The Shakespearean International Yearbook

15: Special Section, Shakespeare and the Human

General Editors
Tom Bishop and Alexa Huang

Special Guest Editor
Tiffany Jo Werth

The Shakespearean International Yearbook

15: Special Section, Shakespeare and the Human

General Editors
Tom Bishop and Alexa Huang

Guest Editor
Tiffany Jo Werth

ASHGATE

Published by
Ashgate Publishing Limited
Wey Court East
Union Road
Farnham
Surrey, GU9 7PT
England

Ashgate Publishing Company
110 Cherry Street
Suite 3-1
Burlington, VT 05401-3818
USA

www.ashgate.com

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

The Library of Congress has cataloged the printed edition as follows:
Library of Congress Control Number: 2014937556

ISBN 9781472468482 (hbk)
ISBN 9781472468499 (ebk – PDF)
ISBN 9781472468505 (ebk – ePUB)

MIX
Paper from responsible sources
FSC® C013985
www.fsc.org

Printed in the United Kingdom by Henry Ling Limited,
at the Dorset Press, Dorchester, DT1 1HD

Contents

List of Illustrations vii
Preface ix

SPECIAL ISSUE: SHAKESPEARE AND THE HUMAN

1 Introduction: Shakespeare and the Human 1
Tiffany Jo Werth

2 Airy Spirits: Winds, Bodies, and Ecological Force in Early Modern England 21
Steve Mentz

3 Humans: Exceptional Humans, Human Exceptionalism, and the Shape of Things to Come 39
Joseph Campana

4 Birds: Shakespeare's Tweets: A Choir 63
Tom Bishop, Jean E. Howard, Gordan McMullan, and Vin Nardizzi

5 Hybrids: Animal Law and the Actaeon Myth in *Titus Andronicus* 65
Miranda Garno Nesler

6 Fleece: The Craziest Transport: Fleecing the Non/human *Merchant of Venice* 81
Lowell Duckert

7 Bees: The Shakespearean Hive and the Virtues of Honey 101
Nicole A. Jacobs

8 Plants: Shakespeare's Mulberry: Eco-Materialism and "Living On" 123
Todd A. Borlik

9 Water: Absorption, Uncontainment, and Cleopatra's Barge 147
Ellen MacKay

10 Shells: *Pericles* and the Fantasy of Shell-Dwelling 167
Shannon Kelley

11 Rocks: "Sure and Firm-Set Earth": Shakespeare, Stone, and Structuration 185
Andrew Tumminia

12 Tail: "Poore wretch … laid all naked on the bare earth": Human Negative Exceptionalism Among the Humanists 205
Laurie Shannon

Notes on Contributors *211*
Index *215*

List of Illustrations

1.1 Detail from Ramon Llull's *Liber de ascensv, et descensv intellectus.* Valentiae impressus anno 1512 (Palma Mallorca: Ex typis Michaelis Cerdá, & Antich, & Michaelis Amorós, 1744). This item is reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California 4

6.1 "The Colchians placed the skins of animals in the pools of springs; and since many particles of gold had clung to them when they were removed, the poets invented the 'golden fleece' of the Colchians." Georgius Agricola, *De Re Metallica* (1556), trans. Herbert Clark Hoover and Lou Henry Hoover (New York: Dover Publications, 1950), 330 89

8.1 George Wither, "Posteritati," *A Collection of Emblems, Ancient and Modern.* Though the English edition dates from 1633, Wither composed many of his verses shortly after the original Dutch version appeared around 1613. With permission of the Pennsylvania State University Library, Special Collections 125

8.2 With unabashed idolatry, much of the mulberry wood was carved into statues or busts of Shakespeare. Photograph by author, from the collection of the Folger Shakespeare Library 135

8.3 A medallion carved from mulberry wood, owned by David Garrick. Photograph by author, from the collection of the Folger Shakespeare Library 136

8.4 The current mulberry tree at New Place. Photograph by author, with permission of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust 139

9.1 Howard Frank, Illustration for *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act 2, scene 2. Enobarbus, "The barge she sat in." By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library 155

10.1 Pierre Belon, "Portraict du Nautillus," *L'histoire naturelle des estranges poissons marins* (1551). Courtesy of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto 170

10.2 Pieter van der Heyden after Hieronymus Bosch, "The Oyster Shell" (1562). Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Photographer: Studio Buitenhof, The Hague 174

Preface

Shakespeare—a proper noun naming a collection of privileged signifiers both ubiquitous and porous—is now so positioned by the history of its reception that the noun itself seems to have become an unavoidable index of the human, a category that is marked by a distinct, ontological singularity and a definite article.

The ambitious Globe-to-Globe festival in 2012 saw 37 plays performed in 37 languages by visiting companies to mark the occasion of the London Olympics and perhaps sketch a claim that Shakespearean performance was somehow coextensive with human language itself. The London Globe is currently touring a production of *Hamlet* through some 200 countries and regions to celebrate Shakespeare's global reach. In 2014 the Royal Shakespeare Company announced a $2.4 million initiative to commission a new Mandarin translation of the Complete Works. Everywhere one looks, there are signs—in institutional and curricular development, in arts funding, in international collaboration—that Shakespeare is now habitually taken as both quintessentially and exceptionally a spokesman for the human, even in times of war, crisis, and upheaval. As English literature and the humanities around it progressively shrink under the impact of budget cuts and student choices, Shakespeare remains central to much thinking about the human and humanism, and engagements with Shakespeare seem inevitably to activate latent humanist, and hence posthumanist, concerns. Not content with this saturation of the human by Shakespeare, criticism has even variously sought to position Shakespeare outside it. Some critics, such as Harold Bloom, propose that Shakespeare "invented" and is thus *prior to* the human (hence his universal appeal as a starting-place in a modern "human" world). Others, such as Stefan Herbrechter and Ivan Callus in *Posthumanist Shakespeares*, argue that Shakespeare exists for and illuminates what comes *after* the human. What links Shakespeare to the human? And what in or through Shakespeare passes beyond, comes before, or sidesteps "the human", and hence potentially also humanism and the humanities?

In this volume, we continue the Yearbook's tradition of promoting the study of Shakespeare's power to cross boundaries by turning to Shakespeare's engagement with the boundary of human and nonhuman. Guest editor Tiffany Jo Werth has put together a selection of essays that shed light on a less anthropocentric Shakespeare by reconceptualizing the relationship between Shakespeare and the

human. Some contributors explore what constitutes the identity of the human in Shakespeare (through issues such as embodiment, the company one keeps, habitat, environment), while others examine the social and natural forces that contend with "the human" and their implications for posthumanism, ecocriticism, performance studies, and animal studies.

An engaging element of this volume is a set of avian "tweets," communication via the electronic medium of Twitter now appearing in print, by Tom Bishop, Jean Howard, Gordon McMullan, and Vin Nardizzi. These short entries, a chorus of Shakespearean twitterings, play with the cross-over of creative with critical writing, of poetic with critical discourses, and of early modern with modern media.

In considering how Shakespeare and "the human" intersect, it is our hope that the volume will put some pressure on the latter category, a central figuration of the Burckhardtian Renaissance and of an older style of intellectual and cultural history. *Shakespeare and the Human* offers to move the field away from models of a "great chain of being" still regularly rehearsed, and toward what ecocritic Timothy Morton has characterized in his *The Ecological Thought* as a non-hierarchical rhizomatic "mesh" of agents and identities.

The Shakespearean International Yearbook surveys the present state of Shakespeare studies, addressing issues fundamental to our interpretive encounter with Shakespeare's work and his time, across the whole spectrum of his literary output and across historical periods and media. For more information, including the stylesheet, please consult our website: http://www.ashgate.com/SIY. Submissions for consideration for publication should be emailed to siy@ashgate.com.

Alexa Huang
Tom Bishop

General Editors

1 Introduction
Shakespeare and the Human

Tiffany Jo Werth

Human

Shakespeare was a human being. Out of all the contested Wills—who wrote Shakespeare? Was he a he? Was he a Catholic? Republican? Radical? Feminist? Queer?—only his ontological identity as human garners critical consensus.[1] Where critics differ on Shakespeare's humanness is a matter of degree. For some, Shakespeare not only *was* human; he is the quintessence of the human. He "made up" or even "invented" the human.[2] For others, he's more than human, an aggregate, a "hybrid of persons," an assemblage recognized, made famous, by name.[3] Like the corporate boast of the replicant producing Tyrell Corporation in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* ("more human than human"), Shakespeare has become the Voight-Kampff test in debates to distinguish "the human," and its etymological relatives, humanism, and the humanities.[4]

Shakespeare's centrality to contemporary thinking about "the human," humanism, and indeed his place within humanities' curricula, likely would have surprised him. It certainly would have astonished Ben Jonson, who fancied himself the premier English humanist. The database *Lexicons of Early Modern English*, for instance, records no entries dated from Shakespeare's lifetime (1564–1616) for "humanism," and a "humanist" in this period refers more narrowly to one who studies Greek or Latin.[5] As Ben Jonson famously wrote, Shakespeare had "small Latin and less Greek," hardly the qualifications for a pre-eminent early modern "humanist."[6] In period terms, as defined by Thomas Elyot's *Dictionary* (1538), a "homo" was a "living creature subject to death, and endued with reason."[7] Shakespeareans have been returning to these period terms, peeling back nineteenth-century assumptions regarding humanism and the Renaissance to recognize that, as a "living creature" amongst God's creation, the early modern

human was more "indistinct," less "human," and only one actor on a crowded creaturely stage: "delegated, mediated, distributed, mandated," as Bruno Latour puts it.[8]

Shakespeare's humanness as a trope with distinctive resonance for contemporary critics might be better understood, as this volume argues, by correspondence, a criterion of sympathy. We can only conjecture what Shakespeare thought of himself as a human, so as a case in point, we might look to Prospero, a character from *The Tempest* who has been sometimes aligned with Shakespeare.[9] For our purposes, whether Prospero is or is not a stand-in for Shakespeare matters less than what, in the world of the play, distinguishes him as a "human" inhabitant on an island populated with nonhuman living creatures. When Prospero, himself human although endowed with more-than-human powers, chides Ariel, he reminds the spirit how, after the death of the "foul witch," Sycorax, the island "then" was "not honoured with / A human shape" "save for the son that she did litter here," the "freckled whelp," Caliban.[10] Prospero's language grudgingly acknowledges Sycorax and Caliban to be of "human shape." Yet his word choice retracts that human honor even as it concedes it: calling Caliban a "whelp" from a "litter" animalizes him and his "dam" (1.2.285). Prospero's reluctance to categorize Caliban and his "blue-eyed hag" mother as fully human, even as he grants they are, raises two implications for how the play regards what it means to have "human shape" (1.2.271). First, the ever-hierarchical Prospero privileges ("honours") human form, categorizing or casting it in opposition to an animal and monstrous other. Later, however, Prospero recasts what it means to be "one of their kind"—by "their" referring to the Neapolitans—when Ariel points out Prospero's treatment of the shipwrecked men, saying that he would feel "tender" towards their plight "were I human" (5.1.23, 19, 20). Prospero hears the rebuke; the nonhuman must remind the human to be humane. Relenting, Prospero recalls his human kinship, sympathizes with the bewildered, shipwrecked Neapolitans' passions, and leaves off his vengeance: "My charms I'll break" (5.1.31). As so aptly illustrated by the stage prompt that locates him aloft directing the lost nobles wandering the isle, Prospero is sometimes more than, sometimes less than, human. He slips into, out of, below, and above a human register and thus enacts a frequent shift in perspective consonant with the fifty-four variants of "human" (humanely, humanity, inhuman) used in Shakespeare's texts.[11] That is, for Shakespeare, "the human" exists not absolutely, or even pre-eminently, but relationally.

And the

I turn next to a consideration of the all-important words that connect the journal title's two nouns: "and the." Here "and" connects a proper and a definite noun; "the" marks out a singularity in one noun ("human") that functions as a collective, a broad category within which the proper noun *may* be grouped. The phrasing thus articulates a grammatical weighing apparatus. That is, Shakespeare *may* be human but the conjunction and definite article ask that we consider how the two nouns interact. This linguistic balance calls to mind the instrument symbolized by the zodiacal sign of Libra, a pair of scales. Engaging this instrument as a conceptual framework, this volume asks how might we "scale" (balance, weigh, measure) "Shakespeare" of, with, and against, "the human"? For, like Prospero, Shakespeare has been read as equally more- and less-than human.

Reconceptualizing the relationship between Shakespeare and the human in terms of a "scale" of nature, or what Sir Thomas Browne in *Religio Medici* calls a "scale of creatures," gives us a different set of criteria for thinking about "the human" than the more critically common phrasings of a "chain of being" or even a ladder of life.[12] While *scala* in Latin means ladder, in English the word "scale" encompasses multiple connotations. In addition to its sense as a balance or instrument for weighing, it would also have invoked for its early modern audience things as seemingly disparate as a drinking cup, the horny membrane of fish, reptiles, some mammals, and siege ladders.[13] This volume explores how these different etymologies for "scale" pressure our contemporary rendering of what "the human" entails.

As a system for natural classification, the Latin *scala naturae*, "scale of nature," dates from Aristotle. The centrality of this classical categorization of nature, here visually illustrated in Ramon Llull's reprinted *Liber de ascensu, et descensu intellectus—Lapis, Flamma, Planta, Brutum, Homo, Coelum, Angelus, Deus*—has shaped modern scholars' attempts to classify how early modern humans saw and placed themselves in relationship to the world around them (see Figure 1.1). In the sixteenth century, this classically inherited *scala* became the subject of renewed scrutiny. What historian of science Brian Ogilvie calls a "culture of describing"—a marked fascination with cataloguing, organizing, and mapping the natural world—recalibrated the criterion of classification.[14]

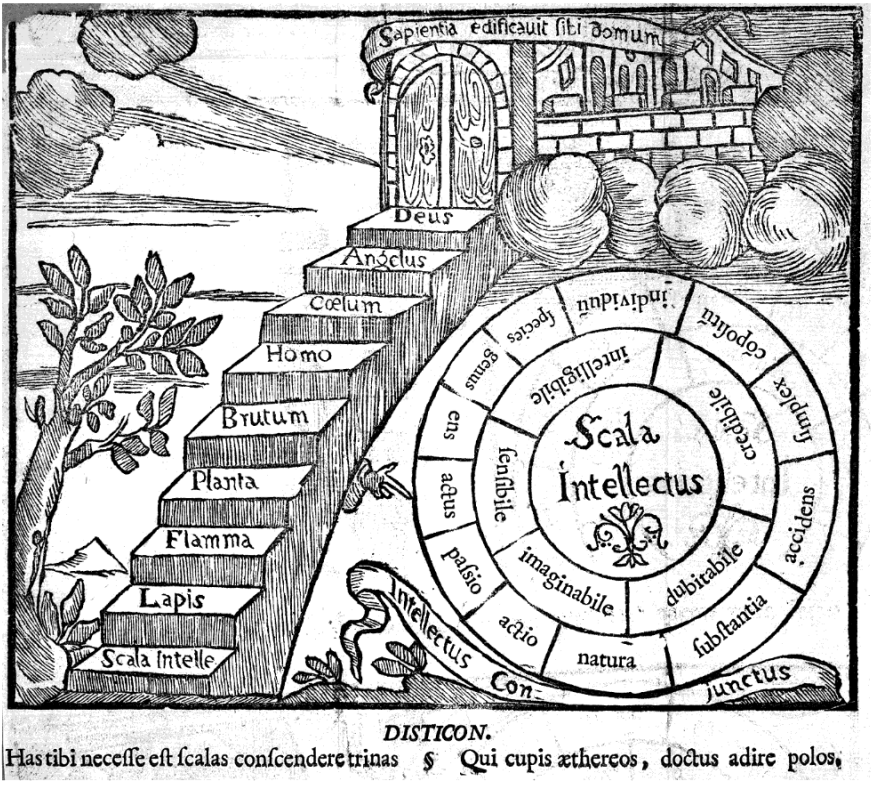

Figure 1.1 Detail from Ramon Llull's *Liber de ascensv, et descensv intellectus*. Valentiae impressus anno 1512 (Palma Mallorca: Ex typis Michaelis Cerdá, & Antich, & Michaelis Amorós, 1744). This item is reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California

Popularized as an era where the ruling idea is that of a "great chain of being" by scholars such as Arthur Lovejoy and E. M. W. Tillyard, who emphasized its representation of order and hierarchy, it became a critically influential "world picture."[15] While the assertion of a Renaissance "world view," a universal order (Lovejoy and Tillyard) or "episteme" (Foucault) has attracted criticism, a reappraisal of such arguments might shift perspective in order to nuance modern critical discussion.[16] In particular, this volume proposes that we shift metaphors from a "chain of being" in favor of a "scale of creatures." Although visual illustrations (such as those in Didacus Valdes' *Rhetorica Christiana* (1579) or Robert Fludd's *Integrae naturae Speculum* (1617)) depict the human linked by chain to God above and to the animals below, the period's verbal language varies

in its depiction for how humans placed themselves in relationship to the natural world.[17] In the rare instance when that relationship is characterized as a "chayne," the emphasis falls on what the Church of England bishop, and later Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbot calls a "strong dependance" whereby God "coupled all creatures" so that man, after the Fall, "hath not that soueraignty in all degrees."[18] Named as "the vast chain of being" by Pope in his *Essay on Man*, sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century texts more frequently invoke the Latin-derived *scala naturae* as exemplified by Milton's Raphael, who refers not to a chain of being but rather to "the scale of nature."[19]

Conceptually, "scale" avoids some of the static implications inherent to words like a "model" or "world picture" for / and of nature. Although originally a "model" indicated a set of plans for a building, and from *modulus* a unit of measure, its attributed sense as an adjective connoting something exemplary or an ideal and complete pattern, makes it, like a "world picture" suggestive of a stable, well-ordered, state.[20] The metaphor of a ladder or chain, moreover, in English usage represents, as Gabriel Egan has argued, a "ranking order."[21] Although as Egan notes the "chain" model implies a tension between the links above and below, as a concept it tends to limit relationships between categories in either vertical or horizontal proximity.[22] The metaphor makes it more difficult to conceptualize hybridity or connection between seemingly distant links on the chain, such as human and shell, or rock and divinity. "Scale," by contrast, in its English context, countenances connection, or, to use the early modern term, "sympathy," between and across disparate categories as much as order, degree, separation, and hierarchy.[23] The two metaphors comprise different ways of ordering the world: one based on notions of wholeness, hierarchical arrangement, and stability; the other based on principles of dynamic correspondence and division. By reading the *scala naturae* as a macrocosm/microcosm, where sympathetic correspondences, attractions, and aversions might connect—or dissolve—categories, a more variegated nature comes into view.[24] Indeed, a closer look at the various connotations for "scale" affords a better view into the complex tensions and frequent contradictions of early modern attitude toward "the human," and her or his environs, than does a "chain of being." The multivalent meanings of "scale" prompt a re-evaluation of the relationship between the categories, and place, of various living and nonliving forms, making it easier to see how categories might bend, jump, or "swerve" beyond their neighbors. As the Table of Contents demonstrates, this issue invokes the classical taxonomic categories in its premise but advocates reading them as a dynamic scale rather than a fixed chain, or even ladder, of degrees.

To "scale," within the sixteenth-century English context, could imply a measuring device (such as a balance or the literal Latin definition of the *scala* as a ladder), but as a noun it could also refer to "one of the small thin membranous

Leviathan, one a terror of the skies, the second of the seas, and proceed to social and cultural structures. From in between, we might then consider Lear's "poor, bare, and forked" status of the human in the natural world, a position that Laurie Shannon invokes to remind us of persistent human physical vulnerability.[38] Such a rendering of scale cannot help but remind us that the interrelationship between man and the natural world may not always be "green": one of pastoral, Edenic harmony, comely proportion, the "recognizable hue of nature's beauty," but may also shade into "greener" violence, dominion, envy, and struggle.[39] The human must vie with a vast creation for place.

This volume engages with the various forces that vie with "the human." It thus enters into conversation with the vibrant, intersecting interests of recent subfields within early modern studies that have begun to reappraise the human and humanism: the posthumanists, new materialists, ecocritics, and related fields of animal studies.[40] The turn in early modern studies to non-humanism, surveyed five years ago by Kevin Curran, continues as new conferences, working groups, and special journal issues displace that central figure of the Burckhardtian Renaissance, "the human" and humanism.[41] It contributes to a trending research practice that engages a theoretical version of "scale" not as a hierarchy, some great chain with a top and bottom, but rather as what ecocritic Timothy Morton might call a "mesh."[42]

Shakespeare

I return to the point of departure—Shakespeare, the human, the subjects for this gathering of international essays. The essays in this issue offer a series of case studies devoted to various scalar locations along the *scala naturae*, from the wind of the *coelum* to the *lapis*, that displace "the human" to a periphery, to but one among the jostling life forces. Yet, as a centripetal figure, Shakespeare proves harder to displace. Even as the essays reorient the human, Shakespeare Prospero-like looms, directing our engagement.

Several essays in the volume will take up the challenge: how do we reckon Shakespeare's cynosure that gives such a pointed, debatable, inflection to the question of "the human"? While critics such as Harold Bloom have claimed that Shakespeare was in some way *before* the human, more recent voices argue he is also *after* it.[43] Like Donne's roving hands, Shakespeare seems to be "Before, behind, between, above, below."[44] All enveloping, Shakespeare appears as both rule and exception. One need only cite the example of the Globe's ambitious plan to tour *Hamlet* through every country in the world to commemorate the 450th year of Shakespeare's birthday in 2014 to index his global appeal. Even as universities

are increasingly called "to scale back," Shakespeare courses remain a staple within modern English departments.[45] Positions listed in job descriptions posted to the MLA seek expertise in "Shakespeare studies"—even as these same departments dwindle. What makes Shakespeare centrally "exceptional" to current humanities curriculum, a measure and minimum unit for University administrations and the general public? The essays in this issue attempt to grapple with how Shakespeare has become an index, if not of the human, to the humanities. They explore from a variety of angles how Shakespeare's status as "more human than human" challenges us to rethink, to rescale our categories, our courses, to re-evaluate our priorities for what "counts" or measures in the humanities.

Swerving, Bending, Jumping Scale

The contributors to this volume ask how we push beyond the categories of exception, of the superlative, the above, beyond, below, or even the normative, the familiar, in order to scale Shakespeare historically, canonically, ontologically? They thus enter a much-needed dialogue that questions not only conventional Burckhardtian understandings of Renaissance humanism, what Paula Blank terms "the Mismeasure of Renaissance Man," but also why Shakespeare matters.[46] Their cross-scale analyses of species borders between Shakespeare "and the" human also reveal recalcitrant literary boundaries: how does the theatrical medium absorb distinction between human and element (MacKay); how does the chase for metaphors such as fleece, wind, honey or rock (Duckert, Mentz, Jacobs, Tumminia) trouble human ethical codes; how does the discovery of strange kinship (Kelley) and of afterlives (Borlik) inform our understanding of character and author; how has Shakespeare's exceptionalism relegated other authors to shadow (Campana); and along the way how might our ideas of what constitutes academic writing be upset by a pun on a tweet (Shakespeare's Tweets: A Choir).

By carrying out cross-scale analysis, identifying and measuring the range—spatial, temporal, ontological—of scale linkage, making sense of the complexity by isolating or by regrouping, the essays in this issue reveal that one answer to "why Shakespeare?" might be that his works and characters refuse scalar fixes, instead they constantly "swerve," generating a turbulent and ever-compelling wake of conflicting human and nonhuman desires, motions, and affinities.

Steve Mentz opens the issue with the intangible tangible *air* in "Airy Spirits: Winds, Bodies, and Ecological Force in Early Modern England." The gospel of John describes how "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth."[47] Yet Mentz demonstrates how chasing the wind "where it listeth" not only as a metaphor

but also as a physical force can "elucidate the wind–human exchanges that drove early globalization." Taking *The Tempest* as his case study, Mentz examines how Providential theology and practical seamanship form a potent dialogue in the play's depiction of Ariel. Ariel's tempest-making produces theatrical amazement as it presents the audience with an "inhuman principle of bare power." As Odysseus's men learn, an opened bag of wind can have far-reaching effects. "Were I human," Ariel reminds Prospero, he might behave differently, but as airy spirit he manifests how wind might be an "ecological wild card," an invisible force that may, with one blow, foster social cohesion as well as unleash historic disruption.

In his *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, Pico della Mirandola locates "man" as a troubled, if exalted, middle, a creature "most fortunate" but also "indeterminate" and bereft.[48] In "Exceptional Humans, Human Exceptionalism, and the Shape of Things to Come," Joseph Campana challenges scholarly traditions of what it means to write from the middle: how to square the human when we are always in the circle. He draws our attention away from thinking of the human as defined by capacity—rationality, linguistics, laughter—to posit that the human exists in a "state of exception." Whether positively as the crowning act of creation, or negatively, as the creature with the least natural defenses, human narcissism proves difficult to elude. These various registers of human capacity, moreover, as Campana demonstrates, are all "haunted by the ghost of Shakespeare."

As creatures who inhabit the air as well as the earth, birds fly between domains, linking heaven to earth, tree to cloud, making a bare branch erupt into sweet chorus. Representative of their flittering presence across Shakespeare's works, Tom Bishop, Jean Howard, Gordon McMullan, and Vin Nardizzi, all engage with the avian fleeting, twittering lyrical call. Interrogating our assumptions of critical and poetic discourse, early modern and modern media, the chorus of Shakespearean tweets demonstrate multiple crossovers between academic, as well as species, divides. A tweet, a birdcall or a message sent via the electronic medium of Twitter, and now printed here, swerves across discursive boundaries. It illuminates the in-between and disrupts our own expectation regarding what constitutes critical, and what creative, writing.

Miranda Garno Nesler takes the chase in pursuit of a human-turned-stag in "Hybrids: Animal Law and the Actaeon Myth in *Titus Andronicus*." Arguing that *Titus* engages legal definitions of human and animal in Elizabethan culture, Nesler follows the hunt for the "dainty deer" Lavinia. The play's positioning of Lavinia as an Actaeon figure, Nesler argues, exposes how humanism—with its predilection for rhetorical eloquence—forecloses the vocal discourses of "traditional status non-human animals and human Others." Lavinia's multiple roles in the play serve to hybridize, and ultimately, destabilize the differences between privileged Roman, Gothic animalism, stag, and woman.

By swerving across traditional taxonomies of animal, object, and human in "Fleece: The Craziest Transport: Fleecing the Non/human *Merchant of Venice*," Lowell Duckert fleeces his audience of a stable, ontological narrative. Instead, readers chase the proverbial golden fleece, ranging across a rich zodiac, from the modern Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami back to the Argonauts of ancient Greece, through the English Argonauts' exploration of the new world, landing finally at Shakespeare's Portia, whose hair hangs like a "golden fleece" compelling "many Jasons" to come "in quest" (1.1.169–72). Duckert weaves metaphoric and material sheep into a woolly web that "redefines the 'social' and the human altogether," transporting us into "alternative ethical relationships" and asking us, in form and content, to engage alternative expectations for ontological and academic boundaries.

Bees, as Joseph Campana reminds us elsewhere, challenge anthropocentric sovereignty with their model creaturely collective in spite of their diminutive scale. Nicole Jacobs follows the honey to show how Shakespeare's apian imagery reveals a porous boundary not only between living creatures as different as humans and bees, but also between honey—the beehives' harvest—and human. Honey, like Duckert's fleece, recruits us in an apian pursuit with surprising revelations. Beginning with the Archbishop of Canterbury's famous bee simile in *Henry V*, Jacobs gathers apian topoi to illustrate "human dependence on bees and honey for both sustenance and self-definition." Gender, social status, moral virtue, political integrity are but a sampling across the spectrum of how bees and their honey shape ideals of cultural behavior.

What happens when living things petrify into legend? In his contribution, "Shakespeare's Mulberry: Eco-Materialism and 'Living On'," Todd A. Borlik explores an uncharacteristically credible eighteenth-century legend that has Shakespeare planting a mulberry tree at New Place. Weaving together the history of mulberry trees in seventeenth-century England, silkworms and the "fetishizing of silk," Shakespeare's poetry, and his posthumous veneration, Borlik imagines an Ovidian transformation of Shakespeare's genius "transfused into a tree and its wooden remnants." As Borlik concludes, Shakespeare's mulberry tree "lives on," a "fascinating counterpoint" to the lament in the *Sonnets* about the decay of material things. Engrafted into the mulberry, Shakespeare redefines the parameters of the human.

The afterlife of Shakespeare and his works persists most visibly through the ongoing vital tradition of the stage. The theatre—as a vehicle, an experience, a performance, a portal—illuminates the malleable category of the distinct human. In "Water: Absorption, Uncontainment and Cleopatra's Barge," Ellen MacKay argues that theatrical spectatorship can effect "human undifferentiation" by breaching the distinction between observer and observed. Reading through

Shakespeare's rendering of Cleopatra's royal entry "upon the river of Cydnus," MacKay literalizes the process of immersive captivation that results in Antony's (and our) theatrical absorption. The theatre, MacKay suggests, might be a "blazon" to the "crisis of distinction" whereby self-sovereignty "proves to be an illusion of humanity's limited power of perception."

Littered across the Shakespearean littoral, shells have largely lain unnoticed—inscrutable husks, detritus left after a rousing Rose or Globe play, or as a passing query the Fool will make to Lear: "Canst tell how an Oyster makes his shell?" (1.5.901). Taking the shell—as a broad category of "indelible fibrous or wood rinds, husks, and pods"—as her point of departure in "Shells: *Pericles* and the Fantasy of Shell-Dwelling," Shannon Kelley asks us to reconsider the shell as exposing what "we lack as humans—a hard, outside covering or a portable dwelling." Collecting her argument across the many shores of *Pericles*, Kelley posits an "unlikely argument of interspecies kinship" between shells and a human admiration for those creatures whose husk serves as both protection and home. Her reading of *Pericles* shows an "ambivalent model of selfhood" where the human envies and mimics shell inhabitation.

Andrew Tumminia takes us down to the bedrock in "Rocks: 'Sure and Firm-Set Earth': Shakespeare, Stone, and Structuration." Tumminia argues that we cannot account for the agency of things, objects, or ontological others without a consideration for how social structures determine that interaction. Drawing from the theory of structuration by sociologist Anthony Giddens, Tumminia shows how Shakespeare draws stone into the moral universe of his characters. What we expect of stone, he shows, structures our response to its metaphorical, as well as real, presence.

While this issue makes headway toward rescaling a less anthropocentric Shakespeare, its essays also point the way to further discussion. In particular, by calling attention to the centrality of Shakespeare, this volume invites companion volumes to offer a fuller picture of the many forms that writing about "the human" took: whether in the poetry and prose of Edmund Spenser, the period's popular romances, or the sermons that battled the stage for attention.[49] Further, work might consider the interaction amongst media, genres, authors, readers, players and performers to these questions of "the human." In what ways do these various frames of reference introduce different scale linkages, contingency, and independence? How, for instance, does the theatrical medium inflect "the human" by its reliance on embodied characters, actors' breath making words alive, animals doing what they do offstage onstage, or rocks multitasking as shipwreck, cave, and portal to a "hideous monster with fire and smoke"?[50] The fields of theatre and theatre history might usefully intersect here, and we might further reflect on how Judith Butler's sense of "performativity" might ask whether to be "human" entails an iterative performance. And if so, can "the human" exist apart from performance, apart from

Menon, Madhavi. *Shakesqueer: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*. Edited by Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Mirandola, Giovanni Pico della. "Oration on the Dignity of Man." In *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, edited by Ernst Cassirer et al. 223–54, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948.

Morton, Timothy. *The Ecological Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

Nardizzi, Vin. "Greener." In *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory Beyond Green*, edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen. 147–69. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012.

Ogilvie, Brian. *The Science of Describing: Natural History in Renaissance Europe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

Principe, Lawrence, and Lloyd De Witt. *Transmutations: Alchemy in Art*. Philadelphia, PA: Chemical Heritage Foundation, 2002.

Roberts, Addison Jeanne. "Animals as Agents of Revelation: The Horizontalizing of the Great Chain of being in Shakespeare's Comedies." *New York Literary Forum* 5/6 (1980): 79–96.

Scott, Ridley, dir. *Blade Runner: The Director's Cut*, DVD, Los Angeles, CA: Warner Bros., 1992.

Shakespeare, William. *The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*. Edited by Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 2008.

Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan. London: Bloomsbury Methuen drama, 2011.

Shannon, Laurie. "Lear's Queer Cosmos." In *Shakesqueer*, edited by Madhavi Menon. 171–8. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.

Shannon, Laurie. *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Shapiro, James S. *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010.

Sheppard, Eric, and Robert McMaster, eds. *Scale and Geographic Inquiry: Nature, Society, and Method*. Maldon, MA: Blackwell, 2004.

Sidney, Philip. *The Defence of Poesie 1595*, Facsimile. Menston, UK: Scolar Press, 1968.

Smith, Emma. *Approaching Shakespeare: The Tempest*. Oxford University Podcast, April 2011. http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/tempest-1 (accessed 11 October 2014).

Smith, Neil. "Contours of a Spatialized Politics: Home-Less Vehicles and the Production of Geographical Scale." *Social Text* 33 (1992): 66.

Spenser, Edmund. *The Faerie Queene*. Edited by A. C. Hamilton. 2nd ed. New York: Longman, 2001.

Sullivan, Garrett A. *Sleep, Romance and Human Embodiment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

The Geneva Bible, a Facsimile of the 1560 Edition. Edited by Lloyd Berry and William Whittingham. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969.

The Holy Bible. London: Robert Barker, 1611.

Thomas, Keith. *Man and the Natural World: A History of the Modern Sensibility*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1983.

Tillyard, E. M. W. *The Elizabethan World Picture*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1943.

Valdes, Didacus. *Rhetorica Christiana*. Perusiae [Perugia], 1579.

Wilson, Richard. *Secret Shakespeare: Studies in Theatre, Religion and Resistance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.

Wright, Laurence. "Inventing the Human: Brontosaurus Bloom and 'the Shakespeare in Us'." *The Shakespearean International Yearbook* 8 (2008): 238–60.

Yates, Frances. *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Yates, Julian. "Towards a Theory of Agentive Drift; Or, A Particular Fondness for Oranges Circa 1597." *Parallax* 8, no. 1 (2002): 47–58.

Yates, Julian. "Accidental Shakespeare." *Shakespeare Studies* 34 (2006): 90–122.

Notes

1 Unless of course you are reading the satirical *Daily Mash* where, we read, Roland Emmerich's new film, *Doom Globe*, claims that Shakespeare was a "300 foot alien." http://www.thedailymash.co.uk/news/arts-entertainment/shakespeare-was-an-alien-says-emmerich-201110264469. 25 April 2014. Or, if you follow "Star Trek," you might believe he was Klingon: in *Star Trek VI*, Chancellor Gorkon claims that to appreciate Shakespeare, one must read him in the "original Klingon." http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0102975/quotes?item=qt0423622 (accessed 5 September 2014). For a superb summary of the authorship debate, see James S. Shapiro, *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010). On the various identity claims, see, for example: Richard Wilson, *Secret Shakespeare: Studies in Theatre, Religion and Resistance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Republicanism* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Christopher Fitter, *Radical Shakespeare: Politics and Stagecraft in the Early Career* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Dympna Callaghan, *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000); Madhavi Menon, *Shakesqueer: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

2 Most influentially claimed by Harold Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1999). For a summative critique of this claim, see Laurence Wright, "Inventing the Human: Brontosaurus Bloom and 'the Shakespeare in Us'," *The Shakespearean International Yearbook* 8 (2008), 238–60.

3 Exemplary in this regard is Julian Yates, "Towards a Theory of Agentive Drift; Or, A Particular Fondness for Oranges Circa 1597," *Parallax* 8, no. 1 (2002), 47–58; and "Accidental Shakespeare," *Shakespeare Studies* 34 (2006), 90–122. In the latter, Yates uses actor network theory to describe Shakespeare as a "hybrid of persons" an "assemblage of activity" or "chain of making" (91).

4 *Blade Runner: The Director's Cut*, DVD, directed by Ridley Scott (Los Angeles, CA: Warner Bros., 1992).

5 The modern conception of "humanism" as "any system of thought or ideology which places humans, or humanity as a whole, at its centre, *esp.* one which is predominantly concerned with human interests and welfare, and stresses the inherent value and potential of human life," was not in use until the nineteenth century. *OED Online*, n.5. "humanism." Like much intellectual thought on the Renaissance, Jacob Burckhardt can be cited as an influential proponent of this view in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* [*Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*], ed. Peter Burke, trans. S. Middlemore (New York: Penguin, 1990). The separation of the human, especially male, subject from objects as a legacy of Burckhardt is discussed in Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass, eds., *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

6 "To the memory of my beloved, the author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us." Ben Jonson, *Ben Jonson: Complete Poems*, ed. George Parfitt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

7 *Lexicons of Early Modern English (LEME)*, ed. Ian Lancashire (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Library and University of Toronto Press, 2006). URL: leme.library.utoronto.ca/lexicon/entry.cfm?ent=53-7301 (accessed 5 September 2014).

8 For a concise summary, see the introduction by Jean Feerick and Vin Nardizzi, eds., *The Indistinct Human in Renaissance Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). Quotation from Bruno Latour, *We have Never been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 138. Other critics who argue for a more expansive period concept for "the human" include Bruce Boehrer, Erica Fudge, Carla Freccero, Henry Turner, Laurie Shannon, and Julian Yates. Such recent accounts work against the grain of the influential account of human exceptional status outlined by Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: A History of the Modern Sensibility* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983).

9 Prospero as a stand-in for Shakespeare is not without debate. The popularity of it as a critical trope might be traced back to Edward Dowden, who wrote in 1875 that "We identify Prospero in some measure with Shakespeare himself," in *Shakespeare: A Critical Study of His Mind and Art* (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1875) 417. For a cogent survey of some of the follies with this alignment, the reader might refer to The University of Oxford's *Approaching Shakespeare* series by Emma Smith, *The Tempest,* Podcast, April 2011, http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/tempest-1 (accessed 11 October 2014). Nonetheless, the ongoing popularity of the argument can be gaged by Sam Jordison, "A Real Character: Is Prospero Shakespeare?," *The Guardian*, sec. Culture-Books-Reading Group, Tuesday 15 April 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2014/apr/15/prospero-the-tempest-shakespeare-reading-group (accessed 11 September 2014).

10 William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, eds. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan (London: Bloomsbury Methuen drama, 2011) 1.2.283, 269. All subsequent references are to this edition.

11 Data from http://www.opensourceshakespeare.org (accessed 11 September 2014).
12 Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici* (London, 1642), Sig. D4^{r}.
13 *Oxford English Dictionary online*, n.1, n.2, n.3 "scale."
14 Early thinking on scale paralleled mapmaking developments. Although precise standards of spatial relationships did not emerge until the eighteenth century in France, early modern cartographers were beginning to represent earth's surface with scaled maps. See Eric Sheppard and Robert McMaster, eds., *Scale and Geographic Inquiry: Nature, Society, and Method* (Maldon, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 3. See also Jerry Brotton, *A History of the World in Twelve Maps* (London; New York: Allen Lane, 2012), 513. For the period as one fascinated by new standards of "describing," see Brian Ogilvie, *The Science of Describing: Natural History in Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
15 On the interaction between Aristotelian principles of continuity of gradation and Platonic notes of plenitude, see Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), 58–62.; E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1943).
16 For episteme, see Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970). Critics have recently begun to rehabilitate aspects of Lovejoy and Tillyard, but have not to date argued for a change in metaphor: see, for instance, Gabriel Egan, *Green Shakespeare: From Ecopolitics to Ecocriticism* (London: Routledge, 2006), 25–6; and Todd Andrew Borlik, *Ecocriticism and Early Modern English Literature: Green Pastures* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 279.
17 In the case of Fludd's image, although connected by what appears to be a chain, this alchemical image reveals the "interconnections" of the human's place in the universe. For a full explication, see Lawrence Principe and Lloyd De Witt, *Transmutations: Alchemy in Art* (Philadelphia, PA: Chemical Heritage Foundation, 2002) 9. In *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), Frances Yates proposes that alchemy by putting things in touch out of a hierarchical sequence unsettled orthodox views (153–63). Kimberly W. Benston, "The Shaping of the Marlovian Sublime" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1982), 75–163, nuances this claim to argue that, while humanism and hermeticism viewed one another with "fear, resentment, and contempt" (83), they illustrate that Renaissance culture was far from monolithic. More recent critics concur and see alchemical views as pervasive, extending far beyond the seemingly occult. See Mary Floyd-Wilson, *Occult Knowledge, Science, and Gender on the Shakespearean Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
18 George Abbot, *An Exposition upon the Prophet Jonah* (London, 1600), Sig. Hb^{v}.
19 John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5.509. According to Tillyard, writers of the period interpreted Homer's description of the golden chain descending down from Zeus as a traditional way of describing the world order, but the actual naming of it as a "vast chain of being" happened later, when it was so "named" by Alexander Pope. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture*, 25–6, quoted in Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being*, 60. For an image that visualizes this "golden chain" in a Christian context, see Didacus Valdes, *Rhetorica Christiana* (Perusiae [Perugia], 1579).
20 *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, n.1, n.2, and adj.B.1. "model."
21 Gabriel Egan, "Gaia and the Great Chain of Being," in *Ecocritical Shakespeare*, ed. Lynn Bruckner and Dan Brayton (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 60.

22 That the chain could be read horizontally as well as vertically has been argued by Jeanne Addison Roberts, "Animals as Agents of Revelation: The Horizontalizing of the Great Chain of being in Shakespeare's Comedies," *New York Literary Forum* 5/6 (1980), 79–96; see also Greg Garrard, "Ecocriticism," *Year's Work in Critical and Cultural Theory* 18 (2010), 1–35.
23 For the pervasive presence of occult forces and theories of correspondence on the stage, well beyond the discourses on alchemy, see Floyd-Wilson, *Occult Knowledge*, introduction.
24 A similar point from the perspective of "queering" the early modern cosmos is argued by Laurie Shannon, "Lear's Queer Cosmos", in *Shakesqueer*, ed. Madhavi Menon (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 171–8.
25 *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, n.2. "scale."
26 *Macbeth*, 4.1.22. *The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 2008). Subsequent citations in the text are to this edition.
27 *The Geneva Bible, a Facsimile of the 1560 Edition*, ed. Lloyd Berry and William Whittingham (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).
28 *The Holy Bible* (London: Robert Barker, 1611), Job 41: 15–17.
29 Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A. C. Hamilton, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 2001), 1.11.9.
30 Richard Davies and Robert Amerie, *Chester's Triumph in Honor of her Prince* (London, 1610) Sig. C^{v}.
31 In a similar vein, but from the perspective of the diminutive bee, see Joseph Campana, "The Bee and the Sovereign? Political Entomology and the Problem of Scale," *Shakespeare Studies* 41 (2013), 94–113.
32 Sig. D4^{r}.
33 Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, 5.2.35.
34 Laurie Shannon, *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).
35 Neil Smith, "Contours of a Spatialized Politics: Home-Less Vehicles and the Production of Geographical Scale," *Social Text* 33 (1992), 66.
36 For scholarship that has begun to probe the connections between environment and human embodiment, see the influential collections of Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garrett A. Sullivan Jr., *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Lynne Bruckner and Dan Brayton, eds., *Ecocritical Shakespeare* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011). Also Garrett A. Sullivan, *Sleep, Romance and Human Embodiment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
37 Stephen Greenblatt, *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011).
38 Shannon, *The Accommodated Animal*, esp. chap. 3.
39 Vin Nardizzi, "Greener," in *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory Beyond Green*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 147.
40 Posthumanist theoreticians that stress the porous boundary between human and other forms of life include work by Giorgio Agamben, Jacques Derrida, Donna Haraway, Katherine Hayles, and Cary Wolfe. Early modern scholars such Bruce Boehrer, Carla Freccero, Laurie Shannon, Henry Turner, and Julian Yates have demonstrated these theories within an early modern context, revealing the human to be an unstable subject. New materialists, such as Jane Bennett, have further questioned distinctions

this element problematic and ubiquitous. As Carla Mazzio has demonstrated in a brilliant essay, attempts to examine the air by artists, scientists, and playwrights eventually generated an understanding of what she terms the "*productiveness of failed instrumentality*."[5] Wind, the dynamic movement of air, appeared both essential and disruptive to early modern thinkers. Craig Martin's comprehensive study, *Renaissance Meteorology*, emphasizes that wind epitomized the principle of sublunary change in neo-Aristotelian weather systems.[6] As European culture became increasingly dependent on wind machines, especially sailing vessels, their dependence fueled anxiety about wind's instability. Excess winds create disasters, the prototypical case being the "storm of winds" or tempest. The ecological disorder of the tempest came to represent a limit-case of human knowledge of natural and divine orders.

This essay's analysis of the materiality of air begins and ends with *The Tempest*, and in particular with the inhuman figure of Ariel. The insubstantial nature of air and airy spirits posed conceptual problems for early modern writers, as it later would for such thinkers as Martin Heidegger, whose philosophical project was famously critiqued for "forgetting the air" by Luce Irigaray.[7] Intellectual attempts to read winds in the early modern period arrived at impasses that were broadly comparable to those faced by practical sailors who wanted to know which way the winds would blow, or what to do in stormy weather. Reading different early modern texts in dialogue with each other helps elucidate the wind–human exchanges that drove early globalization.[8] The case of *The Tempest*, particularly in the context of its literary legacy, emphasizes the difficulty of representing the physical force of moving air. I will show that one of the greatest modern responses to Shakespeare's play, W. H. Auden's *The Sea and the Mirror* (1944), represents Ariel and the storm in an almost entirely dematerialized fashion, and then finally argue that recovering the materiality of wind—the physical pressure that creates historical actions—can renovate our ecological understandings of this element and its influence on human history. Crafting a critical language to voice the winds of shipwreck requires multiple theoretical and literary vocabularies. Practical assistance comes from two distinct early modern rhetorical genres: Providential theology and practical seamanship. I will explore one example of each of these forms in dialogue with Shakespeare's play. For a theology of storm, I turn to John King's *Lectures upon Ionas* and Prospero's magical control of his island. For a poetics of maritime craft, I explore the shipwreck of the Portuguese galleon *S. João* off Africa in 1552 in relation to the Boatswain's technical maritime language. These examples provide opposed responses to catastrophic winds. King's sermons explain wind as God's wrath, and the *S. João* narrative treats the storm as a technical problem confronting human skill. Together these examples suggest that the winds of shipwreck represent the meeting of divine and human forces in a nonhuman environment.

Juxtaposing the wind-force of Ariel's storm against Prospero's attempts to moralize the tempest and the Boatswain's practical engagement with wind, I argue that an eco-materialist understanding of Ariel speaks to the interplay between invisible and material forces.

Against the inhuman flux of Ariel's wind, Shakespeare's play presents a series of attempts to reconstitute human order, including two plots of political ambition, a love story, the moral educations of Prospero and perhaps Caliban, and Ariel's own bid for freedom. Telling all these stories requires that the wind first stop. The show only goes on after the storm passes. This essay attempts a harder, less orderly ecological analysis that imagines itself inside the storm, surrounded by its circulating vortex, deafened by its incessant roar. Using Auden's modernist poem in dialogue with contemporary ecological theories, I seek a stormy critical language that embraces both the "thin air" into which Prospero's spirit-masque dissolves and the "sweet airs" of Caliban's distant music. The airy logic of *The Tempest*, I argue, presents insubstantial air as an invisible force of cohesion and disruption, a principle of bare power, and a key term for thinking about the human experience of nonhuman environments. Arriving at last at what I call a "Plural Theory of Winds," I suggest that ecomaterialist theory can help conceptualize this diffuse but essential element.

Ariel as Wind

The most famous winds in English literature swirl through the storm that opens *The Tempest*. Though this storm draws at least partly on historical accounts of the 1609 shipwreck of the *Sea-Venture* on Bermuda, on Shakespeare's stage winds are pure artifice. Ariel, spirit of the air, conjures the storm just as the driving force of Progress pushes history forward and the Angel backward in Benjamin's allegory. While I will argue that focusing on the materiality of Ariel's winds is essential for an ecological reading of the storm, I first emphasize that Shakespeare's dramatic poetry presents the spirit multiply, in immaterial and material forms. Ariel's account of the storm emphasizes elemental plurality and dynamic pressure. The spirit epitomizes wind as pure motion, roaring through the ship's rigging and play's stage. His first words to Prospero reveal his velocity:

> I come
> To answer thy best pleasure, be't to fly,
> To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
> On the curled clouds.[9]

The spirit's self-description combines all the classical elements except earth, as Ariel starts by flying in the air and moves to water and fire before returning to airy clouds. As multi-elemental ecology, Ariel epitomizes the materiality of ecological flux.[10] He may be primarily a creature of air, as his name suggests, but he is always morphing into the other fluid element, water, which resembles a heavier form of air, and also into the other insubstantial element, fire, which resembles super-charged air. Performing "to point" every article of the tempest requires wind to assume a triplicate identity, burning, flowing, and rushing (1.2.194).

The longer description Ariel gives of his actions extends this materialist vision of elemental combination. He performs the parts of fire, water, and air together, and his actions provide extreme examples of airy dynamism. He inhabits the sailing ship and controls it as the winds did during happier moments on the voyage. His storm of winds produces a catastrophe that recalls the view of Benjamin's Angel:

> Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin
> I flamed amazement. Sometimes I'd divide
> And burn in many places—on the topmast,
> The yards and bowspirit would I flame distinctly,
> Then meet and join. Jove's lightning, the precursors
> O'th' dreadful thunderclaps, more momentary
> And sight-outrunning were not; the fire and cracks
> Of sulphurous roaring, the most mighty Neptune
> Seem to besiege and make his bold waves tremble,
> Yea, his dread trident shake. (1.2.197)

Beyond the triple-combination of fire, air, and Neptune's undersea kingdom, Ariel's description of tempest-making emphasizes and produces theatrical amazement. This captivating force mingles with technical maritime terms, dually locating the audience in theater and ship. The circulation of Ariel's divisible body imitates the flow of air: like wind he divides, meets, joins. He is invisible but like air produces both sound and spectacle. His motion stirs up the great waters and makes them shake. A nonhuman tempest, raw elemental force, the spirit-storm drives the play as the trade winds drove the *Sea-Venture* across the Atlantic to Bermuda's reefs. Ariel reveals wind's appetite: his force creates disaster, destruction, and, perhaps above all, dislocation. This disorder produces history and theatrical play.

Prospero successfully domesticates the storm-winds by telling his own story in Act I scene 2. The key moment for Prospero's maritime adventure comes not during a storm but in a narrative flashback. Prospero's own ship crucially is not able to manipulate the winds, since it is merely "A rotten carcass of a butt, not rigged, / Nor tackle, sail, nor mast" (1.2.146–7). Lacking appropriate technology for harnessing the

air, Prospero and the infant Miranda rely instead on "providence divine" (1.2.159). This passage contrasts that beneficent magic to the presumed brutality of sea and winds. For Prospero, as later in Auden's poetic response to *The Tempest*, immaterial Providence is superior to material wind. In Prospero's telling, exile launches the ex-Duke and his daughter into an environment which appears hostile, though it finally proves friendly: "There they hoist us / to cry to th' sea that roared to us, to sigh / To th' winds, whose pity, sighing back again, / Did us but loving wrong" (1.2.148–51). Bending to the pressure of Providential magic, hostile winds reciprocate the castaways' love. This Providentialist interpretation of wind, however, dematerializes its force. Prospero, like Heidegger and Auden, has a tendency to forget about air.

Against Prospero's abstractions, the play contrasts an earlier engagement with wind as material force and dramatic joke. The Boatswain, as part of his rhetorical dominance of the storm scene, describes the storm's immense power but also insists that it would be ineffectual were it not for the island under his lee. "Blow till thou burst thy wind," he snarls to the storm, "if room enough" (1.1.7–8). Invoking the necessary sea-room which would allow a ship in peril to drift downwind until the storm exhausted itself, the Boatswain's language, here as elsewhere, makes use of the technical vocabulary of maritime labor.[11] By transforming the storm winds into a scatological joke, a universal fart that would harmlessly blow itself out, he articulates a fantasy in which skilled marine labor can endure windy peril. The Boatswain's survival narrative is the precise opposite of Prospero's; the exiled Duke asks for magical aid and receives the happy appearance of the magic island, while the sailor asks for oceanic space and sees that same island's appearance as a curse. The anti-materialist wizard wants only Providence, while the physical mariner feels only disorderly wind. These two symbolic understandings of the human relation with the environment, Prospero's magic and the Boatswain's craft, define the play's attitudes toward air as immaterial force and material presence. Turning now to a theological and historical analogy for each of these points of view, I argue that *The Tempest* stages the conflict between these versions of early modern air. Following one trajectory, air must be transcended into Providence. Following another, wind exerts material force. Different attitudes toward Ariel, the spirit of air, punctuate this debate throughout the play.

In the Hyperobject's Belly: Prospero's Magic and John King's *Lectures upon Jonas* (1597)

Prospero's attitude toward his airy environment parallels the broadly religious lens through which most early modern thinkers and writers understood the weather. In this context, his interpretive situation resembles that of John King, the Elizabethan

clergyman who delivered a year's worth of sermons about the Book of Jonah at York in 1594.

Jonah's story of shipwreck and redemption forms the basic Christian template for the catastrophic encounter between humans and sea-storms.[12] The printed version of King's *Lectures upon Jonas* appeared in 1597 and was reprinted five times before 1618.[13] King's sermons attempt neither to calm the sea nor even survive the storm, but instead find theological meaning in disaster. Out of chaos, the preacher finds meaning.

My eco-materialist reading of Prospero through King's Jonah claims that the salt vastness the prophet and wizard imagine touching parallels the physical and ecological forces that Timothy Morton calls "hyperobjects." Comprising nonhuman-scaled objects such as global warming and subtending both physically and metaphorically today's age of catastrophes, Morton's hyperobjects challenge human perceptions. One of his chosen phrases for the impact of hyperobjects on modern culture gestures toward the Jonah masterplot by employing shipwreck as its chosen metaphor: "The Titanic of modernity hits the iceberg of hyperobjects."[14] The fracture that hyperobjects generate in human conceptions of the world—Morton calls their advent "a quake in being"—requires that human bodies accept a deeper ecological engagement in what Morton elsewhere terms "the mesh," a non-hierarchical, non-anthropocentric understanding of material ecology.[15] After Odysseus, Jonah experiences this deep immersion more fully than perhaps any other figure.

At the center of Jonah's tale, the prophet surrenders to the storm and embraces maritime disorder. In King's telling, this sympathetic embrace of the deeps comes after a sustained elaboration of human terrestrial nature. To Jonah, the earth is proper to humans, while the sea is God's domain. Like Shakespeare's Boatswain, the prophet would have preferred a dry death—as he says in King's sermon:

> And though the sea hath no mercy at all, threating both heaven and hel with the billowes thereof at this time, and bearing a countance of nothing but destruction, & it had beene a blessing unto me, to haue died on land in some better sort, or to have gained the favor of a more mercifull death, yet *cast me into the sea*, and let the barbarous creature glut itself.[16]

This sacrificial turn, which King treats as Jonah's typological imitation of Christ, launches Jonah into the marine depths (192–3).

The ecology that dooms Jonah speaks the language of storm. To the sailors on board, the only legible message is hostility: "the sea is in armes against the mariners themselves" (173). At first, Jonah refuses the ocean's lesson in mutability. King's sermons insist that to be at sea entails embracing instability:

4. *The Storm*: "they were hit by a wind from the west and west-northwest accompanied by many lightning bolts" (5).
5. *No Extra Sails*: "They had no sails other than those already on the yards, as the other set of sails had been through a storm on the Equator and was torn and could not be trusted" (5).
6. *Repairs*: "One of the reasons they had not already rounded the Cape by this time was the time spent in striking the sails in order to repair them" (5).
7. *The Pintles*: "the ship laboured so much that it lost three pintles from the rudder that is, the part of it on which the entire perdition or salvation of a ship depends" (5).
8. *A Second Storm*: "[T]he storm broke out in all its fury. Then it seemed to please God to make an end of them, as later happened" (6).
9. *The Mast*: "The crew, axes in hand, began chopping at the mast when all of a sudden it snapped above the pulleys as if it had been felled by a single stroke" (6).
10. *More Wind*: "Then, the wind tore off the mainsail and the stormsail" (7).
11. *Waves*: "A wave broke the rotten rudder in two and carried away half of it, leaving the pintles in the stern-post gudgeons" (7).
12. *Failure to Make Landfall*: "And so they went at the mercy of the sea and the wind, rolling now to this side, now to that. The ship could not be steered" (8).
13. *Fate*: "But since it was already written on high that this captain, his family, and all of his company would meet their end, anything they might try to accomplish would be overturned by fate" (9).

This summary highlights the multiple overlapping forces that contributed to the wreck. The thirteen causes fall into five mostly distinct categories: failures of foresight, failures of seamanship, failures of technology, dangers of ocean and storm, and the control of fate. These categories structure the tension between navigational labor and Providential control.[21] Unlike King's God-driven sermons, in this case four empirical categories—foresight, seamanship, technology, and storm—partially crowd out Providence. The story emphasizes a struggle between human seamanship and nonhuman storm, with foresight and technology serving as handmaidens to human skill. Fate assumes ultimate control, but the liminal place of references to Fate in the narrative—they appear only in the Prologue and conclusion—suggests that seamanship partly displaces Providentialism. It seems important, in this context, that the source for this account was the boatswain's mate, not a preacher or a playwright. In this account, more clearly than in the highly polished rhetoric of Shakespeare or even John King, the fragmentary and fractured nature of the text reflects a physical encounter with windy disorder.

Blackmore's translation uncovers a struggle among seamanship, maritime labor, and technology.[22] It is only after technology fails, and the ship floats "at the mercy of the sea and wind" despite being near "a beach quite suitable for landing if they could reach it," that the mariners seem truly alone (8). Neither seamanship nor technology intercedes between them and the storm. The narrative emphasizes their helplessness: "Truly, men ought to think on this, for it causes great fear!" (8). Seamanship and lifeboats save many survivors, but when the lifeboat finally "broke in two," it was not maritime skill that saved the rest: "Many of those on board struggled to cling to the boxes and pieces of wood in order to get to land. More than forty Portuguese and seventy slaves died this way. The rest came to land as God pleased: some on top of the waves, and some under, and many were wounded by nails and wood" (10). Human skill fails, leaving divine power—"as God pleased"—in control. Seamanship cannot survive naked encounters with storm.

The most dramatic failure of technology and seamanship involves the pintles (#7). Pintles, as modern sailors know, are small rods that slide into eye-shaped gudgeons in order to fasten the rudder to the stern. They highlight in a concentrated way the dependence of all maritime labor upon precise technology. Pintles are small devices on which navigation utterly depends. These tools for converting wind into direction cannot be rebuilt or repaired at sea. When functioning, they articulate the key connection between pilot's hand and ship's stem; they allow human bodies to direct inhuman forces like wind. Thus the narrator's apparently excessive description of the pintles as "the part on which the entire perdition or salvation of a ship depends," combines the spiritual peril of the 600 souls on board and is also literally, physically accurate. Without pintles, the ship cannot steer; these missing pieces fracture the relationship between helmsman and wind.

As the Prologue had emphasized, however, the *S. João*'s fate "was already written on high" (#13). Neither labor nor technology can alter God's decree. Divine control brackets the conflict between humanity and storm. From the point of view of the reader, however, Fate does not resolve the tension so much as displace it. Readers remain embroiled in questions of foresight—"Should the *S. João* have shipped less cargo?"; of seamanship—"Could the master have steered her onto the beach?"; and of technology—"What if the pintles had not broken?" Fate provides a global hermeneutic solution that fails to address the specific details of the drama. Like Poseidon in the *Odyssey* or Juno in the *Aeneid*, Fate controls but does not clarify. In the technical world of seafaring labor, pintles seem as important as Providence. In Shakespeare's play, by contrast, the Boatswain-centered vision of seamanship dominates Act I scene 1, but largely vanishes during the bulk of the drama, to be replaced by Ariel as insubstantial manager of the wind. As disembodied force, the essence of circulation, the air-spirit transforms the Boatswain's labor into poetic form.

Auden's Bodiless Spirit

The extreme case against which I juxtapose both the Boatswain's craft and Prospero's Providence appears in Auden's five-part poem *The Sea and the Mirror*.[23] This book-length *Commentary on Shakespeare's The Tempest* was written shortly after Auden arrived in the United States in 1942. Its exploration of the "theatrical relation" and the "far side of the mirror" dives into Ariel's spiritual nature, which Auden also explored in his lectures on the play.[24] The figure Auden terms "dear Spirit" and "bright Angel" appears fundamentally bodiless (46, 47). An allegory of art and music, Auden's Ariel owes little to the material world. "Ariel *is* song," Auden would later write in his essay, "Music in Shakespeare" (1957).[25] In performance, the figure should, Auden advises, "ideally, be invisible, a disembodied voice."[26] The "unaxious one" who is also an "unfeeling god" appears in *The Sea and the Mirror* as aesthetic ideal, worshipped and desired by Prospero as the wizard packs his bags for "Briefly Milan, then earth" (12, 12, 5). In Auden's storm-less poem, the only breeze left is a gentle one that causes the old man's eyes to "water / Easily in the wind" (11). As Shakespeare's play becomes for Auden an allegory of art and of poetic exile, the material pressure of air has been, as Irigaray notes of Heidegger, forgotten.

Even as Auden dematerializes the air, however, his expansive consideration of Shakespeare's dramatic elements smuggles back into view a quasi-material view of the sea. In the opening chapter, "Prospero to Ariel," the wizard's voice bids farewell to the world in a formulation that reveals the persistent force of nonhuman materiality:

> Where I go, words carry no weight: it is best,
> Then, I surrender their fascinating counsel
> To the silent dissolution of the sea
> Which misuses nothing because it values nothing. (5)[27]

The poem's drive toward dematerialization expands the drowning of Prospero's book into a meditation on the sea as literal no-thing, a space without space. On a material level, however, "dissolution" is precisely what salt water does to solid objects. Auden's lines thus combine his poem's dominant movement away from the material to the spiritual juxtaposed with a counter-movement in which the sea's dissolving materiality returns to view. Storm winds reassert themselves less directly than does the sea, but the poem's two further uses of the word "wind," one by Trinculo and a final one by Caliban, suggest that even Auden, who asserts elsewhere that the Romantic sea was by definition a nullity, recognizes to some extent the force of airy materiality.[28] Trinculo's wind appears roughly halfway through Auden's poem,

with a swift pressure of invisible materiality on the clown's costume: "The north wind steals my hat" (24). At the end of Chapter III, which contains Caliban's extended monologue to the Audience in a pastiche of the style of Henry James, Auden voices his poem's sole direct recollection of the sea-storm, in which he imagines the actors, or perhaps just Ariel and Caliban, inhabiting the position of Prospero and Miranda overlooking the opening scene. This view, the poem insists, defines the artistic position, slightly to one side of reality and looking down at it:

> Yet, at this very moment when we do at last see ourselves as we are, neither cosy nor playful, but swaying out on the ultimate wind-whipped cornice that overhangs the unabiding void—we have never stood anywhere else,—when our reasons are silenced by the heavy huge derision,—There is nothing else to say. (52)

For Auden's Caliban, the storm shows reality and strips bare all illusions. Swaying above the "unabiding void" that is both audience and emptiness, we seek but cannot find consoling words. These almost-silent traces of wind in Auden's calm-weather poem, from Prospero's eyes to Trinculo's hat to Caliban's actorly view, provide a ghostly sliver of materiality poking out beneath the poem's spiritual skein. The primary subjects of the poem are poetic and dramatic form, and the "restored relation" at which Caliban's monologue finally arrives is made up not of wind and sails but "our contrived fissures of mirror and proscenium arch" (53, 52). Even in Auden, however, wind persists, blowing back from audience to stage. Auden tries as hard to forget it as Heidegger or Prospero, but his verses bear its traces forward, even in resistance.

A key generic feature of Auden's poem clarifies his characterization of Shakespeare's windy drama. *The Sea and the Mirror* is a book-length poem made up of lyric fragments, and as such its lacks the narrative substance of either a play or verse epic. Unlike, for example, Spenser's navigational adventures in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*, Auden's poem always circles around a distant materiality, referring itself to bodies on a not-present stage rather than substantial encounters. As the invisible force of winds organizes sailors' experiences, these theatrical bodies organize Auden's literary creation.

Music against Theater

If Auden's Ariel is the spirit of song, and his Caliban a representation of Nature, earth, and flesh, then the full allegory of *The Sea and the Mirror* turns around the difference between Ariel's solitary music and Shakespeare's plural theater.

The distinction between music and theater emphasizes the distinct affordances of different literary modes, though in this case Auden restructures his lyric voice to approximate and pay tribute to theatrical plurality. Auden's multi-voiced poetic structure gives all the members of the "Supporting Cast" speaking parts in Chapter II, which contains eleven separately-titled lyrics, voiced by dramatic characters from Antonio to Miranda. Shakespeare's play also presents an implied contrast between an air that dissolves and one that endures in material form. Prospero's celebrated vision of the "great globe itself" melts "into air, into thin air," in richly meta-theatrical language of pageantry, racks, and dreams (4.1.153, 150). But the material reality subtending Prospero's vision always emerges from the labor of slaves. Ariel's magic is the literal producer of the "cloud-capped towers," and the air into which those towers melt recalls the language Caliban has used to describe the spirit's song (4.1.152). Caliban's phrase, "sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not," reimagines Ariel's music beyond Prospero's control (3.2.136). In Caliban's ears and his poetic language, airy nothings escape tyranny, or at least promise a change of power. Rather than seeing the airs disappear, Caliban imagines the clouds would "open and show riches / Ready to drop upon me" (3.2.141–2). If Prospero's thin air provides a limit case of theatrical duration in which air is a theatrical timing mechanism, Caliban's sweet airs imagine winds as countercharms against disorder, tools to endure slavery, and the redemptive force of his unseen island companion. The Postscript to Auden's poem, "Ariel to Caliban," implies that these two figures remain for the poet only marginally material, represented in the final couplet by "One evaporating sigh" and its distant echoing " … *I.*"[29] On the cusp of evaporation, for Auden, lies the mutual relation of spirit and body, the insubstantial and the substantial.

In Shakespeare's play, theater triumphs over music because theater presents a vision of plural futurity. The "mutinous winds" of Prospero's Medea-inflected rage give way to "calm seas, [and] auspicious gales" of the promised journey to Italy (5.1.42, 315). Wind finally represents narrative conclusion for Prospero, free elements for Ariel, and materiality, or perhaps island, for Caliban alone. The last "gentle breath" that takes the wizard home comes from the hands of the audience, not the airy sprit.[30] Auden's poetic resistance to this unifying structure appears in his insistent Antonio, the one character who speaks in every verse of Chapter II, each time insisting that he dissents from Prospero's control. "*Your all is partial, Prospero; / My will is all my own*" (14) he intones at the end of his own lyric, which opens the chapter. Antonio continues to sound out his claim to be "*The Only One, Creation's O*" after the final lyric has ended.[31] The interface between Shakespeare's polyvalent materialism, in which Prospero's wizardry only partially contains Antonio's cunning, the Boatswain's craft, and Caliban's devilish earth, and Auden's incomplete dive into pure Spirit, emphasizes *The Tempest*'s wind-driven

Mentz, Steve. *At the Bottom of Shakespeare's Ocean*. London: Continuum, 2009.
Mentz, Steve. "Brown." In *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory beyond Green*, edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen. 193–212. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.
Mentz, Steve. *Shipwreck Modernity: Ecologies of Globalization, 1552–1719*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, forthcoming 2015.
Mentz, Steve. "Strange Weather in *King Lear*" *Shakespeare* 6, no. 2 (2010): 139–52.
Mentz, Steve. "Toward a Blue Cultural Studies: The Sea, English Literature, and Early Modern Studies." *Literature Compass* 6/5 (2009): 997–1013.
Morton, Timothy. *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.
Morton, Timothy. *The Ecological Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.
Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan. Rev. ed. London: Bloomsbury, 2011.

Notes

1 Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. and intr. Hannah Arendt (New York: Shocken, 1969), 253–64.
2 Benjamin, "Theses," 258.
3 Francis, Bacon, *History of Winds*, trans. Robert Gentili (London: Humphrey Mosely, 1653), A12. Bacon's Latin text was first published in London in 1622 by John Hauiland. Gentili's English translation was reprinted by Anne Mosely in 1671.
4 The precise contours and meanings of early modernity remain subject to lively debate, with which I will not engage here. See, among others, Fredric Jameson, *A Singular Modernity: Essays on the Ontology of the Present* (London: Verso, 2002).
5 Carla Mazzio, "The History of Air: *Hamlet* and the Trouble with Instruments," *South Central Review* 26, no. 1–2 (2009), 163. Italics in original.
6 Craig Martin, *Renaissance Meteorology: Pomponazzi to Descartes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 5–9.
7 Luce Irigaray, *The Forgetting of Air in Martin Heidegger*, trans. Mary Beth Hader (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).
8 On ecological globalization, see my monograph, *Shipwreck Modernity: Ecologies of Globalization, 1552–1719*, forthcoming 2015 from University of Minnesota Press.
9 William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan, rev. ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 1.2.189–92. All subsequent references are to this edition of the play.
10 On the elements and ecological literary theory, see Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert, eds., *Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Air, Water, and Fire*, forthcoming 2015 from University of Minnesota Press.

11 For a fuller consideration of the Boatswain's maritime vocabulary, especially the word "yare," see Steve Mentz, *At the Bottom of Shakespeare's Ocean* (London: Continuum, 2009), 11–13.
12 A more substantial consideration of King's sermons will appear in *Shipwreck Modernity: Ecologies of Globalization, 1552–1719*, chap. 2, "Angry Gods".
13 The first three editions (1597, 1599, 1600) were published in Oxford by Joseph Barnes and sold wholesale in London at the shop of Joan Broome. The final two editions (1611 and 1618) were sold in London by Humphrey Lownes.
14 Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 19.
15 See Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012) 1–24.
16 John King, *Lectures upon Jonas* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1597), 183 (subsequent citations in the text in parenthesis).
17 See also Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 11.
18 I quote this narrative from Josiah Blackmore's new translation in *The Tragic History of the Sea*, ed. C. R. Boxer (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 1–26 (subsequent citations in the text in parenthesis). When clarification seems useful, I refer to the Portuguese from Bernardo Gomes de Brito's edition, *Historia Tragico-Maritima*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Officina da Congregaçaõ do Oratorio, 1735), where the account of the *S. João* is in vol. 1, 1–38.
19 See Josiah Blackmore, *Manifest Perdition: Shipwreck Narrative and the Disruption of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), and also James Duffy, *Shipwreck and Empire: Being an Account of Portuguese Maritime Disasters in a Century of Decline* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955).
20 A fuller account of this text will appear in chap. 1 of *Shipwreck Modernity: Ecologies of Globalization, 1552–1719*.
21 Many shipwreck narratives include multiple potential causes, though few elaborate each as fully as the *S. João*. The first scene of *The Tempest* provides a control case: the ocean and Providentialism both appear prominently, but Shakespeare's play does not distinguish clearly between errors of foresight, seamanship, and technology.
22 On craft, see Margaret Cohen, *The Novel and the Sea* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 15–58.
23 Auden's poem contains five sections: a Preface (3–4), three substantial Chapters, and a Postscript. The parallel with the five-act division of Shakespeare's plays seems clear, although Auden pointedly refuses the terminology of the stage.
24 W. H. Auden, *The Sea and the Mirror: A Commentary on Shakespeare's The Tempest*, ed. Arthur Kirsch, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 30, 34 (subsequent citations in the text in parenthesis; italics as in original). Kirsch's edition also includes detailed textual notes and excerpts from Auden's critical writings on *The Tempest*, both of which I draw upon here.
25 Quoted from *The Sea and the Mirror*, 64.
26 This quotation is taken from "Balaam and the Ass" (1954), as reprinted in *The Sea and the Mirror*, 61.
27 I also quote part of this stanza with minimal commentary in my essay "Brown," in *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory beyond Green*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 201.

28 For Auden's reading of the Romantic sea, see *The Enchaféd Flood, or The Romantic Iconography of the Sea* (London: Faber & Faber, 1950). I have argued against the primacy that Auden gives to Romanticism in the history of sea literature in "Toward a Blue Cultural Studies: The Sea, English Literature, and Early Modern Studies," *Literature Compass* 6/5 (2009): 997–1013.
29 Auden, *Sea and the Mirror*, 56.
30 Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Ep. 11.
31 Auden, *Sea and the Mirror*, 26.
32 On the move from static to dynamic ecologies, see Steve Mentz, "Strange Weather in *King Lear*," *Shakespeare* 6, no. 2 (2010), 139–52; and also "After Sustainability," *Publication of the Modern Language Association* 127, no. 3 (2012), 586–92.
33 I explore these life-giving aspects of air in "A Poetics of Nothing: Air in the Early Modern Imagination," *postmedieval* 4, no. 1 (2013), esp. 36–8.
34 Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, 92.

3 Humans
Exceptional Humans, Human Exceptionalism, and the Shape of Things to Come

Joseph Campana

Chain, ladder, scale, circle. Border, distinction, continuum, measure. Organizing *topoi* for modalities of life abound in the Renaissance, providing disparate comparative indices in a quest to define, and perhaps refine, the so-called human. Critical attention to the precursors of, and, for some, alternatives to, species classification has tended to focus on capacity and capability. This predominantly capabilities-oriented approach to what is or is not human adjudicates such distinctions based upon which capacities (language, reason, soul, affect, politics, and so on) provide evidence of either how human a particular life form is and, by extension, where it may be arranged in an array of creatures imagined in one of the many architectures of interrelation cited above. Having distinguished itself from earlier generations of Shakespearean animal lore (some born of the Victorian fascination with natural history), a recent wave of scholarship attending to nonhuman figures of early modernity, often corralled under the rubric of the animal, has recognizably emerged. Arguably, that recent wave of work—from Erica Fudge's *Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern English Culture* (2000) to Laurie Shannon's *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales* (2013)—has appeared under the auspices of an interrogation of the centrality and primacy humans imagined for themselves in the world. Much of this writing attends critically to the supposed incapacities attributed to nonhuman life (such as language, reason, soul, affect, politics) and the hierarchies of life forms that result.

But as a host of Renaissance scholars address with renewed zeal "the human" (its alternatives and its discontents), perhaps the term of true significance should not be not "human" but "exceptional" and the corresponding structure, the exception, as referred to in the parlance of "human exceptionalism." Less an architecture than a standing outside, or the event of an interruption, the exception and varieties of exceptionalism have come to dominate more than a decade of scholarly conversation about creaturely life. Kenneth Gouwens describes "human exceptionalism" as a calibration of "what made humans distinct from and superior to other earthly creatures."[1] More specifically, Gouwens examines the tenuous early modern border between human and simian, approaching "humanists' deployment of simian metaphors … to set in sharper relief what they wrote about humankind's distinctness from and superiority to all the rest of earthly creation." Central to that definition is not only the capacity to speak but to be eloquent:

> In all accounts save the most fanciful, however, apes lacked the ability to speak: the faculty that, for Cicero, distinguished human from beasts and first gave rise to civilization. This view, dominant and rarely controversial until the twentieth century, resonated with particular intensity in the learned culture of Renaissance humanism. By the sixteenth century, the humanists' sophisticated theories of language, their valorization of human dignity, and their systematic scrutiny of both physical and textual evidence led them to define the human/simian boundary with unprecedented clarity and precision.[2]

This exceptional status results, as Keith Thomas outlined years ago in his influential *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500–1800* (1996), in a powerfully and widely articulated set of suppositions about human ascendancy over nature justified by theology and philosophy alike, the implications of which were that "the world had been created for man's sake … other species were meant to be subordinate to his wishes and needs."[3] As such, all of the "natural world" was imagined in the light of the "breathtakingly anthropocentric spirit" with which biblical accounts of creation were interpreted, resulting in the easy reduction of all living creatures to objects of human will and use-value.

Laurie Shannon powerfully takes up human exceptionalism with respect to Shakespeare's *King Lear*, defining its limit and opposite as "negative human exceptionalism"—a new face of human exceptionalism in accounts that emphasize the incapacities of humans born naked and mewling and without means of survival:

> Such traditional exaltations of humankind promote it as a uniquely privileged species, enacting what has been termed a "human exceptionalist" cosmology. In the specific contexts of animal forms of life, human exceptionalism is a

Certainly, the problem of what nature or the natural order invokes has beset Renaissance eco-criticism, as have a series of fraught questions about the activism and efficacy possible for teachers and scholars of early modern literature and culture.[14] Various critics see the task of such criticism to be the excavation of a lost sensibility. For Gabriel Egan, the "great chain of being" and E. M. W. Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture* become relevant once again, in spite of their fallen fortunes in the wake of new historicism, precisely because they gesture toward forms of interdependency that seem to run counter to human exceptionalist privilege. As he puts it, "a number of seemingly naïve old ideas about our relations with the natural world—for example, that the Earth itself is alive and that what we do can change the weather—have turned out to be true."[15] Egan subsequently amplifies this position, bringing together John Lovelock and Lynn Margulis's Gaia hypothesis, which describes the Earth as a complex, self-regulating system composed of the totality of its organic and inorganic constituents and Renaissance notions of the "great chain of being."[16] Todd A. Borlik joins Egan's effort, drawing connections between the Gaia hypothesis and Renaissance responses to Pythagoras in his monograph *Ecocriticsm and Early Modern English Literature*.[17] Robert N. Watson's award-winning *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance* diagnoses a persistent representational crisis associated with "the nostalgia for unmediated contact with the world of nature—a common sentiment focused and magnified by a cultural moment in which urbanization, capitalism, new technologies, and the Protestant Reformation each contributed to anxieties about mediation and the lost sensual past."[18] In spite of Watson's attention to disenchantment and crisis and his divergences with Egan (as evidenced in paired reviews of each other's work in *The Review of English Studies*),[19] the skepticism he often observes in late Renaissance art about the possibility of returning to nature does not extend to the eco-critical returns to the plenitude that purportedly existed in the past.

However, I would suggest that the rush to reassert a series of natural contexts, orders, and histories as an antidote to criticism practiced as an unthinking science of human exceptionalism may in fact obscure the extent to which certain languages of the human—including the languages of human exceptionalism and negative human exceptionalism and the attempt to abandon the so-called human altogether—are haunted by the ghost of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare Child of Nature

What exactly would it mean to call Shakespeare a "child of nature"? The moniker seems to originate with one of Shakespeare's rivals, Ben Jonson, and his attempt to distinguish himself from a rival. As Hugh Grady puts it:

> Ben Jonson … soon helped promulgate a version of this opposition, in which he was seen as a learned student of the classics and Shakespeare an untutored child of nature. Jonson did not invent the terms of this contrast: they derive from famous lines in Horace's *Ars Poetica*, and their earliest recorded use in reference to Shakespeare is found in a poem to Ben Jonson by his fellow playwright Francis Beaumont … In fact, this association of Shakespeare's poetry with native talent rather than learning and acquired skill developed into the single most repeated and most variously interpreted critical commonplace on Shakespeare in critical history.[20]

"Native talent rather than learning or acquired skill" seems to be the central feature of Shakespearean genius. As if a natural outgrowth rather than a constructed architecture, Shakespearean drama possesses a special purity. Of course, Jonson, who famously branded Shakespeare a poet of "small Latin and less Greek" did so to trumpet his own learnedness.

For some at least, Shakespeare, child of nature, is in fact Shakespeare, *naturalist extraordinaire*. Nowhere was this point of view more forcefully articulated that in the collision of Victorian Shakespeare criticism and Victorian natural history. Bessie Mayou's *Natural History of Shakespeare: Being Selections of Flowers, Fruits, and Animals* (1877) remains modest about Shakespeare's capacities as natural historian, demurring, "as we must remember Shakespeare's object was not to write of trees and plants, but to use them as illustrations, and also that, three centuries ago, very little was known of botany, more especially of English wild flowers."[21] Yet the title page quotes this ambitious formulation from *Troilus and Cressida*: "One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin."[22] Whereas Mayou selects passages of note, H. W. Seager's *Natural History in Shakespeare's Time: Extracts Illustrative of the Subject as He Knew It* (1896) collects "quaint theories about Natural History accepted by Shakespeare and his contemporaries" in a volume organized by entries (animal, bloodhound, cowslip, and so on).[23]

A sense of oddity or "quaint[ness]" certainly marks many such studies; Emma Phipson, in her *The Animal Lore of Shakespeare's Time Including Quadrupeds, Birds, Reptiles, Fish, and Insects* (1883) notes the "charming indifference displayed by older writers on natural history to the necessity for any system of animate nature," in explaining why she "followed the modern classification of the animal kingdom, although I have purposely avoided introducing scientific nomenclature."[24] Phipson, however, remains certain both that "a knowledge of the state of natural science during the period in which our great dramatist lived may be gained, not only from the writings of naturalists and antiquaries, but from similes, allusions, and anecdotes introduced into the plays, poems, and general literature of England during the latter half of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries"

and that Shakespeare was, indeed, a child of nature.[25] "Few subjects," she argues, "have more frequently occupied the attention of man than that of his own relation to the animal life around him. The classic writers delighted to note the various points of contact and the joint ownership of qualities which man and animals possessed. In the time of Shakespeare this question of kinship seems to have been studied with renewed interest."[26] Yet this kinship still raises problems. Phipson continues, "The question has been asked,—How is it that the number of animal metaphors and similes in Shakespeare's works so greatly exceeds that of any other of his brother dramatists? The answer is to be found mainly in his larger sympathy with nature ... but it may be that his deeper study of the problems concerning man's origin and destiny, led him thus closely to connect man with his fellow-denizens of the earth."[27]

While Phipson refers to Shakespeare's "larger sympathy with nature," Robert Patterson, in his *Letters on the Natural History of the Insects Mentioned in Shakespeare's Plays* (1838), refers directly to Samuel Johnson's claim that Shakespeare was "the Poet of Nature" precisely because his "attention was not confined to the action of men; he was an exact surveyor of the inanimate world; his descriptions have always some peculiarity, gathered by contemplating things as they really exist; whether life or nature be his subject, Shakespeare shows plainly that he has seen with his own eyes."[28] Indeed, referring to close observation of the destruction of clothes by moths, Patterson insists, "It is not to be supposed, therefore, that the all-seeing eye of Shakespeare should pass unnoticed so ordinary an occurrence."[29] Shakespeare, keen-sighted and all-seeing, does not float above the quotidian world but rather marks its intimacies and habits. To what end does a reader notice such keen observation? "A knowledge of the Natural History of Shakespeare's Plays," Patterson argues, "would increase the pleasure we all experience in reading those unrivalled productions."[30] Edification deriving from Shakespeare's expertise in nature becomes central, then, to be both the enjoyment and the celebration of Shakespeare's singularity as author.

Yet "child of nature" also comes to be associated with other features of Shakespeare's singularity. The first is a *talent for characterization*, as if this child of nature more expertly held a "mirror up to nature" than most. Samuel Johnson famously branded Shakespeare as "above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life."[31] Samuel Taylor Coleridge was one of many to concur, arguing that "it was one of the great advantages of Shakespeare that he availed himself of his psychological genius to develop all the minutiae of the human heart; that he, shewing us the thing, makes visible what we should otherwise not have seen: just as, after looking at distant objects through a Telescope, when we behold them afterwards with the naked eye, we see them

with greater distinctness than we should otherwise have done."[32] Indeed, the superhuman Shakespeare, possessed of capacities more extensive than ordinary perception provides, more easily depicts not only the myriad shades of humanity but also the quintessentially human.

Indeed, Johnson and Coleridge, among others, agree on this additional point, which is that Shakespeare attained *expertise in representing the general condition of the human*. Johnson argues that Shakespeare's characters were not embedded in particularities of place and nation, arguing that, although "his story requires Romans or kings … he thinks only on men."[33] Shakespeare's characters, rather, were "the genuine progeny of common humanity." As he puts it, "In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual; in those of *Shakespeare* it is commonly a species."[34] Thus the "mirrour of life" that is Shakespearean drama is one that reveals the habits of a species regardless of habitat. Coleridge did not himself deploy the language of species but he did amplify Shakespeare's grasp of humanity, continuing a series of analogies that scale up Shakespeare's powers of observation and representation. "Shakespeare," he argues, "was almost the only dramatic poet, who by his character represented a class, and not an individual: other writers for the stage, in other respects good ones too, had aimed their satire and ridicule at particular foibles and particular persons, while Shakespeare at one stroke lashed thousands; Shakespeare struck at a crowd."[35] This titanic quality—perceiving more accurately than a telescope, representing the many and not merely the one—was described by many, including William Hazlitt, who included Shakespeare amongst the "giant-sons of genius."[36]

It takes very little progress down this particular garden path to reach A. C. Bradley's great celebration of Shakespeare's exceptional humans in *Shakespearean Tragedy*, which notes not only the exceptional "suffering and calamity" of Shakespearean protagonists but also with those protagonists' "exceptional being."[37] Bradley insists:

> We have seen already that the hero, with Shakespeare, is a person of high degree or of public importance, and that his actions or sufferings are of an unusual kind. But this is not all. His nature is also exceptional, and generally raises him in some respect above the average level of humanity … His tragic characters are made of the stuff we find within ourselves and within the persons who surround him. But, by an intensification of the life which they share with others, they are raised above them; and the greatest are raised so far that, if we fully realize all that is implied in their words and actions, we become conscious that in real life we have scarcely known anyone resembling them. Some, like Hamlet and Cleopatra, have genius. Others are built on the grand scale; and desire, passion, or will attains in them a terrible force.[38]

To be sure, Bradley's elaboration of Shakespearean grandeur contradicts the pedestrian quality noted by many, including Johnson, who claimed Shakespeare "had no heroes; his scenes are occupied only by men, who act and think as the reader thinks he should himself have spoken or acted on the same occasion."[39] Still, the titanic architecture of Shakespearean greatness clearly extends from the incomparable playwright with species knowledge to his great creations who are "exceptional" in that they experience "an intensification of the life which they share with others" and "are built on grand scale."

It is perhaps no wonder Harold Bloom, to the delight of some and the dismay of others, declared that Shakespeare had invented the human. The intensity of pronouncements about the humanity of Shakespeare in the history of his reception well-nigh necessitated the 1998 publication of *Shakespeare and the Invention of the Human*. Bloom argues, much in accordance with a critical tradition dating back centuries, that "no other writer, before or since Shakespeare, has accomplished so well the virtual miracle of creating utterly different yet self-consistent voices for his more than one hundred major characters and many hundreds of highly distinctive minor personages."[40] Precisely because of Shakespeare's capacity to contain (and individuate) multitudes, his works comprise "the outward limit of human achievement." As Bloom indicates later, this Johnsonian tradition indexes a profound Shakespearean multiplicity. "No one, before or since Shakespeare," he argues, "made so many selves."[41] Bloom claims he self-consciously joins the "Johnsonian tradition in arguing, nearly four centuries after Shakespeare, that he went beyond all precedents (even Chaucer) and invented the human as we continue to know it."[42] This includes not merely "the representation of cognition, personality, character," which would constitute a "weak misreading of Shakespeare" but rather "an overflowing element, an excess beyond representation closer to the metaphor we call 'creation.'"

Shakespeare's exceptional status as author, his exceptional human creations, and his exceptional capacity to hold a mirror up to nature all index varieties of singularity. But embedded in this language is also an equally familiar language, a privative and elusive language about Shakespeare, the man of all—but also no—qualities. His omnicompetence derives from a marked lack of attributes. Hazlitt revered Shakespeare as one of the four great voices of English literature, defining each by virtue of a prominent quality: "The characteristic of Chaucer is intensity; of Spenser remoteness; of Milton, elevation; of Shakespeare; every thing."[43] Hazlitt did not stop there. Shakespeare, he claimed, "had only to think of anything in order to become that thing, with all the circumstances belonging to it."[44] What it is to be the poet laureate of "every thing" or to merely "think of anything in order to become that thing" are questions to which I will return. But Hazlitt, like John Keats, with his generative if ambiguous notion of negative

The Shape of Things to Come

Roughly fifteen years of scholarship has unfolded under the rubric of animal studies, finding beneath various architectures of distinction the mutually constitutive nature of human and nonhuman figures. I have tried to suggest here not that there is no difference between this latest wave of work and previous efforts but, rather, that in a scholarly universe deeply drawn to the figure of Shakespeare, a series of ideas about Shakespeare's complex humans and his singular humanity hover behind seemingly unrelated articulations of human exceptionalism and negative human exceptionalism. Those rubrics I have suggested offer a most concentrated form of a capabilities-based approach to the human and nonhuman universes of the Renaissance.

This focus on capability is by no means unique to Renaissance studies. As Kari Weil argues, "Many of those who have taken nonhuman animals as their objects of study over the past ten or fifteen years (if we think back to the founding of the Great Ape Project in 1993) have nevertheless worked to prove that a variety of animal species possess the basic capabilities deemed necessary for subjectivity: self-consciousness, rational agency, the capacity to learn and transmit language."[49] However admirable and important the desire to correct human misperceptions about the capacities of nonhumans may be, it is hard to resist, in the process, the lure of extending human capacities and capabilities—even subjectivity or legal status—to nonhuman creatures. Arguably, to focus on capacity and capability—even when invoking shared capacities, shared environments, or shared corporealities—may not be to dislodge the human from a position of centrality and privilege. Weil crystallizes the resulting dilemma for animal studies as "whether it is or already should become a new discipline, and if so, whether it should model itself on women's studies or ethnic studies." She continues:

> Such questions are both pertinent and misconceived. Women's studies and ethnic studies programs demanded that the academy acknowledge and address the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of groups of people under the forces of sexism and racism. This redress was to be done not only by focusing on gaps and misrepresentations but also, and more importantly, by bringing the voices of women and minorities into the academy to write and represent themselves. The result was that previously marginalized or silenced groups were no longer to be confined to the status of object but would be subjects of representations; their voices were loud and demanded to be heard. How can that situation be comparable to animal studies? True, for centuries nonhuman animals have been locked in representations authored by humans, representations that, moreover, have justified their use and abuse by humans. But unlike in women's studies or

> ethnic studies, those who constitute the objects of animal studies cannot speak for themselves, or at least they cannot speak the languages that the academy recognizes as necessary for such self-representation. Must they then be forever condemned to the status of objects?[50]

The dilemma here is profound. The danger of overwriting the animal with human capacities exists in excruciating tension with the danger of rendering what is not human as merely and irrevocably an "object."

Of course for some, "the status of objects" is far from a prison-house or death sentence. Indeed, one might draw different genealogies and trajectories for the future of the so-called human in Renaissance studies. Scholarship to come may have little truck with humans and evermore traffic with matter. In the review essay "Renaissance Non-humanism: plants, animals, machines, matter," Kevin Curran ties the recent efflorescence of attention to nonhumans to material object studies. He argues:

> Starting in the 1990s, something curious began to happen to English Renaissance studies. The humans, both real and fictional, that had been at the centre of critical enquiry at least since Jacob Burckhardt's work on the Renaissance concept of the individual began to be crowded out by non-humans. Suddenly, the Hamlets, Britomarts, Essexes, and Elizabeths of Renaissance England had to fight for attention with feathers, handkerchiefs, gloves, and codpieces. As Jonathan Gil Harris puts it: "for a growing number of Renaissance and Shakespeare scholars, the play is no longer the thing: the thing is the thing." Over the last few years this tendency has grown more pronounced, with animals, plants, machines, books, and stonewalls—to give just a handful of examples—joining the textiles and ornaments that have traditionally formed the mainstay of object-oriented criticism. This second wave of what I will be calling "Renaissance non-humanism" is also considerably more sophisticated than its predecessor in that it breaks out of the subject–object dialectic to think instead of more freely structured networks of human and non-human actors.[51]

Curran's invocation of "structured networks of human and non-human actors" pushes beyond what was once called "the new materialism" or "the new new historicism," with its interests in material objects and circumstances rather than cultural materialist analyses.[52] Such a devotion to nonhumans, Curran suggests, may be much more than mere object fetishism. The advantage to a "Renaissance non-humanism" as Curran calls it, "is [that it is] not post-humanistic in the sense mournfully articulated by someone like Ihab Hassan; it does not occupy a critical space subsequent to a completed, receding, and irrevocably lost humanism.

Instead, Renaissance non-humanism should be thought of as a 'new' humanism, one with the same intellectual investments at its core but with a markedly different critical procedure in place for pursuing them. Man is no longer the starting point for the assessment of phenomena, as he was for Descartes, and for Hegel after him. The human, rather, is a destination to be arrived at, something to scrutinize through non-human lenses."[53]

Curran alludes here to a series of conversations scholars of early modernity have begun with figures like Bruno Latour, Michel Serres, Isabelle Stengers, Niklaus Luhmann, Jane Bennett, Manuel DeLanda, Graham Harmon, Timothy Morton, Ian Bogost, and others under the rubrics of actor-network theory, systems theory, object-oriented ontology, and new materialism.[54] Of course, even as such lately heralded interventions seem to draw Shakespeareans into their orbit, we might look back roughly a decade to two essays by Julian Yates—"Towards a Theory of Agentive Drift; Or, a Particular Fondness for Oranges circa 1597" and "Accidental Shakespeare"—which already begin to reconfigure our sense of a singularly human and simultaneously inhuman "Shakespeare."[55] With the aid of Latour and Stengers, he offers new ways of thinking of Shakespeare's relationship not merely to humans, animals, or other sentient beings but also to an entire network of material beings. "We should understand agency," he argues, "not as the attribute or preserve of a series of individuals but as the property of a 'network of actors,' some human, some not, and all of which, regardless of their sentience, regardless of whether we consider them alive or dead, animate or inanimate, participate in the action and so have a share in the performance."[56] A new sense of "agency" implies a new "Shakespeare":

> In describing "Shakespeare" as a hybrid of "persons" and "things" I have already begun to deploy the figure of a network, of an associative or extended grid, to distribute "agency" across the subject–object divide, redescribing singularities, such as "Shakespeare," as an assemblage or activity, a chain of making, which produces an evolving collective of texts, readers, readings, persons, performances, audiences. I am following the likes of Michel Serres, identifying "Shakespeare" not as a historical figure or even a corpus of texts but as a "quasi-object" constituted by all that occurs in his name.[57]

Yates certainly makes reference to not only the turn to objects in Renaissance studies but also the critique of that turn.[58] Yet his turn to agency, networks, and objects offers a different way forward than mere attention to the sensuous materialities of the past. "One of the advantages," he argues, "this network-based model of description has over the recent turn back to 'things' in Renaissance studies, and in cultural studies more generally, is that it has no truck with distinctions between

nature/culture, animal/human, human/machine that frequently, despite our best efforts, tend to remain fairly stable."[59]

And yet what Shakespeare is this? A Shakespeare with "all hues in his controlling"?[60] The Shakespeare whose central virtue, Hazlitt claimed, was "every thing"? Perhaps Hazlitt was referring here to Shakespeare's omnicompetence. But it might be more consistent with his view of Shakespeare as someone who "had only to think of anything in order to become that thing, with all the circumstances belonging to it," to think that the many human characters he could think his way into were only one of the many species and objects within his imagination. Thus, veering away from a human-centered approach by virtue of the strange agency of Shakespeare might be less of a departure than, at first, it seems to be. To say so is not to suggest that scholars should abandon this latest efflorescence of interest in materiality but rather that it may be helpful to recognize affinities with earlier modes of thought, including those which threaten to leave us encircled, never outside of Shakespearean exceptionalism.

Exception

Human exceptionalism and its negative expression have become the face of studies of the human and nonhuman alike. Earlier I suggested that the phrase "human exceptionalism," while perhaps deriving from Singer's approaches to speciesism, felt equally redolent of the phrases "American Exceptionalism" and "state of exception." If intimations of the former date back to Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1840), the latter—largely the product of the thinking of Carl Schmitt—is described by George Schwab in the introduction to Schmitt's *Political Theology* as "undoubtedly the most controversial German legal and political thinker of the twentieth century."[61] Schmitt's intervention might be said to be an intensification of received theories of sovereignty, dating back at least to early modern political theorist Jean Bodin, which crystallize in the slogan "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception" and identify the nature of sovereignty in the sovereign right to suspend law in times of emergency.[62] "Although he stands outside the normally valid legal system," Schmitt argues, "he nevertheless belongs to it, for it is he who must decide where the constitution needs to be suspended in its entirety."[63]

Much ink has been spilled on Schmitt's exception in recent years, especially amidst the renaissance the concept of sovereignty has enjoyed in Renaissance studies, a renaissance arguably not unrelated to the efflorescence of work in animal studies.[64] Rather than review recent responses to Schmitt, I want to focus on a few claims he makes about exceptions and on the particular way he describes

sovereignty as "a borderline concept … one pertaining to the outermost sphere. This definition of sovereignty must therefore be associated with a borderline case and not with routine."[65] The very allure of sovereignty is rooted thus not in rule but in its suspension. "The exception," Schmitt claims, "is more interesting than the rule. The rule proves nothing; the exception proves everything: It confirms not only the rule but also its existence, which derives only from the exception. In the exception, the power of real life breaks through the crust of a mechanism that has become torpid by repetition."[66] Even more provocatively, Schmitt argues, "the exception in jurisprudence is analogous to the miracle in theology."[67]

Suspension, exception, miracle: in the wake of such conjurations it is difficult not to turn from Lear, play-acting his negative human exceptionalism for all to witness, to Prospero, whose power is simultaneously sovereign and suspended. We might see Prospero as one of the many compromised pater familias figures of the romances, his authority compromised by a coup and banishment. But the bookish former-prince consolidates in his island exile the power to warp, indeed to except, the rules of nature:

> I have bedimm'd
> The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
> And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault
> Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder
> Have I given fire and rifted Jove's stout oak
> With his own bolt; the strong-based promontory
> Have I made shake and by the spurs pluck'd up
> The pine and cedar: graves at my command
> Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth
> By my so potent art.[68]

No mere wielder of secular authority, Prospero, a favorite stand-in for Shakespeare at least in some critical circles, rules over sea and sky, plant and animal, the living and the dead. With such "potent art," what is the management of a few humans here or there, or even a city full of them?

The problem of the evocative, rule-breaking exception, for my purposes here, may be that there is no "outside" of Shakespeare in Renaissance studies concerned with iterations of human or nonhuman, that there is no standing beyond the conjured capacities of his exceptional humans, his exceptional grasp of humanity, and his intense concentration on human exceptionalism that is not folded within a borderline demarcated by Shakespeare, that outermost layer of the human. Perhaps I am guilty of an inversion of scale and priority of the variety Dominic Pettman notes of Bloom's *The Invention of the Human in Human Error:*

O'Dair, Sharon. "Slow Shakespeare: An Eco-Critique of 'Method' in Early Modern Literary Studies." In *Early Modern Ecostudies: From the Florentine Codex to Shakespeare*, edited by Thomas Hallock, Ivo Kamps, and Karen L. Raber. 11–30. New York: Palgrave, 2008.

Patterson, Robert. *Letters on the Natural History of the Insects Mentioned in Shakespeare's Plays*. London: William S. Orr & Co., 1838.

Pettman, Dominic. *Human Error: Species Being and Media Machines*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

Philemon Holland. *The Historie of the World*. London, 1601.

Phipson, Emma. *The Animal Lore of Shakespeare's Time Including Quadrupeds, Birds, Reptiles, Fish, and Insects*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co., 1883.

Raber, Karen. *Animal Bodies, Renaissance Culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.

Schmitt, Carl. *Political Theology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Seager, H. W. *Natural History in Shakespeare's Time*. London: Eliot Stock, 1896.

Shakespeare, William. *King Lear*. Edited by R. A. Foakes. *The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd series*. London: Thomas Nelson, 1999.

Shakespeare, William. *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. Edited by Katherine Duncan-Jones. *The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd series*. London: Thomson Nelson, 1997.

Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Virginia Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan. *The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd series*. London: Cengage, 1999.

Shakespeare, William. *Troilus and Cressida*. Edited by David Bevington. *The Arden Shakespeare, 3rd series*. London: Bloomsbury, 2012.

Shannon, Laurie. "Poor, Bare, Forked: Human Exceptionalism, Animal Sovereignty, and the Natural History of *King Lear*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2009): 168–96.

Shannon, Laurie. *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Thomas, Keith. *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500–1800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Watson, Robert N. "Review of Gabriel Egan's *Green Shakespeare: From Ecopolitics to Ecocriticism* (London: Routledge, 2006)." *Review of English Studies* 57 (2006): 819–22.

Watson, Robert N. *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.

Weil, Kari. "A Report on the Animal Turn." *differences* 21, no. 2 (2010): 1–23.

Yates, Julian. "Accidental Shakespeare." *Shakespeare Studies* 34 (2006): 90–122.

Yates, Julian. "Towards a Theory of Agentive Drift; Or, A Particular Fondness for Oranges circa 1597." *Parallax* 8, no. 1 (2002): 47–58.

Notes

1 Kenneth Gouwens, "Human Exceptionalism," in *The Renaissance World*, ed. John Jeffries Martin (London: Routledge, 2007), 416. As Gouwens reminds us "Renaissance conceptions of human dignity. When specifying what made humans distinct from and superior to other earthly creature, sixteenth-century authors could cite numerous classical and Christian precedents."

2 Ibid., 417.

3 Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 6.

4 Laurie Shannon, "Poor, Bare, Forked: Human Exceptionalism, Animal Sovereignty, and the Natural History of *King Lear*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2009): 171.

5 Shannon, 169.

6 Ernst Cassirer et al., eds., *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 223, 224.

7 Andreas Höfele, *Stage, Stake, and Scaffold: Humans and Animals in Shakespeare's Theatre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 18.

8 Philemon Holland, *The Historie of the World* (London, 1601), 152. On nakedness and coated-ness as defining features of human and nonhuman animals specifically, see Shannon: "*Lear* thus not only anatomizes man, philosophically, and finds him wanting; it taxonomizes man, literally, and finds him naked. In this respect, Shakespeare draws on the writings of natural history that had shaped the curricula of the sixteenth century and informed the writings of all who were trained in them. Despite early modernity's reputation for an invention of humankind in terms of some new omnicompetence, *King Lear* exposes an abject humanity's underprovisioning in the face of the environment and its sheer incapacity before the great dramas of self-fashioning Pico had celebrated … This privative sense of man results from both comparative reference across species and a zoographic notion of animal integrity. Beneath the 'extremity of the skies,' man is that unready animal who lacks a coat" (196).

9 Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 3.

10 Bruce Boehrer, *Shakespeare Among the Animals* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 2–3.

11 Bruce Boehrer, *Animal Characters: Nonhuman Beings in Early Modern Literature* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 16, 17.

12 Laurie Shannon, *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 8.

13 Karen Raber, *Animal Bodies, Renaissance Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 5.

14 Many scholars invoke or assert, while some reflect on, the possibility of environmental advocacy. Sharon O'Dair's essays represent a highwater mark for thoughtful reflection on the efficacy of eco-studies, early modern or otherwise ("Is it Shakespearean Ecocriticsm if it isn't Presentist?" in *Ecocritical Shakespeare*, ed. Lynne Brucker and Dan Brayton (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011), 71–88; and "Slow Shakespeare: An Eco-Critique of 'Method' in Early Modern Literary Studies," in *Early Modern Ecostudies: From the Florentine Codex to Shakespeare*, ed. Thomas Hallock, Ivo Kamps, and Karen L. Raber (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 11–30).