified as a postmodern animal for he deconstructs the construction of humanity against animality:

Originally this creature [the postmodern animal] is classified by Steve Baker as the animal appearing and deconstructing the binary of human/animal in postmodern art (2000); here we can employ it to help us see the potential of the nonhuman in theatre. Without saying a word, Crab becomes a defining character in the play, challenging the early modern and subsequent modernist (and often detrimental) hierarchy of human over animal. The scenes fuse into a 'becoming-animal' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 240-248) moment for the human, but a vividly resistant one for the dog.<sup>87</sup>

In this respect Lance and Crab symbolise the “binary of human/animal” with on the one hand Lance professing the humanity of his dog and on the other hand the dog resisting it. Beyond this resistance, Crab, by mirror effect, reflects man’s animality. While Lance exhibits his excessive and his empathy for the dog, Crab “does not shed a tear,” does not respond and remains stoically indifferent.

How many masters would do this for his servant? Nay, I'll be sworn, I have sat in the stocks for puddings he hath stolen, otherwise he had been executed; I have stood on the pillory for geese he hath killed, otherwise he had suffered for't. [to Crab] Thou thinkest not of this now.

(Lance, 4. 4. 28-33)

At the very heart of Lance’s empathy for his dog, he acknowledges his capacity to suffer and thus brings their animal and human nature closer. Lance’s relationship with his dog is one of *empathy* that is made possible only by the assertion that they can both suffer. Thus, by asserting that they share sensation and feelings Lance humanises Crab by considering him his kin. The mimetic function of servants in the play all the more emphasises the deconstruction of the binary between human and animal:

Did not I bid thee still mark me and do as I do? when didst thou see me heave up my leg and make water against a gentlewoman's farthingale? didst thou ever see me do such a trick?

(Lance, 4. 4. 34-38)

All in all Crab’s humanisation is spoken and acted by Lance who behaves as if is dog was human after all. But the dog resists this humanisation by his lack of speech and action.

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<sup>87</sup> Kordecki, Lesley. “True Love and the Nonhuman: Shakespeare's Dog Crab and the Animal/Human Connection” *Social Alternatives* 32.4 (2013). 28-33.



Once again the pair forms a hybrid character which represents, explores, construct and deconstruct the so-called binary between human and animals in a sceptical way. Who is the dog and who is the man, we come to seriously doubt as Lance complains: “If I had not had more wit than he” (4. 4. 13).

### **II. B. 2. Becoming Hound: *Titus Andronicus*.**

Doubting the rational nature of man is also at the heart of *Titus Andronicus* but under a different shape. The hunt has a significant dramatic function and is deeply correlated in the metamorphosis of characters into stags or predators. The myth of Actaeon, if mentioned only once in the play has as much importance as the myth of Philomela which is overtly used. The myth of Actaeon is concealed but no less a driver of the tragedy. The metamorphosis at the heart of the myth does not cling to one character but to all of them. The hunt outspreads to action and characters, perpetrating the domination of savagery and the implosion of humanity. In this process where the hunt — a game in-between civilisation and savagery — dismantles Rome and characters become hounds, hunting and hunted at the same time. The omnipresence of the hunt, more than dismantling civilisation, lays out a confusion on who is hunter and who is prey.<sup>88</sup>

The metaphor of the hunt suggests both the infernal cycle of revenge and cannibalism: “Although an animal might consume another animal, that predator might in turn become the prey of another.”<sup>89</sup> Here the dog symbolises the preexistence of the predatory instinct in man. Against the backdrop of the myth of Actaeon, the motif of the dog metamorphoses into a hound or, the paragon of predators, the wolf. Without language characters can only communicate with their bodies, hence the abundance of body parts in the play’s text and the strong symbolism of the dismantlement of the body politics. Communication by the body stresses the loss of human status and places the animality of man as a driver of this parody of a Senecan revenge tragedy. The body politics is dismantled as the body of its citizens is dismembered. The metamorphosis of characters into predators stages the

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<sup>88</sup> Lafont, Agnès. “‘Bright Cynthia comes to hunt and revel here’: Mythological Clusters and the Motif of the Hunt in *Titus Andronicus* and *Thomas of Woodstock*.” *Revue LISA* 6.3 (2009): 123-138.

<sup>89</sup> Villagra, Analía. “Cannibalism, Consumption, and Kinship in Animal Studies.” in Kalof, Linda, and Montgomery, Georgina M., eds. *The Animal Turn : Making Animal Meaning*. East Lansing, US: Michigan State University Press, 2011. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 7 May 2016.

implosion of the city and the citizen, spanning the canine motif from dogs to hounds and wolves.

The dog is first a symbol of disciplined aggressiveness as Aaron comments upon his function of preceptor with Chiron and Demetrius:

AARON Indeed, I was their tutor to instruct them.  
That coddling spirit had they from their mother,  
As sure a card as ever won the set;  
That bloody mind, I think, they learn'd of me,  
As true a dog as ever fought at head.

(5. 1. 98-102)

Aaron refers to Chiron and Demetrius as obedient dogs whose mission was to prey on Lavinia. The “coddling spirit” that they have from their mother refers to their preexistence as predators. Indeed Tamora is referred to as Dian, who in Ovid’s myth indirectly unleashes the hounds on Actaeon:

BASSIANUS Or is it Dian, habited like her,  
Who hath abandonèd her holy groves  
To see the general hunting in this forest?

TAMORA Saucy controller of my private steps,  
Had I the power that some day Dian had,  
Thy temples should be planted presently  
With horns, as was Actaeon’s, and the hounds  
Should drive upon thy new-transformèd limbs,  
Unmannerly intruder as thou art!

(2. 3. 57-65)

This dialogue between Tamora and Bassianus foreshadows the role of the myth of Actaeon in relation to the hunt which has just begun. Dissimulated in the text, “habited,” “general hunting,” “power,” “horns,” “Actaeon,” “hounds,” “new-transformèd limbs” and “unmannerly,” those key words foreshadow the metamorphosis at work in the play which results from the dissimulation of murders with noise and silence. They also reflect the illusion of shape and the revelation of the inner preexistence of animal instinct.

The play seems to seize the motif of Janus, the two-faced god who represents transition. Everything is dissimulated, two faced. The mutilation of Lavinia (2. 1. and 2. 3.) is smothered by the noise of the hunt (2. 2.) and is only revealed in act 3. The two events occur simultaneously but without interference. This motif of ambivalence and transformation stresses the twofold nature of man — animal and rational — which the

motif of the dog reveals. The dog is a twofold animal at once domesticated and savage. His duality reaches its paragon via the motif of the hunt which combines civilisation and savagery.

The analogy between dog and man is made even more stringent by the analogy between action and hunting. Language is substituted by the body which conducts the metamorphosis of men into animals. In this transformation the “hand” and the “hound” are brought closer to emphasise the confusion which is at hand between human action and animal action: “a solemn hunting is in hand;” (Aaron, 2. 1. 113). “Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand, / Blood and revenge are hammering in my head.” (Aaron, 2. 3. 38-39): Aaron brings closer “hand,” “heart” and “head” which constitute three symbols of human agency. The analogy which compares human action to hounds hunting is sonorous as well as visual. The comparison of man with a hound is derived from the motif of the hunt which is a structural, a textual and a stage metaphor<sup>90</sup>. The body and the agency of characters is influenced by the hunt which produced an animalisation. Despite the significance of the hound, characters are often reminiscent of beasts rather than properly dogs or hounds. The use of animal pelt in contemporary productions, usually exotic animals, hints at the bestiality of characters caught in the hunting process such as it is the case for example in a 2006 Japanese production at the RSC:



Fig. 15. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Yukio Ninagawa. Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Startford-Upon-Avon. 2006.

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<sup>90</sup> Lafont, Agnès. “‘Bright Cynthia comes to hunt and revel here’: Mythological Clusters and the Motif of the Hunt in *Titus Andronicus* and *Thomas of Woodstock*.” *Revue LISA* 6.3 (2009): 123-138.

There are two kinds of animalisation of the human characters: either the use of exotic animal motif or the use of the wolf. The motif of the dog is never taken literally and ranges from exotic animals to the wolf such as in the 2013 RSC production of the play:



Fig. 16. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Michael Fentiman. Swan Theatre, Stratford-Upon-Avon. 2013.



Fig. 17. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Michael Fentiman. Swan Theatre, Stratford-Upon-Avon. 2013.

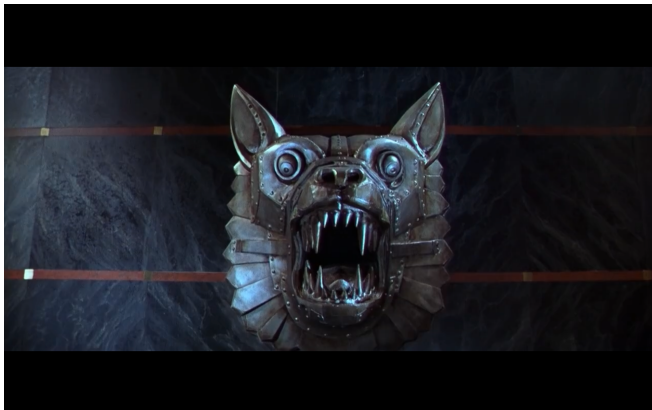


Fig. 18. Taymor, Julie. *Titus*. Italy ; United States ; United Kingdom: Clear Blue Sky Productions ; Overseas Filmgroup. 1999.

In Julie Taymor's movie *Titus* (1999), the hunt is symbolised by the wolf as well. Those productions show different interpretation of the canine motif and the hunt. Overall the interpretation of these motifs strives for the predatory instinct of which the wolf is a paragon in the Renaissance period. Contemporary productions however tend to emphasise the bestial and predatory character by using exotic animals. All in all, the dog is barely represented despite its dramatic significance through the rewriting of the myth of Actaeon.

Still, the canine motif symbolises the inhuman other and in the analogy with man it represents the loss of human status as Lucius insults Aaron: “Away, inhuman dog! unhallow'd slave!” (5. 3. 14). The dog, referring to the inhuman, also refers to the vice of man. Aaron is presented as an infernal beast, inciting vice. The comparison of Aaron with a dog canonises the idea of the dog as a symbol of sinful nature: “Ay, like a black dog, as the saying is.” (, 5. 1. 122). After having confessed his role in the mutilation of Lavinia, the murder of Bassianus, the chopping of Titus’s hand, Aaron expresses his delight of having done so: “And almost broke my heart with extreme laughter.” (5. 1. 113). From the disciplined savagery of the hounds to the infernal beast, the dog represents vice. Canonised by Aaron’s villainy the motif emblematises barbarity. everything that is not civilised is to be compared to a dog. The comparison ranges from the aggressiveness of a hound to the infernal bestiality echoes by the “black dog” or the “hell-hounds and their dame” (5. 2. 144). In the end, the analogy with the dog rather bestialises than animalises the characters.

The hunt destroys civilisation from inside and we attend the implosion of the citizen which becomes animal. The motif of the hunt and the hounds are reminiscent of an ambiguous nature. According to Aristotle’s rational animal man’s nature would be half-animal, half-rational. In this respect the hunt brings the possibility to destroy civilisation from inside as it is a game mingling savagery and civility. The hound serves as a motif to unveil the animal, bestial, savage nature of man as opposed to his supposed rational nature.

### **II. B. 3. Becoming Nothing: *Timon of Athens*.**

While Crab satirises the idea of man as a rational animal, the motif of the hunt in *Titus Andronicus* unveils the savage nature of man. In both plays, the dog stresses man’s animal essence. Whereas Crab is humanised, citizens in *Titus Andronicus* are animalised by the textual and structural metaphor of the hunt. The motif of the dog, if not always visually evident is overall used to stress the inhuman. In *Timon of Athens*, however, the dog represents the “too human”: an excessive human nature is inhuman. Timon prefers becoming nothing for he does not make the difference between humanity and inhumanity, for him inhumanity is inherent to humanity. Contrarily to *The Two Gentlemen* and *Titus*

*Andronicus*, the dog in *Timon of Athens* does not underline the difference between *human* and *inhuman* but instead asserts for the inherent inhumanity of humanity.

The play has a slightly nihilistic vision of mankind which is conveyed by Timon's misanthropy. Neither animal, nor human Timon finally finds salvation in death. He refuses to be a citizen, isolates himself in the woods, chooses to be naked and would do anything to show his opposition to humanity. Yet, in opposing humanity Timon faces an existential puzzle: what is it to be a man? His confusion is translated by a complex rhetoric, full of oppositions, contrasts and nonsense.

TIMON Why, I was writing of my epitaph;  
it will be seen tomorrow. My long sickness  
Of health and living now begins to mend,  
And nothing brings me all things.  
(5. 2. 70-73)

His discourse presents some antithesis, bringing closer "sickness" and "health of living." His vision of life, as well as being nihilistic is antithetic: "And nothing brings me all things." Timon's opposition to humanity triggers an existential questioning which is reflected by Timon's antithetic discourse.

The word 'nothing' has a particular resonance in the play. It has to be understood as a negation of what exists. The repetition of "nothing" during the banquet scene is noteworthy of this negation of humanity: "For these my present friends, as they are to me nothing, so in nothing bless them, and to nothing are they welcome." (Timon, 3. 7. 81-83). In this scene Timon reveals his nihilism which leads him to self-annihilation. Timon's self-denial begins with animalisation and ends with annihilation. The first phase is centred around asceticism, nakedness and the seclusion in the woods where beasts are preferable to mankind:

TIMON Nothing I'll bear from thee,  
But nakedness, thou detestable town!  
Take thou that too, with multiplying bans!  
Timon will to the woods; where he shall find  
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.  
The gods confound—hear me, you good gods all—  
The Athenians both within and out that wall!  
And grant, as Timon grows, his hate may grow  
To the whole race of mankind, high and low! Amen.  
(4. 1. 32-41)

Timon's nakedness is both visual and metaphorical, Timon advocates a bare body and a bare self, free from civilisation. The same image is used in *Titus Andronicus* to convey the loss of human status of Lavinia who is after her mutilation a "bare body" (Marcus, 2. 4. 17) but a "lively body" still (Titus, 3. 1. 105). Timon's loss of human status, which is self-inflicted in contrast to Lavinia, is a negation of his humanity. Timon refuses human status by freeing himself from human attributes. Flavius notes the Timon's self-abnegation by underlining his alienation from mankind:

FLAVIUS It is in vain that you would speak with Timon;  
For he is set so only to himself  
That nothing but himself which looks like man  
Is friendly with him.

(5. 1. 1-4)

Human appearance is central to the assertion or the negation of humanity. But Timon's liberation from human attributes is not enough. Finally, Timon cannot make the difference between men and animals which leads him to self-annihilation. His death aims at escaping humanity and yet it brings him closer to his human nature since for Timon the only finality of human life is death. Dog imagery highlights the inherent hypocrisy, vice and inhumanity of men but Timon uses it also at some point to express nihilism. The use of the verb "fang" is taken from the lexical field of canine imagery and is a synonymous of the verb *to dog* which means *to follow*. The syntagm "Destruction fang mankind" reminds of both the inherent inhumanity of men and also the inevitability of death.

TIMON There's nothing level in our cursed natures,  
But direct villany. Therefore, be abhorr'd  
All feasts, societies, and throngs of men!  
His semblable, yea, himself, Timon disdains:  
Destruction fang mankind! Earth, yield me roots!

(4. 3. 19-23)

Timon's questioning aims to restore the essential nature of man: "Earth, yield me roots!" Human nature, the earth/the mother of men and nothingness are the three pillars of Timon's dilemma which is a driver of dramatic action. The apostrophe to the "Earth" implies a personification of the earth, as the mother of men. In his essentialist quest Timon figuratively and literally goes back to the root of humanity, the earth. Timon digs the earth until he dies, swallowed back by the earth. The motif is similar to *Titus Andronicus* when

Tamora “Like to the earth swallow her own increase.” (5. 2. 191). The image of the *mother earth* swallowing what she has created — humans — conveys the idea of a purification of humanity. Therefore, Timon choses death, it seems, as a purification of *his* humanity. Timon’s self-annihilation brings about a nihilistic exploration of human nature. The dog is used as an insult that points at the inherent inhumanity of humanity which is the starting point of Timon’s confusion.

## **II. C. An Essentialist Quest: Breaking the Great Chain of Beings.**

“— if, like a crab, you could go backward.”  
(Hamlet, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, 2. 2. 206)

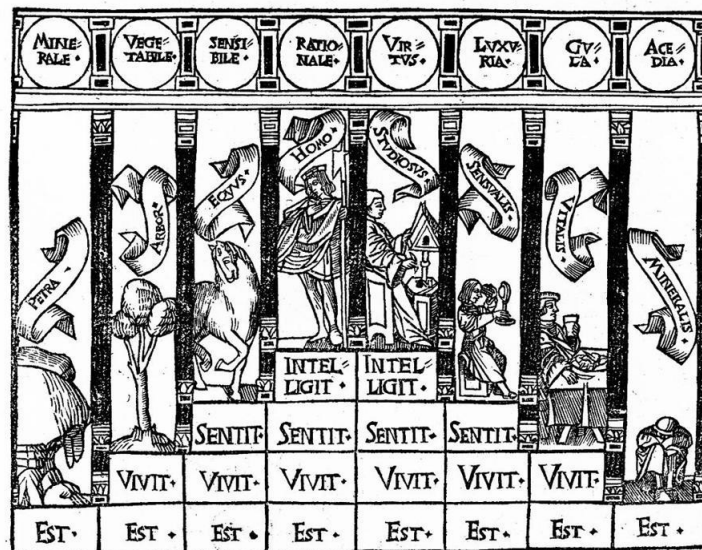


Fig. 19. The Pyramid of the Living, from Carollus Bovillus, *De Sapiente* (1510).

The use of dogs triggers scepticism towards man’s rational nature since this animal represents ambivalence and duality. Therefore, the analogy challenges the adequacy of the definition of man as a rational animal by essence. Crab’s satirical silence, the noise of the hunt and Timon’s refusal of language and of community debunks language as the “messenger of reason” and the difference between animals and humans. Without language, human characters become bodies and thereby Shakespeare draw them closer to animals. The analogy overall suggests an essentialist quest which encourages to doubt the essential



humanity of men. When some character take the counter-stance of humanity dog imagery is here to highlight their inhumanity by comparison.

The analogy provides an inversion between the human and the animal status in the great chain of being which creates either comedy or tragedy: Crab looks more rational than the gentlemen, Rome's citizens are as savaged as Actaeon's hounds and Timon denies human nature which he compares to that of dogs. This inversion can be compared to Bovillus's 1510 great chain of beings which will help to highlight the early modern vision of humanity in comparison with other kinds of beings. This pyramid of the great chain of beings positions man on top of it due to his rationality and virtue — "RATIONALE," "VIRTUS." The pyramid highlights the ascent of man from rock to tree to animal and then to *homo*, corresponding to the Aristotelian tripartite division of the souls: "VIVIT," "SENTIT" and "INTELLIGIT." Following this logic man is above rocks, plants and animals because, in addition to his existence ("EST"), his being alive ("VIVIT") and his senses ("SENTIT") man is endowed with knowledge and understanding ("INTELLIGIT"). Man's intelligence is yet divided into two types of men, "HOMO" and "STUDIOSUS." The latter is the paragon of humanity since it corresponds to the virtuous character of humanity, "VIRTUS" meaning manliness, or manhood in Latin. Yet if the rational or virtuous man is the "paragon of animals," the pyramid also shows his descent. The pyramid is built upon a mirror effect ; thus the rock reflects the hunched man "MINERALIS" for example.

"LUXURIA" and "ACEDIA" are of a particular interest for the use of the analogy between dog and man in Shakespeare's plays. "Luxuria" echoes Titian's *Allegory of Prudence* which makes the dog a symbol of luxury, but above all it connotes excess which is a driver of comedy and tragedy in Shakespeare's plays under study. Crab satirises the gentlemen's passionate desire which is so excessive that its effect is compared to blindness. Timon's hubristic philanthropy and misanthropy drive his tragic and pathetic downfall. As for *Titus Andronicus*, the play uses the myth of Actaeon which is centred around hubris: Diana punishes Actaeon for seeing Artemis naked. Timon's hubris is centred around his faith in mankind and his downfall corresponds to the left side of the pyramid. The phases of Timon's negation of his humanity reflect the downfall of man from virtue to *acedia*, which corresponds by mirror effect to the downfall from rational to mineral. Thus one can

draw a parallel between falling from the state of man to a state of mineral which Timon figuratively does as he becomes nothing and buries himself.

In *Summa Theologica* (13th c.) St Thomas Aquinas uses *accidia* to refer to sloth. The OED dates the appearance of the word *acedia* to the 16th century and indicates its Greek etymology *a- kēdos* “without care”. By analogy in Bovillus’s pyramid *acedia* is compared to a rock and interestingly enough the use of stones in *Timon of Athens* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* symbolises the non-humanity of characters as well. After the parodic banquet during which Timon serves lukewarm water and stones to the lords — “One day he gives us diamonds, next day stones.” (4 Lord, 3. 7. 115) — Timon retires to the woods and becomes the antithesis of man. As the walls separating Athens from the woods “dive in the earth” (Timon, 4. 1. 2), Timon digs the earth and buries himself little by little. He uses stones both to insult mankind and symbolise his self-negation as a man:

TIMON Away, thou issue of a mangy dog!  
 Choler does kill me that thou art alive —  
 I swoon to see thee.  
 APEMANTUS Would thou wouldst burst!  
 TIMON Away, Thou tedious rogue!  
 I am sorry I shall lose a stone by thee!  
*[Throws a stone at him]*  
 (4. 3. 365-369)

Crab is also compared to a stone due to his lack of emotion: “He is a stone, a very pebblestone, and has no more pity in him than a dog.” (Lance, 2. 2. 9-10). In both *Timon of Athens* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the stone symbolises the inhuman. Aquinas reckons that sloth, “an oppressive sorrow, which, to wit, so weighs upon man's mind, that he wants to do nothing,” is characteristic of “the solitary” and “is a mortal sin”:

Objection 3. Further, no mortal sin is to be found in a perfect man. But sloth is to be found in a perfect man: for Cassian says (De Instit. Caenob. x, 1) that “sloth is well known to the solitary, and is a most vexatious and persistent foe to the hermit.” Therefore sloth is not always a mortal sin.  
 On the contrary, It is written (2 Corinthians 7:20): “The sorrow of the world worketh death.” But such is sloth; for it is not sorrow “according to God,” which is contrasted with sorrow of the world. Therefore it is a mortal sin.<sup>91</sup>  
 (Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, 35)

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<sup>91</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas. *The "Summa Theologica" Of St. Thomas Aquinas*. London: Burns, Oates & Washburne, 1920.

Timon and Crab are characteristic of acedia due to their non-humanity and isolation, both refuse to be human.

The analogy between dog and man provides a sceptical account of man's essential rationality but it also breaks the great chain of beings by staging the descent of man from a virtuous being to a mineral and apathetic one. Timon and Crab are the more salient examples of this descent because of the symbolical use of stones. They refer to the basest level of the pyramid while the characters of *Titus Andronicus* can be ranked to the luxuria/sensible level, that is to say not that of minerals but that of animals. This descent from a state of human to a state of animal or mineral is a decomposition of human nature which doubts the rational essence of man. In losing language characters seem to lose their human status which has an impact on their body. The metamorphosed body, under the yoke of the loss of language, becomes the negation of humanity. The synthesis of the loss of language which symbolises the loss of the rational soul and the animalisation (or annihilation) of the body provokes the descent of man in the great chain of being. All in all, Shakespeare seems to play with this early modern conceptions of the different types of beings (mineral, animal, human) so as to doubt man's rational nature. While he goes back to an ancient conception of humanity he also makes his characters go backward in the great chain of beings.

Not only Shakespeare turns the natural order of living upside down but he also makes rationality the distinctive feature of humanity. By metamorphosing humans into animals (and vice versa), the thing that still differentiates humans from animals is rationality. So in this sense, the reception of the classical analogy and its relation to the Aristotelian definition of human nature is both continuous and a source of scepticism. The analogy between the dog and the human enables a sceptical decomposition of human nature that both doubts and confirms the concept of rational animal: man is animal by essence but rational by existence. In the continuity with the classical and medieval traditions, the dog is used for what Jacques Voisenet calls the "anthropocentric spectacle."<sup>92</sup> Not only the dog shows the human, but it is also the starting point of an essentialist quest. Yet by stressing a persistent ambiguity between human and animal natures, the analogy also suggests that the

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<sup>92</sup> Voisenet, Jacques. *Bêtes et Hommes dans le Monde Médiéval: Le Bestiaire des Clercs du Ve au XIIe siècle*. Turnhout: Brepols publishers, 2000.

difference is not so obvious. Indeed the dog is mainly used as an insult and thereby the comparison also hints at man as a threat to himself. The analogy is central to a sceptical decomposition of human nature that points out man's inherent inhumanity. Man as a threat to himself is symbolised by figures of hybridity centred around animality and from which dog imagery is never too far...

### **III. The Hybrid Definition of Human Nature: The Dog as an Emblem of the Dual Nature of Characters.**

“Cry ‘Havoc!’, and let slip the dogs of war”  
(Antony, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, 3. 1. 276)

Shakespeare brings forward a hybrid definition of human nature. Hybrid because it mingles classical ideas with humanist ones and also because man appears as both an animal and a human. The characters compared to dogs are hybridised: they are not half-dog, half-human but their nature is located midway between animality and humanity. These characters start a reflection on human nature which actually seems to be challenged by the subtle analogy with the dog.

In *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, Antony uses the motif of the dog to symbolise the violence of war as well as the military power of the Roman Empire. The idiom is borrowed from Plutarch’s *Lives* and symbolises a violent and crude conflict. The dog evokes madness (“fought at head,” Aaron, 5. 1. 102; “bloody mind,” 101) and foreshadows the destruction but also the defence of civilisation. Shakespeare’s plays seem to present an oxymoronic definition of man which stems from an ambiguous distinction between dogs and human characters. Wedged between brutality and civilisation, domesticity and wilderness, the dog stands as a subtle revelation of the duality of human nature. As Plato reckons in *Republic*, the dog is easily comparable to man for they both can recognise a friend and an enemy:

Don’t these dogs, when they meet a stranger, (376) become angry *before* he has done anything against them; but when they see an old friend, they give him a welcome, though they may never have got any good from his hands? Isn’t that a sign of a true love of knowledge in a dog? The only thing separating friend from enemy for him is that he knows the one and doesn’t know the other! So may we not say of a man as well, that if he is to be gentle to his friends and family and relations, he will have to have a turn in philosophy?<sup>93</sup>

In Shakespeare’s plays the dog is notably used to mirror true and false friendship. For some philosopher friendship is the cement of society,<sup>94</sup> others will consider that it is language, communication and reason that are the basis of society. All in all it seems that the bonds

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<sup>93</sup> Plato, and I. A Richards. *Plato's Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1966.

<sup>94</sup> Agamben, Giorgio. “The Friend.” *What is An Aparatus? And Other Essays*. trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.

uniting men to form a society is a matter of recognition of one's kin. Plato's words suggest indeed that the dog, like man, is able to recognise his kin, and, in this sense, it seems that they both are political animals.

This part will focus on how the similarity of the dog and the human result in figures of hybridity in the three plays. It will start with an analysis of animality not as what is other than human, but as what is other within the human. The irrationality of characters, most of the time their hubristic desire for love, honour or power, their lust or even social engagement, any trait of character that is excessive represent the animal within. Impulsivity is a source of comedy or tragedy and appears as something that ought to be controlled, refrained. The impulse of characters impacts the political level and Shakespeare seems to create societies of beasts. The three plays seem indeed to combine savagery and civilisation to create chaotic or infertile political environments as a result of man's half-animal, half-human nature. Finally, it shall examine the visual representation of hybridity based on 20<sup>th</sup> century archives of productions of these three plays. There are two different types of zoomorphism which have the same impact on the analogy. Hybridity appears nonetheless as a dangerous definition the limitlessness of which can span from mere zoomorphism to monstrosity.

### **III. A. Savage Passions "Can Bring Noblest Minds to Basest Ends!"**

Away, unpeaceable dog, or I'll spurn thee hence!  
(2 Lord, *Timon of Athens*, 1. 1. 278)

What an alteration of honour has desperate want made.  
What viler thing upon the earth than friends  
Who can bring noblest minds to basest ends?  
(Flavius, *Timon of Athens*, 4. 3. 456-458)

Hubristic characters are compared with dogs and alienated from the community of men. Excess, hubris, passions are sources of disorder. Characters are blinded, deafened and muted by passion, to the extent that they lose their wit and are analogically turned into animals.

The loss of human status is often threatened by the civilising or bewildering function of space. The space of the woods which is prone to wildness opposes the space of the city

which is prone to civilisation. But the threat of the loss of human status is actually omnipresent as savage passions “can bring noblest minds to basest ends!” (Flavius, *Timon of Athens*, 4. 3. 458). In other words, characters are a threat to themselves regardless of the space in which they evolve. The animality of characters is revealed by the strange relation between space and hubris. The woods is a space of liberation of man’s animality. Rapes in *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* are good examples of the unleashing of irrational passion in the woods.

Space has a political function in the sense that it represents where to be human and where to be an animal. *Titus Andronicus*’s woods are “Patterned by that the poet here describes, / By nature made for murders and for rapes.” (Titus, 4. 1. 56-57). In *Titus Andronicus*, *Timon of Athens* and *The Two Gentlemen*, the wood is a place of liberation from human status. Lavinia’s rape and Bassianus’ murder confirm the woods as a place for instinct and impulse where the Goths can unleash their barbarity. Lavinia realises Tamora’s inhumanity before being mutilated: “O Tamora, thou bearest a woman’s face —” (Lavinia, 2. 3. 136). Lavinia is dumbfounded by the bestiality of the Goths that is dissimulated by their human appearance:

LAVINIA 'Tis present death I beg, and one thing more  
That womanhood denies my tongue to tell.  
O, keep me from their worse-than-killing lust,  
And tumble me into some loathsome pit,  
Where never man’s eye may behold my body;  
Do this and be a charitable murderer.  
TAMORA So should I rob my sweet sons of their fee.  
No, let them satisfy their lust on thee.  
DEMETRIUS Away! For thou hast stayed us here too long.  
LAVINIA No grace, no womanhood? Ah, beastly creature,  
The blot and enemy to our general name!  
Confusion fall —

(2. 3. 173-184)

Lavinia’s imploring for death evokes that she would rather die than being tortured but also that her mutilation will deprive her from human status: “never man’s eye may behold my body.” Her chastity, her “nice-preservèd honesty” (135) and “her loyalty” (125) are her greatest social and political values, as well as sources of political disturbance in 1. 1. In the incipit, Bassianus and Lavinia refuse Saturninus to have Lavinia as his wife. For this reason, the newly elected emperor frees the Goths and takes Tamora as his wife. Bassianus and Lavinia’s opposition to political power can be one of the sources of the escalating

chaotic barbaric revenge process. The Goth's revenge is indeed devoid of humanity. Tamora suggests that their sons need to "satisfy their lust" which enhances their incapacity to control their animality. Françoise Frontisi Ducroux explains that "anthropomorphism shows the hierarchy that civilisation requires: savage or domesticated, animals ought to be submitted, mastered, controlled."<sup>95</sup> One major difference between humanity and animality is the capacity to restrain oneself. Chiron and Demetrius are animals *par excellence* for they ought to "satisfy" themselves. Their lust is reinforced by their perversion to mutilate both Lavinia's body but also her social status:

CHIRON I warrant you, madam, we will make that sure.  
Come, mistress, now perforce we will enjoy  
That nice-preservèd honesty of yours.  
(133-135)

This is furthermore stressed by Lavinia's incapacity to recognise the woman that Tamora is supposed to be. The human appearance of Tamora and her sons confronts their animal spirit.

LAVINIA No grace, no womanhood? Ah, beastly creature,  
The blot and enemy to our general name!  
Confusion fall —  
(82-184)

Lavinia describes Tamora as the contrary of human nature — the "enemy to our general name." Her confusion is enhanced by the punctuation. Question marks, exclamatory marks, commas and a dash evoke her panting due to her astonishment. As Lavinia seems to reckon, human nature is only a "general name," and she compares the Goths to a stain or a shadow — "the blot." The animal nature of the Goths is described as the other within human nature, the contrary of humanity a flaw which threatens human status. The rape episode in *Titus Andronicus* reveals the ambiguous nature of man and his potential animality.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* the rape also threatens the characters' human status and more particularly their citizenship. When Valentine witnesses Proteus trying to rape

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<sup>95</sup> Frontisi-Ducroux, Françoise. "Actéon, Ses Chien et Leur Maître." Cassin, Barbara, J.-L. Labarrière, (eds.). *L'Animal dans l'Antiquité*. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1997. (my translation) "l'anthropomorphisme offre en exemple la hiérarchie qu'exige la civilisation : sauvage ou domestiques, les animaux doivent être soumis, maîtrise, contrôlés." 435.



Silvia, he focuses on his incivility and betrayal as a friend: “Ruffian, let go that rude uncivil touch, / Thou friend of an ill fashion!” (Valentine, 5. 4. 60-61). He continues:

VALENTINE Thou common friend, that's without faith or love,  
For such is a friend now! Treacherous man,  
Thou hast beguiled my hopes. Naught but mine eye  
Could have persuaded me. Now I dare not say  
I have one friend alive; thou wouldst disprove me.  
Who should be trusted, when one's right hand Is perjured to the bosom? Proteus,  
I am sorry I must never trust thee more,  
But count the world a stranger for thy sake.  
The private wound is deepest. O time most accurst,  
'Mongst all foes that a friend should be the worst!  
(5. 4. 62-72)

The love Valentine is talking about could either be Proteus' feelings toward Silvia or toward his friend Valentine. This double meaning creates confusion and a strange comic relief. What is at stake here is the social bond between characters and their civility. Once again the woods enable characters to unleash their inhuman side revealing man's potential animal nature. The woods enables characters to free their animal nature, yet the city makes the hybrid nature of characters concrete. The points of reference to dissociate humanity from animality are not reliable anymore and it seems that we deal with a hybrid composition of humanity which is even more salient in the creation of hybrid societies, that is to say societies of beasts.

### **III. B. Societies of Beasts?**

The communities of men that Shakespeare depicts are a combination of savagery and civilisation which make the hybrid nature of characters concrete. These societies of men actually look like societies of beasts: Athens is a “high-viced city” (Timon, 4. 3. 109), Rome, “a wilderness of tigers” (Titus, 3. 1. 54) and Verona is peopled of “gentlemen-like dogs” (Lance, 4. 4. 17). Society in the three plays is a source of disorder. In *Titus Andronicus* the political incoherence and tyranny, in *Timon of Athens* false friendship and in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* marriage, desire and pairing create social disorder which leads characters to exile in the woods where they “shall find / The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.” (Timon, 4. 1. 37). Leaving the city, the political environment,

characters put their political nature to the test. Political naturalism, the Aristotelian doctrine that defines man as a political animal, states that

First, the city-state exists by nature, because it comes to be out of the more primitive natural associations and it serves as their end, because it alone attains self-sufficiency (1252b30-1253a1).<sup>96</sup>

The *polis* would come out of “the more primitive natural associations,” that is to say man’s animal nature, so as to fulfil his natural needs.

Second, human beings are by nature political animals, because nature, which does nothing in vain, has equipped them with speech, which enables them to communicate moral concepts such as justice which are formative of the household and city-state (1253a1-18).<sup>97</sup>

What differentiates a community of animals from a community of men is speech, communication and ethical behaviour. So the idea again that speech entails reason.

Third, the city-state is naturally prior to the individuals, because individuals cannot perform their natural functions apart from the city-state, since they are not self-sufficient (1253a18-29).

Men, naturally endowed with rationality and speech are prone to be civilised. Yet it is the political environment only that has a formative effect on man as an individual which alone cannot be civilised.

These three claims are conjoined, however, with a fourth: the city-state is a creation of human intelligence. “Therefore, everyone naturally has the impulse for such a [political] community, but the person who first established [it] is the cause of very great benefits.” This great benefactor is evidently the lawgiver (nomothetês), for the legal system of the city-state makes human beings just and virtuous and lifts them from the savagery and bestiality in which they would otherwise languish (1253a29–39).<sup>98</sup>

This civilising process cannot occur without regulators. That is why the legal system is crucial to the development of the individual among the community, “[f]or, in addition to his well-developed brain, man — unlike many mammals — has the handicap of total dependence on others of his species.”<sup>99</sup> This communal dependence has two dimensions,

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<sup>96</sup> Miller, Fred. “Political Naturalism.” Plato.stanford.edu. N.p., 2016. Web. 10 June 2016. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-politics/supplement3.html>

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Khoshkish, A. “Beyond Aristotle’s ‘Political Animal’” in *The Socio-Political Complex*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979.

the community has an ontological function as it enables men to realise they are men. It also has a regulatory function, men not only reflect each other, but also regulate each other.

In Shakespeare's plays the community of men is put to the test. Characters compared to dogs lose speech, their body is animalised so while they gradually or partially lose their natural rationality they challenge their political nature. The comparison with the dog highlights their struggle between their belonging to the community of men and the community of animals. In *Titus Andronicus* the legal system, instead of regulating characters' animality enables to unleash their bestial instinct. The revenge process is maintained by the Lex Tallionis which makes the political system one of the utmost primitivity. Timon's Athens and the Verona of *The Two Gentlemen* are also characterised by animal-like characters, compared to dogs in both cases. The marginal characters of these plays — Lance and Crab, Timon — from their position as clown/servant or banished in the woods comments upon the societies of beasts that Athens and Verona are to them. They bring cynical perspectives on the community of men.

### **III. B. 1. "Tear for tear and loving kiss for kiss": Justice and Lex Tallionis in *Titus Andronicus*.**

Can the son's eye behold his father bleed?  
There is meed for meed, death for a deadly deed.  
(Lucius, 5. 3. 64-65)

The question asked to Socrates "Isn't the society greater than the man?"<sup>100</sup> is at the heart of the reflection that hybridity brings on the conflict between human and animal nature, and thereby on the relation of man with society. Shakespeare brings forward a reflection on the relation of the political/rational nature of man with "justice as both a moral virtue of character and a desirable quality of political society, as well as how it applies to ethical and social decision-making."<sup>101</sup> In *Titus Andronicus* in particular the legal system — Lex Tallionis — is very primitive. Lucius defines it at the end of the play, as if he had just understood what was actually at the heart of Roman barbarity: "There's meed

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<sup>100</sup> Plato, and I. A Richards. *Plato's Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1966.

<sup>101</sup> "Justice, Western Theories Of | Internet Encyclopedia Of Philosophy." *Iep.utm.edu*. N.p., 2016. Web. 4 July 2016. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/justwest/#H3>

for meed, death for a deadly deed.” (5. 1. 65). His phrasing of the play’s political logic cannot but powerfully ring out. Due to the assonances, alliterations, and symmetrical repetitions, it is as if the bestial revenge logic was spellbinding. Characters are alienated from ethical behaviour by this logic. In *Titus Andronicus* one can be tempted to say that society is not greater than man for it fails to lift him from the savagery in which he languishes.<sup>102</sup> Actually the tyrannical political system seems, in the contrary, to lift men from the humanity in which they languish to reveal their animal, bestial, predatory, barbaric nature. Collin Burrows links the decline of communication with tyranny:

The breakdown of eloquence in the face of violence that dominates the Shakespearian sections seems in the context of the whole drama to have a constitutional edge: it occurs as Rome turns away from elective monarchy towards tyranny. Rape seems to become a metaphor for, as well as a consequence of, political decline.<sup>103</sup>

The animalisation of characters is determined by the political status of the city: the mutilation of the body of characters is a metaphor for the mutilation of the city and political power. Yet, mutilation is at the heart of the Lex Tallionis legal system which animalises characters given the primitivity of this system based on natural balance and resulting in impulsive murder and mutilation. The animalisation of characters is correlated to the mutilation of the political system which is symbolised by the mutilation of the body of characters.

The body of characters is symbolical of the city’s incapacity to perform justice. Eyes, hands, heads, blinded, chopped or cut off represent the mutilation of the political system. When Titus sees Lavinia’s mutilation, Titus witnesses the executory power of hands: “Speak, Lavinia, what accursèd hand / hath made thee handless in thy father’s sight?” (3. 1. 66-67). The hands and the head stand for the executive and the legislative powers. They are a metaphor for the mutilation of the executory power of Rome. Sight has a particular function in the play for it enables to witness, but it also stands as the human dignity and replaces speech. For example, Titus says “My tears are now prevailing orators.” (3. 1. 26). Eyes and sight replace speech and it is instinct that now prevails. Titus claims that his tears

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<sup>102</sup> Miller, Fred. “Political Naturalism.” Plato.stanford.edu. N.p., 2016. Web. 10 June 2016. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-politics/supplement3.html> “the legal system of the city-state makes human beings just and virtuous and lifts them from the savagery and bestiality in which they would otherwise languish (1253a29–39).”

<sup>103</sup> Burrow, Collin. “Ovid” *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 92-132.

are the humblest way to express his sorrow. Communication is downgraded to signs and symbols, it becomes very primitive.

TITUS Why, 'tis no matter, man ; if they did hear,  
They would not mark me ; if they did mark,  
They would not pity me, yet plead I must,  
And bootless unto them.  
Therefore I tell my sorrows to the stones,  
Who, though they cannot answer my distress,  
Yet in some sort they are better than the tribunes,  
For that they will not intercept my tale.  
When I do weep, they humbly at my feet  
Receive my tears and seem to weep with me ;  
And were there but attirèd in grave weeds,  
Rome could not afford no tribunes like to these.  
(3. 1. 33-44)

With Lex Tallionis at hand, the city-state is of the most primitive for it follows the instinct and impulse of characters. Aristotle's political naturalism is taken to the word: "the city-state exists by nature, because it comes to be out of the more primitive natural associations and it serves as their end."<sup>104</sup> But it results in a "wilderness of tigers" (3. 1. 64), a society of beasts where the legal system fails to lift men from their animality and rather takes benefice of their animal nature to destroy the city. One can define tyranny as a system with no legal rights. In *Titus Andronicus* however, despite the tyranny, there are legal rights but they allow for the basest savagery. The plays' bestial legal system stands as an exaggeration of the function of the city-state to enable citizens to fulfil their primitive needs. Characters are encouraged to be closer to their primitive animal nature. Lex Tallionis animalises the city, making Titus's Rome a society of beasts where instinct and impulse prevail. This legal system fosters the animality of characters which is expressed by impulse and the primitivity of the legal system. The city make the hybrid nature of man concrete for it maintain both his human and animal nature. Characters are human in appearance but their behaviour is closer to that of beasts.

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<sup>104</sup> Miller, Fred. "Political Naturalism." Plato.stanford.edu. N.p., 2016. Web. 10 June 2016. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-politics/supplement3.html>

### III. B. 2. What's in Nature? Digging the Earth in *Timon of Athens*.

At the heart of the ambiguity between animality and humanity there is the question of *nature*. Struggling between their animal and human nature characters try to tend to their *true nature*. Timon's misanthropy is directed at the true nature of man but still faces the problem of what is in *nature*. In *Timon of Athens* both nature and civilisation are infected which causes him a puzzle. Timon digs the earth in an attempt to find the true nature of man, not only this will bring him deception but also it brings him closer to an animal.

For Timon, the city is a place of corruption and humanity a disease. He repudiates the political nature of man, inclined to satisfy the self-interest and primal needs of individuals. His cynicism is represented by his symbolical nakedness but also by his anti-social, anti-political and even anti-humanist position. Timon uses the invective to depict a corrupted society. He positions himself as a "sun-king; the universal dispenser of golden light."<sup>105</sup>



Fig. 20. Image from *Timon of Athens*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Gregory Doran. Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-Upon-Avon. 1999.

His role as a cynic is a moralist one, his cynicism is exaggerated, even allegorised. In the 1999 RSC production (see Fig. 20 above), the second part of the play displays Timon digging the earth with a set enhancing the dry atmosphere. The sun and dryness are emphasised by the dark background which highlights the dry and infertile ground made of a pale and dry wooden floor and its pit filled with sand. Characters are either wearing black or beige clothes. The contrasted colour pattern and the lighting are emblematic of Timon's

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<sup>105</sup> Shakespeare, William. *Timon of Athens*. Dawson B., Anthony, and Gretchen E. Minton (eds.). 3rd ed. London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2008.

harsh invective tone but also reflects Timon's striving on Earth "in his war against all things"<sup>106</sup>. If Timon is dissatisfied with society, he is even more so by nature.

Even more than in *King Lear*, the very idea of a productive natural space is called into question. In *Lear*, nature can be harsh and destructive, but it can be redemptive as well. For most of *Timon* (though there is some mitigation near the end), nature is just as bestial as humanity. And indeed, the presence of beasts is everywhere felt.<sup>107</sup>

Yet the wildness in which Timon evolves in the second part is productive in the sense that he finds salvation, it has a redemptive function. His digging the earth is a metaphor for the coming of his death, the search for truth and also the human greedy impulse to search for gold. Ironically, while Timon digs to find man's true nature, he digs out gold. The earth, the mother, and gold are compared to a whore for "the only breeding that happens is that of cash."<sup>108</sup> Mercantilism as the core of the human society is "the instrument that the earth uses to breed destruction."<sup>109</sup> Timon's abhorrence of humanity initiates in the revelation of the corruption of mercantile society. The political nature of man is depicted as a corruption, an infection, the result of whore-like mother earth which would have engendered impious men.

TIMON                      Piety and fear,  
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,  
Domestic awe, night-rest and neighbourhood,  
Instruction, manners, mysteries and trades,  
Degrees, observances, customs and laws,  
Decline to your confounding contraries —  
And let confusion live!

(4. 1. 15-21)

Timon enumerates all the components organising the community of men and blames nature for being perverted. Instead of being just and virtuous men are sinful. By pointing at the contrary of what humanity is supposed to be, Timon also expresses his eager disappointment. He continues, his invective tone growing stronger, his hatred exploding:

   Plagues incident to men,  
Your potent and infectious fever heap

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid. 90.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. 88-89.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. 87.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. 86.

(4. 1. 21-32)

Timon struggles between his idealised vision of human nature and his disillusion. The mere idea of nature is called into question. Nature instead of being pure, engendering naturally good and virtuous beings is corrupted to the roots. As mentioned earlier, while Timon digs the earth as an attempt to come back to this virtuous purity he finds gold and extols his disillusion:

(4. 3. 19-44)

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right, / Base noble, old young, coward valiant.” All things considered, Timon is lost between two ideas: the conception of man as a virtuous being by nature and the conception of man as a being that ought to control himself, an animal. Two ideas which confronts the Aristotelian definition of man as a rational and political animal. It is actually the confusion between the conception of man as naturally good or naturally bad that causes Timon such anger: “Make the hoar leprosy adored.” The diseased and contagious nature which he calls a “whore” echoes the “hoar leprosy,”<sup>110</sup> that is to say the impossibility to see man as a virtuous — “white,” “fair,” “right,” “noble,” “valiant” being — nor as a sinful being — “black,” “foul,” “wrong,” “base,” “coward.”

Digging brings Timon closer to an animal. Digging comes as the symbolisation of Timon’s struggle to decipher the true nature of man. His disillusion of the nature of man goes along with the comparison of the lords with dogs for the analogy symbolises the ambiguous nature of man. Timon’s struggle to find the true nature of man brings forward a hybrid definition of man whose duality becomes a source of confusion. His struggle to find the true nature of man is emblematic of the struggle of characters between animality and humanity in the three plays. The political and rational nature of man is put to the test by man’s dual nature and this struggle results in a subtle visual representation of hybridity spanning from zoomorphism to monstrosity.

### **III. C. Figuring the Hybridity Out.**

Characters compared with dogs are dual, often hybridised, characters. In defining man as a rational and a political animal, Aristotle proclaims the natural rationality, political and social nature of humans. Yet, Shakespeare plays on the hybridity of such a definition. He emphasises the animal nature of man instead of his rational or political nature. In subverting Aristotle’s assumption he brings forward an oxymoronic definition of humankind which stems from the cynicism and scepticism of the early modern period. Hybridity is at the centre of this Shakespearean subversion, and by combining antagonist elements it suggests that one should doubt the political and rational nature of man. The excessive violence, desire, love or hatred of characters are situated on the brink of

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<sup>110</sup> Archaic expression for ‘greyish’: “the greyish leprosy.”

savagery. They manifest an animal-like blindness as they are threatened to forget their human status.

The representation of the hybridity of characters spans from zoomorphism to monstrosity. If some productions of the plays display examples of zoomorphism, others pushes the boundaries of hybridity to monstrosity. The definition of man as a hybrid is centred around his natural struggle between right and wrong. A struggle which is yet central in his political and rational nature. The ethical principles at stake with the definition of human nature are challenged by the definition of man as a hybrid.

### **III. C. 1. Half-man, Half-human: Representing Zoomorphism.**



Fig. 21. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Doran/Cohen. Market Theatre with the National Theatre Company, Johannesburg. July 1995.

Lavinia, Lance, Chiron and Demetrius are the most evident hybrid characters. Yet only Lance, the gentlemen, Chiron and Demetrius are actually compared to dogs. The pack of men in *Titus Andronicus* is generally compared to predators and hounds. But Chiron and Demetrius, as the perpetrators of the primal murder in the play, are central to the struggle between animal and human nature in the play. In the 1995 South African and British production of the play at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, Tamora and her two sons as

“A pair of cursèd hell-hounds and their dame” (5. 2. 144) is visually represented (see Fig. 21 above). The composition of this photograph shows the familial hierarchy and suggests the infernal threat that Tamora and her sons represent. Hound masks and natural colours remind of their animality. The lighting emphasises Tamora as a protecting mother as well as the decision-maker. The photograph also calls at her relation with Diana in the myth of Actaeon. Bassianus and Lavinia compare Tamora to Diana and her sons to the hounds of Actaeon. They suggest that Aaron could be her sons’ prey for they cannot recognise him as their kin. Yet, Tamora will act like Diana but the prey she chooses is not Aaron but Lavinia. Lavinia and Bassianus imply the hybridity of Tamora and her sons, mingling nobleness and baseness. Yet, Tamora recognises the bloody minded moor as her kin and not the noble Lavinia and Bassianus whom she takes as her stags.

BASSIANUS Who have we here? Rome’s royal Empress,  
 Unfurnished of her well-beseeming troop?  
 Or is it Dian, habited like her,  
 Who hath abandonèd her holy groves  
 To see the general hunting in this forest?  
 TAMORA Saucy controller of my private steps,  
 Had I the power that some day Dian had,  
 Thy temples should be planted presently  
 With horns, as was Actaeon’s, and the hounds  
 Should drive upon thy new-transformèd limbs,  
 Unmannerly intruder as thou art!  
 LAVINIA Under your patience, gentle Empress,  
 ’Tis thought you have a goodly gift in horning,  
 And to be doubted that your Moor and you  
 Are singled forth to try thy experiments.  
 Jove shield your husband from his hounds today!  
 ’Tis pity they should take him for a stag.

(2. 3. 55-71)

The photograph above enhances her position of control over the hounds. Her two hands are dissimulated behind Chiron’s and Demetrius’s heads, as if she were holding them by the neck, as if she were controlling “their bloody mind” (Aaron, 5. 1. 101). Furthermore the position of Chiron and Demetrius is highly reminiscent of their hounds-like spirit and their costumes reminds of their mythological origin (centaurs) which in addition to their posture, their dazed and wild gaze enhance their emblematic hybridity. For Chiron and Demetrius are embodiments of the struggle between bestiality and humanity in the play. Their action is almost completely animal but they remain humans in shape; their body is made animal by their action.



Fig. 22. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Doran/Cohen. Market Theatre with the National Theatre Company, Johannesburg. July 1995.



Fig. 23. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Doran/Cohen. Market Theatre with the National Theatre Company, Johannesburg. July 1995.

Figures of animal-behaving human bodies appear as a background motif haunting the play in this production. The contrast between characters standing and characters squatting, or moving like animals is also reminiscent of the ongoing struggle between animality and humanity in the play, rendering, overall, a hybrid vision of humanity. The opposition between standing and kneeling or crouching characters is also reminiscent of Henry Peacham's illustration of *Titus Andronicus*.



Fig. 24. Henry Peacham's illustration of *Titus Andronicus*. (c.1595). Taken from Shakespeare, William. *Titus Andronicus*. Waith, M Eugene (ed.). Oxford World's Classics. 1984. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 21.

The drawing show an opposition between the Andronici and the Goths, and has, it seems, inspired numerous productions. The Andronici are depicted in full armour,

standing, while the Goths are kneeling. Tamora is begging while her sons are made captured. Aaron stands behind the Goths as the strongest element of their clan. He has indeed a function of preceptor. Yet his darkness suggests his evil spirit. But all in all the drawing represents the opposition of two clans, one standing and the other kneeling, or crouching being brought closer to the ground. There is a sense of superiority of the Andronici over the Goths which hints at the fight of civilisation against barbarity. Despite the Roman desire to fight the barbarous Goths, barbarity unleashes with the hunt and finally the superiority of the Andronici becomes an illusion. It seems that some productions play on this ambiguous situation by performing two sorts of barbarity: one that stems from civilisation and one that stems from animality.



Fig. 25. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Doran/Cohen. Market Theatre with the National Theatre Company, Johannesburg. July 1995.



Fig. 26. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Tresnjak, Drako. Old Globe, San Diego, CA. 2006.

In these two photographs of the 1995 RSC and 2006 Old Globe, San Diego productions the influence of Henry Peacham's drawing is significant for we can see the vertical delimitation between characters standing and those kneeling. In the American production, it is even reinforced by the black pillar in the background which heading is symbolically reminiscent of imperialism because of the symbolism of the eagle and the laurel crown. Both productions oppose half-naked characters to soldiers or "white supremacist Afrikaner leader."<sup>111</sup> The imposing military or supremacist figures prefigure a civilised barbarity. Thus, we have a feeling that "civilised" characters are as barbarous as animalised characters. The animalisation of characters in *Titus Andronicus* combines a human appearance with an animal behaviour. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* however zoomorphism takes a different form even if in both cases the result is an ambiguous comparison of human characters with animals.

The visual comparison of Crab with Lance and the gentlemen can be very subtle and rigorous. Concerning Crab, the type of dog chosen is of a greater impact than expected. In the 1981 and 1988 RSC productions of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Crab mirrors aesthetic choices. As the three photographs below can show, in both productions, thanks to the matching of colour and of aesthetic traits, the dog is used as a diffracted reflection of the human and makes the analogy all the more salient. Thus the two productions, despite their evident different aesthetic choices, use the dog as a reflection of human characters and an extension of Lance. In both productions, in spite of his name suggesting his short size<sup>112</sup>, Crab is acted by a big dog. The coarseness of the 1981 Crab is in the continuity with the extravagant farcical outfit of Lance and Speed. Their clown costumes are exaggerated and inspired from medieval buffoons. Instead of stressing the farcical situation, the sobriety of the characters of the 1988 production rather plays on the subtleness of an astute parody. While 1981 Crab has his eyes covered by his hairs, possibly hinting at the gentlemen's blindness, the 1988 Crab is looking at the audience and strangely matches the gentlemen's costumes. While one is fundamentally farcical, the other

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<sup>111</sup> Shakespeare.berkeley.edu. N.p., 2016. *Web*. 26 July 2016. "The costumes are modern, as they should be in a Rome reduced to the shell of a grim, grey building with old tyres, bicycle wheels and other urban debris piled at its sides. Sher's beefy, bearded Titus enters in a Jeep, the medals on his uniform adding to the impression of a respectable Terre' Blanche [a white supremacist Afrikaner leader]. Times 14.7.95"

<sup>112</sup> Shakespeare, William. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Carroll, C. William (ed.). 2004. London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2014.



is strangely similar. The choice of dogs reflecting the character's appearance, if participating into an aesthetic coherence, reinforces the parodic analogy between characters and the dog.



Fig. 27. Image from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Barton&Stevenson. Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-Upon-Avon. September 1981.



Fig. 28. Image from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Barton&Stevenson. Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-Upon-Avon. September 1981.



Fig. 29. Image from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Hall/Pavelka, Royal Shakespeare Company. February 1998.

In *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* the analogy with the dog, the hound, or more generally the animal can be visually represented. In *Titus Andronicus* the human body is animalised. It is attributed elements of animality such as behaviour, gesture, or costumes. Contrarily to this type of animalisation, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* the animalisation of characters is made by reflection, using the dog to reflect the characters' appearance and the aesthetic choices of the production. In *Timon of Athens* however, the analogy is not very evident onstage. On the whole, the visual representation of animality relies on hybridity for it combines the animal appearance or behaviour with human ones. The effect of such hybridity brings forward confusion, and the evidence of a struggle between a human and an animal identity. Yet if zoomorphism brings forward the ambiguous nature of man, it also hints at his monstrosity.

### **III. C. 2. Representing Human Monstrosity “With Any Size of Words.”**

According to Simona Cohen hybridity is fundamentally synonymous of vice. It is easy to consider hybridity as a figure of monstrosity for it shows the abnormality. The word *monstrosity* appeared in the English language in the 16th century and comes from the latin word for showing: *monstrare*, *monstrousus*.

Hybrid images, combining human and animal parts had a deeply rooted negative connotation in Western art. Such composite creatures included the devil, demons, monsters, personifications of vices as well as mythological creations, like the centaur, Minotaur, and satyr, which represented bestial instincts as opposed to, and in conflict with, human virtues.<sup>113</sup>

Based on several definitions of words related to *monstrosity*<sup>114</sup>, one can define monstrosity as the visual or mental representation of the unnatural and/or abnormal. Something monstrous is also something that goes beyond what can be imagined, or what is known.

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<sup>113</sup> Cohen, Simona. *Brill's Studies in Intellectual History : Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*. Boston, MA, USA: BRILL, 2008. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 3 May 2016.

<sup>114</sup> "monster, n., adv., and adj." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, June 2016. Web. 26 July 2016. 1. a. Originally: a mythical creature which is part animal and part human, or combines elements of two or more animal forms, and is frequently of great size and ferocious appearance. Later, more generally: any imaginary creature that is large, ugly, and frightening. 5. A person of repulsively unnatural character, or exhibiting such extreme cruelty or wickedness as to appear inhuman; a monstrous example of evil, a vice, etc. 6. An ugly or deformed person, animal, or thing. "monstrosity, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, June 2016. Web. 26 July 2016. 1. b. The condition or fact of being abnormally developed or grossly malformed. 2. a. Something repulsively unnatural, an abomination; a thing which is outrageously or offensively wrong.



Finally, monstrosity is something which is striking because of its unexpected abnormality. The Poet in *Timon of Athens* expresses his incapacity to touch with words the monstrosity of Timon's tragic downfall.

POET Sir,  
Having often of your open bounty tasted,  
Hearing you were retired, your friends fall'n off,  
Whose thankless natures (o abhorred spirits)  
Not all the whips of heaven are large enough —  
What, to you,  
Whose star-like nobleness gave life and influence  
To their whole being? I am rapt and cannot cover  
The monstrous bulk of this ingratitude  
With any size of words.

(5. 1. 55-64)

The poet cannot define what he witnesses "With any size of words." No word is monstrous enough to decipher the monstrosity of Timon's tragedy, and certainly no word can exist for this purpose. For if the Poet himself cannot find any words it is because monstrosity is what is so unexpectedly abnormal that it cannot be thought of, and thus not spoken neither. Elaine Fantham considers that metamorphosis is basically monstrous and explains that it has, in Roman mythology, a didactic purpose:

metamorphosis itself is clearly monstrous, in both Roman senses: we think of a monster as some hybrid creature not normally found in nature, but for Romans a monstrum was primarily a supernatural event, a portent sent by the gods to show (monstrare) or warn (monere) men against dangerous behaviour.<sup>115</sup>

Thus hybridity can be considered as a metamorphosis of human nature, which by its potential to convey monstrosity stands as a subversive representation of man as a political and rational animal.

In *Titus Andronicus* the monstrous and hellish associations with the animal are quite evident. This is not the case in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* where the dog is, it seems, only a parody of humans and especially of their courtesy and manners. In *Timon of Athens* the monstrosity of humanity is well expressed by Timon's rage and his servants' fidelity. Yet productions seem to rather put the stress on Timon's beggary and asceticism. Monstrosity is much more at stake in *Titus Andronicus* due to the importance of barbarity

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<sup>115</sup> Fantham, Elaine. *Ovid's Metamorphoses*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. 105 - 118. 107.

and the repetitive link between dogs and evil: “Ay, like a black dog, as the saying is.” (Aaron, 5. 1. 122); “Away, inhuman dog! unhallow'd slave!” (Lucius, 5. 3. 14);

DEMETRIUS And therein, hellish dog, thou hast undone.  
Woe to her chance, and damn'd her loathed choice!  
Accursed the offspring of so foul a fiend!  
(4. 2. 77-79)

The monstrosity of Tamora and her two sons, for example, is of the most striking in productions of *Titus Andronicus* as at the 2012 Utah Shakespeare Festival production of the play.



Fig. 30. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Woronicz, Henry. Utah Shakespeare Festival. 2012.

On this photograph the traits of human characters are extremely exaggerated and distorted so as to create monstrous beings. Just like Bergson defines laughter as profoundly human<sup>116</sup>, monstrosity is made out of humanity as well. The dreadfulness of Chiron, Demetrius and Tamora comes from the fact that their monstrosity is based on their humanity. Humanity is distorted for the purpose of showing the inhuman within the human. This scene from *Titus Andronicus*, when Rape, Murder and Vengeance — Chiron, Demetrius and Tamora, disguised in allegories of Rape, Murder and Vengeance — visit Titus, often mingle animality, monstrosity and humanity. In Julie Taymor’s 1999 filmic production, the ambiguity is accentuated by psychedelic motifs. Although there are no vivid colours the picture presents abstract and swirling patterns, and most of all incoherence as the centre of cohesion. Distorted bodies, a dead tree, bits of animals, erotic

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<sup>116</sup> Bergson. *Le Rire: Essai Sur la Signification du Comique*. 1900. Paris: Editions Payot & Rivages, 2011.

images: the tableau mingles different types of elements mixing animality, humanity and distortion. Everything is subverted so as to emphasise the abnormality which becomes here the embodiment of confusion and incoherence. The infernal trio is represented as a figure of monstrosity, interweaving the known and the unknown to form a three-headed monster.



Fig. 31. Taymor, Julie. *Titus*. Italy ; United States ; United Kingdom: Clear Blue Sky Productions ; Overseas Filmgroup. 1999.

The diabolical character that they form together reminds images of hell as depicted by Hieronymus Bosch whose paintings showing half-human, half-animals figures and a circular dynamic which renders a hellish atmosphere: “Bosch's highly detailed works are typically crowded with half-human, half-animal creatures and grotesque demons in settings symbolic of sin and folly.”<sup>117</sup>



Fig. 32. Follower of Hieronymus Bosch. *The Horrowing of Hell*. Oil on panel. 22-7/8 x 28-3/8 in. (c. 1575), Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S.A.: Indianapolis Museum of Art.

<sup>117</sup> Simpson, J. A and E. S. C Weiner. “Bosch, Hieronymus.” *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.



Fig. 33. Follower of Hieronymus Bosch. *The Last Judgement*. Oil on wood. Fragment of the painting, 24 in x 45 in. (1506-1508), Munich: Alte Pinakothek.

The photograph below of the 1972 RSC production of *Titus Andronicus* strangely reminds of Bosch' infernal scenes. The angle of the photography and the lighting enhance the chaotic scene. Yet the distorted body of the central character as well as the touches of red on other characters stress the infernal circle that the composition of the scene renders. The dark set, devoid of any props, reinforces the centrality of characters and the effect of a crowded set similar to Bosch's paintings. Elements of elegance and monstrosity are combined to reinforce the strangely familiar which composes the monstrosity at stake.



Fig. 34. Image from *Titus Andronicus*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Nunn/Morley, Royal Shakespeare Company. 1972.

The distortion of the body is also a motif which has been used in a German production of *Timon of Athens*. Yet in this production monstrosity is emblematised by masks which instead of covering monstrosity reveal it. Hybridity, monstrosity seems to stand as a revelation of the other — the animal or the monster — within the human. In the 1990



German production of *Timon of Athens* directed by F.P. Steckel, characters wear masks in the second part of the play so as to stress their monstrosity as greedy and false friends:

TIMON Most smiling, smooth, destested parasites,  
 Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears —  
 You fool of fortune, trencher-friends, time's flies,  
 Cap-and-knee slaves, vapours and minute-jacks!  
 Of man and beast the infinite malady  
 Crust you quite o'er!

(3. 7. 93-98)

The masks are a sort of metaphor for the hypocrisy of characters, they cover their real face as the lords — “the glass-faced flatterer[s]” (Poet, 1. 1. 60) — would pretend to be loyal friends. Besides, the mask can be used to amuse as well as to scare. In this case, due to the distortion of the masks, it seems rather that they emphasise the monstrosity of human characters. So instead of covering the inner monstrosity of characters, it highlights their true nature. In spite of covering the vice of characters, masks emblematised their greedy nature.



Fig. 35. Image from *Timon of Athens*.  
 By William Shakespeare. Dir.  
 Steckel. Bochum Schauspielhaus,  
 Bochum, Germany. 1990.

“Monstrous physiognomies, frozen in bizarre expressions, yet clearly signifying the greed, gluttony, malice, servility and hypocrisy to be found in the group of parasites surrounding Timon (illus. 80).”

From Hortmann, Wilhelm and Michael Hamburger. *Shakespeare On The German Stage*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 320.

The Poet and the Painter foreshadow the tragic revelation that is at the centre of the play. By reflecting on appearance, characters in the first scene of act one imply that humanity is but a painting, an illusion...

TIMON Painting is welcome.  
 The painting is almost the natural man,  
 For since dishonour traffics with man's nature,  
 He is but outside; these pencilled figures are  
 Even such as they give out.

(1. 1. 160-164)

... malleable as wax:

POET I have in this rough work shaped out a man  
Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug  
With amplest entertainment. My free drift  
Halts not particularly, but moves itself  
In a wide sea of wax

(1. 1. 43-48)

Similar metaphors comparing humanity with changing elements such as melting snow or wax in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* hint at the versatility of humanity. The representation of hybridity seems overall to uncover the monstrous nature of man. In conclusion, characters compared to dogs — the lords, the Andronici, the Goths, the gentlemen — are the objects of a reflection on human nature which is highlighted by hybridity. The analogy participates in this reflection. Its role, even if minor, is to subtly foreshadow the hybridity of man, torn between an animal and a human nature. There the Aristotelian definition of man as a rational and political animal, in other words a civilised, or human animal is at stake. Indeed, the analogy and its challenge to human nature are overall centred on human hybridity. The conception of man as either an essentially virtuous or sinful being is put into perspective and Shakespeare, via this analogy and the reflection on human nature, seems rather to point out that man is neither essentially good nor bad, but a versatile being whose animal nature clings to his human existence.

## Conclusion

Here it is possible to trace a logic in which humans can actually become animals through their actions. The starting point is often the brain, which, in the human, was understood to be the bodily seat of reason, the home of the capacity that distinguished man from dog. Such simple anatomical differentiation had its foundation in the classics - Aristotle, had proposed man as the 'rational animal'. But in early modern discussions of perception and movement, an alternative reality emerges in which the oppositions human/animal and reasonable/unreasonable were never so clearly polarised. Instead there was a dangerous 'grey area' into which many, too many, so-called humans must be placed. In fact sometimes the difference between a man and a dog, as Burton said, is hard to find.<sup>118</sup>

The “grey area” between a man and a dog is at the heart of the analogy under study in Shakespeare’s plays. As I have tried to show, the analogy can take on several aspects: madness, fidelity, ferociousness, hypocrisy... But the main function of the analogy is really to trigger confusion in challenging human nature. Despite their anatomical differences the dog and man are easily brought closer and the “grey area,” if a source of challenge to the Aristotelian definition of man as a rational and political animal, is also a great source of tragedy or comedy.

The starting hypothesis was that the comparison of human characters with dogs represents the dual nature of man and thereby challenges the Aristotelian definition of man as a rational animal. By an analysis of the topos of the dog in relation with its classical cultural heritage in *Titus Andronicus*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Timon of Athens*, it appeared that the dog is mainly a symbol for cynicism, friendship and death. And that it constitutes a dialogue between classical and humanist cultures and also between nature and culture. The analogy has thus a metaphysical and a political dimensions. It seems that the dog brings a challenge to man’s rational nature but also to his political nature, overall putting into perspective the classical definition of human nature. Yet, in spite of the centrality of classical culture in the early modern period, taking into perspective both the classical and medieval cultural heritages of canine imagery would probably have given more depth to the analysis.

Focusing on the dialogue between classical and early modern cultures, the analogy initiates a sceptical decomposition of human nature which visually brings man closer to a

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<sup>118</sup> Fudge, Erica. “How a Man Differs From a Dog.” *History Today* 53.6. London: History Today Ltd. (2003). 38-44. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 8 Feb 2016.

dog. So as to create comedy or tragedy, the degradation of language, by means of parody, symbolism or paratactic discourse, represents the degradation of the human side of characters resulting in a physical confusion between animals and humans. The degradation of the human side is centred around points of reference of the classical definition of human nature: language and physical appearance.

The degradation of the human side of characters impacts their political nature and the whole results in a definition of human nature based on ambiguity, duality and hybridity. The duality of characters is at the centre of a conflict between their irrationality and rationality which results in the creation of societies of beasts. The combination of animality and humanity to form a political entity brings the hybrid nature of man to the foreground. Yet this hybridity dangerously spans from zoomorphism to monstrosity.

All things consider, with this analogy Shakespeare threatens the classical idea of man as a rational and political being that was taken for granted. Due to the recurring references to the dog's strange closeness with man, this animal is prone to challenge the classical conception of human nature.

This dissertation has considered the dog as a springboard to a philosophical reflection on human nature. Yet seldom interest has been given to the cultural symbolism of this animal. It should be interesting to examine the dog in Renaissance drama in relation with its classical and medieval cultural heritage. Indeed, this animal has the singularity to symbolise very different things. From friendship to madness, not excepting death and cynicism the dog can reflect many aspects of human life.

Despite its multifold symbolical meanings, the dog is traditionally associated with cynicism. As the 19th century painting of Diogenes surrounded by dogs shows, the association of cynicism and dog has crossed time. A parallel study of cynicism and canine motif in Renaissance drama could be an interesting way to go deeper into this study. The dog seems to be used for political purposes, representing at once the inclusion and the exclusion from society. Thus the symbolism of this animal in relation with the political environment or system could also be an interesting way to work out this motif. As for the Aristotelian definition of man as a rational and political animal and the way it seems to be challenged in Shakespeare's plays, maybe the study of other animals than the dog could bring to light other ways to put into perspective this classical idea.



From a dialogue between classical and humanist cultures this study shall drift to a dialogue between humanist and postmodern cultures. The Renaissance marks the advent of modernity. In making a break from medieval scholasticism and in revisiting classical culture, early modern thinkers, artists, playwrights, and poets open up new horizons, ask new questions, and bring new answers. Now, if Shakespeare's posterity is undeniable at the dawn of the 21st century, what about humanism? The continuation of this study shall examine the posterity of Shakespeare's humanism's in post-1945 literature. It shall first attempt to define Shakespeare's humanism and in what context and to what purposes it is used in the post-1945 cultural period.

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## Illustrations

Cover. Image from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. P.J. Paparelli. Washington DC, Shakespeare Theatre Company. 2012. [http://shakespearetheatre.org/\\_img/show\\_imgs/Two\\_Gents/production/2.jpg](http://shakespearetheatre.org/_img/show_imgs/Two_Gents/production/2.jpg)

Fig. 1. Gérôme, Jean-Léon. *Diogenes*. c.1860. Oil on canvas. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

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Fig. 3. Image from *Timon of Athens*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Bailey, Lucy. The Globe Shakespeare, London. 2008. <http://bloggingshakespeare.com/reviewing-shakespeare/timon-athens-shakespeares-globe/>



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