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The Disorder of Love and the Love of Disorder

Cognitive Interplay in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at the Middle Temple, 1602

Abstract

Twelfth Night presents both personal love and festive reveling as phenomena that create disorder. Contemporary productions often render the play as a romantic comedy in which a temporary disruption of personal and social harmony is finally resolved by the prospect of three marriages. A richer and more complex appreciation of the play can be gained by exploring its first recorded performance at the Middle Temple (a law college) in 1602. I do this through the lens of embodied cognition, a hypothesis arising from cognitive neuroscience which holds that cognition is grounded in bodily interactions with the physical and social environment, and that mental concepts arise from the body's sensory and motor neural systems. Thus the meaning of *Twelfth Night* in performance is comprised not only of the script's dialogue, but also the biology, experiences, and values of its performers

and audience members. Envisioning the play's performance in the physical space and social context of the Middle Temple highlights ways in which Shakespeare's company raised moral complexities for audience members whose legal decisions shaped the order of early modern English society.

Keywords

William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, embodied cognition, cognitive ecology

Abstrakt

Nieład miłości a miłość do nieładu: Kognitywistyczne spojrzenie na inscenizację *Wieczoru Trzech Króli* Shakespeare'a w Middle Temple, 1602

Wieczór Trzech Króli ukazuje osobiste relacje miłosne oraz hulanki biesiadników jako zjawiska wprowadzające nieład. Współczesne inscenizacje zazwyczaj prezentują tekst Shakespeare'a jako komedię romantyczną, w której tymczasowe zakłócenie harmonii osobistej i społecznej zostaje ostatecznie przezwyciężone dzięki perspektywie połączenia trzech par węzłami małżeńskimi. Bogatszą i bardziej złożoną interpretację *Wieczoru Trzech Króli* umożliwia analiza pierwszego odnotowanego wystawienia w kolegium prawniczym Middle Temple w 1602. Autor przygląda mu się, sięgając po wypracowaną na gruncie neuronauki kognitywnej hipotezę poznania ucieleśnionego, według której procesy poznawcze opierają się na wzajemnym oddziaływaniu ciała ludzkiego i jego środowiska fizycznego oraz społecznego, a pojęcia powstają w wyniku impulsów z układu nerwowego narządów zmysłów i ruchu. W tym ujęciu znaczenie *Wieczoru Trzech Króli* tworzą podczas przedstawienia nie tylko wypowiadane ze sceny kwestie, lecz także biologia, doświadczenia i wartości aktorów i widzów. Wyobrażenie sobie tej inscenizacji w fizycznej przestrzeni i kontekście społecznym Middle Temple pozwala zobaczyć, w jaki sposób trupa Shakespeare'a poruszała złożone kwestie moralne przed publicznością prawników, których decyzje kształtowały porządek społeczny Anglii początku XVII wieku.

Słowa kluczowe

William Shakespeare, *Wieczór Trzech Króli*, poznanie ucieleśnione, ekologia kognitywna

John Manningham's diary entry of 1602 that describes a performance of *Twelfth Night* at The Middle Temple Hall in London is one of the few surviving historical documents that firmly identifies the place and date of a presentation of one of Shakespeare's plays during his lifetime.[1] It not only situates the event spatially and temporally, but also allows us to gain knowledge of the audience, made up of judges, lawyers, and law students, some of whom can be individually identified. Describing the events on the feast of Candlemas, Manningham writes:

> At our feast we had a play called *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, much like *The Comedy of Errors*, or *Menaechmi* in Plautus, but most like and near to that in Italian called *Inganni*. A good practice in it to make the steward believe his lady widow was in love with him, by counterfeiting a letter as from his lady in general terms, telling him what she liked best in him, and prescribing his gesture in smiling, his apparel, etc., and then when he came to practise making him believe they took him to be mad.[2]

Additionally, the building still exists, providing concrete information about the spatial affordances and constraints with which Shakespeare's company interacted.[3] Among theatre people it is common to acknowledge that a play is not the written script—the play is the embodied event that takes place *for* and *with* an audience. Exploring this event within its original venue and its socio-cultural context can reflexively enhance our understanding of the document (the script) on which we base contemporary performances. This exploration reveals how themes of order, disorder (both individual and social), perception, self, and identity permeate and intertwine the fictional world of the play and the material and social world of the Middle Temple audience. In some instances these topics are not so much themes as *categories of shared experience*. These features highlight a spectrum of responses to moral argument displayed by the play's characters, relating to a strand of dramatic action in which individuals seek retribution or revenge for real or imagined wrongs done to them. This was a significant topic for both the Chamberlain's Men and their Middle Temple audience of law students, lawyers, and judges. The performance took place within the larger context of a hierarchically defined society undergoing rapid social change and

[1] One can see an image here: https://www.britain-magazine.com/wp-content/uploads/webJohn-Manninghams-Diary-1602-courtesy-of-British-Library-smaller-version.jpg.

[2] John Manningham in Stanley Wells, *A Dictionary of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100131434,accessed March 21, 2022.

[3] The Middle Temple archives can be accessed at https://www.middletemple.org.uk/archive.

experiencing instances of disorder, such as the Misrule of the Revels, the prevalence of dueling as a way of settling scores, apprentice riots, public playhouses, and the Essex rebellion against Queen Elizabeth. The law-college audience for this performance of *Twelfth Night* had significant agency in both defining and maintaining social order. I will show that Shakespeare and his company had a vested interest in influencing this group of people, and by doing so, highlight features of the script that are often overlooked in contemporary productions.

The theoretical framework that enables this discussion derives from findings in the inter-disciplinary field of cognitive neuroscience and is known as embodied cognition. I recognize that readers will have varying levels of familiarity with this concept, so I will briefly describe its provenance and principles. Research in cognitive neuroscience studies the structure and functions of the nervous system, focusing on the brain and its relationship to behavior and cognitive functions. These include thinking, perceiving, imagining, remembering, speaking, planning, and doing. Evidently, we engage in all of these activities in the creation and performance of theatre and in its reception by audiences. However, these features of human existence operate largely in the realm of the unconscious and consequently are difficult to investigate. Neuroscience provides empirically derived data about the subconscious actions of the mind and their relationship to observable behavior. These data allow us to better understand our subject matter—human behavior—and the processes that we use to express it in performance. This data has informed a wide range of disciplines, including psychology, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, evolutionary biology, and anthropology, among others. This large interdisciplinary field is now known as cognitive neuroscience. A major insight arising from this field is that sensorimotor activities of the human body shape, inform, and are enmeshed with mental concepts. This insight is aptly expressed in the title of an influential book by philosopher Shaun Gallagher, *How the Body Shapes the Mind*,[4] and informs many other works.[5] This knowledge challenges assumptions that underlie much of Western thought. Embodied cognition presents a radical departure

[4] Shaun Gallagher, *How the Body Shapes the Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[5] E.g. Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991); Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Mark Johnson, "Conceptual Metaphors and Embodied Structures of Meaning: A Reply to Kennedy and Vervaeke," *Philosophical Psychology* 6, no. 4 (1993): 413–422; George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999); Vittorio Gallese and George Lakoff, "The Brain's Concepts: The Role of the Sensory-Motor System in Reason and Language," *Cognitive Neuropsychology* 22, no. 3 (2005): 455–479; Patrick Haggard, Yves Rossetti, and Mitsuo Kawato, eds., *Sensorimotor Foundations of Higher Cognition: Attention and Performance* XXII (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

from the Cartesian idea of reason being separated from the body that has influenced traditional Western psychology. From the perspective of embodied cognition, phenomena such as consciousness, empathy, intersubjectivity, affect, and aesthetic responses "come from having a body with various sensorimotor capacities [that] are themselves embedded in a more encompassing biological, psychological and cultural context."[6] Within this field there is a growing consensus that meaning results intersubjectively from our interactions with our environments, both social and physical. The concept proposes that thinking and behaviour constitute a property of the whole human organism, not just the brain, and that body, brain, and cognition are *situated*—intertwined with the surrounding environment. I hope that this article, in addition to illuminating aspects of *Twelfth Night*, will demonstrate the value of the embodied cognition hypothesis as a theory that facilitates the analysis of varied styles, approaches, and periods of theatre. It offers a consistent and stable point of reference by describing principles of perception, cognition, and expression that are rooted in evidence from empirical studies of human biology and behavior.

In considering a record of a performance through the lens of embodied cognition, I am building on a proposal made by John Sutton and Lynn Tribble, that a valuable framework for approaching Shakespeare's plays in performance is that of a cognitive ecology:

> Cognitive ecologies are the multidimensional contexts in which we remember, feel, think, sense, communicate, imagine, and act, often collaboratively, on the fly, and in rich ongoing interaction with our environments. . . . The idea is not that mind is . . . projected outward into the ecological system: but that from the start (historically and developmentally) remembering, attending, intending, and acting are distributed, co-constructed, system-level activities.[7]

They go on to say that

> cognitive ecology facilitates a system-level analysis of theater: this model of cognitive ecology would posit that a complex human activity such as theater must be understood across the entire system, which includes such elements as neural and psychological mechanisms underpinning the task dynamics; the bodily and gestural norms and capacities of the trained actors; the physical

[6] Varela, Thompson and Rosch, *Embodied Mind*, 173.

[7] Evelyn Tribble and John Sutton, "Cognitive Ecology as a Framework for Shakespearean Studies," *Shakespeare Studies* 39 (2011): 94, 96.

> environment(s), including the relationships between playing and audience space; cognitive artifacts such as parts, plots, and playbooks; technologies such as sound or lighting; the social systems underpinning the company, including the mechanisms for "enskillment"; the economic models by which the company runs; the wider social and political contexts, including censorship, patronage, and commercial considerations; and the relative emphasis placed upon various elements of the enterprise, including writerly or directorial control, clowning, visuality, and improvisation. No one of these elements is primary, but instead each affects and modulates the others.[8]

Tribble expands on this approach in her book *Cognition in the Globe* where she states that an advantage of understanding theatrical activity in this way

> is that it does not privilege any one area of the enterprise, but instead emphasizes the *interplay* of internal cognitive mechanisms and social and physical environments. Cognitive ecologies are always dynamic—as one element changes, others may take up the slack, so to speak.[9]

She also quotes Roslyn Knutson who points out that in the early modern period,

> companies and theatrical entrepreneurs . . . faced, on the one hand, a political environment that imposed limitations on their business but, on the other, a customer base that encouraged expansion.[10]

The cognitive ecology of the *Twelfth Night* performance at the Middle Temple incorporates an audience which is active both in the political environment *and* as the customer base. I am going to look at some of the ways that Shakespeare's company engaged with members of that audience as their customer base, potentially influencing them as political agents in the legal establishment. In considering the relationship between Shakespeare's company in performance and its audience, I should make clear that I do not presume to know what the audience members felt and thought. I seek

[8] Tribble and Sutton, "Cognitive Ecology," 97.

[9] Evelyn B. Tribble, *Cognition in the Globe: Attention and Memory in Shakespeare's Theatre* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[10] Roslyn Lander Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 12, quoted in Tribble, *Cognition in the Globe*, 26.

to illuminate values and belief systems that it can reasonably be assumed were held by this particular group of play-goers. As Shakespearean scholar Jackie Watson proposes,

> an understanding of the common knowledge, training and experiences of Innsmen, and of the interests that many shared, enables us to deduce some likely responses of these men who formed a substantial group in many theatrical audiences. . . . [C]ertain elements of plays would have been of particular significance to men belonging to an Inns of Court segment of contemporary audiences, and . . . responses and understandings amongst that group would have some commonality.[11]

The first perspective I'll use is an embodied cognition approach to morality advocated by thinkers such as Mark Johnson, Paul and Patricia Churchland, Diana Stanciu, George Lakoff, Jean Decety, and Lee Boldeman, among others. In this approach,

> morality includes concepts such as justice, fairness, and rights, and comprises norms regarding how humans should treat one another. It is an evolved aspect of human nature because it contributes to fitness in shaping decisions and actions when living in complex social groups. Reinforcement of moral rules minimizes criminal behavior and social conflict, and moral norms provide safeguards against possible well-being or health infringements. Developmental studies provide empirical support for claims that human capacities for moral evaluation are rooted in basic systems that evolved in the context of cooperation necessary for communal living.[12]

Mark Johnson points out that "moral values are found in ordinary physical, interpersonal, and cultural experience, and therefore not in some alleged realm of pure moral norms and principles"[13] since "our nature as biological organisms is intricately intertwined with our cultural being".[14]

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[11] Jackie Watson, "Satirical expectations: Shakespeare's Inns of Court Audiences," *Actes des congrès de la Société française Shakespeare* 33 (2015), https://journals.openedition.org/shakespeare/3352.

[12] Jean Decety and Jason M. Cowell "The Complex Relation Between Morality and Empathy," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 18, no. 7 (2014): 337.

[13] Mark Johnson, *Morality for Humans: Ethical Understanding from the Perspective of Cognitive Science* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 28.

[14] Johnson, *Morality for Humans*, 3.

Within these biological organisms, morality is also intertwined with other features of cognition and reflection. As Jean Decety puts it,

> neuroscience work demonstrates that the brain regions underpinning morality share resources with circuits controlling other capacities, such as emotional saliency, mental state understanding, and decision-making.[15]

Shared cultural activities, like play performances, offer a way to think through moral decisions and values without the attendant consequences that might pertain in daily life.

It has long been recognized in Shakespearean scholarship that comedies move through a phase of disorder towards some form of order. Cognitive theories of morality afford us a new perspective on this progression in *Twelfth Night*. As cognitive economist Lee Boldeman puts it in a chapter entitled "The Creation of Social Order is Irreducibly a Moral Project,"

> civil society, the political system, the market system and the broader culture are all involved in a complex mosaic of interlocking, mutually supporting structures and activities that provide the system of relationships, the social system within which we live. The interactions between these elements resemble a complex, interdependent ecological system.[16]

Recalling the fundamental principle of *situatedness* in embodied cognition, The Middle Temple can be considered as an ecological system within the larger ecological system of Elizabethan England. It was one of the four Inns of Court described by Sir Edward Coke in 1602 as *the third university*. The Inns, besides training those who would make the law their career, educated the sons of the nobility and other gentlemen and had close associations with the most powerful people in the country. Queen Elizabeth donated the wood for the Bench table in the hall from a tree in Windsor Great Park. The Middle Temple was at the heart of Elizabethan political and cultural life; Sir Francis Drake was a guest in 1596, Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Martin Frobisher were honorary members. Students in 1602 included the playwrights John Marston (*Historio Mastix*, *What You Will*, *The Malcontent*, *The Dutch Courtesan*), John Ford (*Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *Perkin Warbeck*) and John Webster (*The Duchess of Malfi*, *The White Devil*).

[15] Decety and Cowell, "Complex Relation," 337.

[16] Lee Boldeman, *The Cult of the Market: Economic Fundamentalism and its Discontents* (Canberra: The Australian National University Press, 2007), http://doi.org/10.22459/CM.10.2007.

Given that the Candlemas feast was one of only two occasions annually that all members of The Middle Temple were required to attend, it seems likely that they were present.

Thus, the Middle Temple audience included individuals who were invested in the status quo of the existing social hierarchy and who were also familiar with the licensed disorder that the Revels allowed. This tension between an ordered hierarchy and its disruption is also present in the play. The Candlemas performance that Manningham recorded was a context in which clothing was a matter of importance for performers and audience alike; while Middle Temple audience members strove to exaggerate their social status by wearing extravagant clothing, the Chamberlain's Men needed the livery of the Lord Chamberlain when they toured to give them protection from the legal status of vagabonds that otherwise applied to bands of performers. They were also sometimes criticised for wearing cast-off aristocrat's clothing in their performances. The period's Sumptuary Laws laid out very specific rules about what types of fabric were appropriate for each social *degree*, seeking to maintain a desired *correspondence* between social station and appearance:

> During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, specific laws were in place relating to dress codes, which dictated the colours and fabrics that people were permitted to wear based on their social rank and wealth. These were called sumptuary laws and aimed to regulate personal spending on luxuries such as clothing. Restrictions were placed on a range of fabrics including cloth of gold, velvet, silks, furs and damask and even on buttons and swords. Historically, clothing had been a clear indicator of one's place in the social hierarchy, but that was challenged during the reign of Henry VIII by the rise of the wealthy merchant classes who started imitating the nobility in dress. . . . Elizabeth I passed the Statutes of Apparel and issued no less than eight proclamations on the theme of "excesse of apparel". . . . The chief reason seems to be the dislike and fear of people—particularly "the inferior sort"—dressing above their station, which Elizabeth complained was causing "disorder and confusion of the degrees of all states".[17]

Statutes of the Middle Temple parliaments of the period, forbidding extravagance of dress, echoed the Sumptuary laws. Minutes of the Middle Temple Parliament of 1584 declare:

[17] Excerpt from a document stored at the British Library and published on the website: https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/proclamation-against-excess-of-apparel-by-queen-elizabeth-i, accessed July 6, 2023.

> Imprimis that noe great ruffes be worne; secondly that no white colour dublett or hose be worne; thirdly that noe facing of velvet be worne in gownes but by such as are of the Benche.[18]

When Malvolio imagines what his life would be like after marrying Olivia, his fantasy of wearing a "branched velvet gown" (2.5.47)[19] would therefore have had particular significance for the Middle Temple audience members, conveying a disruption of their dress code and the hierarchy it denoted within their institution. Clothing is a non-linguistic feature of the performance that links text and character with both the immediate and wider context. Malvolio's fantasy of wearing a branched velvet gown is metonymic of his desire for social advancement by marrying Olivia, which implies the disruption of a larger social hierarchy. The embodied fictional narrative blends with the immediate ecology of the Middle Temple and then extends into the larger social ecology.

Added to these factors were the festive disguises associated with the Revels. When clothing is linked with identity (as Mary Thomas Crane has demonstrated in *Shakespeare's Brain*),[20] disguise leads to a disruption of social order. This is true not only in the fictional world of the play, but also in the very location of its performance. On Candlemas night in 1591, several students had entered the Temple disguised, broke down doors, and abused and assaulted people. This was one of the events that led to the banning of the Revels for several years. Within the Middle Temple, Viola's line "Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness wherein the pregnant enemy does much" (2.2.27) would likely have reminded audience members of the violent potential of disguising and could even be heard as a moral axiom.

In the melded world of *Twelfth Night* and The Middle Temple, social order is closely related to visual perception and the way in which self is partly defined by image. As Mary Thomas Crane points out in *Shakespeare's Brain*, "suits both conceal and reveal what is within."[21] The most evident example of this is Viola's disguise, which, although it does not transgress social class, disrupts identity and incites the dramatic narrative of confusion. *Twelfth Night* emphasizes the subjectivity of perception and draws attention to the instability of a hierarchy

[18] Anthony Arlidge, *Shakespeare and the Prince of Love: The Feast of Misrule in the Middle Temple* (London: Giles de la Mare Publishers Ltd., 2000), 29.

[19] References are to act, scene, and line in the main text, using the Folger Shakespeare Library text available at https://www.folger.edu/search/?q=%22branched%20velvet%20gown%22&area=works&work=twelfth-night, accessed July 6, 2023.

[20] Mary Thomas Crane, *Shakespeare's Brain: Reading with Cognitive Theory* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[21] Crane, *Shakespeare's Brain*, 114.

that relies in part on sartorial appearance to identify its social *degrees*. This theme can be seen in the play's strand of imagery that relates visual perception to ideas of the self through the use of the words *see*, *eyes*, *picture*, and *image*. A particularly relevant example occurs in Orsino's conversation with Viola: In act 2 scene 4 Orsino states that "For such as I am, all true lovers are, unstaid and skittish in all motions else Save in the constant image of the creature That is beloved" (2.4.15). At the heart of this statement is the notion that what is constant about the lover resides in the image of the beloved. This concept can be fruitfully explored through Lakoff and Johnson's analysis of the ways in which metaphoric thought is embedded in and expressed through linguistic schema that reveal otherwise unconscious ideas. Lakoff and Johnson describe this as "a system of different metaphorical conceptions of ourselves."[22] I should point out that this analysis reflects how we as humans think of ourselves, *folk theories*, which are not necessarily aligned with the neurological actuality of our being.[23] Lakoff and Johnson's *Subject–Self* metaphor system shows that we experience ourselves as divided, making a distinction between a Subject and one or more selves:

> The Subject is the locus of consciousness, subjective experience, reason, will and our "essence," everything that makes us who we uniquely are. There is at least one Self and possibly more. The Selves consist of everything else about us—our bodies, our social roles, our histories, and so on.[24]

Lakoff and Johnson go on to point out that

> the source domain of the basic Subject-Self metaphor schema . . . is thus very general, containing only a person (the Subject), one or more general entities (one or more Selves), and a generalized relationship. Here is a statement of the general mapping:
>
> THE BASIC SUBJECT–SELF METAPHOR SCHEME

People and Entities		*The Whole Person*
A person	>	The Subject
A Person or Thing	>	A Self
A Relationship	>	The Subject–Self Relationship[25]

[22] Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, 267.

[23] I am grateful to Naomi Rokotnitz and Lisa Zunshine for their comments on this, which made clear the necessity for stating this distinction.

[24] Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, 268.

[25] Lakoff and Johnson, 270.

In Orsino's statement, love disrupts the essential subject; the "I am" of the lover is constant only in the visual fiction (the "constant image") of the beloved. The *Twelfth Night* audience knows very well that Orsino's beloved, Olivia, is not interested in him. Consequently Orsino has surrendered his essential self to an illusion—an outcome of the disordering effects of love. Similarly, when Olivia declares her love for Cesario, the disguised Viola tells her "you do think you are not what you are" (3.1.146) and then "I am not what I am." (3.1.148) In the world of the play, love is stimulated by visual perception and confuses the very notion of the essential Subject and varied Selves. Clearly, social order is going to be disrupted when individuals are not who they appear to be, let alone who they think they are.

In the world of *Twelfth Night*, love is a sickness (Olivia saying "Even so quickly may one catch the plague?" [1.5.301]) that supplants the constant Subject in the Subject–Self metaphor schema. When the sickness is self-love, which both Olivia and Maria assign to Malvolio, vanity becomes the *essence* of the Subject. Malvolio's references to Jove reinforce the concept of vanity for the Middle Temple audience; in Elizabethan cosmology, the soul descending to earth received the quality of vanity from the planet Jupiter (representative of Jove). References to the *melancholy god* Saturn are a reminder of the Saturnalian origins of Christmas Revels, and the feast of Candlemas—the date of this performance—marks the turning point between a period ruled by Saturn and one ruled by Jupiter in the astrological calendar. In his vanity, Malvolio pictures a socially elevated *self*: his narcissistic *Self* supplants his essential *Subject* in the way that Orsino's Subject is supplanted by the image of the beloved.

The play suggests that trying out different versions of self is going to disrupt social order *unless* it is accommodated in the *whirligig of time* which many commentators understand to refer to the pre-Christian cyclical festive calendar, based on the astrological calendar that I have just mentioned. Puritans opposed the festive calendar, and their attempts in London to restrict Reveling and also to close public playhouses form another social context that creates a synchronicity of attitude between The Chamberlain's Men and the Middle Temple audience.

The vice of vanity is, of course, what undoes Malvolio. In act 2 scene 3, Malvolio has confronted Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Feste, and accused them of "uncivil rule." As Sir Toby is encouraging Sir Andrew to challenge Malvolio to a duel, Maria diverts the potential violence through proposing revenge through comic humiliation: "On that vice in him will my revenge find notable cause to work" (2.3.150-152). Maria's motivation in gulling Malvolio is vengeful, but it is a vengeance that diverts, rather than prompts, physical violence and is part of a pattern of moral argument that is woven throughout the play.

Earlier in this piece, I described how scholars of the philosophy of mind consider morality to "originate in ordinary physical, interpersonal, and cultural experience, and therefore not in some alleged realm of pure moral norms and principles"[26] since "our nature as biological organisms is intricately intertwined with our cultural being".[27]

I am grateful to Tomasz Kubikowski, who responded to this paper at the *Cognitive Futures* 2023 conference, for alerting me to the necessity of acknowledging the plurality of views among these scholars. In particular, Paul and Patricia Churchland's proposals that psychology can and ultimately will be reduced to neurobiology is subject to some contention.[28] A detailed examination of such a complex topic is beyond the scope of this article. The aspects of Paul Churchland's work that I refer to, can, I believe, be considered robust regardless of where one stands in the debate about reductionism. Churchland has proposed that the neuronal and synaptic process of moral learning is founded on moral perception and that "moral perception is of a piece with perception generally,"[29] which is consistent with the proposals of Decety and others.[30] As we have seen, perception in *Twelfth Night* is often inaccurate and causes confusion. As Churchland states, "moral perception displays the familiar tendency of cognitive creatures to *jump to conclusions* in their perceptual interpretations."[31] In the scene that I've just described, what Churchland identifies as Moral Conflict occurs: "The activation of distinct moral prototypes can happen in two or more distinct individuals confronting the same situation".[32] Maria presents a plan of action that proposes a moral prototype of revenge through comic humiliation. Sir Toby s*witche*s from advocating a moral prototype of revenge through violence, proving himself susceptible to persuasion, or, in the language of the play, *entreaty*—a form of moral argument.

Different characters have different positions on the spectrum of responsiveness to entreaty. Sir Andrew, of course, is very susceptible: "I'll stay a month longer" (1.3.110). Olivia is resistant to Orsino's *verbal* entreaty, but swiftly responsive to Viola's *visual* appeal as Cesario: "Methinks I feel this youth's perfections With

[26] Johnson , *Morality for Humans*, 28.

[27] Johnson, 3.

[28] For example see John Sutton, "The Churchlands' Neuron Doctrine: Both Cognitive and Reductionist," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 22, no. 5 (1999): 850–851, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X99462193.

[29] Paul Churchland, "Neurobiology of the Moral Virtues," in *The Foundations of Cognitive Science*, ed. Joa Branquinho (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 84.

[30] E.g. Decety and Cowell, "Complex Relation," ff.

[31] Churchland, "Neurobiology of the Moral Virtues," 87.

[32] Churchland, 88.

an invisible and subtle stealth To creep in at mine eyes" (1.5.230–233), picking up on the play's imagistic thread of tension and interplay between language and visual perception. Orsino's responsiveness to entreaty is not really tested until he threatens violent revenge after hearing Olivia call Viola "husband": "Why should I not, had I the heart to do it, Like to the Egyptian thief at point of death, Kill what I love?" (5.1.112–115) and "I'll sacrifice the lamb that I do love, To spite a raven's heart within a dove" (5.1.126–127). Verbal argument does not sway him. It is only when he is presented with visual evidence (in the form of Sebastian) that Viola has *not* betrayed him that he sees an alternative to his threatened moral prototype of violent revenge: "One face, one habit, and two persons, a natural perspective that is and is not" (5.1.208). Orsino's perceptual conflict at this point matches Churchland's description of Moral Conflict in an individual:

> some perceptual feature is alternately magnified or minimized and one's overall perceptual take flips back and forth between two distinct activation patterns in the neighborhood of two distinct prototypes.[33]

Of course, there are other examples in the play of the tension between violent revenge and entreaty, not the least of which is the comic workout given to the theme in the abortive duel between Sir Andrew and Viola disguised as Cesario.

Readers who are familiar with the play may remember that there are two minor characters named Fabian and Curio who pop up at incongruous moments. These names were used as stage names by two law students in the Middle Temple Revels.[34] Given the apprenticeship system used by the Lord Chamberlain's Men and other companies, it's quite possible that the characters were performed by the law students whose names they bore, increasing the melding of the Middle Temple with the fictional world. In act 3 scene 2, Sir Andrew is persuaded to continue wooing Olivia by Fabian using legal terms and reasoning:

> FABIAN This was a great argument of love in her toward you
> ANDREW 'Slight, will you make an ass of me?
> FABIAN I will prove it legitimate, sir, upon the oaths of judgment and reason
>
> (3.2.13–14)

[33] Churchland, 88.

[34] This is persuasively argued by Arlidge in *Shakespeare and the Prince of Love*.

When Sir Andrew writes his challenge to Cesario, Fabian gives him some legal advice about the letter, saying: "A good note, that keeps you from the blow of the law" (3.4.162-163) and "Still you keep o' th' windy side of the law" (3.4.172). Fabian is involved throughout the sub-plot of the tricking of Malvolio and participates heartily in the box-tree scene, even though Maria has earlier said that Feste would be involved. Whether it was the student playing the character, or simply the character bearing the student's stage name, the device encourages the audience to identify with the characters whose Reveling is being suppressed by Malvolio.

Malvolio proves himself completely resistant to entreaty. In the Sir Topas scene, accepting the opinion of Pythagoras could deliver him from the darkness of his confinement, but he refuses. Many Shakespearean scholars have investigated the philosophical implications of this, but to my knowledge, the significance of the material environment and its effect on the audience in this scene have been neglected. This scene plays upon the audience's conceptual blending of the material environment with the fictional. Malvolio is noted by the First Folio text as "Within": this could have meant behind one of the closed doors of the screen wall, or inside a box brought in to the performance space. Feste disguises himself as Sir Topas in view of the audience and then contradicts Malvolio's claim that he is in darkness by asserting a visual reality that is shared with the audience. In describing "Olivia's" house, Feste gives an exact description of how the Middle Temple Hall admits light: "Why it hath bay windows transparent as barricadoes, and the clerestories toward the south-north are as lustrous as ebony" (4.2.38–41). This sounds like gibberish if, in reading the script, we understand the "south-north" as a single direction, an understanding which is encouraged by the word "toward." . However, the two long sidewalls of the Middle Temple Hall are oriented on a north–south axis, and the building also has a bay window. The effect is a metatheatrical in-joke for the Middle Temple audience, but also creates a situation in which a character identified by Maria as a "kind of puritan" insists on a version of reality that directly contradicts that which the audience sees.

This contradiction has particular significance in the social context of this performance. Puritans were extreme Protestants who sought to "purify" worship in the Church of England by restoring simple religious rites and what they considered to be the way of life of the earliest Christians. Whilst certainly not a group with entirely homogenous views, the most extreme Puritans opposed frivolous entertainment, the celebration of pre-Christian feasts, theatres, and theatre-going. Queen Elizabeth had appeased these views by banning the building of public theatres within the boundaries of the city of London, but the decades leading up to 1602 were marked` by many Puritan anti-theatrical publications and sermons. Shakespeare reminds the Middle Temple audience of these sentiments with lines such as Sir Toby's to

Malvolio—"Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" (2.3.114–115)—and Fabian's: "You know he brought me out o' favor with my lady about a bearbaiting here" (2.5.6–7). The Middle Temple audience would have known that bearbaiting was one of the activities opposed by Puritans. They would also have been aware that, for someone like Fabian whose livelihood depends on the favor of the head of the household, this is not a trivial matter.

In one sense, the actions that Malvolio takes throughout the play can be considered as vengeful—he revenges himself on those who are having more pleasure than he is by seeking to constrain or banish them. Orsino has stated that the lover is constant only in the image of the beloved and Malvolio's beloved is himself; any moral argument that might sway him from his vengeance will run up against his own focus on his image of himself. While Viola has earlier surrendered her tangled knot of a problem to Time, Malvolio has refused what Feste calls the "whirligig of time" by condemning the Reveling brought about by the cyclical festive calendar. Fabian suggests that the trick played on Malvolio "may rather pluck on laughter than revenge" (5.1.389), but Malvolio also refuses the supplanting of the revenge moral prototype by the comic moral prototype. Malvolio is offered a form of legal justice when Olivia tells him that he shall be both "judge and plaintiff" in a tribunal of the wrongs done to him, significantly tipping the scales of justice in his favor, but he refuses this. His self-righteous propriety has been a *behavioral disguise* of his narcissistic desire for social advancement and the riches that accompany it. The end of the play predicts the resolution of the main plot through the rediscovery of characters' true identities. At this point in the play, this implies the integration of the visually defined self with the *essential self* that forms the *Subject* in Lakoff and Johnson's *Subject–Self* metaphor scheme. Malvolio's final action of departing with the line "I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you" (5.1.401) disrupts this. Orsino says "Pursue him and entreat him to a peace" (5.1.403). In the cognitive ecology of this performance, it is unlikely that the audience would believe that Malvolio can be "entreated to a peace." Shakespeare has, throughout the performance, used visual, spatial and contextual as well as verbal means to encourage the audience to view Malvolio as a character who is resistant to *entreaty* about anything but his own social advancement. This implies—to an audience responsible for formulating and administering the law—that the vengeful impulses of Puritans cannot be integrated by any of the traditional means. Considered in the larger socio-cultural context, the Lord Chamberlain's Men were subtly making a moral argument against the Puritans who, by opposing theatre in general and the public playhouses in particular, threatened their livelihood.

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