

Gilding Loam and Painting Lilies: Shakespeare's Scruple of Gold

GABRIEL EGAN

Unlike his contemporaries John Lyly (*Gallathea*), Ben Jonson (*The Alchemist*), and Thomas Middleton (*Anything for a Quiet Life*), Shakespeare wrote no play featuring an alchemist.¹ Renaissance alchemy had a practical end, the transmutation of cheap metals into gold, but it was underpinned by a complex and subtle model of the universe derived from Aristotle and significantly modified by Paracelsus in the early sixteenth century.² The philosophical purpose of turning base metal into gold was to prove a theory about the nature of matter, according to which "all metals are made from the same basic matter and grow within the crust of the earth like a giant tree or plant."³ Gold, in this model, is merely the most refined kind of metal, one that cannot be transmuted further, and hence unalterable even by fire. But it is also a fiery principle in itself:

In the microcosmic-macrocosmic law of correspondences, gold is the metallic equivalent of the sun, the image of the sun buried in the earth. The sun in turn is the physical equivalent of the eternal spirit which lodges in the heart (the 'sun' of the human microcosm).⁴

Such a correspondence is part of a supposed cosmological and ideological system shared by all educated Elizabethans that was outlined by E. M. W. Tillyard during the second world war.⁵ When first announced, Tillyard's model was widely criticized for its reductivism and its failure to credit dissent, and these shortcomings were explored again in the 1980s by critics in apparent ignorance of the success of their predecessors, as Robin Headlam Wells showed.⁶ Shakespeare certainly gives characters speeches about microcosmic-macrocosmic

correspondence, but far from validating the putative Elizabethan World Picture what happens to such characters as often as not indicates the inadequacies of their explanations of the universe. A mundane way of transforming ordinary materials into gold without recourse to alchemy—and one Shakespeare would have known from playhouse decoration—is the technology of gold-plating, the applying of a thin layer of real gold to the surface. By repeated hammering of a small amount of gold, ancient Egyptian goldbeaters produced gold leaf only 40 millionths of an inch thick for the purpose of luxurious decoration, and by the nineteenth century refinements of essentially the technique achieved 3 millionths of an inch thickness.⁷ The art of applying gold leaf (or 'gilt') is 'gilding,' and while Shakespeare shows little interest in alchemy itself, his plays contain a rich seam of imagery connected with gold in this attenuated and debased form. The interest is apparent in a fondness for playing on the words employed in this kind of working of gold, 'gild', 'gilt', and 'gelt,' by using them in contexts where the meanings of their homophones and near-homophones (such as guile, guilt, and geld) might also be understood by a playhouse audience. This essay will explore that imagery, starting and ending with *The Merchant of Venice* where tawdry gold-plating is masterfully linked to an exploration of notions of purity, commodification of flesh, and monetary inflation.

On the night of the elopement in *The Merchant of Venice*, Graziano, Lorenzo, and Salerio are on the main stage and Jessica (disguised as a boy) throws one of her father's caskets down from the stage balcony. Before leaving her family home for the last time, Jessica decides to "gild [her]self / With some more ducats," to which Graziano responds "Now, by my hood, a gentile, and no Jew" (2.6.49-51).⁸ Jessica's suspicion that Lorenzo loves her rich outside more than her inner self is signalled in her talk of gilding her exterior to make it more attractive. Matching the split between her 'inner' and newly-enhanced 'outer' selves is a split in Lorenzo, who identifies himself as "Lorenzo, and thy love" (2.6.28) as though the man were not the embodiment of the love but something apart from it. Yet Lorenzo has

full confidence in his own powers of perception and finds Jessica wise "if I can judge of her" and fair "if that mine eyes be true" (2.6.53-54), which solipsism is typical of the play's young Christian men. The casket that Jessica throws to Lorenzo, undoubtedly full of gold and a prerequisite for her planned escape, is a counterpart to the three caskets amongst which Bassanio has to choose. In both scenes is a barely-submerged problem of perception, for although the moral of the three caskets might seem to be 'judge not by external appearance,' this platitude is undercut by the prize in the lead casket being a picture, a representation of the external view of a woman.

As a young woman dressed as a boy, Jessica's decision to "gild" herself might mean somewhat more than simply stealing ducats. The verb 'to geld,' meaning to castrate, could be spelt 'gild' until the sixteenth century (*OED* "geld" *v.*¹), and the noun 'geld,' meaning an Anglo-Saxon tax on land, was in the seventeenth century "confused with *gelt* *n.*²," meaning money, "which is in fact identical in ultimate etymology" and thus 'geld' could be spelt 'gelt' (*OED* "geld" *n.*). As Caroline Spurgeon showed, Shakespeare made his own connections between phonetically similar words,⁹ and Ernst Honigmann argued that even graphically similar words might cross-fertilize in Shakespeare's mind.¹⁰ I use this reproductive metaphor deliberately, for with gild/geld Shakespeare made a breed of barren metal and allowed 'gild' to suggest 'geld' in its sense of emasculation. Shakespeare's women refer to their lacking penises most often when engaged in cross-dressing (for example Viola's "A little thing [...] I lack of a man"; *Twelfth Night* 3.4.294), and the wordplay in Jessica's remark is picked up in Graziano's swearing an oath by his "hood." He might, of course, merely swear by his masque-costume, or perhaps his manhood, but we are warranted by the context—an eloping Jewish woman dressed as a Christian boy—to suspect that "hood" at least hints at his foreskin, which because he is not a Jew is intact. The foreskin is a small and relatively unvalued piece of flesh that substantiates religious and racial identity, and one of the play's characteristic inflations is this scrap's magnification (and Freudian displacement up-

wards) in the dangerously large chunk of the human body that Shylock tries to take from Antonio. This is a kind of forced adult circumcision of a Christian—Shylock gets to choose which part is cut and it is to be “cut off” not ‘cut out’—and in the popular imagination this was supposed to be a common desire of Jews, as James Shapiro showed,¹¹ and it is dramatically reversed when the Christians take their revenge upon the Jew with a forced conversion.

In alchemical science, gold is the most perfect of all substances and entirely untainted by imperfections. Most frequently Shakespeare has characters refer to personal imperfections as ‘spots’ that are “black and grained” for a self-reflecting Gertrude (*Hamlet* 3.4.80) and indelible for a psychotic Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth* 5.1.33). Just occasionally, however, spottedness can be a guarantee of identity, as with Innogen’s “cinque-spotted” mole that none but Posthumus should know (*Cymbeline* 2.2.38) and Mowbray’s insubordinate resistance to his king’s “Lions make leopards tame” with “Yea, but not change his spots” (*Richard II* 1.1.174-75). The idea of a leopard’s skin being the site of its unchangeable nature is somewhat in tension with our modern sense that identity is a matter of the internal and unseen (“that within which passes show”; *Hamlet* 1.2.85), but Mowbray insists that identity is necessarily outside the body in the form of “spotless reputation” without which “Men are but gilded loam, or painted clay” (*Richard II* 1.1.178-79). The choice here is between two forms of perfected outside, an immaterial representation in the minds of others (‘reputation’) and a mere covering of gold. Much of the play hinges on Richard’s spottedness, his failure to live up to the ideal of kingship (a perfected humanity), and characters repeatedly liken the monarch to the golden sun. This metaphor need not draw on alchemical thinking since ordinary ideas about value and purity are sufficient to explain it, but the alchemists’ understanding of the transformative power of the sun lent the sun/king association additional weight because the sun’s rays, penetrating the earth, were thought to provide “the generative warmth to ripen such imperfect metals as iron, copper and lead into the perfect metal, gold.”¹² When Richard’s Welsh followers give up on

his return from Ireland, Salisbury imagines that Richard's "sun sets weeping in the lowly west" (2.4.21), Bolingbroke in mid-rebellion sees Richard as a "blushing discontented sun" (3.3.62) about to be obscured by clouds, defeated Richard wishes Bolingbroke "many years of sunshine days" (4.1.211) before imagining himself a king of snow melting before "the sun of Bolingbroke" (4.1.251), and seeing in his reflection the face "That like the sun did make beholders wink" (4.1.274). But before this sun/king rhetoric has even got off the ground, it is undercut in the first act by Bolingbroke, who responds to banishment by observing that the sun will still shine on him and "those his golden beams to you here lent / Shall point on me and gild my banishment" (1.3.140-41). Thus Bolingbroke invokes the sun/king association before anyone else has a chance to use it, and by linking it with Mowbray's dismissal of mere gold-plating Bolingbroke slyly suggests that a king has only the exterior signs and golden trappings of power, which are available to anyone. For audience members who knew the ensuing history this was proleptic because Bolingbroke goes on to replace Richard and find the same danger alighting on himself: when kingship is treated as a possession not a right the institution is fatally weakened. The point of a king being like the sun and like gold is that these things were held to be unchangeable, having reached the state of perfection seldom attained in the sublunary sphere. As the rebellion gathers head an alternative, unflattering, sun/king rhetoric emerges: Northumberland invokes the gold-plated trappings of kinship as he exhorts his peers to redeem the "blemished crown" and "Wipe off the dust that hides our sceptre's gilt" (2.1.295-96). In spoken performance there is no way of distinguishing between this kind of 'gilt' and the 'guilt' of Richard's wrongdoing, and indeed the first five editions of the play spelt the word "guilt" and not until the 1623 Folio was it changed to "gilt."¹³

As well as kingship, Shakespeare's characters repeatedly associate gold with blood, especially in the form of thin layers coating weapons. In alchemy blood has strong associations with the principle that metals must 'die' in their original forms to be reborn as gold, and with the

life-giving red elixir (synonymous with the philosopher's stone) achieved after the white (silver) stage, the latter transformation featuring in alchemical treatises with the attendant associations of moon and sun, and of virginity giving way to fecundity, that one might expect.¹⁴ Of course, the word 'blood' itself is highly polysemous and when King John acknowledges that "There is no sure foundation set on blood" he immediately glosses his meaning as "No certain life achieved by others' death" (*King John* 4.2.104-05) but the opposite meaning is equally active: there is no certainty based on "lineage, descent" (*OED* "blood" *n.* 9.a). After the inconclusive offstage battle of the English and French between the first two acts of *King John*, the English herald sickeningly describes the once "silver-bright" armour now "all gilt with Frenchmen's blood" (2.1.315-16), and we might ask why Shakespeare likens gold-plating to painting in blood. An alchemical explanation is not necessary since there is an equally viable alternative in the inescapable 'guilt' of being caught red-handed, that is being caught in the act of murder with the damning evidence, the red blood of one's victim, still on one's hands. For the infamous 1981 Old Vic production of *Macbeth*, Peter O'Toole kept a basin of stage blood ready in the wings for use in the scene where Macbeth returns from killing Duncan. Out of sight, O'Toole would pour the entire basin load over himself and return to the stage soaked in gore from head to foot. If the audience kept their composure when Macbeth announced what is too obvious, "I have done the deed," they could be relied upon to lose it when Lady Macbeth reassured him that "A little water clears us of this deed" (2.2.14, 65).¹⁵ Of course, Macbeth should have merely bloodied hands to literalize the Scottish legal expression meaning "having the evidences of guilt still upon the person" (*OED* "red-handed" *a.*, "red-hand" *a.* and *n.*), which kind of 'guilt' suggested to Shakespeare's associative mind its homophone 'gilt' and hence he put together images of blood-painting and gold-plating. Thus we can explain Lady Macbeth's "I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal, / For it must seem their guilt" (2.2.54-55), although Macbeth's "His silver skin laced with his golden blood" (2.3.112) does also sug-

gest an alchemical influence in its linking of death, the transformation of silver to gold, and the red elixir.

The verb 'to gild' has virtually passed out of common usage except in the form of 'gilding the lily,' meaning "to embellish excessively, to add ornament where none is needed" (*OED* "lily" *n.* 5.). The phrase is Shakespeare's and it arises at the beginning of *King John* 4.2 after the king takes the decidedly unusual step of having a second coronation to make himself feel more secure in his possession of the crown. Salisbury thinks this the height of pointlessness and likens it to a string of other wasteful endeavours starting with gold and ending with the sun:

To gild refind gold, to paint the lily,
 To throw a perfume on the violet,
 To smooth the ice, or add another hue
 Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
 To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish, [...]
 (*King John* 4.2.11-15)

The familiar phrase 'gilding the lily' is a corruption of Salisbury's speech, for he speaks not of adding gold to the flower, but of adding gold to gold (so, a patina made of the same substance as that it coats), which suits Salisbury's meaning that the second coronation is superfluous. Likewise perfuming the violet, smoothing ice, adding a colour to the rainbow, and illuminating the sun all connote the pointlessness of supererogation, of 'more of the same.' But painting a lily entirely changes it from pure white to impure colour, which is the opposite of Salisbury's meaning of 'more of the same'; it is, however, rather like Mowbray's sense of men being "gilded loam, or painted clay" (*Richard II* 1.1.179). The readiest examples of painted clay known to Shakespeare would have been the statue work of stone masons whose yards had become established near the Globe playhouse in Southwark. Late-sixteenth century statues were invariably painted as was the classical tradition (the continental fashion for unpainted statuary did not reach England until the 1610s or 1620s) and B. J. Sokol argued that the supposed statue of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*—whose

still-wet painted lips Leontes is warned not to touch—shows Shakespeare's sensitivity to the continental art tastes of a circle of courtiers around Prince Henry.¹⁶ Hermione's supposed statue is, of course, exactly "gilded loam" and "painted clay," those things that Mowbray said were valueless without "spotless reputation." It is her reputation that is restored to Hermione by Leontes's acknowledgement of his guilt and by his sincere repentance for it.

The art of painting cheap things such as clay and wood to give the appearance of luxury is one with which Shakespeare had a long and lucrative business interest, via his one-tenth share in the Globe playhouse. The Burbage family failed in their efforts to establish an elite indoor theatre in the Blackfriars district in 1596, and the Globe was a decidedly second-best option that reused the main timbers (and presumably whatever else could be salvaged) from the dismantled Theatre in Shoreditch.¹⁷ The precise decoration of the inside of the Globe is uncertain but there was undoubtedly an extensive use of *trompe l'œil* painting to make wood and plaster resemble marble and gold.¹⁸ Hamlet's reference to the sky above him as a "majestical roof fretted with golden fire" (2.2.302-03) is perhaps the most famous moment that makes little sense to a reader thinking of the world of the play—why should the sky be "fretted" at all?—but is entirely clear if one thinks of the gilded fretwork of the underside of an amphitheatre playhouse's stage cover. Otherwise one might attempt to explain Hamlet's "golden fire" as the sun or the stars of a night sky, but this would seem as misguided as G. Wilson Knight's effort to make sense of Othello's "yon marble heaven" (3.3.463) by "watch[ing] the figure of Othello silhouetted against a flat, solid moveless sky"¹⁹ rather than thinking of the playhouse's eye-deceiving decoration. In such theatrical moments characters see through the imaginary world that they and the audience have been taking for reality and come up hard against the tawdry actuality of a gaudily-painted, neoclassical, wood-for-marble, London playhouse.

Even in our world of international standards for units of measurement, precious materials retain their own systems of weight such as

the carat, which has one meaning in relation to purity of gold, 24 carats being 100% purity, and another in relation to precious stones, one carat being 200 milligrams (*OED* "carat" n. 2., 3.). In Shakespeare's time a number of weighing systems were in use for different materials, and the dissonance created by not matching the unit to the material makes for *The Merchant of Venice's* most memorable expression, a "pound of flesh," which is so striking precisely because human flesh does not usually go 'by the pound.' There are two ways for Shylock to fall foul of his own bond, which Portia unreasonably determines has to be fulfilled to an impossible exactitude. The first is by cutting more or less than a pound and the second is by taking blood along with the flesh. The play leaves unstated what kind of pound the bond specifies, whether troy weight (used for precious metals and bread), apothecaries' weight (used for drugs), or avoirdupois weight (used for other materials). The subdivisions of a pound vary in each system, but the smallest unit, the grain, was uniform across all three. The troy pound and the apothecaries' pound weighed the same (5760 grains) while the avoirdupois pound was about one-fifth heavier at 7000 grains. There was, of course, no standard system for weighing flesh since it could not ordinarily be traded, but the basis of Shylock's legal argument is that since Venice permits the keeping of slaves it has already accepted the principle that flesh can be owned. The court upholds this principle and accepts Shylock's claim—"A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine" (4.1.296)—but punishes him for acting to enforce this claim since it is a crime for an alien to "seek the life of any citizen" (4.1.348). The pound of flesh, then, has already been alienated from the rest of the citizen who formerly owned it (but lost it by a contractual forfeit), and what catches Shylock is the act of trying to separate his property from Antonio's. This notion of inextricably linked properties extends to the pound of flesh itself, since the contents of the blood vessels in the flesh are not Shylock's and an overly-literal reading of the bond requires him to leave the blood behind. Negotiating his punishment, Shylock successfully pleads a similar inextricable link between his life and "the means whereby"

(4.1.373-74) he lives, his property, and although the terms of the final settlement are not clear he appears to be allowed to retain part of his wealth until he dies.

At the climax of the court scene Portia twice invites Shylock to take his forfeit. The first time she warns him only that if he also takes even one "jot of blood" (4.1.303) not mentioned in his bond, his lands and good will be confiscated by the state. Repeating the invitation twenty lines later, Portia inexplicably adds an extra stipulation and a new forfeit:

Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
 But just a pound of flesh. If thou tak'st more
 Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
 As makes it light or heavy in the substance
 Or the division of the twentieth part
 Of one poor scruple—nay, if the scale do turn
 But in the estimation of a hair
 Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.
 (4.1.322-29)

No further legal argument has been introduced, but Portia now claims that even taking too little of what is his own would trigger the punishment of the court and moreover the penalty has risen to include death as well as confiscation of wealth. This repetition might be due to the printing of imperfectly cancelled authorial first thoughts, with the second version of the warning ratcheting up the exactitude and the penalties, and prefiguring the Alien Statute trap to be sprung when Shylock attempts to leave.

The precision with which Shylock must measure his pound is clearly stated as one-twentieth of a scruple, and then obscurely stated as one hair. It is not certain whether the width or the weight of a hair is meant here, but in a parallel usage by Falstaff it is the latter: "the weight of a hair will turn the scales between their avoirdupois" (2 *Henry IV* 2.4.255-56). The word 'scruple' comes from the Latin 'scrupulus' meaning a small rough or hard pebble that came to be a standard unit in the apothecaries' weight system (but not the other two systems) in which it comprised twenty grains (*OED* "scruple" *n.*¹ 1.).

Thus Portia specifies the degree of accuracy Shylock has to achieve as one grain (0.017% of a troy or apothecaries' pound, 0.014% of an avoirdupois pound), which is a unit common to all three systems of weight. But she does so by its relation to the scruple, which exists only in the apothecaries' system. In alchemy the word 'grain' is used for "the seed of metals" as well as a unit of weight, and "It was said that just one grain of the elixir could transmute immeasurable quantities of base metal into gold,"²⁰ which suits the argument I am about to make regarding multiplication and division. But we can hardly expect a playhouse audience to hear the unspoken word 'grain' behind Portia's "twentieth part of one poor scruple" and then pause to ponder its associations, even if a dramatist in the act of composition might. Leaving aside an alchemical explanation based on 'grain,' we might still wonder why Portia avoids a word ('grain') that would make her stipulation independent of any particular system of weight and uses 'scruple,' which necessarily invokes the apothecaries' system. If Portia specified the troy weight system used for precious metals (including gold) and bread, say by referring to a 'pennyweight' (24 grains), which exists only in this system, she would perhaps evoke the anti-semitic 'blood libel' that Jews sacrifice Christian children at Passover to obtain blood as an ingredient for their unleavened bread, and this would hardly be consistent with her pretence at impartiality. And perhaps the avoirdupois system would seem too ordinary for the weighing of flesh, but in any case there was no unit that could identify it uniquely: its unit the 'dram' (roughly 27.3 grains) existed also in the apothecaries' weight system, albeit denoting a different weight (60 grains). Whatever other associations it might evoke, the apothecaries' system, which Portia uses, offers the polysemy of 'scruple' being a unit of weight and a thought that troubles the mind, "esp[ecially] one [...] which causes a person to hesitate where others would be bolder to act" (*OED* "scruple" *n.*² 1.). Such a finely balanced response from Shylock suits Portia's entrapment, for his crime against the Alien Statute is his being on the verge of taking the forfeit, but of course it is essential that he does not.

Creating for Shylock an anxiety of minuteness resulting from division upon division is Portia's new solution to the Christians' problem and it is the flipside of an inflationary mathematics that has signally failed. As Peter Holland noted,²¹ both sides are quick with their multiplication tables, from Portia's wish that she were "trebled twenty times myself, / A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich" (3.2.153-54) to her "Double six thousand, and then treble that" to pay off Shylock rather than have Antonio "lose a hair" (3.2.298-300). A hair representing the smallest part of a person that could be harmed was proverbial,²² but for Shakespeare human hair was also an image for near-infinite multiplicity ("Had I as many sons as I have hairs"; *Macbeth* 5.11.14) and for unity-in-multiplicity (singular 'hair' comprised of many 'hairs') that may break down in time of stress, as with Hamlet's "each particular hair to stand on end" (*Hamlet* 1.5.19). Shylock reputedly swore to reject "twenty times the value of the sum" he is owed (3.2.285) and in the court he asserts that even if every one of 6,000 ducats "Were in six parts, and every part a ducat" (4.1.85), he would not accept them instead of his forfeit. Like a goldbeater adding value to his material by repeatedly subdividing it, Shylock rightly thinks of multiplication as a form of division (strictly, it is division of the inverse, since $A \times B$ is the same as A divided by B^{-1}), which is in keeping with Shakespeare's sense of hair as both singularity and near-infinitude. Portia's wealth is virtually infinite: as Holland noted 3,000 ducats is so much money that even Shylock cannot lay his hands on it right away, yet Portia offers 60,000 ducats (3.2.304-05), which Holland reckoned to be about £ 5.4 million in modern money.²³ The play's Venetian ducats were "almost certainly gold" according to Holland,²⁴ as of course is Portia's hair, providing a rather tidy link between the main images of wealth in the play. Bassanio pitches to Antonio his trip to Belmont by reporting that her "sunny locks" are like a "golden fleece" (1.1.169-70) and Graziano confirms the classical allusion with his cry "we have won the fleece" (3.2.239), to which Salerio responds with a near-homophonic wordplay on Antonio's

wealth-giving fleets: "I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost" (3.2.240).

As with Lorenzo in the casket-catching scene, Bassanio's sense of his wife's identity is shaped by solipsism regarding his own powers of perception, and confronted with the picture of Portia in the lead casket he wonders whether the liveliness of the eyes is inherent in the object or produced by the act of looking at them: do her eyes "riding on the balls of mine" (3.2.117) only seem to move? Her golden hair Bassanio sees not as a singularity but a multiplicity ("hairs"), and one that reverses the roles of subject and object, of seeker and sought-after: "Here in her hairs / The painter plays the spider, and hath woven / A golden mesh t'untrap²⁵ the hearts of men" (3.2.120-22). Here most plainly is visible Bassanio's mental work of making a unity out of parts (as a spider makes a web from strands), but we should note that Bassanio's comment on Portia's golden hair is preposterous, putting the multiplicity first and the unity last (from hairs to hair). Bassanio uses Petrarchan language—John Russell Brown found an analogue in Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti*²⁶—but his movement from parts to whole is in the opposite direction to the particularizing and disturbingly anatomizing trajectory of the poetic blazon identified by Nancy Vickers.²⁷ This is not to exculpate Bassanio, who can experience Portia only as a portion or dowry comprised of numberless parts that to him add up to a "full sum" rather greater than the "unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised" she claims (3.2.157-59). By imagery that yokes gold and blood with hair, multiplication (woolly breeders and golden ones), and the indivisibility of the human body (the impossibility of Shylock getting his pound of flesh), Shakespeare treats human 'subjectivity' rather more subtly than one would expect from the misleadingly simple three-caskets scene, which appears to credit the Christian aristocrat with a keen insight to the difference between that which is within and that which is without.

NOTES

¹Thomas L. Berger, William C. Bradford and Sidney L. Sondergard, *An Index of Characters in Early Modern English Drama: Printed Plays, 1500-1660*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: CUP, 1998) 16, 110-138.

²Allen G. Debus, *The Chemical Philosophy: Paracelsian Science and Medicine in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, 1:2 vols. (New York: Neale Watson, 1977) 63-126.

³Lyndy Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), "gold and silver."

⁴Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, "gold and silver."

⁵E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1943).

⁶Robin Headlam Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000) 209-10.

⁷George M. Whiley, Cecil Whiley and H. L. Hunter, *Leaves of Gold: An Account of the Ancient Craft of Goldbeating and Its Development Into a Modern Industry*, illus. John Minton (London: Newman Neame, 1951) 20-23, 53.

⁸Unless otherwise attributed, all quotations of Shakespeare are from William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*, ed. Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett, and William Montgomery. Electronic edition prepared by William Montgomery and Lou Burnard (Oxford: OUP, 1989).

⁹Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Iterative Imagery: (1) as Undersong (2) as Touchstone, in His Work*, Annual Shakespeare Lecture of the British Academy (London: Milford, 1931).

¹⁰E. A. J. Honigmann, *The Stability of Shakespeare's Texts* (London: Edward Arnold, 1965) 71.

¹¹James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996) 113-30.

¹²Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, "sun."

¹³William Shakespeare, [*Richard II*] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second*, STC 22307 (Q1) (London: Valentine Simmes for Andrew Wise, 1597) D3r; William Shakespeare, [*Richard II*] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second. By W. Shakespeare*, STC 22308 (Q2) (London: Valentine Simmes for Andrew Wise, 1598) D2v; William Shakespeare, [*Richard II*] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second. By W. Shakespeare*, STC 22309 (Q3) (London: Valentine Simmes for Andrew Wise, 1598) D2v; William Shakespeare, [*Richard II*] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second. By W. Shakespeare*, STC 22310 (Q4) (London: W. White for Matthew Law, 1608) D2v; William Shakespeare, [*Richard II*] *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second. By W. Shakespeare*, STC 22312 (Q5) (London: for Matthew Law, 1615) D2v; William Shakespeare, *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies. Published According to the True*

Originall Copies, STC 22273 (F1) (London: Isaac Jaggard and Ed. Blount, 1623) C3v.

¹⁴Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, "blood," "rubedo."

¹⁵For this anecdote I am indebted to my student Kevin Quarmby, who played the cream-faced loon in the production.

¹⁶B. J. Sokol, *Art and Illusion in The Winter's Tale* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1995) 58-65.

¹⁷Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry and William Ingram, eds., *English Professional Theatre, 1530-1660* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000) 330-32, 493-94, 501-02.

¹⁸John Ronayne, "Totus Mundus Agit Histrionem [The Whole World Moves the Actor]: The Interior Decorative Scheme of the Bankside Globe," *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, ed. J. R. Mulryne, Margaret Shewring and Andrew Gurr (Cambridge: CUP, 1997): 121-46.

¹⁹G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearian Tragedy with Three New Essays*, 4th ed., intr. T. S. Eliot (London: Methuen, 1949) 99-100.

²⁰Abraham, *A Dictionary of Alchemical Imagery*, "grain."

²¹Peter Holland, "The Merchant of Venice and the Value of Money," *Cahiers Elisabethains* 60 (2001): 13-30.

²²R. W. Dent, *Shakespeare's Proverbial Language: An Index* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1981), Appendix A, H26.1.

²³Holland 16, 25.

²⁴Holland 24.

²⁵The only substantive early text gives this as "tyntrap"; see William Shakespeare, [*The Merchant of Venice*] *The Most Excellent Historie of the Merchant of Venice*, STC 22296 (Q1) (London: J. R[oberts] for Thomas Heyes, 1600) F1r. It is often modernized to "t'entrap" and although the Oxford edition's "t'untrap" seems negative the required sense is of trapping not releasing.

²⁶William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. John Russell Brown, The Arden Shakespeare (London: Methuen, 1955) 84.

²⁷Nancy Vickers, "'The Blazon of Sweet Beauty's Best': Shakespeare's *Lucrece*," *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (London: Methuen, 1985) 95-115.