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Heloísa Dias Queiroz

“What’s in a name?” - Shakespeare as a Brand

Rio de Janeiro

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Dissertação apresentada, como requisito parcial para obtenção do título de Mestre, ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras, da Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro. Área de concentração: Estudos de Língua

Orientadora: Profª. Dra. Fernanda Teixeira de Medeiros

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Rio de Janeiro

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DEDICATION

To my father (*in memoriam*), the first to encourage me to study the English language.

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To my husband, Rafael, for being my partner in life and believing in my dreams as if they are his own.

To my mother and sister, for always taking pride in my accomplishments.

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To Shakespeare, "I can no other answer make but thanks, And thanks, and ever thanks" (*Twelfh Night*, III.3.1502-5)

Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be.

Shakespeare. Hamlet, *IV.5.47-8.*

RESUMO

QUEIROZ, Heloísa Dias. *"O que há em um nome?"* Shakespeare como uma marca. 2021. 128 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em Letras) – Instituto de Letras, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2021.

Com a pergunta "O que há em um nome?" (*Romeu e Julieta*, II. 2, 46) como guia, esta dissertação visa analisar de que forma tanto o nome de Shakespeare quanto os de suas peças funcionam como uma marca. Entendendo as marcas não apenas como objeto de discurso, mas também como construções culturais, esta dissertação explora os processos de canonização de Shakespeare no período dos séculos XVII ao XIX, que culminaram na formação da marca shakespeariana. Visto que no processo de construção dessa marca alguns agentes culturais se mostraram mais relevantes do que outros, um enfoque especial é dado para o papel da indústria cinematográfica no século XX, destacando seus impactos na percepção e entendimento contemporâneos acerca da marca shakespeariana. Visando entender como a marca do Bardo opera no cinema, conferindo um conjunto de características positivas que agregam valor a esses produtos culturais, de forma a potencializar seu reconhecimento e aumentar seu desejo de consumo, um estudo de caso, comparando duas adaptações destinadas ao público adolescente, *Romeu + Julieta*, de Baz Luhrmann (1996), e *10 coisas que eu odeio em você* (1999), de Gil Junger, também é apresentado.

Palavras-chave: William Shakespeare. Estudos de Adaptação. *Branding.*

ABSTRACT

QUEIROZ, Heloísa Dias. *"What's in a name?"* Shakespeare as a brand. 2021. 128 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em Letras) – Instituto de Letras, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2021.

With the question "What's in a name?" (*Romeo and Juliet*, II. 2, 46) as a guideline, this dissertation aims to analyze how either Shakespeare's or his plays' names function as a brand. Understanding brands not only as objects of discourse but also as cultural constructions, this dissertation explores the processes of canonization of Shakespeare, from the 17th to the 19th centuries, which culminated in the formation of the Shakespearean brand. Since in the process of fashioning this brand some cultural agents proved to be more relevant than others, a special attention was given to the role of film industry in the 20th century, highlighting its impacts on the contemporary perception and understanding of the Shakespearean brand. With the objective of discussing how the Bard's brand operates within cinema, providing a set of positive characteristics that add value to these cultural products and enhance the desire for their consumption, a case study, comparing and contrasting two teenage filmic adaptations, Baz Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (1996) and Gil Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You* (1999) is also presented.

Keywords: William Shakespeare. Adaptation Studies. Branding.

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INTRODUCTION

People have learned in school that, according to Lavoisier's Law, nothing is either lost or created in nature, everything is the result of a process of transformation. Although it pertains to the study of chemistry, Lavoisier's principle can also be partly true in the realms of literature, art and popular culture, in which the process of adapting pre-existing artistic works has become quite common in the production of new material in multiple forms: music, literature, movies, dance, opera… Philosophers such as Walter Benjamin (2018 [1936]) and literary critics such as Roland Barthes (1967) have studied the process of storytelling, focusing on how new stories are derived from previous ones. As proved by the ever-growing list of examples, intertextuality is consciously in the center of our postmodern age, serving as a creative mechanism for the production of new popular or high-brow works.

When it comes to adaptations and appropriations one name that is almost mandatory to be mentioned is William Shakespeare's. Not only is he considered a great adaptor himself, being responsible for the popularization and immortalization of several stories − within his 38 plays, only four are considered to have an original plot: *Love's Labour's Lost*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; *The Tempest* – but he is also one of the authors that have inspired the greatest number of adaptations, his plays serving as source of inspiration for many different cultural products, from movies to comics. But what is it that makes Shakespeare the number one choice when selecting a source to adapt? Is it his skillful ability to use the English language in creating unforgettable passages? Or is it the many open possibilities to interpret his plays that deal with forever pertinent philosophical themes? Or maybe is it the canonical status of high-culture that his works have acquired that could somehow transfer this "respectability status" to the adapted work? Or even all of the alternatives above?

In today's capitalist society many notions of individuality derive from the kind of products people buy. People are inserted in a particular group of individuals by expressing their subjective tastes in fashion, music and culture in general. There is a need to demonstrate taste distinctions as a way to establish one's personal identity. In this world, taste has become an ability to make personalized choices out of a sea of consumer options. As Collins stated in *High-Pop: Making Culture into Popular Entertainment*, "what really matters is *what you like, not what you are like*" (2002, p. 17, emphasis added). This popularization of "good taste" has originated a cultural phenomenon named by Collins (2002) as "High-Pop". This phenomenon

consists in the appropriation of the so-called "high-culture", transforming it into mass entertainment products that are going to be purchased and consumed as a way to demonstrate taste and social distinction. Within the High-Pop phenomenon the status that authors' names acquire while working as brands is particularly interesting. The use of the signature as a brand is already a reality within different industries, such as fashion, in which women feel proud to exhibit their Chanel clothes or Cartier jewels, for example. In these markets, the name of the designer becomes a valuable asset to the product, conferring upon it a superior quality and positioning it as renowned and respectable. In literature and the visual arts, the signature system functions in a similar way: many novels, paintings, photos or sculptures acquired important status simply because they were created by a famous author/artist.

As far as signatures are concerned, Shakespeare's name has achieved such a status in and outside literature and drama that it is not an exaggeration to say that he has become a brand, and as such, tends to lend credibility to any product with which his name becomes associated. With the question "What's in a name?", which appears in *Romeo and Juliet* (II. 2, 46) as a guideline, this dissertation firstly to investigate and map out the historical formation of the Shakespearean brand. After having built this framework, the focus will lie on a specific niche of products, considered of utmost importance for the afterlife of Shakespeare's plays and the Shakespearean brand: filmic adaptations. The questions of how either Shakespeare's or his plays' names function as a brand for modern filmic adaptations or how Shakespeare's name works as a symbol which provides a set of positive characteristics and values to these cultural products in order to enhance their recognition and, consequently, the desire for their consumption are contemplated in the case studies this dissertation will present.

Although the Bard has always been rated as a talented playwright and poet, experiencing a great deal of success in his own time, the perception of his achievements suffered a turnaround in the late 17th century, when he was acclaimed as the supreme author of the English language. Throughout time, Western culture's fascination with the Bard has enlarged and he has become a cultural icon, suggesting that people's perception of his works has changed, according to their own context in history. In order to achieve its goals, this dissertation comprises three lines of studies: the study of the process of canonization of Shakespeare, branding, and adaptation studies, which will include a case study of two film adaptations of Shakespeare's plays.

Chapter one begins with the evolution of what marketing studies define as 'brand' as well as other important concepts that allow me to consider Shakespeare and his works as such, as for example, McQuarrie and Phillips' (2016) understanding of a brand as an object of

discourse and a cultural construction. Then, based on the criticism of Michael Dobson (1992), Jonathan Bate (1992,1997) and Stuart Sillars (2013), I will discuss the process of canonization of Shakespeare from the 17th to the 19th centuries. Here, it is important to mention that, in order to delimit the scope of my research, I am focusing mostly on the critical response to Shakespeare's plays.

The second chapter deals with the transformation of the Shakespearean brand in the 20th century, its presence within popular culture and the role of the cultural industry, in special film industry, in the transformation of the Shakespearean brand into an iconic brand. The marketing studies theory of Douglas B. Holt (2004) as well as the adaptation theory produced by Linda Hutcheon (2006) and Julie Sanders (2006) provide the basis for my analysis. The criticism focused on filmic adaptations and appropriations of the Shakespearean plays produced by scholars such as Jackson, Hapgood, Henderson, Lanier, Lehmann and Friedman also help me to substantiate my analysis. Finally, in order to understand how the Shakespearean brand operates in a specific and hugely relevant filmic market niche, the case study in chapter two will bring a discussion of two filmic adaptations: Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* (1996), based on the homonymous play, and Gil Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You* (1999), based on *The Taming of the Shrew*. The selection of movie adaptations produced in the same historical period (1990s), with the same targeted audience in mind (teenagers) and different genres – tragedy and comedy − will help to visualize the operation of the Shakespearean brand, allowing the analysis to focus on how genre and age can (or cannot) be a relevant factor in determining the popularity and the commercial result of a cultural product. It is, thus, through the analysis, comparison and contrast of Shakespearean filmic adaptations that all three lines of study mentioned above will merge: literature, adaptation studies and marketing studies.

1 THE BARD AS A BRAND

"Every age reconfigures the poet and his works for its own ideologies", said Stuart Sillars in his book *Shakespeare and the Victorians* (2013, p.185). To understand the construction of the Shakespearean brand it is important to analyze the principal aspects as well as some main events that were critical in the canonization of the Bard and his works through time.

This chapter comprises four sections: the first consists of a brief introduction to the concept of *brand* and how it is developed by different scholars, the last three sections focus each on a historical period concerning Shakespeare's reception in order to highlight the different "Shakespeares" that existed from the 17th to the 19th centuries, that is, how the image and perception of Shakespeare gradually evolved from a poet-playwright to a cultural icon, and finally a *brand*.

The historical periods considered in this chapter are: The Restoration period (17th century), the Romantic period (18th century) and the Victorian Age (19th century). It is worth mentioning that the aim of this chapter is not to give a full, detailed description of the critical reception and the Shakespearean scholarship within each historical period since it is obviously impossible to cover up approximately 300 years in a few pages. Rather, its aim is to pinpoint the main processes that, over the periods mentioned above, enabled the transformation of Shakespeare's figure into the Shakespearean brand we have today.

I expect that by the end of this chapter one may have a glimpse of the fact that, as stated by Sillars, our modern conception and understanding of Shakespeare is a result of an amalgamation process that started a long time ago, beginning even in the Bard's own lifetime.

1.1. The history of 'brand' and its various concepts

Brands are thought to be as old as civilization, having their origins dating to around 2.700 BC, in Egypt[1]. The word 'brand' is derived from the Old Norse word *brandr*, which

[1] KHAN, Saif; MUFTI, Owais. The hot history & cold future of brands. *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, v. 1, n. 1, p. 75-87, 2007.

means ‘to burn’. The linguistic origin of the word already indicates its primitive function: brands were created as a manner of livestock owners to identify their property by marking their animals with a heated iron in order to avoid theft. In this context, brands functioned as a way of differentiating products, providing them with an identification from a specific source. Over time, the brand concept naturally expanded when buyers realized that it provided information not only about the origin and ownership of a product, but also served as an index of quality, as manufacturers with a particularly good reputation would sell more products than the ones with a lesser reputation. Branding was, thus, used not only by farmers, but also by other professionals, such as potters, producers of manufactured goods or even traders of commodities. Seals or stamps were used on bricks, pottery, storage containers and fine ceramics and acted as primitive brands or *proto-brands*. The identification of clay pots, for example, would come in the form of the potter’s thumbprint or by the use of pictorial references to natural elements, such as fish or stars. Several archaeologists and other researchers have found evidence of branding, packaging and labelling in Antiquity, from early Greece and Rome passing through Mesopotamia, India and China, showing us how branding is even more ancient than literacy itself.

During the Middle Ages, the rise of trade guilds made the practice of using a manufacturer’s mark to identify products spread across Europe. In fact, this practice had grown so common that it even became mandatory for bakers in 1266 England, when the first trademark law was established[2]. Watermarks, blind stamps, hallmarks, and silver-makers' marks started to be widely used during this period. Another form of distinction and identification during the Middle Ages was also used by the wealthier and aristocratic families through heraldry. According to McQuarrie and Phillips, “heraldry shaped the early history of emblematic brand marks” (2016, p. 131). However, they call our attention to the fact that a coat of arms, although identifying the lineage of a family with a symbol, could not still be called as a brand. According to them, it would be “a gross solecism to speak of branding the Tudors or Hapsburgs” (MCQUARRIE; PHILLIPS, 2016, p. 131). If not a text and/or symbol of identification and distinction, what then, does a brand actually consist of? It is important to

[2] The Bakers Marking law was established by Henry III in 1266 England and it made mandatory for bakers to identify their bread, either by stamping their marks on the loaves or by pricking them in a particular and recognizable pattern. This law was a consequence of the Assisa Panis et Cervisiae law, which regulated the price, the weight and the quality of bread and beer. With the Bakers Marking Law, customers could identify the baker in case they tried to deceive them with loaves lighter than the standard.
BOUCHOUX, Deborah. *Intellectual Property*. The Law of Trademarks, Copyrights, Patents and Trade Secrets. Delmar: Delmar Cengace Learning, 2009. p. 20.

stress that the definition of brand is not a consensus among scholars, and it became a largely debatable topic in marketing studies, from the 1980's onward.

In the field of Marketing, brands were only acknowledged in the late 19th century, with industrialization and mass-production. The Industrial Revolution transformed the production of local communities into centralized factories, which needed to expand the selling of their products to broader markets. When shipping their items to other cities or countries, the factories would put their mark on the goods. By this time, this mark consisted not only of a name, but also of a graphic symbol or design − known today as 'logo'− that would usually represent the company. Until then, brands were understood as synonyms for trademarks, that is, a type of intellectual property that consisted of a recognizable symbol, sign, design, or expression legally registered to be used as representing a company or product. Because brands were a relevant aspect taken into account by customers in their purchasing decisions, many companies tried to copy the brands of competitors which had a better reputation. Thus, in 1862, with the Merchandise Marks Act, Great Britain established it to be a criminal offense to imitate another's trademark with the intent to defraud. It was not until 1875, however, that the formal registration of trade marks at the Patent Offices was allowed for the first time in the United Kingdom.

Still in the 19th century, producers and companies quickly realized that, despite the presence of the trademark, it would require them more in order to get the full attention – and trust – of customers. Therefore, a brand should consist in much more than a 'simple' trademark and should start to encompass other elements of intellectual property used in mass media advertisement such as slogans, mascots and jingles. The concept of brand as almost a synonym for trademark lasted very long. Until 1960, for example, the American Marketing Association, or AMA, defined brand as "a name, term, design, symbol, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from competitors"[3]. But, because this definition was product-centered and ignored the function of customers in negotiations, the brand concept provided by AMA started to be considered as partial and insufficient by some scholars, being soon replaced by new ones.

The rise of mass media in the 20th century provoked a radical change in advertisement and marketing studies. In the 1940s companies had already started to recognize that people

[3] AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION. *Marketing Definitions:* A Glossary of Marketing Terms. Chicago, American Marketing Association, 1960.

developed relationships in a social, psychological and anthropological sense with the brands they consumed. As they perceived the central and essential role of customers in business and as consumer behavior theory blossomed, brand definitions gradually changed. One example of brand definition that went beyond the initial trademark scope was that of Farquhar, who established it as a "bundle of tangible and intangible features which increase the attractiveness of a product or service beyond its functional value" (FARQUHAR, 1989, p. 24-33). Because attractiveness is subjective, that is, the qualities that customers perceive as appealing in a product may vary from person to person, Farquhar's concept could be said to be more evolved compared with AMA's first 1960s definition, since it indirectly considers the buyer's role as a decisive agent in the process of the purchase. It is reasonable to say that, in his opinion, therefore, a brand is something created by companies to aid consumers to make 'better' choices. However, because Farquhar failed to acknowledge the most important role of customers – that of producers of meaning in any kind of discourse – his concept has also been considered outdated.

Unlike Farquhar, scholars such as Keeble and Brown were successful in presenting in their brand concepts the idea that customers are also responsible for the construction of a brand's meaning. Considering a communicative perspective, they established more complex and rather abstract concepts. While Keeble stated that: "a brand becomes a brand as soon as it comes in contact with a consumer" (KEEBLE, 1991, p. 167-182), Brown defined it as "nothing more or less than the sum of all the mental connections people have around it" (BROWN, 1992, p. 419-420). Another scholar who had a similar thought towards brands was Pitcher, who defined them as a "consumer's idea of a product" (PITCHER, 1985, p. 241-246). At first sight, all these concepts sound a little vague, making it rather difficult for one to actually pinpoint a concrete definition. On the other hand, they can be considered very precise because they observed that, although intellectual properties, brands are not assets of which companies have complete ownership. That is, although brands exist objectively and physically – people can see the product's name and its graphic representation in the packaging – and can be legally registered in a patent office, they are still susceptible to different associations from the public. Brands are, therefore, public and cultural objects over which companies do not have absolute control.

The concept of brand developed by Keeble, Brown and Pitcher reminds us of Saussure's linguistic theories, in which a brand is very similar to the concept of sign, that is, a mental picture or image, something personal to a certain extent and subject to different interpretations and assimilation according to people's individual backgrounds. Put simply, a

brand was what customers or prospects, that is, possible customers, thought of when they heard a brand's name and/or saw its logo. As mental pictures, brands had surpassed the tangible aspects as that of a graphic mark or set of technical and functional features that could differentiate one product/service from another and had become an element of social practice. As a consequence, other sub-concepts began to emerge in marketing studies, such as that of brand image. According to Keller (1993), it consisted of the "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory" (KELLER, 1993, p. 3). So far, one can argue that both concepts of brand and brand image can be easily mistaken and to some extent even be used interchangeably, which is the case of this dissertation. Since a brand is subjective, all brands can also have multiple brand images depending on different customers and their social and historical contexts. McQuarrie and Phillips (2016) address this matter when they say:

> Brands are incorporeal entities that exist independently of their owners and of the goods that they name. Brands exist and are developed primarily in discourse. Brands are cultural things. [...] To be a cultural thing means to exist primarily in the minds of people who participate in the surrounding culture. Cultural things are renewed in discourse and practices. Any cultural thing will be manifested in many representations, no one of which pushes and tugs at the overall gestalt. Brand meaning is fluid [...]. (MCQUARRIE; PHILLIPS, 2016, p. 7-8)

As an element of discourse, a brand is heavily dependent on communication and, once this idea was understood by the marketing and advertising professionals, it became imperative for them to establish strategies to induce consumers into building specific perceptions towards brands so that companies could regain relative authority over these valuable assets. One of these strategies consisted of establishing a brand personality, which involved attributing a set of human characteristics to brands in order for them to function as a person. One of the most prominent marketing scholars who advocated in favor of the brand personality concept was David Aaker (1991) who, after applying some of Sigmund Freud's psychological techniques such as projection, free association and sentence completion into motivational purchase researches, realized that people usually establish unconscious relationships with products they consume but those who established connections based on emotion rather than rationality developed longer relationships. Aaker (1991) then suggests that instead of focusing on tangible and functional attributes of a product/service, a brand should be portrayed as reflecting the customer's experience with the product/service as a way to create emotional associations between them. Besides including personality features, it should also include demographic characteristics like age, gender or class.

According to Aaker (1991), it is through brand personality that customers communicate with their own identity. By extent, it is through the consumption of a brand with a specific personality that people would be expressing their self-image to the world. Customers who want society to perceive them in a particular way will probably consume brands that exhibit personality features similar to the ones they desire for themselves. Through aspiration, association and projection, branding enhances organizations' ability to communicate and connect with their consumers. Usually companies resort to celebrities and other kinds of public people in their advertisements as a way to embody their brand personalities, making a public figure the 'face' of a product or service. In the case of specific industries such as fashion, architecture and even literature, for example, the author or the creator of a product instantly embodies their brand personality. However, it is not simply by associating a brand with a celebrity or a public figure that a brand communicates its personality/identity and establishes emotional connections with its consumers.

As it had happened with other branding models before, the focus on emotional branding which encouraged brand managers to give their brands a personality proved not well suited for developing all kinds of brands. According to Douglas B. Holt (2004), the model of emotional branding is effective for business-to-business firms, services, retailers and experiential offerings, as the brands in these economy segments create value to customers in their face-to-face interactions (HOLT, 2004, p. 234). However, for categories in which people tend to value products as a means of self-expression, such as clothing, home decor, beauty, leisure, entertainment, automotive, food and beverage, the emotional connections between brands and their core customers are not simply developed through communications that provoke an emotional reaction from the audience. Rather, emotional connections are the result of potent identity myths, that is, brands must create memorable stories through which they address customers' deepest anxieties or barely perceptible desires. For brands which aimed to function as vehicle of self-expression, thus, Holt suggested that a new model of branding would be better suited, the model which he named as cultural branding. With cultural branding, Holt defined the set of axioms and strategic principles which guided a brand into becoming cultural icons or, in other words, into becoming an *iconic brand.*

The idea of Shakespeare as an iconic brand will be further developed on chapter two. In the following topics of this chapter I will give special focus to the notion of brands as cultural constructions. As precisely stated by McQuarrie and Phillips (2016), brands are elements of discourse and as such their personalities are fluid and mutable, being constantly defined and redefined by both companies and consumers alike, in all forms of

communications, not exclusively advertisement. Agreeing with McQuarrie and Phillips (2016), I will discuss how the Shakespearean brand has been built through time by several agents as, for instance, critics, editors, scholars and theatrical adaptors, among others. As I have mentioned above, it is worth highlighting that marketing studies acknowledge the concept of brand as we understand it today as existing only from the 19th century onwards. Because of that, since it would anachronistic to refer to a Shakespearean brand before the 19th century, all previous historical periods here analyzed refer to a Shakespearean image instead. Nevertheless, one will realize that both the 17th and 18th centuries represented crucial periods in the formation of the modern Shakespearean brand.

1.2. **The image of Shakespeare from the Restoration period to the First Jubilee (1660-1769)**

The period between 1660s and 1760s is one which many authors consider to be essential in the canonizing of Shakespeare and the beginning of Bardolatry, that is, the adoration of Shakespeare as a cultural icon. In his book *The Making of the National Poet,* Michael Dobson affirms*:* "many of the conceptions of Shakespeare we inherit date not from the Renaissance, but from the Enlightenment" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 3). Dobson supports his opinion by exemplifying how many of the practices that modern spectators and readers of the Bard regard as normal and natural today, such as the reproduction of his works in scholarly editions with critical commentaries, the publication of critical editions devoted entirely to the analysis of his texts and the promulgation of his plays in secondary and higher education started during the Enlightenment. Dobson's focus, however, relies not on those practices but on adaptations and appropriations of Shakespeare's works, highlighting that it was also during the Enlightenment that every play in the Shakespearean canon, except for *Love's Labour's Lost,* experienced either a revival and/or a rewriting. In fact, many of the plays that helped build Shakespeare's reputation as the supreme dramatist of world literature such as *Macbeth, King Lear* and *Romeo and Juliet* for example, were only tolerated at the theaters at that time in heavily revised versions.

While many critics consider these rewritten plays as something inessential to the story of Shakespeare's reception and some like the editor of *Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage, 1623-1801,* Brian Vickers (apud DOBSON,1992, p.9) , even understand them as the

eighteenth-century public's failure to achieve an educated standard of taste, others such as Michael Dobson consider adaptations as a fundamental piece in the canonization of Shakespeare, "one of the various and contingent means by which that very idea of the 'true' Shakespeare was constructed" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 10). To Dobson, the process of claiming Shakespeare as an Enlightenment culture hero both profited from and occasionally demanded the substantial rewriting of his plays. He focuses his discussion on presenting how Shakespeare's works were appropriated to fit what became the dominant nationalist ideology of mid-eighteenth-century England, that is, how Shakespeare's original work was transformed, 'enhanced' and 'purified' in order to adjust to the political and also aesthetic mentality of the time. These appropriations created a series of "alternative Shakespeares" (DOBSON, 1992, p.12), proving that history can be multiple and is certainly not incontestable. Tracing an outline of the events and pieces of evidence that made the "authorizing" of Shakespeare most visible, that is, the events that served to canonize the playwright as a cultural hero and that helped to enshrine his texts as national treasures, Dobson presents himself as "inclined to privilege the authority of the interpretative community as the most important factor in defining what Shakespeare's texts can mean at any given historical moment" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 12).

Because of this positioning, which not only acknowledges the importance of appropriators but also historicizes the process of canonizing Shakespeare, Dobson's work *The Making of the National Poet* proved itself essential in my path of understanding the process of construction of the Shakespearean brand and, thus, was used as its starting point. This section of the chapter, hence, aims to discuss how some events – especially theatrical adaptations and appropriations of the 17th and 18th centuries – even though very distant from us in time, came to be determinant and highly influential in our contemporary understanding and appreciation of the Bard's work. It will try to illustrate the role of adaptations in providing the incorporation of Shakespeare's plays into literature and how they changed the status of his work from popular and 'unrefined' to one exemplary of high-quality reading. It will also comment on how adaptations, by developing new tragic sub-genres such as the she-tragedies, helped to plant the very first seeds of the essential view on Shakespeare as a profound *connoisseur* of the human soul – an idea that would actually grow and bloom with the Romantics. The role of adaptations and appropriations has been so fundamental in the building of the Bard's brand, that this discussion will continue in chapter two, this time focusing not on theatrical productions, but the cinematic productions of the 20th century.

In the 1660s, after the reopening of the theaters that had previously been closed for 20 years due to the prohibition of theatrical activity during the Interregnum[4], very few new plays were immediately available and the theatres therefore turned to the works of pre-civil war most popular dramatists, namely Ben Jonson (1572-1637), William Shakespeare (1564-1616), Francis Beaumont (1584-1616) and John Fletcher (1579-1625). In general, the restaging of Jonson's and Fletcher's works was privileged to the detriment of Shakespeare's because critical perceptions in the mid-seventeenth century associated his plays with something less 'refined', as unmediated expressions of nature, while Jonson's and Fletcher's works were considered more sophisticated, belonging to the domain of Art. There were levels or degrees in adapting Shakespeare, depending on the amount or depth of modifications the adaptors executed. Initially, some of his works were restaged mostly unaltered, with the theatres resorting to plays that had been popular in the royal circles before the closing of the theaters in 1640, such as *Othello*, *Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, as a strategy to grant their commercial success. However, while these plays acquired the status of reliable classics, attempts to expand this lightly revised form of adaptation to the rest of the Shakespearean *repertoire* proved to be a failure. *Romeo and Juliet*, one of Shakespeare's most acclaimed plays nowadays, was cruelly evaluated by Samuel Pepys, who, after watching a revival in 1662, wrote in his diary: *"*It is the play of itself the worst that ever I heard in my life" (PEPYS apud DOBSON, 1992, p.27). Although being a single spectator, Pepys' negative appraisals of 'unaltered' Shakespearean drama are still relevant to portray how Restoration playgoers apprehended the Bard's works, that is, as plays considered vulgar and provincial, that required 'cultivation'.

In the light of the new political situation, in which a monarch from the Stuart's house, Charles II, restored its political powers after the 11-year republican government of the Commonwealth (1649-1660), and because of neoclassical standards and expectations of the public that demanded clearer and more intelligible language, tragicomic plots, increased sentimentalism, and poetic justice, Shakespeare's plays needed to be substantially rewritten. It was Sir William Davenant who, also in 1662, started the practice of full-scale adaption, creating a hybrid of *Measure for Measure* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, called *The Law Against Lovers.* By removing the original plays from the 'natural state' in which Shakespeare

[4] The Interregnum was the period between the execution of King Charles I in January 1649 and the arrival of his son, Charles II, to the London throne in May 1660. The government of Charles II is also known as the Restoration Period.

left them, Davenant-combines and modifies ingredients to fit the dramatic requirements of the Restoration, creating, as a result, a new category of his own works. As Shakespeare had done in his own time with *ur-Hamlet* and *Leir*, for example, Davenant treats Shakespeare's plays as something available for recycling and appropriation.

Davenant's most memorable work, *The Enchanted Isle*, was based on the *Tempest* and written in 1667, with the collaboration of John Dryden. This play was able to outlive the specific context in which it was produced, becoming a mark in the history of Shakespearean adaptations, as the first one to introduce female actresses in the theatrical practice. The importance of this adaptation, Dobson suggests, relies not only on the role it developed influencing the theatrical treatment of Shakespeare's plays over the next two decades but specially on the way it portrays the figure of the Bard himself, epitomizing the perception towards Shakespeare during most of the Restoration period. In its preface, it is possible to observe Dryden's and Davenant's conflicting attitudes towards Shakespeare. While presented as a father figure who has influenced other contemporary playwrights, Shakespeare, although endowed with "a magical power as sacred as the King's" (DAVENANT; DRYDEN apud DOBSON, 1992, p.40) is, at the same time, considered 'old' and outdated. This strategy to praise Shakespeare's work just as much as not to elevate him to the position of the greatest authoritative figure either in English drama or in literature was carefully thought to leave room for his adaptors to alter the originals, 'improving' them with new features. In the following years, from 1678 to 1688's, however, the strategy applied to adapt Shakespeare would drastically change because of political reasons.

Between 1679 and 1681, both the stage and the State were suffering the consequences of the so-called Exclusion Crisis, in which three bills were created in order to exclude Charles II's brother, James, from the line of succession to the throne. The claim to that exclusion was that James was not an Anglican, but a Roman Catholic and it was feared that, as the direct successor of the king, he could rule in an absolutist way, in the molds of French Catholic king, Louis XIV. While the consequences in politics were the formation of two new parties that later would be known as the Tories and the Whigs, in theaters − as highly political places operating under the patronage of the king and other nobles − the reflection of the Exclusion Crisis was a climate of tension and censorship, in which every play produced was considered controversial, with explicit or covert propagandist intentions or even secret plots. Every play was in danger of attack, either from Tories, accusing it of treason against the monarchy or from Whigs, accusing it of nurturing Catholic sympathies.

Under these conditions, caught in the crossfire of the two parties, many playwrights took refuge in rewriting Shakespeare. Having been considered 'unpolished' in comparison to Jonson's and Fletcher's during the Restoration, Shakespeare's plays continued to be seen as expressions of nature during the Crisis, but this view now offered an advantage to the adaptors: they could claim political neutrality for their texts, selecting Shakespeare as source material under the convenience of his recognition. Using canonization, that is, the promotion of Shakespeare as an author supposedly above and beyond contemporary politics as a pretext, adaptors such as Dryden and Ravenscroft created a sanctuary around their adaptations, making them safe from critique in the political context of the time. Dobson pointed out that what is most significant in both adaptors is their ability to distract the audience's attention from "the issues of loyalty and kingship onto the sheer pathos offered by the spectacle of their suffering heroines." (DOBSON, 1992, p. 76). In fact, this strategy of attracting the public's attention to the dramas of the domestic, private emotions became common at the time, being used not only by Dryden and Ravenscroft, but also by Otway in his, *The History and Fall of Caius Marius* (1679)[5], a version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. By denying both lovers the full responsibility for their destinies and portraying them as victims of fate, Otway proved to be possible to produce tragedy disconnected from political action, focusing instead on the sufferings of political victims. After Otway, tragedy was no longer a privilege of monarchs because it had been '*embourgeoised*'. The affective tragedy of *Caius Marius* represented a decisive turning-point in the Augustan drama, to the extent that, as late as 1875, almost 200 years after its first performance, Otway's version of the tomb scene would continue to be part of most performing texts of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Another adaptor that also produced a play that became a turning point, in the history of English drama was Nahum Tate, with his adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, named *The History of King Lear,* first staged between 1680 and 1681. Tate's *Lear,* as Dobson points out, also helped to establish this theatrical change of the tragical focus, from "the heroic ethical choices of political leaders" to "the sufferings of helpless private citizens" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 77), especially female characters, that would create a new sub-genre known as the she-tragedies. As did Otway, Tate similarly resorted to (apparently) 'apolitical' domestic

[5] *The History and Fall of Caius Marius* is an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, written by Thomas Otway. It is based on the Roman civil wars envolving the consul and general Caius Marius and his rival, Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix, who attempted to take control of the Roman Republic in the 2nd century B.C.

pathos, establishing the focus of his play on the love affair between Edgar and Cordelia, that end up happily married, needless to say, a crucial difference in comparison to Shakespeare's version of *Lear*. Although the play portrays a bastard's rebellion being crushed and the restoration of the right, legitimate monarch to the throne, Cordelia's choice of marrying Edgar instead of her royal suitor Burgundy, gives occasion for reflections on the superiority of private love to the detriment of state matters. Preferring her relationship, Cordelia ignores her father's marital arrangements as well as her duties and obligations as a princess, thus, demonstrating the incipience of a bourgeois behavior. This happy-ending adaptation was, in fact, so well received by audiences that, according to Stanley Wells, general editor of the Oxford University Press and one of the world's most prominent Shakespearean scholars who was even knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 2016 in honor for his services in scholarship, Tate's version "supplanted Shakespeare's play in every performance given from 1681 to 1838", and was "one of the longest-lasting successes of the English drama".[6] Dobson highlights how this change in the original plot is very significant in the historical context of the period, demonstrating not only the prevalence of middle-class thoughts over the customs of the monarchy, but also implicitly endorsing feminine roles.

Another example of an adaptation produced during the Crisis that resorts to feminine tragedies to create its pathos is Thomas Durfey's *The Injured Princess* (1682), a tragicomedy based on *Cymbeline.* Recalling Tate's mode of adaptation, Durfey's work also presents a similar valorization of the private sphere through his treatment of Imogen first as a wronged wife and second as the heiress to the British throne. According to Dobson, Durfey's work is another example of how Shakespeare's monarchist romances were made fit for middle-class consumption. Gradually, the so called she-tragedies – plays that have their pathos generated by a suffering woman who owes her status as a heroine to her misery rather than to her rank – start to replace the Restoration's heroic plays on the stages. Through this series of examples in adaptors such as Ravenscroft, Otway, Tate and Durfey, Dobson once again stresses that it was due to the processes of appropriation and adaptation that Shakespeare began to acquire the prestige of England's greatest dramatist. The readings and rewritings of his work that transformed the plays into primarily domestic tragedies, stressing character's private pathos, allowed the Bard's work to transcend politics, providing discussions about universal human suffering and starting to show its timeless value. On the contrary of what may be assumed,

[6] WELLS, Stanley. Introduction. In: SHAKESPEARE, William. *King Lear*. Ed. by Stanley Wells. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. p. 63.

then, what Dobson observed was that, rather than reducing the scope of Shakespeare's work, the focus on the she-tragedies actually amplified it, since it allowed the middle-class public to see themselves represented in the plays and to identify themselves with plot. It is possible to conclude that for the bourgeoisie, the private, domestic pathos could be generalized until a certain extent, transforming what was individual into more of a universal human condition.

Although seen by Dobson as one of the contributors in the elevation of Shakespeare's plays because of his focus on the human suffering, Durfey was not always seen in a pleasant manner by his contemporaries. Having been considered an inventive and creative playwright in the premiere of his first play in 1676, Durfey sees his status change by the end of his career when he doesn't acknowledge basing his *Injured Princess* on Shakespeare's work. At a time in which a new interest in the matters of intellectual property in the fields of literary criticism arose, Durfey suddenly became a "violator of both property and propriety" (DOBSON,1992, p.102), not being considered a true author in the view of the critics. Soon, the attitude of treating Shakespeare's raw materials for reworkings without acknowledging the original author his due credit in an adaptation, as did Durfey, started to be seen as morally transgressive and lacking in respect for the literary works of others, with adaptations consequently becoming synonymous of low entertainment.

It is worth mentioning, however, that sometimes, the attitude of omitting Shakespeare's name from some adaptations appeared not as a sign of lack of respect for the Bard as critics observed in Durfey, but exactly the opposite, that is, as a sign of high esteem for his image. This is the case of Charles Johnson (1679-1748), in his adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew*, named *The Cobler of Preston*, in 1716. In a time in which comedies were considered vulgar, Johnson's omission of the Bard's name as a source of inspiration to his new farce is done deliberately in order to preserve Shakespeare's authorial honor and distance his image from what was considered low entertainment. Dobson suggests that this division between the so-called 'low' adaptations uninterested in Shakespeare's authorship and the ones concerned above all to portray him as a great literary exemplar would continue up to the middle of the eighteenth-century, when the qualities of Shakespearean drama came to indisputable recognition and the invocation of his name would virtually legitimize anything. However, two centuries later, it is still possible to observe a similar behavior in contemporary filmic adaptations of Shakespeare's works.

The two 90's teen-movies selected to build up my *corpus*, operate in a similar manner to those adaptations of the seventeenth century, with Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet* explicitly referencing Shakespeare in its title, while Gil Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You*

does not acknowledge the Bard as its source of inspiration. The fact that it is the movie based on a tragedy that mentions its source, while the other, based on a comedy, opts to omit it seems no coincidence. Perhaps the omission of Shakespeare's name on the movie title suggests that in contemporary societies, comedies are considered less marketable than tragedies, been even a mere "byproduct" of the Shakespearean brand. In the following chapters I expect to clarify the circumstances that made each adaptor choose a different strategy towards mentioning its source as well as to analyze the consequences of such strategies for the movies' commercial success, as one of the objectives of the present research.

Besides the matter of acknowledging or not their sources, playwrights have used different approaches towards intellectual property and modes of adapting during the centuries. Whereas earlier adaptors modernized Shakespeare's language to make it blend in with their own, others, like Colley Cibber (1671-1757) and George Granville (1666-1735), decided to alter their own diction to imitate that of Shakespeare. Although imitating Shakespeare's style, both authors used a similar typographical strategy to distinguish Shakespeare's exact words and their own thoughts. While Cibber uses quotation marks to signal which thoughts are Shakespeare's, Granville chooses differently to label his own additions to the plays, defending that "nothing may be imputed to Shakespeare which may seem unworthy of him". What is interesting to observe about Cibber's and Granville's strategies of adapting Shakespeare is that their typographical distinctions show us how Shakespeare's image has been constructed and influenced not only with adaptations in theatrical form, but also with their published versions. Thus literature, in the 18th century, begins to enlarge its importance in establishing Shakespeare's authority.

While Granville's veneration for Shakespeare made him concerned about not staining the Bard's reputation with the alterations he produced, others thought differently. In the 1700's Shakespeare's plays were, actually, caught between two main points of view: one that considered them so admirable that nothing should be added to them, and the other that thought them so despicable that no one should lose their time upon them. Nevertheless, an adaptor with a less radical viewpoint was able to establish the middle ground between these two extremes. In his *Remarks on the Plays of Shakespear*, Charles Gildon (1665-1724) presents himself as a partial approver of adaptations. In Dobson's words, Gildon believed that adaptation:

> only benefits Shakespeare's original text when its exponents supply thoughts 'which we could justly attribute to Shakespear' – presumably to replace those of Shakespeare's original thoughts which we would rather not attribute to Shakespeare (DOBSON, 1992, p. 118).

In other words, for Gildon, adaptations are only relevant when they, in a certain way, "purify" and, consequently, "enhance" Shakespeare. Gildon's own contribution to the purification of Shakespeare, his adaptation *Measure for Measure, or Beauty the Best Advocate*, performed in 1700, is framed by an explicit rejection of theatrical vulgarity, in which he tries to frame it into an Aristotelian format. About his own adaptation, he affirmed that:

> The Main Story or Fable of the Play is truly *Tragical* for it is Adapted move Terror, and Compassion, and the Action is one. Its having a Fortunate Catastrophe, is nothing to the purpose that is in many of the Greek Tragedies…The Unities of Action and Place are pretty well observed in this Play, especially as they are in the Modern Acceptation. (GILDON apud DOBSON, 1992, p. 120).

Besides trying to make the comedy more socially accepted by configuring it into classical tragical patterns, Gildon also tries to make it "less indecent and more socially exclusive" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 120) by removing some characters considered responsible for the "carnivalesque vulgarity" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 121), such as Mistress Overdone, Froth, Elbow, Abhorson, Pompey Bum and Barnardine. Gildon's Shakespeare, thus, is "at heart a neoclassicist and moralist" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 121) and endorses the adaptation himself, with his ghostly manifestation appearing on stage to speak the epilogue of the play – a procedure clearly inspired by other previous adaptors who had done the same in order to grant their *oeuvres* posthumous approval.

Actually, this strategy of posthumous approval was even used by Shakespeare himself and his now credited collaborator George Wilkins, in *Pericles*, in which the English poet John Gower (c.1330-1408), one contemporary of Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400) and author of the poem *Confessio Amantis*, works as a chorus, appearing in the beginning and between the scenes in order to comment on forthcoming or previous actions. The fact that *Confessio Amantis* is one of the sources for *Pericles* puts Gower in this legitimizing position, his presence as proof of his agreement and pleasure in the adaptation done by Shakespeare and Wilkins.

The campaign to purify Shakespeare's works, initiated by Gildon in the theater continued outside the stage, towards the realm of literature and criticism with Alexander Pope and his *The Works of Shakespeare, Collated and Corrected* (1725). In Dobson's words: "Pope's edition reveals more clearly than any other Augustan publication the connection between the desire to rescue Shakespeare from the theatre in the interests of print culture and

the urge to delete his plays' lapses into vulgarity" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 129). Pope attributes the errors in Shakespeare's originals to the interference of actors and editors in the published texts. In his edition, produced to restore Shakespeare's image as a respectable authority through the refashioning of The Complete Works, he decides to cut off passages of low humor, considered unworthy of the great poet, to the foot of the page. In a tactic similar to Cibber and Granville, Pope also uses typographical marks as inverted commas, this time not to clarify a distinction between the adapted text and the original, but to highlight what Pope considered Shakespeare's most "shinning passages" so that the reader would be able to recognize "the elevated moments at which Shakespeare is most fully present in his own text" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 130). Pope's use of the inverted comma, then, has a more didactic approach, as if he's trying to educate readers in the task of fully appreciating Shakespeare.

Besides Pope, another literary critic who also tried to establish Shakespeare as an author of respectable literature was John Dennis (1658-1734). Although Dennis was not the first one to identify the Bard as a genius[7], his work *An Essay upon the Genius and Writings of Shakespeare* published in 1712 was actually the first book with such an epithet in its title. The book consisted of a series of letters from Dennis to the editor of the newspaper *The Spectator*, in which he praises Shakespeare's plays for his supreme representation of character and passion. Dennis vaguely defines 'genius' as the capacity to exhibit magnanimous and natural sentiments. On the other hand, he also undermined the concept by acknowledging that Shakespeare was 'uneducated' in the arts, being ignorant of the best Greek models. For Dennis, 'genius' was what came from nature, a sort of natural talent, that existed without the necessity of formal study or practice. In this same article in *The Spectator*, Dennis reflects on how Shakespeare could have been even greater if he had been formally instructed. He wonders: "If Shakespear had these great Qualities by Nature, what would he not have been if he had join'd to so happy a Genius Learning and the Poetical Art?" (DENNIS apud BATE, 1997, p. 166). Since Addison and its first appearance of the term 'genius' came to be connected with an idea of artlessness, and Dennis's definition, although vague, helped to consolidate such an idea. Therefore, Dennis, desirous of 'improving' Shakespeare and making him conform to the neoclassical rules of art, took upon himself the task to adapt *Coriolanus* in

[7] According to Jonathan Bate in *The Genius of Shakespeare* (1997), the actual responsible for the conception of Shakespeare's genius was Joseph Addison, in a publication of the *The Spectator* newspaper on September 3rd 1711.

1720, probably thinking he was elevating the Bard's work to a even 'greater' status. The establishment of the epithet of Shakespeare as a genius, however, was what set ground for Shakespeare to become an English 'National Poet' and, undoubtedly, represented a great achievement for the Shakespearean brand, an idea that will be further developed in the next part of this same chapter, when I will discuss the Romantic criticism on Shakespeare.

Gradually, it becomes clear that it was through adaptation and appropriation that Shakespeare was purged of the so-considered 'low elements', such as the transgression of the three Aristotelian unities[8], passages of lascivious or vulgar dialogues and even buffoonery or comical characters, that appealed to the popular entertainers, his image being constructed as a canonical author. The adapted versions of his plays, now 'freed of all flaws', display thoughts 'as we could justly attribute to Shakespeare' (DOBSON, 1992, p. 130), promulgating his image as an elevated man. Dobson points out that by 1730 Shakespeare is already an authoritative figure, fully established as a canonical author and his works become the center of a struggle for the right to speak for the core of the English national culture. All subsequent uses of his plays must then appropriate not only their contents, but also their author. In this matter, Dobson highlights two essential figures that helped consolidate the Bard's image as the National Poet: the first, the statue of the playwright erected in Westminster Abbey in 1741 and the second, the actor David Garrick (1717-1779), the organizer of the Shakespeare's Jubilee in 1769.

Shakespeare's statue in Westminster Abbey was the result of a politically motivated canon formation and was sponsored, among others, by Alexander Pope, who commissioned the monument as a critique to the current government of king George II and the prime-minister Robert Walpole, which, in his opinion, shamed the nation by failing to honor and reward writers. The interest in defining a national literary pantheon as a repository place for the country's pride and the sponsoring of monuments as reparation to its members by government opponents was actually a common characteristic of the mid-1730's, as the Temple of British Worthies, a gallery built in 1734, to honor sixteen exemplary Britons for their great national achievements, both political and intellectual, illustrates. Shakespeare's bust had already been included in the sixteen ones presented in the Temple, being, actually, the first monument to celebrate him in a national context.

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[8] The three unities of Aristotle determined that a tragedy should have a single plot-line, a single location and its action should happen within a 24-hour time frame

The monument in Westminster's Poet's Corner was designed by William Kent and executed by the Dutch sculptor Peter Scheemakers, the same ones responsible for the construction of the busts in the Temple of British Worthies. Dobson suggests that the fact that the statue of the Abbey was erected by the same sculptor of the Temple indicates that the version of cultural nationalism of which Shakespeare is evoked as a father in the 1730s and 1740s is one opposed to the government of the day. In his words, "however he may have been deployed since, Shakespeare became national poet in the 1730s as an Opposition playwright rather than an Establishment one." (DOBSON, 1992, p. 136). Still according to him, the monument summons the image of Shakespeare as "the antitheses of the Grubstreet hacks bribed to write on behalf of Walpole." (DOBSON, 1992, p. 137).

It is interesting to observe that this idea of Shakespeare as an 'opposition playwright' is one that goes against the 'real' or 'original' Shakespeare, who, as a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men theatrical company, could even be described as a grubstreet writer himself, performing plays that were not only approved by the censorship and the government of his time, but were actually patronized by government members – there was, in fact, a tradition of regarding Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) as the Bard's patroness, with anecdotes of her commissioning the play *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (DOBSON, 1992, p. 147). The establishment of Shakespeare as an 'opposition playwright', though, would really fit the Romantic ideology, in which his image was used to defend the values of 'Englishness', his work in clear antagonism with the French academicians devoted to the neoclassical aesthetic, a topic that will be further developed in the next section of this chapter.

As shown in picture 2 below, the life-size white marble statue of the Abbey portrays the poet dressed in the fashion of Charles I's court. He stands with his right leg crossed in front of the left, leaning his elbow on a pile of three untitled books positioned above a pedestal. On the basis of the pedestal appear the carved heads of Queen Elizabeth I, Henry V and Richard III. A garland, signifying immortality, with a dagger and a dramatic mask are also shown above the head of Richard III. The presence of such kings and queen makes Shakespeare remembered as a creator of histories and tragedies, rather than that of the 'low' comedies. In Dobson's opinion: "the proximity of the laurel wreath to the triad of sovereigns from the histories also suggests that Shakespeare is being claimed as an honorary epic poet, the British Worthy who immortalized his nation's heroic Golden age." (1992, p. 143). The statue's left hand points out to a scroll which hangs down in front of the pedestal, the whole focus of the entire monument, which was left in blank when the memorial was unveiled in February 1741, a fact that did not go unnoticed at the time, with two different anonymous

commentators writing about it in the newspapers *London Evening Post* and *Craftsman*, considering Shakespeare as victim of government censorship, probably a consequence of his invocation as an opposition playwright. Only in May 1741, was the scroll filled by the Abbey's dean with a variant of Prospero's lines from *The Tempest*, transforming the monument into a conservative *memento-mori*, which reads:

> The Cloud capt Tow'rs,
> The Gorgeous Palaces,
> The Solemn Temples,
> The Great Globe itself,
> Yea all which it Inherit,
> Shall Dissolve;
> And like the baseless Fabrick of a Vision
> Leave not a wreck behind.

Picture 1 - Shakespeare's monument at Westminster Abbey.

Source: Google Images

Probably without knowing the dean also helped to fix a Shakespearean image that many critics carry until nowadays. Because the statue became and remained as one of the best-known and most widely reproduced representations of Shakespeare – in some senses beating even the Droeshout's portrait of the Bard in the first pages of the 1623 Folio – the dean's selection of engraved lines in the scroll reinforced Dryden's and Gildon's previously established association of Prospero as a representation of Shakespeare himself, attributing the Duke's words to the Bard's own thoughts.

Dobson suggests that the importance of this monument is not limited to its contribution to the building of the physical image of Shakespeare in our contemporary minds, but also to the debate of his 'rightful' place as a literary author rather than a playwright. In his words: "The Abbey monument may birth the canonical Shakespeare, but it simultaneously enacts his funeral, relocating the corpus as it does so from the theatre to the study" (DOBSON, 1992, p.160). Because of his leaning posture over the pile of books, presumably the published versions of his own plays, his works can be associated more with literature than with drama. Indeed, in the following years, the monument's presentation of a preferably literary Shakespeare was confirmed, as the cast which Scheemarker used as the model to produce its head became one of the most popular library busts of the eighteenth-century. There is, however, an apparently contraction in Dobson's words. Some paragraphs after defending the importance of the monument in the birth of a literary Shakespeare, he affirms that:

> (…) the unveiling of the Westminster Abbey memorial coincided with **an unprecedented amount of Shakespearean activity in the theaters**: during the 1740/1 season, one in every four performances given in London was of a Shakespeare play (a record which even during Garrick's professedly Bardolatrous management of Drury Lane was never challenged.) (DOBSON, 1992, p. 161, my emphasis)

After reading such a passage one may question himself/herself whether the monument produced a more scholar or theatrical image of the Bard. Nonetheless, this intense Shakespearean activity on the stage which Dobson refers to had less to with the statue per se and more with the activities of the Shakespeare's Ladies Club, an association of "Ladies of Quality" who, besides financing the Abbey project, used to petition theater managers to revive more Shakespeare in place of the "insipidity of Italian Opera" (DOBSON, 1992, p. 147). Even though the names of these women have been forgotten in history, their responsibility in the construction of the Shakespearean image was registered by Garrick, who, in his Ode at the 1769 Jubilee affirmed: "It was you Ladies that restor'd Shakespeare to the

Stage (…) you form'd yourselves into a Society to protect his Fame, and Erected a Monument to his and your own honour in Westminster Abbey" (GARRICK apud DOBSON, 1992, p. 148). The Ladie's championing of the English aspects of Shakespeare against foreign imports such as opera and the harlequinade also influenced in the making of the National Poet.

Still regarding the importance of the Abbey monument as one that possibly gives birth to the image of the literary Shakespeare, it is also worth mentioning that the connection of Shakespeare and literature was much older than the construction of the Scheemaker's statue. Tiffany Stern (2010) points out that it existed since Shakespeare's own time. She explains how literate spectators of the 16th century attended the playhouses carrying books in order to pass time before performance. And, because all playbills were printed, it was also common for the audience to know the plays in print form even before they experienced them performed. The book-stage relation could also be observed in another behavior of the audience, in which part of it would bring writing instruments to the theaters in order to note down favorite passages of the play in a notebook known as 'tables'. Aware of this behavior, Shakespeare would not only make an effort to give his audience 'extractable' passages for their tables, but also would indicate them in performance. One example is Hamlet's line "My tables – meet it is I set down,/That one may smile and smile and be a villain" (I.5.108-9), that provide a clear indication that the following passage is worth writing down. Shakespeare really profited from this audience's habit, that functioned as an advertisement for both his plays and his theater. These examples illustrate how, in Stern words "the close connection between performance and publication, often questioned now, was visible then and situated directly around and inside the playhouses themselves." (STERN, 2010, p. 57). They also seem to indicate that this tension in relation to the 'rightful' place of Shakespeare – the stage or literature – seems really foolish in the light that they are not mutually excluding. Shakespeare can belong to both environments and even himself seemed to be conscious of that, smartly taking advantage of both to promote his works.

Besides the Westminster Abbey − and the Shakespeare's Ladies Club −, the other figure highlighted by Dobson as essential in the building of Shakespeare's image as the English National Poet was David Garrick, as stated above. Garrick's career was dedicated to embody the Bard himself, establishing the Drury Lane Theater, rather than the Westminster Abbey, as the rightful home of Shakespeare's spirit. To accomplish that, the strategy which Garrick carried out was to cultivate in the public's imagination an intimate connection between himself and Shakespeare. A strategy, in fact, very similar to the approach chosen many years before by the adaptor William Davenant in his play *The Enchanted Isle*, written in

collaboration with Dryden in 1667. But while Davenant, as Shakespeare's godson, had an apparently more convincing claim for carrying the Bard's spirit alive within him, Garrick's claim for their familial bond depended on himself constantly performing a role, both on and offstage. Garrick's debut on the London theater was in 1741, performing the role of Richard III. His most acclaimed performance and the one responsible for the ascension of his meteoric career, however, was the role of Prince Hamlet, that first occurred in Dublin in 1742, in the Smock Alley Theater Royal. Garrick's connection to this role extended into his offstage life, in which he continued acting as if himself was the equivalent of Prince Hamlet in real life, enjoying a special relationship with the Irish actress who played the first Ophelia, Peg Woffington, and also behaving as if the was the one whom Shakespeare's own ghost had been waiting in order to reestablish his position as an accomplished playwright.

Regarding the relevance of the casting of Garrick as Prince Hamlet in the construction of this familial bond with Shakespeare, Dobson mentions an anonymous poem published in 1750 in the *London Magazine* in which Shakespeare's ghost urges Garrick to replace the adapted texts of his plays with their originals:

> To thee, my greatest restorer, must belong
> The task to vindicate my injur'd song,
> To place each character in proper light,
> To speak my words and do my meaning right. [...]
> So by each other's aid we both shall live,
> I fame to thee, thou, life to me, shalt give[9]

Depicting Garrick as Hamlet to Shakespeare's ghost, the poet endows him with complete access to the playwright's thoughts, being Garrick's responsibility to be his rightful avenger. Because he is speaking Shakespeare's words and is the only one able to declare the Bard's meaning, Garrick is simultaneously possessed and in possession of the playwright's spirit. They live a sort of symbiotic life, being mutually dependent, as the final verses suggest. Garrick's success in establishing himself as actor of not only Shakespearean roles, but also as the legitimate incarnation of the Bard is such that another poet declares:

> Thou art my living monument, in Thee
> I see the best inscription that my soul
> Could ever wish: perish, vain pageantry, despis'd!
> Shakespeare revives! In Garrick breathes again![10]

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[9] *London Magazine*, June 1750, 278-9. In: DOBSON, Michael. *The Making of the National Poet*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

As Shakespeare's definitive embodiment, Garrick acquired the authority to set down and insert as many speeches as he liked into Shakespearean plays. It is only ironic that, considering the ghost's demand for Garrick to avenge him on his theatrical adaptors, he did not behave as purist, becoming instead what Dobson named as an 'authorial usurper' (1992, p. 171), using his power to revise and rewrite Shakespeare's plays. Garrick's authority usurpation could be also observed in the way he managed the Drury Lane Theater, an activity he took over in 1747, when he declared it as "the house of William Shakespeare", that promoted his series of adapted versions instead of Shakespeare's originals. As an adaptor, his most active years were between 1754 and 1756, when he produced *Catharine and Petruchio*, *Florizel and Perdita*, *The Tempest* and *An Opera*. While Garrick's alterations to Shakespearean plays, especially his rewriting of *Hamlet,* suffered harsh attacks, others really praised Garrick's works, considering that his professional achievements helped to promote acting as a respectable vocation, bringing artistic and intellectual gravity to the stage. In an anonymous text published in *London Chronicle* in 1769, Garrick is said to 'promote virtue and inspire decency' to the acting profession:

> Few while living have arrived at such eminence in their profession as Mr. Garrick, and indeed it may be said that while the art has advanced him he has no less advanced the art. What before now was considered by our laws as a trade taken up by vagrants, is now considered, through his great merits, as a profession tending to promote decency and inspire virtue.[11]

During the Restoration Period and for many years after it, until around 1730's, Shakespeare's name was used to justify theatrical adaptations. Claiming the Bard as a 'classic', many adaptors revised and rewrote his works hoping to bring glory to their theaters. From 1740's onwards, with Garrick embodying Shakespeare and usurping the authority for his texts, it was him, and not the Bard, the one responsible for changing the social status of the theatrical productions, which started to acquire a more intellectual tone. Wealthy beyond any preceding actor of his time, Garrick celebrated his success by commissioning a sculptor to design a figure of Shakespeare to be put in his own private property. What is interesting about this statue, designed by Louis Francois Roubiliac (Picture 2, bellow), is that it is said it was made

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[10] *A poetic Epistle from Shakespear in Elysium to Mr. Garrick at Drury Lane Theatre*, 1752. In: DOBSON, Michael. *The Making of The National Poet*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992. p. 168.
[11] *London Chronicle*, 3. Jan. 1769. In: DOBSON, Michael. *The Making of The National Poet*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992. p. 176.

on Garrick's image, who posed for the sculpture. Once more Garrick is taking on the spirit of Shakespeare himself, with the actual image of the Bard being replaced by that of a middle-class man.

Picture 2 - William Shakespeare by Louis François Roubilliac

Source: The British Museum Images Website. Img. id: 00035160001

About this statue, Dobson affirms:

> Garrick's Shakespeare statue is constructed not in the image of Britain's heroic past, but in exactly the image Garrick wishes to project for himself: a man of property, wealthy through his own professional expertise, undoubtedly inspired but completely respectable. (DOBSON, 1992, p. 182).

The statue sculpted by Roubiliac, in short, strongly displays the image of the bourgeoisie, that of a common man who built up his career and became successful through his own merits and talent. After the construction of this new statue, Shakespeare's image on the public's mind would be completely altered, when, in 1758, Longton Hall Porcelain factory would refashion its Shakespeare's figurine, which used to be manufactured with the Abbey's statue as a model, to one into the likeness of Garrick (Picture 3). Dobson has pointed out that this blurred identity between Shakespeare and Garrick makes it difficult for one to understand

whether Shakespeare was used to canonize Garrick and the bourgeois ideology or the other way around. The indisputable fact about this matter is that both Garrick and Shakespeare thrived on one another.

Picture 3 - David Garrick (c.1755-60). Longton Hall Porcelain located in Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C

Source: The Oxford Handbook of the Georgian Theatre 1737-1832

Dobson also stresses that Garrick's contribution to the canonization of Shakespeare, in fact, has less to do with his personal image and more with his share towards the Bard's removal from an exclusively theatrical environment. By projecting the eighteenth-century bourgeois standards and values onto Shakespeare's plays, Garrick's adaptations made them safe for domestic consumption. The supposed indecency and social indecorum present in Shakespeare's originals, a consequence of his desire to please the popular theatrical audiences of his time, had been ultimately purged out by Garrick, who "saved" the Bard from his vulgar dramaturgy. Garrick's alterations to make Shakespeare fit for contemporary middle-class audiences influenced many other editors and writers until the nineteenth century, such as Henrietta and Thomas Bowdler who edited the *Family Shakespeare* in 1807 as a compilation

of the Bard's works intended to be read by ladies at home. At the same year, Charles and Mary Lamb published *Tales from Shakespear,* a book projected to tell Shakespeare's stories to young children, rescuing his works not only from vulgarity but even from being drama at all.

Perhaps, however, the full transposition of Shakespeare's figure from the theater and the expansion of his presence to that of everyday life was epitomized in Garrick's festive entertainment, the Stratford Jubilee of 1769, "his literal coronation of his muse witnessed and legitimized by some of the most influential tastemakers in the nation" (STOTT, 2019, p. 19), the event responsible for the culmination of Shakespeare's canonization. In this festival not a single play of Shakespeare was performed, and its objective was to present a 'new' statue of Shakespeare that Garrick had gifted the Stratford-upon-Avon town, yet another copy of the Scheemaker's Abbey Statue. In his book *What Blest Genius: The Jubilee that made Shakespeare,* Andrew McConnell Stott defines the event as "hodgepodge, a gallimaufry of inconsistencies and contradictory motivations that featured little of the work of its honoree" (2019, p. 19). It consisted of a three-day miscellaneous event, with various activities such as balls, dances, music, parades, pageants, several meals, fireworks and even a horse race in which the figure of Shakespeare was evoked as a kind of a

> sponsor, presiding over a series of events and entertainments that by themselves had little to do with him, the body of his work featuring only as echoes and fragments, or as song lyrics and quotations, and allegorized images painted on [...] the windows of the Town Hall" (STOTT, 2019, p. 19-20).

The climax of the event, was Garrick's recitation of a poem, his *Ode upon dedicating a building, and erecting a statue, to Shakespeare at Stratford upon Avon*, accompanied by the Drury Lane orchestra and choral passages. These varied activities attracted a lot of criticism to the Jubilee, with people questioning the purpose of an event that did not celebrate the theater or literature, and conveyed the message that it in fact consisted of a demonstration of David Garrick's grandiosity. While Samuel Johnson boycotted it entirely, the actor and manager of the Haymarket theater in London, Samuel Foote, defined it as a act of vanity and avarice on Garrick's part, such was his desire "to fleece the people and transmit his name down to posterity, hand in hand with Shakespeare" (FOOTE apud STOTT, 2019, p. 20). Another one who agreed with Foote was Charles Dibbin, responsible for the composition of part of the music for the event, who later wrote that:

> the whole business was concerted to levy contributions on his [Garrick's] friends, retainers, dependants, and the public in general, for no other motive upon earth than

> to fill his own pockets…The tomb of Shakespeare was stript of laurels to adorn the brow of Garrick. (DIBBIN apud DEELMAN, 1964, p. 271).

It is true that an event of this magnitude invariably made some of its commercial and personal ambitions evident, which included David Garrick as well as the mayor and aldermen of Stratford-upon-Avon. The first was experiencing his career fall into decline, with lots of controversies, and hoped that such occasion could represent a great role for his offstage retirement, making him to be remembered as a sort of cultural custodian of Britain. The later, wanted to transform the reputation of the little town of Stratford in a nursery of genius and decided that a statue to pay homage for its most famous son was the best way to attract an influx of visitors that would help boost their timid economy. Having common interests, Garrick and the Stratford municipality got together to support one another, Garrick financing part of the event and lending his image to grant notoriety to the festivity.

Besides the criticism it received, historical records of the event depict it as a *fiasco,* as the rain that occurred on September 7th 1769, the second day of the festivity, not only prevented or ruined many of the scheduled activities, such as the character parade and the fireworks, but also caused several structural damages to the town, as the wooden Rotunda specially constructed for the event on the river bankside, partially collapsed. Needless to say, the rain also caused much of the public to return home, preventing the customers to spend even more money in the town and staining the event's image around England. The rain, however, was not the only thing made accountable for the Jubilee's allegedly failure, as the press published several stories criticizing the organization and its inability to estimate the amount of its public, anecdotes depicting people's trouble in finding a place to stay.

Nevertheless, despite all the aftermath mentioned above, the Jubilee of 1769 definitely had some real positive aspects. The website of Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust[12] reports that Garrick had invested around £2,000 in the event, a very large amount even for a wealthy person as he. He was able to regain and even surpass the money invested by staging a play based on the Jubilee at Drury Lane just the next month after the original event, on October 14th 1769. The play, also named *The Jubilee,* featured many of the songs composed for the occasion and depicted all that the event could have been if it were not for the rain, with the performance of some of the activities that had been cancelled taking place. It proved itself so

[12] Available at: <https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/shakespedia/aftermath-jubilee/>. Access on July 20th, 2020.

incredibly popular that it was still occasionally staged six years later. The play granted a good longevity for the Jubilee, making it alive in people's memories and also amplifying the range of its audience, as it allowed the public who had not been present in the original occasion to experience it.

Another long-lasting impact of the event, one that can be felt even nowadays, is to the town of Stratford-upon-Avon, that was transformed into a must-see tourist destination for fans of Shakespeare around the world. David Garrick's 1769 Jubilee inspired a tradition of other Shakespearean celebratory events held in the town, such as the 1816 commemoration for the playwright's death. Later, in 1824, the establishment of the Shakespeare Club decided to restage the Jubilee every three years. The festivity held on 1830, for example, attracted nationwide interest to the extent that it even received royal patronage. The Jubilee, thus, by transforming Stratford as a place of pilgrimage, represented a landmark in the route of the construction of both the Stratford and the Shakespearean brand, acquiring a central position in the history of Shakespeare's canonization. Many scholars consider it as the origin to the cult of Shakespeare, that later on would be named by George Bernard Shaw as 'Bardolatry'.

Defining it as "a peculiar foundation on which to build an enduring hagiography" (STOTT, 2019, p. 19), Stott comments on how many elements of the event resemble that of the rituals of the catholic mass, such as singing songs and raising a mulberry cup of wine in honor of Shakespeare. He describes the Jubilee as the secular ritual in which Shakespeare takes the place of a divine entity, calling our attention to the fact that even the very name chosen for it relates to the Catholic tradition. With its origin in Jewish antiquity, Pope Boniface VIII adopted the word in the 14th century to describe a year of celebration and pilgrimage in which the faithful would be granted forgiveness for their sin. In the case of the Catholic Church, a Jubilee occurs every fifty years, but, in the case of Shakespeare's, Garrick planned it should occur every seven years. Although it is unclear whether Garrick wanted to evoke the full extent of the religiosity aspect in the Jubilee, another aspect that endorse this interpretation is that in the Ode he declared, Shakespeare is presented as a 'demi-god' and 'the god of our idolatry', once again reinforcing the idea that the playwright must be adored and idolized almost as a religious figure. For Stott, though, the Jubilee was not a branding exercise that simply lionized Shakespeare and Garrick, but it also contributed to lionize the image of Shakespeare as the English national poet. In his words:

> By choosing to celebrate Shakespeare in the town of his birth, with its timber-framed houses, reedy riverbanks, and airy open fields, Garrick sought to deploy Shakespeare as a soothing and bucolic parent to the nation at a time when Britain was in turmoil, with riots and hunger commonplace and political institutions shaken

> by a strong populist movement led by a pugnacious and resilient leader named John Wilkes. (STOTT, 2019, p. 20).

Both Garrick and Britain were looking for a national hero, due to the long period of war with France. As already mentioned in this very chapter, neoclassicism was seen as the literary tradition, and Shakespeare was considered as a regionalist writer, one that did not conform to the mainstream formal rules of the day – in reality, the main reason why he was highly adapted in the Restoration Period. The association of the playwright with the bucolic, rural environment of Stratford can be seen as Garrick's celebration of the 'natural' Shakespeare as well as the celebration of all his so considered 'imperfections' that fostered him as genius and product of nature instead of artifice, an idea that was further developed by the Romantics and that will be mentioned in the next part of this chapter. More than fostering the Bard as the National Poet, the 1769 Jubilee illustrates how Shakespeare was finally so firmly established as a cultural icon, his reputation no longer depending on his achievements as a dramatist. A century of appropriating, adapting and repositioning of Shakespeare's plays led to their accession into such an unprecedent symbolic value that now their content seems almost irrelevant. Shakespeare transcended drama and literature and became such an omnipresent figure in English culture, that there is no need to actually read or see his plays to know him.

1.3. **The image of Shakespeare in the Romantic period**

If during the Restoration period Shakespeare was mostly perceived as a good playwright among many others, the one-hundred years of theatrical adaptation and the organization of the 1769 Jubilee by David Garrick certainly did the trick and dramatically changed this previous image. While Dobson marked the Enlightenment as the period in which the cult of Shakespeare started, Jonathan Bate points out that it was during the Romantic period that it reached its peak, since Shakespeare has already ascended to the status of the English National Poet and would consolidate his position as the 'genius' we still consider him today. Due to the importance of the Romantic period in the canonization of Shakespeare and the formation of its brand, it received an exclusive, dedicated part of this chapter. However, it is important to highlight that, because most critics consider that the British Romanticism started at the end of the 18th century, in historical terms I am still dealing with the same

National Poet that Garrick idolized in the Jubilee, presented in the previous section. The sections were organized in this manner in order to present a dialogue with the thoughts first exposed by Dobson and now, by Bate. It is also worth mentioning that a significant part of the Romantic criticism was produced in a period which also comprised part of the reign of Queen Victoria, that started in 1837 and ended in 1901. Be that as it may, because the three main thinkers that figure in this section − August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767-1845), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and William Hazlitt (1778-1830), exposed their thoughts on Shakespeare in lectures and essays produced between 1808 and 1830, the image of Shakespearean brand dealt with within this period is presented apart from that of the Victorian Age.

As already mentioned in the previous section, the idea of Shakespeare as a 'genius' was first developed by Joseph Addison in the edition of September 3rd, 1711 of *The Spectator* newspaper. *The Spectator* was a daily publication, founded by the essayist, playwright and politician Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and his Irish colleague, Richard Steele (1672-1729), also a playwright and politician. While the publications became a magazine in 1828 that has continued up to this day, the original version was actually a short-lived newspaper, that was first published on March 1, 1711 and lasted until 1712, with 555 editions. Rather than reporting news, it portrayed personal opinions on events and important issues of the day in the voice of Mr. Spectator, defined in its first edition as an observer of society. The periodical aim was to provide its readers topics for well-reasoned discussion and to help them engage in polite conversations in social places such as the clubs, assemblies, tea-tables and coffee-shops[13]. The paper's readership was constituted mostly by the English emerging middle-class, merchants and traders, including also a female public. Although it declared itself as being politically neutral, *The Spectator* has been recognized by some critics, such as the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, as promoting Whig values and interests such as family, marriage and courtesy. Habermas also defines the periodical, alongside with the coffee-house culture, as an important instrument in the formation of a space for debate in 18th century

[13] BOWERS, Terence. Universalizing Sociability: The *Spectator*, Civic Enfranchisement, and the Rule(s) of the Public Sphere. In: NEWMAN, Donald J. *The Spectator: Emerging Discourses*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005. p. 155-56.

England, which he called as the 'public sphere'[14]. Addison and *The Spectator* publications developed a crucial role in the construction of the Shakespearean image for the middle-class public, sowing the seeds not only for Shakespeare's genius, but also for his 'originality' and the 'cult of imagination'.

For Addison, 'genius' was a term used to praise writers, especially poets, whose strength comes from nature rather than art or learning. In his own words, those "who by the mere Strength of natural Parts, and without any assistance of Art or Learning, have produced Works that were the Delight of their own Times, and the Wonder of Posterity" (ADDISON apud BATE, 1997, p. 167). For *The Spectator* editor, then, a genius was derived from someone's natural capacity of invention (from the Latin *ingenium)*, an innate ability or 'native endowment' (BATE,1997, p.162) in opposition to an acquired one by study. In his book *The genius of Shakespeare*, Bate (1997) points out that Addison's move to define Shakespeare as a genius was a crucial one, an essential step to put Shakespeare in the center of English literary criticism from the eighteenth century on. He affirms that: "To say that a writer *is* a genius rather than that he *has* a genius is not merely to make a small change in customary linguist usage; it is also to begin to elevate the artist into the special kind of man he became in Romanticism" (BATE, 1997, p.168).

In the newspaper edition number 279, Addison comments on how Shakespeare's genius is manifested by his creative ability to develop characters: "It shows a greater Genius in Shakespear to have drawn his Calyban than his Hotspur or Julius Caesar." (ADDISON apud BATE, 1997, p. 170). Here, we observe that the term 'genius' applied by Addison seems to be in line with our modern sense of the term, defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "an instinctive and extraordinary capacity for imaginative creation, original thought, invention or discovery". With this comment, Addison is praising Shakespeare not for his capacity to imitate great classical writers of the past such as Homer, but to imagine new characters and beings that are not common, or *natural* to this world. In Bate's opinion, Caliban, as well as other characters such as Ariel and the witches in *Macbeth*, epitomize the English rejection of neoclassical theory because they represent an 'affront to the creed of mimesis' (BATE, 1997, p. 170), that is, of art's obligation to mirror reality or 'be true to nature', depicting exclusively elements that could be found in our real world. This association of the genius of Shakespeare

[14] HABERMAS, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere:* An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society. Translated by Burger, Thomas and Lawrence, Frederick. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1989.

to the power of imagination would then provoke an extreme anti-classical claim that 'True Poesy is magic, not nature' (BATE, 1997, p. 170) − meaning that a true genius was the one that had an intellectual power that seemed to proceed form a supernatural inexplicable manner − and would prepare the grounds for the Romantic image of Shakespeare himself as Prospero, conjuring up magical spirits out of his own fruitful mind. The idea that geniality and creativity had to do with giving life to magical beings rather than with verisimilitude was, perhaps, best developed by the poet Edward Young (1683-1765), on his *Conjectures on Original Composition* in 1759. In this work, Young divides the practice of imitation into two: the imitation of ancient authors, praised in the classical poetics, and the imitation of nature, or verisimilitude. Young defined that "originals can arise from genius only" (YOUNG apud BATE, 1997, p. 180) and extolled Shakespeare's originality by affirming that "Shakespeare mingled no water with his wine, lower'd his genius by no vapid imitation." (YOUNG apud BATE, 1997, p. 180). He also used the metaphor of genius as a magician, in a clear opposition of imitation and inspiration:

> A Genius differs from a good understanding as a magician from a good architect; that raises his structure by means invisible; this by the skilful use of common tools. Hence Genius has ever been supposed to partake of something Divine. (YOUNG apud BATE, 1997, p. 180)

The definition of Shakespeare as a genius and the cult of imagination initially planted by Addison, started to bear fruits in the poetic practice from the 1740's on, generating reflexes in other literary critics, who highly appropriated Shakespeare, embracing his transgression of the mainstream artistic principles to consolidate his image of 'national poet' and England's superiority and independence in relation to Europe. About this praise of Shakespeare as a national poet and England's supreme culture hero, Bate comments on how it "caused great difficulty for the *ancien régime* aesthetics associated with theorists like Gildon and John Dennis" (BATE, 1997, p. 174), since relating the playwright's native genius to his innate inventiveness "made it impossible to sustain arguments about the need for refinement and control" (BATE, 1997, p.174). As a consequence, through the 18th century, the Restoration custom of 'improving' Shakespeare's poetic language for theatrical representation, was gradually abandoned in favor of an original and unaltered Shakespeare.

In his introduction to *The Romantics on Shakespeare*, Bate, highlighting how Romantic criticism was highly appropriative in political terms, points out that there is a "potential fissure between feeling one's way into Shakespeare as he is and using him as one

wants to use him" (BATE, 1992, p. 8-9). He considers three authors as the main voices in this transformation of Shakespeare's image during the Romantic period. They were: the German August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767-1845), and the English Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and William Hazlitt (1778-1830). After briefly discussing their critical responses to Shakespeare, it will be possible to observe how their criticism continues to exert influence in the way we think Shakespeare nowadays, being responsible for various characteristics that we still attribute to the Shakespearean brand such as its innovative and creative genius, its interest in dealing with the human passions and its universality.

Written under the shadow of the Napoleonic wars and France's aspiration towards a pan-European hegemony, much of Schlegel's and Coleridge's criticism was highly appropriative, using Shakespeare's plays to promote national values, not only English but also German. Because of Shakespeare's disregard to the Aristotelian unities with these plays with multiple plots occurring in episodic form, his combination of verse and prose as well as the tragic and the comic and the presence of a vocabulary which emphasizes speech idiom, his texts were made alive in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to serve as a weapon against the dominant tendencies of French neoclassical culture. Shakespeare, as the English National Poet − and consequently as the counter-model to France − is then appropriated by the Romantics as a symbol of freedom from prescriptive artistic rules. The Shakespearean characteristics that had been sharply criticized before are highly praised by the Romantics, with the label of 'the poet of nature', granted by Samuel Johnson in his Preface to Shakespeare in 1765, highlighting his ability to develop organic forms rooted within their own culture. Romantic criticism was, thus, set up in conscious opposition to that of previous ones, such as Johnson's, Pope's, and Voltaire's.

Concerning previous critical commentary, Schlegel argued that the English critics had been myopic because they praised Shakespeare's "truth and consistency of his characters, his heart-rending pathos and his comic wit" (SCHLEGEL apud BATE, 1992, p. 95), but were not able to look further into the depth of purpose of all these elements, failing to analyze Shakespeare's works in their own completion and misunderstanding his compositions. According to him, these former critics usually analyzed specific, isolated parts of a play – "separate descriptions, images and expressions" – disregarding their function within the totality of the plot. About this characteristic, which Schlegel considered as a fault, he stated:

> It was generally speaking, the prevailing tendency of the time which preceded our own (…) to consider everything having a life as a mere accumulation of dead parts, to separate what exists only in connection and cannot otherwise be conceived,

> instead of penetrating to the central point and viewing all the parts as so many irradiations from it. (SCHLEGEL apud BATE, 1992, p. 95-96) [15]

As a consequence to this 'bad' habit, the criticism produced was of "the most superficial and cheap mode" (BATE, 1992, p. 95). In response, Schlegel developed a theory of the 'organic unity' of the great artwork, in which true aesthetic value comes from within the work itself, not imposed in the form of rules. His theoretical model was applied to all Shakespearean plays, starting with *Romeo and Juliet*, in which he scrutinized all the scenes, demonstrating the necessity of each with reference to the whole – "Nothing could be taken away, nothing added, nothing otherwise arranged without mutilating and disfiguring the perfect work" (SCHLEGEL, 1992, p. 96). Bate defines that Schlegel's theoretical model depends on the apprehension of "hidden essences" (BATE, 1992, p. 5) and was a precursor of much of twentieth-century criticism.

In his *Lecture on Dramatic Art and Literature*, Schlegel praised the playwright's ability to "look into the inmost recesses of the mind", understanding human nature and displaying it in his characterizations.

> It is the capability of transporting himself so completely into every situation, even the most unusual, that he is enabled, as plenipotentiary of the whole human race, without particular instructions for each separate case, to act and speak in the name of every individual. (SCHLEGEL apud BATE 1992, p. 97).

Not only did Shakespeare really understand people, but his talent was such that he was also able to create unreal, magical beings as fairies, ghosts and witches that truly convinced readers they would behave in the way they were portrayed if they existed in real life. It is precisely in this aspect that Schlegel criticizes Pope and Johnson, the first for calling Shakespeare's characters 'individuals' and the latter, for defining these same characters as 'species'. As 'species', a character would have to be limited within the scope of reality and, as Shakespeare "opens the gates of the magical world of spirits [...] and carries a bold and pregnant fancy into the kingdom of nature" (SCHLEGEL, 1992, p. 98), the term does not comprise all the existing characters in his plays. Schlegel, then, considers the term 'individual' as the most appropriate of the two since it is not constrained by reality and it "embraces the infinite variety of nature" (SCHLEGEL, 1992, p. 99) and its peculiarities. However, he still considers Pope's term as improper because, although characters portray

[15] From this point onward all the references from the three Romantics thinkers here exposed will be taken from BATE, Jonathan. *The Romantics on Shakespeare.* London: Penguin Books, 1992.

unique traits, they also possess a significance that is applicable beyond themselves; that is, the characteristics of each *dramatis personae* can be transposed to humans in general, providing material for readers to reflect upon greater aspects of the play as those referring to human nature and its passions. Because, in Schlegel's opinion, both terms fail to consider these mentioned aspects, looking exclusively to characterization and neglecting the essential role of characters within the totality of the dramatic art, he rejects both of them. Defending once again his theory of the organic unity, Schlegel draws our attention to the function of characters within the whole plot, emphasizing that some characters exist to highlight certain impressions in the reader, and it is in this matter that Shakespeare excels himself beyond others:

> This is the very perfection of dramatic characterization: for we can never estimate a man's true worth if we consider him altogether abstractedly by himself; we must see him in his relations with others; and it is here that most dramatic poets are deficient. Shakespeare makes each of his principal characters the glass in which the others are reflected, and by like means enables us to discover what could not be immediately revealed to us. (SCHLEGEL apud BATE, 1992, p. 101).

Regarding Shakespearean comedy, which was usually severely condemned, Schlegel continues to praise the Bard's talent, affirming that "it stands on an equal elevation, and possesses equal extent and profundity" (SCHLEGEL, 1992, p. 103). He considers that Shakespeare's characterization in the comedies is also "true, various, and profound" (SCHLEGEL, 1992, p. 104). Still regarding the organic unity, he highlights the role of minor characters, such as servants, fools and tradesmen, that have "an infinite abundance of intellect" and "may afford many an insight into the situation and circumstances of their masters" (SCHLEGEL, 1992, p. 103). In his opinion, Shakespeare's use of language is also important for readers to understand his characters. Schlegel defends the idea that Shakespeare's versification is carefully thought and it is used in a way to portray class distinctions among characters – while the most socially elevated ones speak in verse, with the rhymeless iambic of ten or eleven syllables, the minor characters use prose, usually in the tone of everyday life. The German critic also believed that the characters' way of speaking is portrayed differently not only according to their social rank, but also to their disposition of mind. Shakespeare's irregularities of versification and change of rhythm serve the purpose to express a pause in the progress of a thought or a change in his mental disposition. He points out that frequently, the reader can observe that the same character expresses himself at times with 'the sublimest language, and at others with the lowest', a characteristic enabled mostly by the use of the blank verse that, being so plastic, allows elevated or conversational tones.

From the German author's perspective Shakespeare's mixture and mingling of forms exemplifies the playwright's "masterly skill in blending the dialogical element with the highest poetical elevation" (SCHLEGEL, 1992, p. 105). Finally, he concludes his critique of previous editors of the Bard's works by affirming that Shakespeare, although a poet of nature and genius, was not "guided by humour and accident, but, like a genuine artist, acted invariably on good and solid grounds" (SCHLEGEL, 1992, p. 109).

Like Schlegel, Coleridge's criticism is also built upon the central idea of the organic form and was also used with patriotic purposes. The similarities of thought between both of them are so vast that Coleridge was accused of plagiarism. Nevertheless, Bate (1992) assures us that those similarities were not a matter of plagiarism, but one of historical inevitability since both authors had the same intellectual background and wrote about Shakespeare within the same historical context of the Napoleonic wars. Although Coleridge sought to keep his criticism free from political contamination, in practice his lectures − that appeared in print form after his death, first published by his nephew H.N. Coleridge in the *Literary Remains* in 1836-9, and that later on became known to the modern readers under the title of *Lectures on Shakespeare (1811-1819)* – were permeated by his own political positions, particularly by the anti-Jacobinism and anti-Gallicism. Bates points out how Coleridge's criticism "shifts uneasily between historicism and atemporality" (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 17), commenting on aspects of the Elizabethan society that may have influenced Shakespeare's writing, such as the patronage system, as well as extending Shakespeare's relevance beyond the playwright's own time.

As did Schlegel, Coleridge also considered Shakespeare a genius. Not a wild, erratic one that wrote under the influence of the muses, but a self-conscious, directed one that had "the power of acting creatively under laws of its own origination" (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 128). To Coleridge, Shakespeare's plays should not be put into judgement and appreciation considering the classic, ancient Greek rules of drama, but the standards that the Bard himself created. Instead of using the unities of time and place to evaluate his works, one should perceive the *unity of feeling* and *unity of character* that pervade his dramas.

As far as Shakespeare's characterization is concerned, Coleridge stressed the Bard's ability to put himself in someone else's shoes. He was always concerned about how he should present the characters, even in situations that he had never personally lived or witnessed. Comparing the dramatist to the god of Greek Mythology Proteus, the sea-god of change, he stressed the dramatist's capacity of "becoming all things, yet for ever remaining himself" (COLERIGDE, 1992, p. 152). At the same time, he defined Shakespeare's poetry as

something “characterless” insofar as readers cannot observe any traits of the “individual Shakespeare” (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 160-161). This suggests that, in his opinion, Shakespeare is capable of transforming all things at his own ideal and will without transposing his personal thoughts, feelings or personality to his text; his characters are universal, being the representation of “men in all ages at all times” (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 130).

Still considering characterization, yet another similarity to Schlegel’s ideas is to be found in Coleridge’s perception of what he called Shakespeare’s ‘method’. According to him, Shakespeare’s excellence resides in how he describes his characters, creating them with “just proportion, that union and interpenetration of the universal and the particular” (1992, p.160). Because of his method of characterization, readers can perceive the character’s individual traits and, at the same time, acknowledge resemblance between themselves and the characters, due to the common characteristics present in all humans. In the author’s words, “we find individuality everywhere, mere portrait nowhere. In all his various characters, we still feel ourselves communing with the same human nature.” (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 159).

Coleridge also talked about how the personality of characters arises not in the descriptions written by the playwright, but, as in real life, in the interaction among characters: “In his mode of drawing characters, there were no pompous descriptions of a man by himself, his character was to be drawn as in real life, from the whole course of the play, or out of the mouths of his enemies or friends.” (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 130).

Once again, this passage resembles Schlegel’s thoughts, according to which characters perform their role in relation to others and must always be analyzed taking into account the totality of the play. Schlegel’s theory of the organic unity also echoes in Coleridge’s comment of how Shakespeare, following the best tragedies, introduces moral or “general reflections in the mouths of unimportant personages” (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 144), reminding readers that even supposedly minor characters have actually a great deal of importance in the development of the entire plot.

Although Coleridge’s criticism bears close affinity to that of his German coeval, there is, in Bate’s (1992) opinion, one aspect in which he surpasses all other critics. To Bate (1992), Coleridge was the most straightforward critic to illustrate to readers how Shakespeare operates his poetic language. By contrasting the Bard’s use of language with that of his contemporaries such as Jonson (1572-1637) and Fletcher (1579-1625), Coleridge tries to prove how Shakespeare transcended the other playwrights, his carefully thought constructions exhibiting all his poetical power and strength because they form an organic unit:

> Shakespeare's intellectual action is wholly unlike that of Ben Jonson or Beaumont and Fletcher. The latter see the totality of a sentence or passage, and then project it entire. Shakespeare goes on creating, and evolving B. out of A., and C. out of B., and so on, just as a serpent moves, which makes a fulcrum of its own body, and seems for ever twisting and untwisting its own strength (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 163).

In fact, this comparison with other dramatists of Shakespeare's time was, in Coleridge's opinion, necessary for one to measure "the surplus which is entirely Shakespeare's own" (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 161). This abundance of talent, however, was not restricted to poetry and drama. Coleridge observed the Bard's power to understand the human passions and his attempts to elicit noble and general truths from them and the result was his ultimate definition of Shakespeare as "a great philosopher" (COLERIDGE, 1992, p. 145)

The essayist William Hazlitt was another one who compared the works of Shakespeare to those of other English famous and canonical authors such as Chaucer (1343-1400), Spenser (1552-1599) and Milton (1608-1674). In this comparison, he censored previous critics who thought that the only aspect that distinguished Shakespeare among his contemporaries was his wit. Regarding this perception he spoke in his lecture *On Shakespeare and Milton,* in 1818:

> It has been said by some critic, that Shakespeare was distinguished from the other dramatic writers of his day only by his wit, that they had all his other qualities but that; that one writer had as much sense, character, another the same depth of passion, and another as great power of language. This statement is not true. (HAZLITT apud BATE, 1992, p. 181).

With this statement Hazlitt clearly frowns upon others critics' opinions, which considered 'wit' the Bard's unique and exclusive distinction, since other playwrights were as skilled either in 'sense', 'fancy', 'knowledge of character' or 'power of language' as Shakespeare. In opposition to those critics Hazlitt thought that what genuinely distinguished the Bard among others was his 'generic quality', that is, his ability to 'virtually include all the genius of all great men of his age' inside his own mind. Hazlitt defines him almost as an omniscient entity that has no specific traits of itself; one that is capable of embracing all human race and understanding every possible human feeling, in any given context, either present or past. In his words:

> The striking peculiarity of Shakespeare's mind was its generic quality, its power of communication with all other minds – so that it contained a universe of thought and

> feeling within itself (…). He was just like any other man, but that he was like all other men. (…) He was nothing in himself; but he was all that others were, or that they could become. He not only had in himself the germs of every faculty and feeling, but he could follow them by anticipation, intuitively, into all their conceivable ramifications, through every change of fortune or conflict of passion, or turn of thought. He had 'a mind reflecting ages past' and present: - all the people that ever lived are there. (HAZZLITT apud BATE, 1992, p. 181)

Another author who also observed these same characteristics in Shakespeare's works was the poet John Keats (1795-1821). Having been influenced by Hazlitt, he established the concept of 'negative capability' in a letter to his brothers George and Thomas in December 1817, which he defines as a sort of quality for literary 'men of achievements', especially Shakespeare, which occurred "when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 198). To Keats, the trait of negative capability was best expressed when a poet's "sense of Beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all consideration" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 198). That meant that for him, true beauty excelled reason as well as a fixed identity. He valued the poetical character that distinguished himself from the egotistical sublime, that is, someone who was 'not itself', 'had no self', being at the same time, 'everything and nothing (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 198). Shakespeare was used as his model to best express this ability, being defined as a 'chameleon poet', who was continually 'filling some other body', enjoying to portray in his works both 'light and shade', 'foul or fair', 'rich or poor' (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 199), and having as much delight in conceiving so opposite characters such as Iago or Imogen.

In the same way that Keats' negative capability concept resembles Hazlitt's thoughts, as a great admirer of Schlegel's works, Hazlitt's criticism also bears points of convergence with that of the German's. However, as Hazlitt found Schlegel's criticism excessively theoretical, he founded his own on the principle of sympathy, feeling his way into the plays and discussing in a very passionate way how Shakespeare's empathy works. He constantly stressed the Bard's aptitude not to "have an individual existence of his own, but to borrow that of others at will", passing successively through every variety of "untried being" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 7).

Similar to Schlegel, he also criticized Dr. Johnson's definition of Shakespeare's characters as a 'species', in his preface to *Characters of Shakespeare's plays*, published in 1817. Viewing Johnson as a man concerned with practical wisdom, who took human nature always in the same way, Hazlitt judged him unqualified to discuss Shakespeare's genius,

because he could not perceive how "the nature of man was modified by the workings of passion, or the infinite fluctuations of thought and accident" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 177).

Hazlitt also agreed with Schlegel when he referred to Shakespeare's knowledge of human nature, and that this knowledge was not limited to understanding the human mind with its different concerns, passions, virtues and motives. Concerning Shakespeare's conception of unreal characters, Hazlitt affirmed that Shakespeare had only to "think of any thing in order to become that thing, *with all the circumstances belonging to it*" (emphasis added). Using the character of Caliban to exemplify his theory, he praised Shakespeare' imaginative power, which made him able not only to create a character with "a language and manners of his own", but also his surroundings, "the scenery and situation of the enchanted island he inhabits, the traditions of the place, its strange noises (…)" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 182). This imaginative power and understanding of the soul were what allowed Shakespeare's readers to "not merely learn what characters say" but actually see "their persons" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 182). Although fictional, Hazlitt considered Shakespeare's personages as "real characters of flesh and blood" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 184). He saw "wonderful truth and individuality of conception" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 184) in each and every character and it is precisely at this point that his perception diverges from that of Schlegel.

While the German observed characters in relation to each other, justifying that even the minor ones had their importance within the whole play, Hazlitt observed them individually, considering each character fascinating and powerful enough to have an existence of their own, "absolutely independent of the rest" (1992, p. 184). The character's existence was also independent from that of Shakespeare's, and, in this aspect Hazlitt's view resembles not that of Schlegel's, but of Coleridge's:

> The poet may be said, for the time, to identify himself with the character he wishes to represent, and to pass from one to another, like the same soul successively animating different bodies. By an art like that of the ventriloquist, he throws his imagination out of himself, and makes every word appear to proceed from the mouth of the person whose name it is given. (…) His characters speak like men, not like authors. (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 184).

Hazlitt continues talking about how Shakespeare's characters are so alive by themselves that it is impossible even for their creator to control them. In this matter, what brings truth and credibility to Shakespeare's plays is that his characters are governed by their own passions, making it hard for readers to predict their behavior – "so the dialogues in Shakespeare are carried on without any consciousness of what is to follow, without any appearance of preparation or premeditation" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 184). He compares

Shakespeare with Chaucer affirming that, while the characters of the latter had a fixed essence and answered to their author, who was in full control of them and presented in the story only characteristics that would serve for a specific purpose, the first exercised a "continual composition and decomposition" of its characters, who presented "alternate affinity or antipathy" to other principles in the plot. For Hazlitt, the striking distinction of Shakespeare's dramatic productions is that passion is delineated in the same way of the characters, that is, it is not an "habitual feeling or sentiment preying upon itself", but a feeling "subject to all the fluctuations of caprice and accident". In summary, in the same way characters are governed by their passion, also "passion is modified by passion". As a consequence, "the human soul is made the sport of fortune, the prey of adversity", "calling into play all resources of understanding and all the energies of the will" (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 185-186).

At first notice, Hazlitt's and Coleridge's view towards Shakespearean characters as completely autonomous beings may appear very opposite to that of Schlegel's, which valued their appraisal in relation to each other and the whole organic unity. Their thoughts, however, seem in fact to be complementary, since what we observe in the Shakespearean plays is a combination of both types of characters. There are those who are strong and free-spirited such as Rosalind in *As you like it* − who subverts the restrains of a male dominated society by assuming a pedagogical role and teaching Orlando about love − a character that could easily be defined as an exemplary model to Hazlitt's concept of independence. At the same time, there are others such as Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth or even Othello and Iago, which are impossible to consider if we ignore the relations among them, because they would probably portray different personality traits and different behavior and consequently, change the entire dramatic plot. The presence of these both types of characters only enhance the Shakespearean drama, once again exemplifying how he was a huge *connoisseur* of the human nature. Hazlitt has affirmed that the Bard's power relies on his "deeper sense than others of what was grand in the objects of nature, or affecting the events of human life." (HAZLITT, 1992, p. 188). For sure, the development of these complex characters taking into account how humanity is affected by other external factors, being them culture, history, nature or even our own personal relationships confirm how both Hazlitt and Schlegel were correct.

After briefly discussing the thoughts of the three authors which Bate (1992) pointed out as the most important in re-shaping the Bard's image within the Romantic period, it is interesting to notice that all of them highlight the same Shakespearean attributes − that of understanding the depths of the human soul and its passions as well as his ability to transfer these subtleties with precision into fictional characters. Of course, this skill requires a literary

author to be versatile and adaptable, in the sense to be able to set aside his/her own personality, almost as to deny his/her own Self in order to put into paper such diverse, multifaceted individuals. The observation of such characteristics went beyond the criticism of Schlegel, Coleridge and Hazlitt and was actually a constant within Romantic criticism as a whole, as exemplified previously with Keats's concept of 'negative capability'. It is obvious, then, that in our attempt to establish the characteristics that constitute the identity of the Shakespearean brand we could not leave out those attributes. So far, based on the comments provided by the Romantics, the Shakespearean brand can be defined as generic, versatile, adaptable, universal, empathetic, philosophical, and most of all, as a source of knowledge about human nature.

However, more than mere aesthetic or formal literary characteristics on the Shakespearean brand, what Bate's comments illustrate is how Schlegel's, Coleridge's and Hazlitt's critical discourses formed the paradigm of the Romantic ideology, that is, how their appropriation of Shakespeare's works and his linguistic talent, his 'genius', were politically used to produce a British (and German) nationalist bourgeois discourse which initiated in the historical context of the Napoleonic Wars but that still affect our contemporary perception of the Shakespearean brand. Nonetheless, since the Romantics did not hold the privilege of shaping alone this complex brand, it is time to understand how the Victorian Period, as well as the British Imperialism, have contributed in this process.

1.4. **The brand of Shakespeare during the Victorian Age (1837-1901)**

During the Victorian Age, Shakespeare continued to be the English figure of national importance that he had become in the previous centuries, although the focus of his importance at the moment relied neither on his professional talents as a great poet and playwright nor on his works *per se*, but rather on himself as a great English thinker of human nature and moral guide.

In this sense, the plays, taken as a repository of moral and ethical truths, became an essential instrument of education. Instead of being studied in their completeness, the Victorians started the practice of studying key speeches in isolation, with the prescription of learning passages by heart as a method for testing students' reading and elocution abilities.

Shakespeare became mandatory in most state schools' *curricula* being on top of the list of 'standard authors', at the very foundation of what we consider canonical literature.

The tendency to focus on supposedly relevant parts of the plays and the understanding of Shakespeare as a moral advisor is explicit in the works of Reverend Aaron Augustus Morgan. His work *The Mind of Shakespeare, as exhibited in His Works,* published in 1860, presents short passages of the plays categorized under subject titles that evidence the moral or virtue they exemplify. Put in alphabetical order, with titles such as 'Conscience' or 'Courage' for example, the book's organization diminishes the aesthetic value of the plays as a dramatic literary form and also the importance of their understanding as a whole. On the other hand, the fact that a clergyman took interest in Shakespeare's work to serve as source of moral example illustrates the highly esteemed position the Bard occupied within the Victorian society, one that considered his intelligence divinely inspired.

Seen as an example of moral and intellectual excellence, Shakespeare became a model for all to follow, enlarging his presence way beyond the classroom (and the Church). The Victorian desire of self-improvement and the concept that a knowledge of Shakespeare's plays was indispensable for the possession of any kind of cultural maturity made the plays popular outside schools and universities, putting Shakespeare as part of society's everyday interest. In fact, with Victorian secularization and the substitution of the religious discourse, not only Shakespeare but all literature in the 19th century was approached in this edifying manner, as a subject that could teach people to become better citizens, as exemplified by the criticism of the poet Mathew Arnold (1822-1888), who in his *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time (1864),* affirmed that criticism should "endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas"[16]. Thus, the study of Shakespeare served not only as a tool to form "better" English citizens but also as an instrument of domination for the British Empire, in order to inculcate in the colonized populations a sense of the superiority of British culture. According to the Indian writer Gauri Viswanathan (1950-), "as early as 1820s (…) English as the study of culture and not simply the study of language had already found a secure place in the British Indian curriculum" (VISWANATHAN apud MURPHY, 2003, p. 167).

The enlargement of Shakespeare's presence in the domestic sphere was also explained by the Victorian culture's appreciation of reading and writing and the publication of specific

[16] Available at: <https://www.lsj.org/literature/essays/arnold>. Last acess on: 06/09/2020

editions destined to particular readers such as house-wives, children and the working-classes. Even though since the late 1700s the number of collected editions of Shakespeare's plays increased because of the availability of his works in public domain, the 19th century represented a new level in the scale of the expansion of the Shakespearean text, as the scholar Andrew Murphy (2003) affirms. Murphy (2003, p. 167) observes that during this period, 800 collected works editions reached publication, what signifies that almost every six weeks there was a new complete edition of Shakespeare in print. The popularization and democratization of the Bard's work was propelled by the publication of penny editions, designed for the consumption of working-class readers, as for example Ward and Lock's *Sixpenny Shakespeare*, published in 1890. Another very relevant publication of the period was *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807) from the brother and sister Charles (1775-1834) and Mary Lamb (1764-1847). The book rewrites, in short-story format, twenty of the thirty-eight Shakespearean plays. In its initial editions, *Tales from Shakespeare* specified its reader audience with a subtitle: *Designed for the use of Young Persons.* However, this literary adaptation has long affected more than its first intended audience. As the professor John Milton (2015) affirms, the book has been translated to more than 40 languages, representing the very first contact of the Orient (Chinese and Japanese cultures) with the work of Shakespeare. (MILTON, 2015, p. 24).

Scattered around the globe, Shakespearean characters' lines were commonly used as a statement of traditional wisdom, acquiring the status of proverbs, until people had no longer conscience of the fact that they were quotations. The Bard's characters, especially the female ones, also started gaining a life of their own, outside the plays. As a way of further understanding human nature, the Victorian approach towards characters considered them as real individuals, rarely mentioning their position within the plays, except only when they related to others. Characters and their speeches were often examined in the perspective that they could offer some kind of moral example, an approach that vaguely resembled the Romantic trend in which the critical exploration of the plays came through character analysis. It is important to mention that this process of considering characters as real individuals is the beginning of a larger one, within which characters have become a brand of their own, having a separate existence apart of Shakespeare's, which will be further developed later on in this very chapter.

One example of how the characters' importance was extended beyond the stage is the work of such writers as Mary Cowden Clarke. In 1851 she wrote *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines*, a series of fifteen tales in which she creates background narratives to

compose the childhood stories of Shakespeare's female characters, exploring how these events may have impacted on the characters' behavior and, consequently, on the events of the actual plays. Her narratives explore common situations of the nineteenth-century novel, each tale ending with the first line a specific character spoke in their Shakespearean plays, projecting them as sequels to her stories. For example, the first tale, entitled as The Heiress of Belmont, focusing on Portia from *Merchant of Venice,* finishes with the line *"*By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world", which is what the heroine speaks when she first appears on stage on Act 1, Scene 2. The same happens on the second tale, The Thane's Daughter, that deals with Lady Macbeth. Although her first lines on stage correspond to her husband's words, since she is reading aloud a letter about the episode of the witches in which Macbeth was claimed to be Thane of Cawdor, when she speaks her actual words, her own very thoughts about the event − "Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be What thou art promis'd" − it is with these lines that Clarke's tale ends. Clarke's work clearly exemplifies the Victorian urge to understand human nature and the processes involved in the formation of one's self-identity. The fact that Shakespeare's characters are used as a great source of inspiration is no mere coincidence since the Romantic idea of the Bard's genius and his unparalleled ability to deeply understand individuals is still in vigor at the Victorian Age. Other examples, this time not in narrative, but in poetry are Tennyson's "Mariana" (1830), a lyric monologue spoken by the woman abandoned by Angelo in *Measure for Measure* and Robert Browning's "Caliban upon Setebos" (1864), a poem in which the character of *The Tempest* provides his reflections about Setebos, the god in which he believes.

Another field that helped enhance the movement of understanding characters as real people and their separation from the plays was the figurative arts. Charles Heath's *The Shakespeare Gallery,* first published in 1837, contained engravings of almost all female characters in the plays with a short relevant quotation. It was somewhat modified and reissued in 1847, this time with the title *Shakespeare's Heroines,* with much more realistic paintings and an attempt at more psychological depth. The movement of illustrating character beyond play continued with the works of many more artists and engravers and reached its peak when the owner of the *Graphic Journal* commissioned leading artists to paint a series of characters' portraits which were printed in monochrome and presented with the journal. The fact that these portraits were available to several layers of the Victorian society through a mass market medium such as the newspaper shows us how Shakespeare's presence is gradually extending itself beyond its initial fields of the stage, literature and the scholar research.

Besides painting, photography also helped to spread a view and interpretation of the characters, since the early 1850's. Because it was not possible to take photographs within the theaters until the end of the century, most photographs were taken after rehearsal, with no guarantee that they represented the action as it was performed. That way, photographs of the Victorian Age were not exact registers of scenes of the plays, but mostly representations of actors and actresses in costume. By the 1880's, when procedures for printing photographs were widely available, photographic studios multiplied and photos began to appear frequently in the illustrated newspapers and even illustrated editions of the plays. The first illustrated edition to present photos of individual actors in character instead of painted pictures appeared in 1900. The spread of printed photos also led actors to commission their image to publicity purposes, with quarto-sized signed photos left at the theaters to be handled to admiring audience members.

Since to most Victorians photographs were considered as actual documentations of external reality, the nature of the actors' and characters' identities started to mix with each other, allowing different interpretations of Shakespearean characters that somehow remain alive until today. Not only the selection of actors/actresses with specific individual traits was used in a manner to construct characters' personalities but even the posture in which the actor/actress was photographed influenced in this perception of character. By associating the character's attributes presented in the text with the actor's individual ones presented in the picture, photography started to guide readers' and spectators' imaginations of Shakespearean characters towards a specific, directed interpretation. This strategy of association is, actually, the same used in publicity and advertisement nowadays to construct a product or brand's personality in the consumer's mind and one may even risk to say that these signed photos were probably the beginning of the process to use Shakespearean characters as cover-boy/girl for different types of products. The Victorian Period and its technological advancements like photography, thus, are presenting themselves as fundamental to understand the Shakespearean and the characters' brands.

Apart from the appreciation of Shakespeare due to the moral aspect of his works and his acute perception of human character, another quite different interest began to rise in the Victorian society and the cult of "Shakespeare the man" developed on many levels. Balanced by the interest in his characters, there was an interest in the author himself, which arose specially with the new attention to Shakespearean poetry. The sonnets were often perceived as autobiographical statements written in the form of intentional codes and symbols that, once unveiled, would allow readers to access the personal life and mind of the greatest Englishman.

Scholars of the period were concerned with the sonnets' dates of composition and their addressees, mostly in discovering the identities of the 'Onlie Begetter'/ Mr. W.H., the Dark Lady and the 'rival poet'. The poems addressed to the 'lovely boy' or 'fair youth' often received a different treatment, with a scholarly attempt to explain or justify them as an allusion to Queen Elizabeth. Not rarely were these sonnets altogether omitted, reflecting the fear that the National Poet could be considered a homosexual. The scholar Stuart Sillars (2013) comments about this in his book *Shakespeare and the Victorians*:

> that the mention of a poet regarded as a rival by the most significant writer of the period now attracts less interest than the identities of figures within the poem itself has much to reveal about the way the Sonnets as a whole were and are by many still regarded: it is not for their place in the growth of English poetry, but for what they reveal about amorous intrigues of the late sixteenth century that they have been analyzed and debated. (SILLARS, 2013, p.137).

Since there is no explanation on how the identification of a character would matter to a scholar and literary reading of the sonnets, it gets clear that the work of Shakespeare itself is once again getting partially ignored in favor of the life and personality of the author.

However, the sonnets were not the only source of material used in the construction of Shakespeare's life. The use of documents also had a fundamental role in this process. In this matter, a pivotal figure was Charles Knight. He visited Shakespeare's birth town, Stratford-upon-Avon, in search of as many records associated with the Bard as he could possibly find to write his biography, which first appeared as an appendix of *Pictorial Shakespeare* in 1842, and became a larger, separate book in 1865. Although Knight used some documents that later were proven to be John Payne Collier's forgeries – a fact that nowadays discredits his work as something flawed, lacking historical accuracy – his work should still be considered remarkable in the sense that his search for documents tried to place the writing of biographies within an authoritative framework, away from the realm of legends that existed in the eighteenth-century Shakespearean biographies, especially the one written by Nicholas Rowe in 1709. Another biography that heavily relied on documents was James Orchard Haliwell's *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare,* first published in 1881. Its seventh edition contained more than 700 pages; a miscellaneous collection of documents essential for the construction of an academic account of the life of Shakespeare.

The most famous Shakespearean biography of the period, however, was written by Sidney Lee in 1898. What later became *A Life of William Shakespeare* began as an entry for the *Dictionary of National Biographies*, testifying to the importance that biographies occupied

within the Victorian education. Unlike Halliwell's work that seemed more like a list of disorderly documents, Lee's is much more similar to Knight's woven narrative. The progressive, detailed text discusses the dates of performance and publication, the source of the plays – rejecting some theories of different authorships – and struggles to remain accurate by listing all documents that were discovered as forgeries. While Knight placed Shakespeare in a conventional and respectable position in society, describing both his early as well as his marital life as prosperous and comfortable, Lee's work is also in accordance with the Victorian standards, by presenting Shakespeare as a figure of national identity.

The considerable number of Shakespearean biographies and its re-editions − around nine in total, including the four collections of Shakespearean documents that Halliwell published − that came out in the nineteenth-century reflects the Victorian fascination with the dramatist and its desire to make his life more tangible. But, besides biographies, another way Victorians thought they could get a glimpse of the mind, the personality and the character of Shakespeare was through portraits. The cult of portraiture was highly developed in the period, as the foundation of the National Portrait Gallery in 1856 exemplifies. The fact that a picture of the Bard, known as the Chandos portrait, constituted the first actual donation to the Gallery to be exhibited alongside other works of the most outstanding artists of the period highlights the importance of Shakespeare as someone who helped shape England's identity. What mattered was not the aesthetic perfection of the painting; rather, the interest relied on the person being depicted, once again showing how Shakespeare occupied the place of an idol, a symbol of national importance.

As the sonnets were analyzed in the search for Shakespeare's true identity, so the so-called Chandos portrait − named so after its last owner, the 3rd Duke of Chandos − became a sort of glass through which the Bard's real nature was expected to be found, since it was supposedly painted between 1600 and 1610, when Shakespeare was still alive. Although many scholars have spoken in favor of the authenticity of the painting, some Victorians could not accept it as a faithful representation, because they found it did not fit some ideal attributes associated to the National Poet. In his 1864's *Life Portraits of William Shakespeare*, J. Hain Friswell stated:

> One cannot readily imagine our essentially English Shakespeare to have been a dark, heavy man, with a foreign expression, of decidedly Jewish physiognomy, thin curly hair, a somewhat lubricious mouth, red-edged eyes, wanton lips, with a coarse expression and his ears tricked out with earrings. (FRISWELL apud SILLARS, 2013, p. 147).

Friswell's clearly prejudiced considerations reflect the typical imperialist thought of English superiority and also the Victorian idea of portraits as absolute, faithful representations of reality, not as a form of art. Had he considered it as a painting, Friswell could have observed that Shakespeare's color, as well as his hair and beard, have been altered through time, as a result of a process of over-cleaning and retouching. Although not unanimously accepted at the time, the fact is that the Chandos portrait remains as one of the most famous pictures of the Bard until today, being, alongside with the Droeshout's engraving in the First Folio of 1623, the picture that has mostly shaped Shakespeare's image in our contemporary imagination, attributing him some characteristics such as simplicity, wisdom and atemporality.

Picture 4 - *The Chandos Portrait*

Source: Google Images

The obsession with Shakespeare's portraits was one that had begun in the middle of the eighteenth-century and continued through the Victorian period. The desire to see Shakespeare depicted in a manner considered fit for his highly intellectual abilities was not only Friswell's and it led to alterations in a series of surviving 17th century paintings, being the so-called Janssen portrait an example of this treatment. Sillars comments on how the hairline in this portrait was repainted in the nineteenth-century in order to replace Shakespeare's full hair to his large, bared forehead that was more compatible with his genius. Another painting that was altered was the Flower portrait. Because of its resemblance with the Droeshout's engraving, the painting was long considered authentic until a detailed analysis in the twentieth century proved it was painted over an earlier image of the Madonna and Child. Sillars comments on how this reveal:

> a wonderful appropriateness: that the central icon of the Catholic faith is displaced by a face purporting to be the essential expression of English identity is a perfect,

> tangible embodiment of the way Shakespeare was regarded by many at the end of the nineteenth-century (SILLARS, 2013, p. 147).

The way Shakespeare was regarded in the nineteenth century was also influenced by a major event: the tercentenary celebrations in April 1864. According to Dickson (2015) in his article "The Wrong thing in the Right Place", the event "represented a decisive shift in the cultural placing of Shakespeare and his achievement, not just in the UK but around the world." (DICKSON, 2015, pg. 13)

As already mentioned, in 1769 the actor and playwright David Garrick had transformed Stratford-upon-Avon into a place of secular pilgrimage when he organized the celebrations for Shakespeare's bicentenary. But Garrick's contribution went beyond establishing Stratford as a place of pilgrimage. He also established a sort of pattern or 'event template' that was copied in Shakespeare's tercentenary festivities in 1864, which included banquets, fireworks, concerts and the Shakespearean characters' parade that could not happen in 1769 due to the rain.

Unlike its previous model, within which none of the Shakespearean plays was performed, the tercentenary actually featured some of the Bard's works such as *Twelfth Night* and a double bill of *The Comedy of Errors* and *Romeo and Juliet*, but, as it happened in 1769, the focus of the festivities was not to celebrate Shakespeare 'the poet or dramatist', but rather, to celebrate him as a myth and idol, whose achievements were divinely inspired. The place selected to stage the productions was a wooden pavilion, specially constructed for the festivities, in the meadows beside the River Avon. The building, offering seats at different prices, could be considered as a physical representation of Victorian society, with its sharp demarcations of class rank. Sillars points out that the fact the building was meant to be a temporary structure indicates the place of Shakespeare and the theater in the English imagination in the Victorian period: "the Bard was a figure of national importance, but not one whose works were deserving of a permanent, still less a nationally supported, place of performance." (SILLARS, 2013, p. 5). The celebrations of the tercentenary, thus, praised ultimately Shakespeareanity[17], or, the Cult of Shakespeare.

Besides the performances, the town of Stratford offered many other attractions, such as Shakespeare's birthplace in Henly Street; the New Place, Shakespeare's last home in

[17] The term was coined by the Victorian comic magazine *Punch.* See SILLARS, Stuart. *Shakespeare and the Victorians.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. p. 1.

Stratford; the cottage of Shakespeare's wife, Anne Hathaway, and the Holy Trinity Church, the place where the Bard was baptized and his final resting place, only to mention a few. These tourist attractions made Stratford a place of pilgrimage not only during the tercentenary festivities but turned it into a popular destination from the mid-Victorian period onwards.

Since 1857, when the railway reached Stratford-upon-Avon, all sorts of people have visited the town, from famous writers such as Charles Dickens, Henry James and William Thackeray, to politicians, diplomatic representatives and even anonymous people. In fact, all of those who wished to profess any cultural stature were encouraged to visit Stratford and a trip for the town became almost mandatory as a way to achieve social advancement during the 19th century.

About the gains from such a trip to Stratford, C. Roach Smith wrote in 1897 in his *Remarks on Shakespeare, his Birthplace, Etc*. that it would make the visitors see the things that Shakespeare himself saw and understand how "the impress of many of these objects is reflected most vividly throughout his works" (SMITH apud SILLARS, 2013, p. 153). This passage conveys the idea that being in Shakespeare's birth town would enhance the experience of reading his plays, by connecting author, characters, text and the geographical place. The eagerness to connect with Shakespeare in order to understand him better and the necessity to prove that connection became evident with the signatures people left behind on the walls, windows and even on the ceiling of the Birthplace and Anne Hathaway's cottage. Such signatures cannot be seen in place nowadays since they were painted over in the 1940's, as a way to preserve and restore the place's original ambiance.

The desire to preserve Shakespeare's Birthplace, actually, emerged still in the Victorian Period, when in 1847, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust was founded in order to buy the Birthplace property and transform it into a national memorial. Created as an State-independent entity, which still lives on public donations nowadays, the Trust restored the property to its 'original' façade and also served a more scholarly purpose, housing a library that was open to visitors. Currently, the Trust owns and cares for five properties related to Shakespeare and his immediate family as well as others buildings that form a huge museum complex and library archive. In the Trust website they define themselves as "the independent charity that cares for the world's greatest Shakespeare heritage sites in Stratford-upon-Avon,

and promotes the enjoyment and understanding of his works, life and times all over the world."[18]

The fact that the Trust is claimed to be the oldest conservation society in Britain highlights once again the importance of Shakespeare within the Victorian Period. It is undeniable that the establishment of a sort of nineteenth-century NGO to cherish and mythologize Shakespeare has a fundamental role in the building of the Bard's brand, one that slowly surpassed England's boarders and became more and more international. Although Garrick started the pilgrimage tradition to Stratford within England, The Trust was the big responsible for establishing the town as an international shrine, the birthplace of a humankind genius, or, as stated by Henry James in his 1903 short story "The Birthplace", "the supreme Mecca of the English-speaking race"[19].

The Birthplace inspired not only James' short story, but also other popular fiction such as J. Hollingshead's "A Startling Confession", published in 1857. In the story, a dramatist decides to set the Birthplace on fire after his masterpiece, a tragedy in twelve acts, fails to get staged and is completely lost when a local theater is burnt down during a performance of one of Shakespeare's plays. Driven by anger and jealousy, he decides to commit his vengeance by destroying "the shrine of the saint". The privileged position of Shakespeare's house within the story exemplifies the iconic status of the building to the typical Victorian reader, who, interested in Shakespeare's personal life, would recognize and understand the horror of burning down such a place. In both short stories Shakespeare appears as 'saint', worth of people's devotion, his birth town considered to have the same importance as that of sacred cities such as Mecca and Bethlehem.

The comparison of people's devotion towards Shakespeare with religion was not new for the Victorians. As already mentioned, since 1769 Garrick had defined the Bard as the "God of our idolatry" in his *Ode.* However, the period's antiquarianism elicited a new focus of interest in the cult of Shakespeare: that of his relics. The Shakespeare Museum, founded in 1868 and located in Stratford-Upon-Avon right beside The New Place, housed several objects professed to be from Shakespeare's time and even from the Bard's own possessions', exemplifying the central importance given to physical memorabilia in the building of

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[18] Available at: <https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/about-us/>. Last acess on: Sep. 2020.

[19] JAMES, Henry. The Birthplace. *In*: JAMES, Henry. *The Better Sort.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903, p.245-311. Available at: https://archive.org/details/bettersort00jamegoog/page/n2/mode/2up. Retrieved on: July, 2020.

Shakespeare's mythical identity. The fervor with which the Victorians valued the advancement of culture through the accumulation of material objects also helped in the process of building the Shakespearean brand. It provided a commerce of the supposed relics, from objects allegedly made with wood from the mulberry tree in Shakespeare's garden to several other objects and souvenirs, such as ceramic figurines loosely resembling Scheemakers' statue in Westminster Abbey. Victorians had plenty of trinkets to venerate and idolize the Bard in their own homes as well as many 'sacred' buildings and places to visit. Without even realizing it, they started spreading the Shakespearean brand in markets other than the literary, through the selling of merchandise and tourism.

As the 20th century approached, the final decades of the Victorian period presented radical changes in the way Shakespeare's works were perceived by critics and the public imagination, mostly as a consequence of the new aesthetic movement. Guided by the idea of Art for Art's sake, which valued 'true' Art as something completely apart from any didactic, moral, politic or utilitarian function, this movement tried to drag Shakespeare's works away from conservative views that used the Bard as a model for all to follow.

However, these last few decades were not sufficient to put aside the complete and long-lasting brand image that pervaded all the period. Among the historical periods here analyzed, the Victorian one is probably the most important since it clearly consolidates the image of Shakespeare as a global icon, beyond the 'simple' dramatist he was considered during the Restoration Period or even the National Poet and genial canonical author of the Romantic Period. Although present in the other historical periods in an embryonic form, the aspects that made tangible the *Shakespearean brand* are better observed in the Victorian Period. The invention of a new medium, the cinema, by the French Lumière brothers in 1895, radically transformed the way the public perceived Shakespeare and his works. Driven by the movies, the perception of the Shakespearean brand will evolve from something closely associated with the most erudite, cultivated social classes – an ideological process that began in the 1790's by Edmond Malone[20] and that Coleridge himself endorsed in one of his lectures in which he affirmed that "no man of genius ever wrote for the mob" (COLERIDGE apud BATE, 1992, p. 19) – to that of the popular, mass market audiences, a topic that will be further developed in chapter 2.

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[20] The ideological manouvre to associate Shakespeare with the higher classes of the English society was named as "Shakespeare gentrification" by the critic Margreta De Grazia, one of the themes she explores in her book *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus*, published in 1991.

2 THE BARD AS A BRAND IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: A CASE STUDY IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

Since the mid nineteenth, but specially in the twentieth century, Shakespeare has been circulating in several fields other than theater and literature. Theorists of social and human sciences such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, law and political theory turned to the playwright for inspiration. As stated by Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1850: "Now, literature, philosophy, and thought are Shakespearized" (EMERSON apud GARBER, 2008, p. xvi). Propelled first by the British imperialism and later by mass media and globalization, the Bard was spread around the world. His home, once the Globe theater, was now the globe itself. As both an icon and as a cited text, Shakespeare has appeared in all sorts of media and has been found everywhere: celebrated in English novels, referenced in the works of important Austrian and German thinkers, adapted in an Italian opera or Russian ballet, translated in China and Japan, honored in the form of sculptures to adorn Polish theaters and American parks…The pervasiveness of the playwright's and his characters' presence in contemporary culture has become infinite, making it impossible to cover up all examples and to discuss them in the limited scope of this dissertation.

In the search for one of Shakespeare's facets most related to our contemporaneity, I found myself particularly interested in the niche of teen films produced in the 1990s. Because I was growing up at that time, these movies had a remarkable responsibility in the construction of my perception of what "Shakespeare" can signify. As I believe these movies had the same importance to others, many adults still carrying the Shakespearean impressions they formed in their adolescence, I selected two teenage films of the 1990's, *William Shakespeare's: Romeo + Juliet* (1996) and *10 Things I Hate about you* (1999), in order to work on precise examples that could illustrate important points of my research.

In her work *Shakespeare and Modern Culture*, critic and scholar Marjorie Garber (2008) analyses how the body of works produced in dialogue with Shakespeare's plays and characters has redefined and repositioned both the playwright and the modern world. In a very vehement line, she affirms that "Shakespeare makes modern culture; modern culture makes Shakespeare" (GARBER, 2008, p. xxxiii), her successful *chiasmus* that summarizes the complex mechanism in which the plays influence our modern/contemporary thought at the same time that our modern/contemporary cultural products shape what means "Shakespeare" and "Shakespearean". In the reference to the "body of works", Garber encompasses more than

the film industry, discussing also modern fiction, the news and the literature of business, psychology, sociology, etc. Be that as it may, I argue that as a mass communications medium with a huge capacity to reach people, cinema has proved to be not only a significant tool in the diffusion and teaching of the Bard's plays to the public in general – many people have never read his play texts, only knowing his stories through movie adaptations – but also *the most* relevant agent in the fashioning of the perception around Shakespeare, being that the reason why I selected the film industry to present the case study proposed in this chapter.

According to Boose and Burt (2003) the popularization of Shakespeare brought by the movies has enlarged what can be legitimately studied as part of his canon as, for instance, the teen films selected as the *corpus* of this dissertation; besides, it highlighted the inexistence of the idea of a single, unified playwright − and I should also add, in this case, the inexistence of a unified Shakespearean brand that, as a historical entity, has been continually transformed over time. Another critic who understands the Shakespearean brand as an "open signifier" is Douglas Lanier (BOOSE; BURT, 2003, p. 94).

Lanier explains to us that, having a popular origin par excellence in the theater, the Shakespearean trademark has been appropriated and repositioned, until it became well established in the nineteenth century as a symbol that evoked the notions of "high-quality", "virtuosity", "traditionalism", "cultural intellect" and "elitism". The advent of modern mass media and cinema within the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, promoted the transposition of the theater from a dominant to a residual medium in the offerings of cultural entertainment. This transposition, in its turn, promoted a decisive shift in the history of the Shakespearean brand, so it acquired an ambivalent meaning, "accentuat[ing] nascent tensions and contradictions in the field 'Shakespeare'." (LANIER, 2007, p. 95). A well-established icon of high culture and recognized as a sign of elitism, his presence and association with popular and democratic media ended up creating a modern paradox, simultaneously preserving and reinforcing Shakespeare's status as a powerful symbol of cultural capital and source of legitimation, as well as highlighting its availability for appropriation and (re)creation. The critic defends the idea of a certain continuity behind the various re-brandings that the Bard has suffered through time: that of Shakespeare as popular culture's symbolic Other. In his words:

> Within popular culture Shakespeare's face remains the sign of that culture which pop proclaims it isn't, old fashioned, elitist, artisanal, intellectual, moralistic, 'proper' art promoted by official educational and cultural institutions, but it also remains the sign of pop's desire, its desire for the kind of cultural authority, quality,

> legitimacy, and upward mobility that Shakespeare continues to symbolize. (LANIER, 2007, p. 99).

In summary, what Lanier defends is the idea that mass media – and here I wish to place a special emphasis on the film industry – appropriated and rearticulated the Shakespearean brand in order to serve popular culture's needs to respond to current social changes. It is exactly at this point that Lanier's ideas and those of the marketing scholar Douglas B. Holt (2004) converge.

As we already discussed in chapter one, over time, a series of stories about products/services are told by multiple "authors" (companies, customers, intermediaries such as critics or retail salespeople and the cultural industry). A brand properly emerges when these varied stories become a firmly established collective understanding. Treated as truths in everyday interactions, these stories circulate in society as a consensus view, enabling the formation of a brand. Holt (2004) observed that this process of brand formation bore close resemblance to that of cultural icons, leading him to propose a new category of branding – *iconic brands* − in his book *How Brands Become Icons* (2004). He defines iconic brands as those that have created such compelling myths that they have become cultural icons. As examples he mentions Coca-Cola, Harley Davidson, Volkswagen and Apple. Most iconic brands have been built through the mass media, usually television advertising. However, iconic brands can also be found in cultural industry products, such as films, television series, music, books.

In general, customers value brands because of their *identity value*, that is, because brands act as vessels of self-expression, providing material for customers to construct their own identities. In the case of iconic brands, Holt (2004) defends that rather than a simple identity value they perform *identity myths*, or, putting it differently, they perform stories that address the collective anxieties and desires of a nation, resolving cultural contradictions. Holt believes that, to achieve an iconic status a brand must maintain a sense of continuity of its identity while simultaneously making proper adjustments to better align its myth with important cultural tensions in society. He summarizes this adaptability feature or brand's resilience as such:

> Here we see a common property of iconic brands. Since these brands derive their value from how well their myth responds to tensions in national culture, when there are tumultuous cultural shifts, the brand's myth loses steam. I call these shifts *cultural disruptions*. When disruptions hit, iconic brands must reinvent their myth, or they fade in relevance. (HOLT, 2004, p.23)

To better illustrate his concept, Holt (2004) gives us a brief overview of the genealogy of the branding of Coca-Cola from the 1950's to the 1980's. He explains us that Coke's iconic brand history began in World War II, when bottles were shipped to the North American troops on the battlefront, who drank them in ritual confirmation of their national pride. After the war ended, Coke "came to represent [North] American myths exemplified in the war effort: a country willing to sacrifice its sons and daughters to save the world for democracy (…)" (HOLT, 2004, p. 22). By drinking Coke, consumers could share these collective feelings of national solidarity, illustrated in the brands ads which fostered the "American way of life". The brand rested on this myth until the late 1960's, when cultural disruptions such as the Civil rights protests, the war in Vietnam and disenchantment with the middle-class suburban lifestyle made the brand reinvent itself.

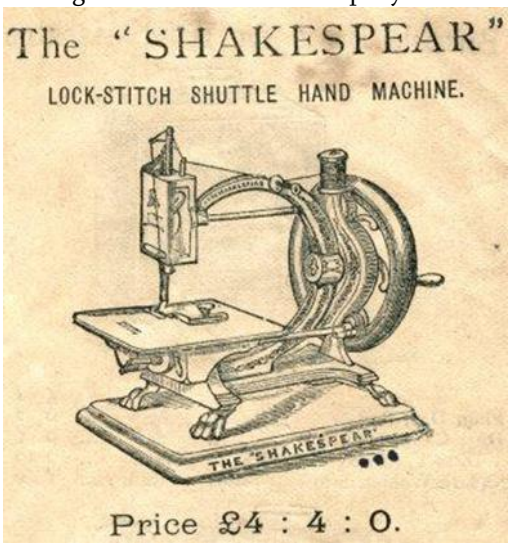
In the 70's, the brand drew on images of the hippie counterculture and peace movement to reinterpret its already recognized benefit – the pause that refreshes – into a new myth of national solidarity. In the "Hilltop" commercial, the company featured young people from different countries on top of a hill, singing in unison about union and equality – 'I'd like to buy the world a Coke and keep it company'. Again, the brand provided a symbolic cure: sharing a Coke would make the world more peaceful, healing political, racial and gender divisions. The drink was to be understood as an "elixir of universal harmony" (HOLT, 2004, p. 24). By the end of the decade, as cultural tensions and anxieties changed, with racial strife increasing in the United States due to the lack of public investments in the highly segregated African American neighborhoods, there was a new reinvention of the brand's myth. Once more, Coke positioned itself as a brand able to heal the North America's problems, built around the "pause that refreshes". In the commercial entitled "Mean Joe Greene", the homonymous African American professional football player is offered a Coke by a white little kid while walking in the stadium's tunnels towards the locker room, after a game. The commercial encourages the audience to make a connection between the story presented and the current situation of the North American black community, who must be perceived not as real threats for the white population. In such a context, the brand provided a new symbolic myth that healed the racial divide in the North American society.

With such examples along three decades, Holt (2004, p. 22-27) showed how Coca-Cola's product's benefit – the pause that refreshes – worked as a platform for the brand to construct powerful identity myths that spoke to current North American cultural tensions and anxieties and, as the social problems changed, so did Coke's myth. The capacity to adjust in order to address the cultural tensions of its time, mentioned by Holt as the essential feature of

an iconic brand is, in other words, the same idea that Lanier defended about the Shakespearean trademark, which he actually called as "the Coca-Cola of canonical culture" (LANIER, 2007, p. 93) as if to emphasize its iconicity. The idea of the Shakespearean brand as an *iconic one* is also what I expect to propose from now on.

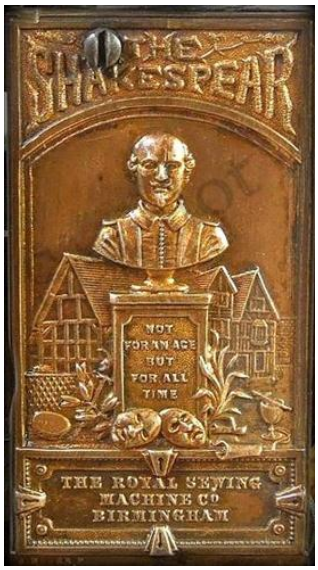
From an Elizabethan-Jacobean playwright, the Bard was gradually transformed, until he could be fully considered as a brand. As discussed in chapter one, although in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries we did not have quite a *Shakespearean brand*, the theatrical adaptations of these centuries were still fundamental in the establishment of the Shakespearean myth, both as an English national symbol and as a Romantic genius. Having a popular origin par excellence in the theater, the Shakespearean image experienced its first significant relocation around the end of the eighteenth century, when it was transposed into a literary and academic environment. In the nineteenth century, the keeping of such a myth took the form of Bardolatry, or the cult of Shakespeare "the man", which experienced a proliferation of biographies that relied less on accurate facts than on pre-fabricated assumptions already in consonance with his idealized image. Bardolatry would promote Shakespeare's status as a figure of aesthetic traditionality, identified with British rural life. Together with the emphasis on biographies, the 19th century's attention to portraiture also helped to consolidate the playwright's image as a natural genius, whose work was not dependent on artifice or any sort of technique, being a God-given talent instead – usually the paintings depict him unadorned, as a "simple man", with a prominent forehead, his most distinguished feature, a sign of his high intellectual capacity. These positive and common associations culminated, at the end of the nineteenth century and in the mid twentieth century, into the use of the Bard's name, face (and even his characters and quotations of his works) in different marketing campaigns as a means of adding value to products. From sewing machines with the slogan "Not for an age but for all time" (pictures 5 and 6, bellow) to airline companies advertising means to visit the Shakespeare's family properties in Stratford-upon-Avon (picture 7), passing even through Coca-Cola (pictures 8 and 9), the Bard was clearly recognized as a signifier of "high quality", "virtuosity", "traditionalism", as well as a symbol of "cultural intellect" and "elitism". Three centuries after the Bard's death, there it was, finally: the Shakespearean brand!

Picture 5- Illustration of the “Shakespear” Sewing Machine. Sewalot Company.



Source: Sewalot Website

Picture 6- Photo of the side plate of the “Shakespear” sewing machine, evidencing its slogan.

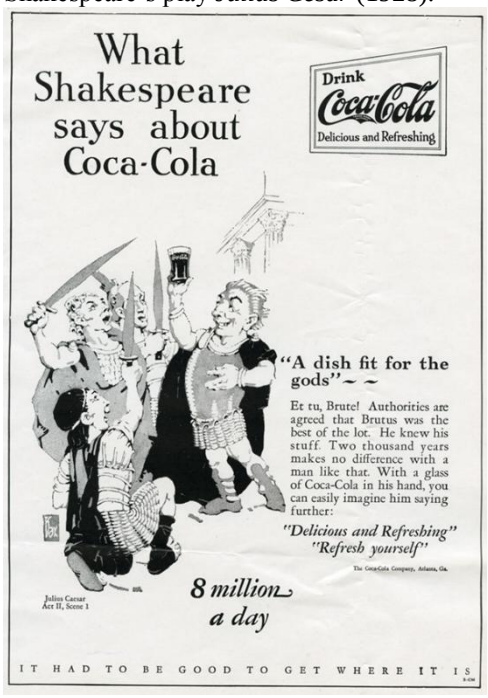


Source: Sewalot Website

Picture 7 - British Overseas Airways Corporation Ad (1947).

Source: Flashback.com

Picture 8 - Coca-Cola Ad, featuring Shakespeare's play *Julius Cesar* (1928).



Source: Shakespeare's News Website

Picture 9 - Coca-Cola Ad, featuring *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (1950).

Source: Folger Shakespeare Library Website.

Along the twentieth century, mass media made the brand transform once again, as illustrated previously through Lanier's ideas. More than a brand, Shakespeare became an *iconic brand*, mostly propelled by the film industry. Each in its way, the cinematic adaptation and appropriation selected as examples in this research have helped reinvent and transform the Bard's image, not only allowing the brand to remain relevant with its contemporary consumers, but also keeping a sense of continuity in its identity myth, an essential feature for a brand to be considered iconic. As we shall see next in detail, while in Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo and Juliet* this sense of continuity is reinforced in the restyling of an archetypical love story which can even be considered as a brand on its own, in Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You*, traditional Shakespearean brand perceptions related to gender roles are reworked in the light of social disruptions of its time within the context of the Riot Grrl punk feminist movement of the 1990's.

The objective of this chapter, thus, is to present a case study discussing how the Shakespearean brand operates in the teen filmic industry, comparing and contrasting the selected movies and highlighting their role in both the disruption and the maintenance of some aspects of the already recognized identity of this brand. Another important aim is to identify if the difference in the movies' genres, the first a tragedy and the latter a comedy,

somehow influences or affects the perception of the Shakespearean brand in the audience's mind. The chapter comprises four sections: the first will present and overview of the history of Shakespeare on film, from silent movies to the present, giving a special emphasis to films based on the two plays selected for the dissertation's case study, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Taming of The Shrew*, as well as to those films targeted at a teenage audience. Section one will also discuss aspects of the theory of adaptation. Sections two and three will present each an analysis of the movies; first, Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* (1996), then, Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You* (1999). At last, section four will conclude the analysis of the case study, comparing and contrasting the selected movies. By presenting this case study I expect to prove both Lanier's and Holt's points that the Shakespearean brand is an open signifier, constantly evolving. In this respect, the teen film industry promoted a significant impact in shaping our contemporary conception of this brand, helping it to achieve its present iconic status.

2.1. **A brief overview of the history of Shakespeare on film – from silent Shakespeare to the 1990s**

As the name 'motion picture' suggests and as the film directors' traditional command 'Action!' epitomizes, a movie is a story-telling which privileges visual language rather than the verbal one. In this sense, it is often considered imperative for mainstream/commercial filmmakers and screenwriters to keep dialogue to a minimum. This aspect of the very nature of cinema, then, seems to highlight a potential trouble in adapting Shakespeare's plays to film: how can one transform a work that lives mostly on its rhetoric and poetry to fit into a medium that tries to do without language as much as possible? Although there was prejudice on the part of some critics, as for instance, the journalist and writer Graham Greene (1904-1991), who considered that the works of Shakespeare were incompatible with cinema, the great number of movies deriving from the Bard's work state exactly the opposite: both Shakespeare and cinema thrived with one another. Until November 2020, the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) had credited more than 1,540 feature-length and TV films as adaptations or

appropriations of the Elizabethan-Jacobean playwright, including those under production but not yet released[21].

In fact, because the Bard's plays have been adapted since the beginning of the film industry, even when cinema had no sound at all − the very first Shakespearean 'adaptation', *King John*, was produced only ten years after the invention of the medium, in 1899 − the history of Shakespeare on film can sometimes be confused with the history of film itself. The earliest Shakespearean cinematic 'adaptations' were very short silent movies, which usually consisted of recordings of scenes from the staged versions of the plays, in order to promote the theatrical one (BUCHANAN, 2009, p. 4). Hence, these movies did not have the intention to tell the whole plot of the plays, but to give the audience a glimpse of the action of the best Shakespearean scenes. In *King John*, for example, Herbert Beerbohm Tree (1852-1917) reprises the death scenes from his West End theatrical production in a studio in London. Silent Shakespeare films also drew on a visual tradition from the narrative paintings of the 19th century, privileging physical action within constructed décors or natural landscapes, rendering key scenes or key phrases from the plays into iconic images, instantly recognizable by the audience.

It was between the end of 1900's and the beginning of 1910's that the real rush of Shakespearean films took place, with adaptations of *The Tempest* (Clarendon, 1908), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Vitagraph, 1909), *Twelfth Night* (Vitagraph, 1910), *King Lear* and *The merchant of Venice* (Film d' Arte Italiana, both 1910), and *Richard III* (Co-operative Film Company, 1911), the same period when the film industry was experiencing a significant transformation. Interested in making more money, both studio executives and filmmakers realized that showing short movies to lower-class audiences in shopfront venues would not bring them large financial rewards. The industry then decided to invest in longer and more complex projects, making them worthy of being shown in purpose-built locations, with larger audience capacity. They also decided to target a wealthier, bourgeois class, able to afford higher ticket prices. In order to guarantee their revenue, producers felt it was safer to rely on well-known stories, that could be visually understood even without sound or language, such as those of the Bible or canonized works of literature, such as famous novels and Shakespeare's plays. For those members of the audience who did not instantly recognize the Bard's works, cinema would make use of "film explainers", that would read aloud selected

[21] Available at: https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000636/. Last access on: November 22, 2020.

parts the plays or would distribute specially prepared quotation commentaries while the movie was being projected[22].

According to Barbara Hodgdon (2000), the importance of silent Shakespeare's films resides in their appeal to the bourgeois spectatorship and their role of legitimizing cinema as a respectable emergent art form, being even used in the United States as an instrument to acculturate immigrant populations. Besides Hodgdon's reasons, one could also stress the relevance of silent films in pioneering the strategy of adapting "classical", canonical literary works to the big screen, as it still remains commonplace in the industry even a hundred and eleven years later, having demonstrated to be an efficient and secure source of income for studios and filmmakers.

From 1911 to 1929, only four full-length Shakespearean movies were produced, none with great prominence. The first sound Shakespearean adaptation was Sam Taylor's *The Taming of the Shrew*, produced and exhibited in the same year as the American Great Depression. Paradoxically, as Russel Jackson (2007, p. 20) points out, the advent of the sound movies (also known as 'talkies') in the 1930s made it more difficult to film Shakespeare's plays, as cinema and theater became *milieu* rivals. Because the first sound movies employed a pictorial technique that privileged visual aspects such as settings and costumes and only added instrumental music between or during cut speeches, the cinema seemed to be copying the old habits of the actor-manager theatre, something that the staged versions of Shakespeare had long surpassed by the 1930's. As a result, many reviewers criticized the motion pictures, considering that the Shakespearean language was not 'film material', since movies could not do justice to its poetic beauty. Writing for the *Spectator* about George Cukor's *Romeo and Juliet* (1936), the journalist and writer Graham Greene (1904-1991) even affirmed that he was not "convinced that there is an aesthetic justification for filming Shakespeare at all" (GREENE apud JACKSON, 2007, p. 21). Another who also criticized Cukor's *Romeo and Juliet* was the actor Harley Granville-Baker (1877-1946). A purist, he believed that the two art forms did not mix, affirming filmmakers were "wronging" Shakespeare's art with their concern not in the integrity of the plays, but in the production of "as many and as good pictures as possible" (BAKER apud JACKSON, 2007, p. 22).

The distance between these two art forms (film and theater), however, started to diminish since the 1940's, with productions by filmmakers who had their origins in the

[22] Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2016/jul/18/the-best-is-silence-why-shakespeare-in-early-film-is-worth-celebrating. Last access on: February 7, 2021.

theater, such as Laurence Olivier (1907-1989) and Orson Welles (1915-1985). In what concerns filmic technique, Jackson (2007, p.22) points out that the English language Shakespearean movies of the 1940s and 1950s use the cinematic *milieu* in a more symbolic and stylized manner, displaying few of the traditional production values of commercial cinema and resembling more contemporary stage productions of the plays. For example, Olivier's and Welles' 1948 productions, respectively *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, both make use of unrealistic, frankly artificial studio settings, the first depicting Elsinore as a "castle of the mind" (JACKSON, 2007, p. 22) and the second exercising his art "in the manner of the 1920s German Expressionism" (JACKSON, 2007, p. 22).

Jackson (2007) divides the Shakespearean movies into two groups, according to their filmic technique: the conservative (also known as mainstream) and the radical, sometimes called art films by other critics, as for instance Douglas Lanier (apud HENDERSON, 2006). According to Jackson, the most conservative ones "are those which adopt as many features of a given play's structure and language as possible, while adapting them to the accepted rules of mainstream cinema", that is, they are the most "straightforward adaptations" (JACKSON, 2007, p. 15-16). The other group, the radical or avant-garde adaptations, "seek to achieve the play's ends by using as fully as possible the medium's ability to juxtapose images and narrative elements, to superimpose one element of the narrative into another, shift point of view and register, and disrupt a sense of a coherent world seen clearly." (JACKSON, 2007, p. 15-16). Even though Jackson agrees with important theorists of the adaptation studies such as Hutcheon (2006) and Sanders (2006) and recognizes that the true value of a film does not rely on its degree of fidelity to the original, he also acknowledges that this kind of comparison (measuring the amount of similitude or divergence from the dramatic text) is an important element for cinemagoers to assess what a given movie is doing in terms of adaptation. In his opinion it is this comparison that actually helps the audience to identify which group, the mainstream or the radical, a certain movie belongs to.

Following his classification, Olivier's and Welles' productions, due to their innovative use of the cinematic resources, would fit into the category of radical adaptations, and not of mainstream movies. Even so, as we shall observe in detail later on, to some critics, Olivier and Welles are considered to deliver very "straightforward adaptations", presenting the fewest alterations possible, especially in what concerns the Shakespearean language. It is due to their inventiveness and radicalism in the use of cinematic techniques that do not relate to those usually employed by commercial or mainstream movies that I shall consider Olivier's and Welles' productions within the category of art films, as proposed by Lanier (2006).

Before proceeding any further within the history of Shakespeare on film, another important conceptual distinction must be made between popular culture and mass culture.

As Richard Burt explain to us in the introduction of *Shakespeare After Mass Media* (2002, p. 3), although used interchangeably the terms "mass culture" and "popular culture" do not exactly mean the same thing. Whereas "mass cullture" is typically defined as culture imposed on the people, "popular culture" is considered to be the culture made by the people (folk culture). The *Oxford Dictionary of Media and Communication* (1 ed, 2011) defines "mass culture" as cultural products that are both mass-produced and destined to mass audiences, such as films, television programs, popular books, newspapers, magazines, mechanically reproduced art, etc. In the perspective of the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkheimer and Benjamin), the term mass culture refers to these cultural products that are condemned as repetitive, mechanical, alienating, conforming and dehumanizing. Because of these pejorative connotations acquired around the 1930s, Burt (2002, p. 3-4) affirms that many Shakespeareans, both progressive and conservative, have opted to use the term "popular culture" instead. Although the cultural products cited in this dissertation are comprehended in what is considered as "mass culture", following the tendency promoted by these Shakespeareans in cultural studies, I decided to also adopt the term "popular culture", which I believe brings more positive associations to the films here mentioned.

As cultural products within the entertainment industry, films are highly influenced by commercial aspects that may end up determining their artistic decisions, such as the movie's narrative style, its language and cast. Although in the history of adapting Shakespeare to the screen filmmakers and screenwriters have adopted diverse strategies for the fashioning of the Bard's theatrical material into a movie, no matter the technique employed, directors of mainstream movies have always had the same final goal, that is, make their movies profitable. Curiously enough, among the vast universe of Shakespearean film adaptations, within both categories of art-films and mainstream movies, few of them have actually been great commercial successes. Even though both Olivier's and Welles' were the most significant productions in the 1950's, with a reasonable financial success at the time, in the opinion of some critics such as Robert Hapgood (1997), for example, their choices for cinematographic language ended up making their movies age badly. For a great part of contemporary spectators, Olivier's and Welles' movies have become "classical", not in the sense that they carry a stable universality, transcending the cultural signs that date them, but, rather, "classical" as opposed to "popular", accessible movies. Because of their lack of use of mainstream cinema techniques, these movies are now associated with cultural elitism.

In Hapgood's (1997) opinion, it was the Italian director Franco Zeffirelli (1923-2019) the true responsible for popularizing Shakespeare for middle class audiences and the general audiences. Agreeing with him, other critics such as Russel Jackson (2007) also see Zeffirelli's productions as a turning point in the history of Shakespeare on film.

Zeffirelli made three Shakespearean films: *The Taming of the Shrew* (1964), *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) and *Hamlet* (1990). All three movies share what Cartmell (2006, p. 216) defines as an "unmistakable operatic conception", using color, music and movement in abundance to appeal to the senses. Because Zeffirelli's adaptations highly influenced the movies that compose the filmic corpus of this dissertation, I will give more attention to them, focusing on the innovations they brought to the history of Shakespeare on screen as well as their repercussion and cultural importance in shaping later Shakespearean movies targeted at an adolescent audience.

As a popularizer of Shakespeare's plays, Zeffirelli made stylistic choices that allowed his movies to be understood and appreciated by many, as well as criticized by some. The Italian director understood that the Bard's work dealt with universal truths that could apply "to every human being on earth, no matter what cultural background" (ZEFFIRELLI apud HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 82). In this respect, at the same time that he wanted to be faithful to the playwright's work, treating it as a real "classic"[23], he also allowed himself some poetic license, that in his view was justified to narrow the gap between the plays and modern audiences. According to Hapgood (1997, p. 83) it is exactly in the aspect of poetic license as well as in the relation between filmmakers and spectators that Zeffirelli and Olivier differ. While Olivier, standing at the center of high-culture Shakespeare, took a more distant and authoritative position, treating his source material as English cultural heritage to be presented to others, and consequently, employing the fewest alterations possible; Zeffirelli, as an Italian filmmaker and an 'outsider', took as many liberties as necessary into converting drama to film and adopted a guidance posture, escorting his uninitiated-in-Shakespeare-audience in a journey of discovery. In fact, Hapgood sees Zeffirelli's adaptation style as parallel with Shakespeare's own process of adapting his sources. To him, both artists are "bold in the appropriation of their originals and seem uninhibited in fulfilling the demands made by their

[23] Here, I use the term "classic" in the sense(s) employed by Italo Calvino (1923-1985) in his book *Why Read the Classics*, as a work that transcends its own historical and geographical contexts, that "has never finished saying what it has to say" and that "achieved its place in the cultural continuum" (CALVINO, 2001 [1991], p. 1-5).

mediums" (HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 85). In his autobiography, Zeffirelli explained his artistic choices:

> With the cinema, you have to make up your mind whether you do a film for a small number of people who know it all—and it's not very exciting to work for them—or really to make some sacrifices and compromises but bring culture to a mass audience. (ZEFFIRELLI apud HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 82)

This commentary illustrates how conscious Zeffirelli was about the requirements of adopting a popularizer's posture towards Shakespeare. He knew, for instance, that to make the Bard's works accessible, he would have to give up part of his intensely acclaimed poetic language. Actually, Zeffirelli's treatment of the Shakespearean dialogue has been highlighted as a major contrast between his adaptation style and that of Olivier's.

Although both are obliged to cut a great deal out of the Shakespearean dialogue, Olivier is perceived by Hapgood (1997) as conflicted about reworking the playwright's language, relying deeply on its poetry, probably because of his previous history as a Shakespearean actor. Zeffirelli, on the other hand, is seen as taking more liberties in the way he transposes and interpolates the Bard's own words, due to his non-English origin. Despite the different nationalities of Zeffirelli and Olivier, though, Hapgood defends the idea that the Italian director's true concerns have to do with what the playwright's stories communicate in any language. As a result, Zeffirelli focuses on presenting the plot with clarity, displaying Shakespeare's poetry as a welcome "additional beauty" (ZEFFIRELLI apud HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 86) to his adapted film versions. The critic also understands Zeffirelli's exploration of the visual opportunities that motion pictures afford as equivalent to Shakespeare's poetic beauty, with its "wonderful richness (…), Renaissance copiousness and plenitude" (HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 86). Thus, Hapgood (1997) sees no real harm in the poetic license employed by Zeffirelli, as the beauty observed in the visual aspects of his movies is parallel to the one Shakespeare presents with language.

Disagreeing with Hapgood, Cartmell (2007) sees Zeffireli's adaptive style as an imposition of his own tastes and culture onto Shakespeare's texts, which she deemed as "Italianisation" of the Bard (CARTMELL, 2007, p. 216). To her, Zeffireli's operatic style, with his emphasis on visual detail and appeal to the senses, represents a strategy to distract the audience as much as possible from the playwright's own words. In summary, his style is understood as a means to oversimplify the problem of understanding Shakespeare's language. She exemplifies her critique by quantifying the number of lines from the original playtext that have been kept in the movies, pointing that *The Taming of The Shrew* has retained 30 percent,

while *Romeo and Juliet* maintained 35 percent and *Hamlet*, 37 percent. Even so, as other critics discuss, this percentage of lines in Shakespearean mainstream adaptations is absolutely common. To say that Zeffirelli oversimplifies Shakespeare does not do justice to his adaptive style, which translates the opulence of the Shakespearean text through other semiotic devices, such as framing, lighting, edition, and photography, for instance. The fact that Zeffirelli works within the patterns that govern mainstream cinema does not signify an intellectual impoverishment of his productions, neither puts them in an inferior position in comparison to *cult* films. Both Zeffirelli's movies and Shakespeare's texts can be considered as equivalent in terms of their richness, their difference being due to natural aspects of the medium each of them worked.

As already mentioned, Zeffirelli made some frankly commercial calculations in his adaptation process, much like did Shakespeare himself. Besides the 'popular' treatment of the original Shakespearean language, the director's most striking feature as a popularizer relates to his casting choices, which selected hugely popular stars to main roles. In *The Taming of The Shrew*, he cast Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton as the protagonist couple whereas in *Hamlet*, Mel Gibson and Glenn Close were cast to play the homonymous character and his mother Gertrude. The exception was *Romeo and Juliet*, in which both Olivia Hussey, who played Juliet, and Leonard Whiting, who played Romeo, were unknown to the public at the time of the production, becoming stars only after the movie's incredible success[24]. Zeffirelli's star casting system, however, was not one without risk. Though Taylor and Gibson had an appeal with the public, they were not perceived as professionals with ability to play serious Shakespearean roles until they proved otherwise. On the other hand, the lack of stars in *Romeo and Juliet* almost left the movie without financial funding from major studios. What ultimately ended up attracting Paramount studios to finance the movie was the cast's young age, which promised to draw an adolescent audience. Although casting or not celebrities to play the main roles is clearly a decision that influences the commercial return of a motion picture, Hapgood believes that Zeffirelli's concern with youth in *Romeo and Juliet* was beyond a mere interest in making money, being in fact related to his attempt of preserving an essential feature of the Shakespearean text.

[24] According to Zeffirelli's autobiography, only in its first year, *Romeo and Juliet* returned 48 million dollars at the box office in comparison to the 1,5 million of investiment for production. (ZEFFIRELLI apud HAPGOOD, 2007, p. 84).

His choice of following literally Shakespeare's indication of Juliet's age − in the play she is only thirteen years old, and would turn fourteen in July 31st, as the Nurse informs us in 1.3.19 − is what established his movie as a turning point in the history of Shakespeare on screen. Before him, all filmmakers and even playwrights had the custom of casting adult actors/performers for the protagonist couple. In the famous appropriation of *Romeo and Juliet, West Side Story* (1961), for example, Natalie Wood, who played Maria, the equivalent role to Juliet, was 23 years-old; the same age as her love interest in the movie, Tony, played by Richard Beymer. Another even more memorable example is the 1936 adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* directed by George Cukor. Even though it was praised as a "faithful" adaptation by the *Variety Magazine*[25], it is nowadays considered as a fiasco by great part of the audience since the cast's age did not correspond to that of the characters – Leslie Howard, who played Romeo, was already in his mid-forties, a similar age to his counterpart, Norma Shearer, who old played Juliet at 34.

As a core aspect to the plot, Zeffirelli's decision to keep faithful to the characters' age had a huge influence on its reception. By casting adolescents as the protagonists − Olivia Hussey was 16 years-old and Leonard Whiting was 17 − Zeffirelli re-established the idea of young love as Shakespeare had originally designed, helping to consolidate a stereotype of love in Western culture. According to Hapgood (1997) this version of *Romeo and Juliet* appealed to the public because it was itself "young at heart" (HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 85), allowing the audience to identify with the protagonists and making the movie overcome a simple teenage fad. Even with English actors, the film resonated with American audiences (and the rest of the world), not only because of the cultural phenomenon known as British Invasion[26], but also because of its historical context of production. Filmed in 1968, in the height of the counterculture and hippie subculture, Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* was directed to speak to a generation of young people who, much like the play's tragic protagonists, felt torn between following their cult of passion or the values imposed by their parents. Also like the characters, who did not see a logical reason in the "ancient grudge" between the two

[25] "Romeo and Juliet". *Variety*. New York: Variety, Inc. August 26, 1936. p. 20.

[26] The British Invasion was a cultural phenomenon of the mid 1960s, when rock and pop music from the U.K., as well as other aspects of the British culture became popular in the United States. Music groups such as The Beatles and The Rolling Stones were at the forefront of the movement. In the film industry, movies with English or British actors and actresses, such as Sean Connery in the *James Bond* series (1962) and Audrey Hepburn in *My Fair Lady* (1964) became hits. Retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/event/British-Invasion>. Last Acess on: April 2nd, 2021.

households, the young generation of the 1960's also felt that the military conflicts of their time were illogical. In such a context, the movie, epitomizing the ultimate romantic juvenile transgression, was able to connect and bring closer together cast and audience. Cartmell (2006) also agrees that what made Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* resonate with its audience was the movie's interest in the generation gap, which "suggests the unfairness of a society where the old live, while the young (who have the potential to redeem their society) die." (CARTMELL, 2006, p. 218). She also explains how the older generation is portrayed as flawed and morally condemned − as, for example, in the depiction of Lady Capulet as a Renaissance version of Mrs. Robinson, from the 1967's movie *The Graduate*[27], who behaved as if she and Tybalt had an affair[28] − while the young are depicted as innocent and pure as, for instance, the exclusion of the play's scene in which Romeo kills Paris.

Although Hapgood (1997, p. 93) believes that in *Romeo and Juliet* Zeffirelli's artistry was at his best, he also stresses that what allowed his success is that he never lost sight of the human drama that exists in the Shakespearean text. His focus on the "poetry of human relationships" (KITCHIN apud HAPGOOD, p. 90) and his crucial ability to make a popular audience identify with its protagonists is what allowed him to achieve his goal as a popularizer. In his opinion, all of his three films display high-spirited individuals who win our admiration and sympathy by the revelation of their vulnerabilities. Even in a complicated and polemic relationship such as that of Kate and Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Hapgood thinks that Zeffirelli did a good job in "clarifying" Shakespeare's poetry (HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 93). Kate's final speech, as the movie's director stated in his autobiography, is not delivered with irony and yet, to Hapgood, she still remains a "free spirit" (HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 91) as through the progression of the movie: "(…) she more and more takes the lead in defining the terms of their marriage, most of all at the very end, when Petruchio, while boasting of his triumphs, turns his back on her only to find that she has run off once more". (HAPGOOD, 1997, p. 92).

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[27] *The Graduate* is a romantic-comedy movie, directed by Mike Nichols in 1967 and based on the 1963 novel of the same name by Charles Webb. The film tells the story of a recent college graduate, Benjamin Braddock (Dustin Hoffman), who begins an affair with an older woman, Mrs. Robinson (Anne Bancroft), only to discover himself later obsessed with her daughter. The film won the Oscar of Best Director and was such a comercial success, being one of the most grossing films of 1967 worldwide. The character of Mrs. Robinson became immortalized by the homonymous song of Simon & Garfunkel and became a stereotype in popular culture.

[28] This depiction of Lady Capulet's character was so remarkable that it was actually copied by Luhrmann in his *Romeo+Juliet* 1996 version. In Luhrmann's version, however, Lady Capulet and Tybalt's affair is not merely suggested, but actually depicted, as they kiss in a scene during the Capulet's ball.

For Cartmell (2006), the popularity of Zeffirelli's films is "in part, due to their appropriation of particular cultural/historical moments" (CARTMELL, 2006, p. 217). Besides the theme of the generational gap already mentioned in *Romeo and Juliet*, she highlights that, in the case of *The Taming of the Shrew*, its commercial success was due to the objectification of women, observable in the representation of the 1960's wife as someone who "secretly wants to be abused (or tamed)" (CARTMELL, 2006, p. 217). In her words, Kate's transformation of Petruchio's house depicted in the scene after the couple's wedding night in which Kate appears cleaning and changing the home's dirty, dusty state into orderly domestic bliss, epitomizes "the ideal 1960s besotted housewife, complete with headscarf, having the time of her life tidying up and feminizing a long neglected male domain" (CARTMELL, 2006, p. 217). Even though she acknowledges the final joke Kate plays on her husband when she farcically leaves him at Bianca and Lucentio's wedding feast after delivering her final speech, differently from Hapgood, who understands it as a sign of Kate's permanence as a free-spirit, Cartmell sees that Kat's attitude of leaving Petrucchio alone in the dinner table reinforces her portrait as a woman who enjoys being abused, someone who is constantly looking for the 'cat-mouse' chase.

As for Zeffirelli's *Hamlet*, that even 29 years later was marketed with the same strategy as *The Taming of the Shrew*, that is, with the use of extremely famous actors and actresses, Cartmell (2006) sees it in a diametrically opposite direction in terms of ideology. In order to appeal to a more "politically correct" audience, she stresses how Zeffirelli enlarged the role of women, almost producing "a feminist version of the play (or at least one in which women are allowed an equal part)" (CARTMELL, 2006, p. 219). Because of their appropriation of cultural and historical moments, Cartmell defends the idea that Zeffirelli's movies were not for all times, being definitively of 'an age'. Agreeing or not with her, one must certainly acknowledge the relevance of Zeffirelli's productions. Not only did he inaugurate the star-cast-system, but he also established a trend in directing towards a youth audience, giving origin to the boom of Shakespearean teenage adaptations and appropriations in the 1990s. As far as branding is concerned, I believe that his movies were the first in the film industry to start pushing the Shakespearean brand into the direction of becoming *iconic*, according to Holt's (2004) definition.

As already mentioned, Holt (2004) considers that, to be iconic, a brand should provide extraordinary identity value to its customers. The more a brand is able to create a myth that addresses the collective anxieties and desires of its customers given a historical context, the more valuable (or iconic) it will be. When a brand's myth is able to resolve a customer's

identity anxiety, an emotional connection between them is established. Each in its own way, all three of Zeffirelli's movies redefined the emotional bond that existed between customers and the Shakespearean brand. In his version of *Romeo and Juliet*, he updated the theme of the generation gap, present in the Bard's plot in order to make it resonate within the context of the counterculture of the 1960s. The same happened with his version of the *Taming of the Shrew*, that even though mostly taken as misogynistic nowadays, fully captured the spirit of the 1960s housewife, enabling its audience, both male and female, to relate to the Shakespearean plot as it addressed the anxiety of the patriarchal society about traditional gender roles. At a time when second wave feminism and Betty Friedan's best-seller book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) threatened to undermine male dominance and the family unit, his movie led audiences to leave cinemas satisfied because it ensured the normative place of women in heterosexual relationships, reinforcing the fundamental basis of the Western family life. Finally, in his version of *Hamlet*, some aspects of the main character's personality were also refurbished so that the movie could reflect the blockbuster culture, as we shall explore in greater detail next. What all his productions had in common was the ability to revitalize essential traits of the Shakespearean brand, that of its "universality" and "plasticity", increasing the brand's value and making it continue relevant in new cultural contexts.

After Zeffirelli's start in the process of popularizing Shakespeare on screen in the 1960s, another turning point happened in the 1990s, also significantly driven by the Italian director and his adaptation of *Hamlet*. Unlike Jackson (2006), who divided the movies according to their filmic technique as already mentioned, the critic Douglas Lanier (apud HENDERSON, 2006, p. 180-181), divides the history of Shakespeare on film according to their time of production and their targeted audience. Until the 1990s, the movies that adapted Shakespeare were predominantly of the kind of 'art film', that is, marketed to a 'niche' or specific audience − here, of course, most critics refer to the cinematic productions of Olivier, Welles and other prominent directors, excluding the work of Zeffirelli as the initial popularizer of the English playwright. From the 1990's on, Shakespearean movies aimed to reach a mass market audience, establishing the Bard as popular entertainment in the film universe. Lanier (apud HENDERSON, 2006, p. 180-181) defends that the cultural phenomenon of postmodernism is the key to understand this transformation in the movies' style, as the traditional boundaries of high and low culture were problematized with mass media's appropriation of a form of cultural capital associated with literature. He exemplifies his point by mentioning how Zeffirelli's *Hamlet* (1990) "appropriated elements of the action blockbuster to produce Shakespearean cinema for a mainstream audience" (LANIER apud

HENDERSON, 2006, p. 181). By casting Mel Gibson, star of the franchise *Lethal Weapon*, to establish action-hero credentials to Shakespeare's protagonist, Zeffirelli transformed the plot completely, stressing Hamlet's explosive temperament, his active counterplotting and strategically feigned madness. He also cut half of Shakespeare's dialogue, mostly the parts were the Danish Prince appeared as pensive or hesitant to avenge his father. As to emphasize the popular taste in action, sex and violence, the movie's promotional campaign read "murder, madness, lust, treachery, swordplay, and a ghost…Hamlet" (LANIER apud HENDERSON, 2006, p. 182).

According to Boose and Burt (1997, p. 8-22), the 1995 teenage movie *Clueless*, based on Jane Austen's novel *Emma* and with star Alicia Silverstone in the main role, offers a mini-allegory of Shakespeare's position within the popular culture of the 1990s. In one of its scenes, Cher, the protagonist, a popular high-schooler in Beverly Hills, is in a car with her Ivy League College stepbrother and his also 'cult', high-educated girlfriend. When the girlfriend mistakenly attributes the line "to thine own self be true" to the character of Hamlet, Cher promptly corrects her, pointing out that the line in fact belongs to Polonius. Because Cher represents the type of "uneducated" girl, that lacks high cultural capital since her personal interests are restricted to futile things, such as clothes and make-up, she is discredited by the girlfriend, who believes Cher could not know Shakespeare well enough in order to correct anybody, especially an Ivy league student. Angry, Cher strikes back, confirming that she does not know *Hamlet*, but she most certainly knows Mel Gibson, the actor who played the Danish Prince in Zeffirelli's adaptation.

There are two very interesting aspects in this scene. The first is that it really confirms Zeffirelli's position as a popularizer of the Bard's work, a spokesman who helped democratize Shakespeare beyond the academic and literary fields, establishing the film industry as another source of knowledge for the plays. The second, it exemplifies how the Hollywoodization of Shakespeare changed the established parameters of measuring cultural capital. By raising questions rather if Cher does or does not have cultural capital, since she properly knows the play's lines even though not from the 'original' Shakespearean source, the movie *Clueless* demonstrates that the distinction between high and low cultures was becoming blurred. In Boose and Burt's opinion (1997, p. 10), what matters in this Shakespearean allegory in *Clueless* is that, in the light of the age of the mechanical and electronic reproduction, it enacts the displacement of the traditional book and literary culture by video and film culture in America. They also point out that the technologies that allowed Shakespeare to be more accessible through the process of adapting his works into film, have

also paradoxically increased the deconstruction of the playwright's image as a venerated author, displacing his position in favor of the film director. Highlighting the States' long history of pride in anti-intellectualism, which acquired even stronger political force in the 1980s and 1990s, the critics focus on how Shakespeare's name became, for great part of the U.S., a market liability, that is, a cause of embarrassment that should be avoided in the filmic adaptations at all costs. Explicitly mentioning its debts to the Bard's canon was understood as an indication that an adaptation would bring a high culture status and elitism that could drive away adolescent viewers. As Cher depicts in *Clueless*, for the 1990s teenagers, success resides in accumulating knowledge through popular culture products, not in actually knowing Shakespeare. Because of that belief, most of teenage adaptations omit any clear reference to the playwright or his work in their title, with the exception of Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo+ Juliet*, as we shall observe in detail in the next section of the chapter.

Making a distinction between the American and British Shakespearean film adaptations, Boose and Burt (1997, p. 13) believe there was an American norm according to which, up until Kenneth Branagh's commercial success at the beginning of the 1990s, Hollywood chose not to follow Olivier's or Welles's models of adapting, keeping its distance from direct or "straightforward Shakespeare". Instead, because Shakespeare still maintained his status as the National Poet of England and was understood as a signifier of British 'superiority', American film directors and screenwriters decided into a more colonized approach towards the Bard, reworking his plays into specifically American narratives, such as Woody Allen's *A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy* (1982), Paul Mazurcky's *Tempest* (1982) and Gus Van Sant's *My Own Private Idaho* (1991)[29]. In the case of *My Private Idaho*, the critics affirm that the avoidance of a clear connection with Shakespeare was even stronger, as the movie's appropriation of the Henriad was through a layered mediation, being based not on the plays, but on Welles's *Chimes at Midnight*.

In reality, even Britain − where the playwright has been mostly understood as a primary signifier for patriotism and national culture since the XVII century − did not escape

[29] *My Own Private Idaho* is an independent movie, loosely based on Shakespeare's *Henry IV* (parts I and II) as well as on *Henry V*, inspired mostly by the relationship between Prince Hal and Falstaff. The movie depicts the story of two friends, Mikey Waters (River Phoenix) and Scott Favor (Keanu Reeves) as they embark on a journey of self-discovery from Idaho to Rome, in search of Mike's mother. The movie is considered as a cult/classic among LGBTQ+ audiences, being a landmark in the queer-themed independent filmmaking. (PORTWOOD, Jerry. The Enduring Power of *My Own Private Idaho*. *Out Magazine*. October 25, 2015. Available at: <https://www.out.com/movies/2015/10/25/enduring-power-my-own-private-idaho>. Last Acess on Februrary, 21, 2021).

the allure of appropriating Shakespeare into popular culture in the 1990s. The Irish director/actor Kenneth Branagh (1960-), refurbished the previous tradition of adapting Shakespeare's plays into high culture movies with a marketeer sense of popular culture. In Branagh's productions, "high and low culture meet in moments where Shakespeare's scripts get subtly reframed inside of references to Hollywood pop culture". (BOOSE; BURT, 1997, p. 14). An example is his version of *Much Ado about Nothing* (1993) that not only opens with a visual evocation of the 1960s Western classic *The Magnificent Seven*[30], speaking within a meta-cinematic discourse of self-reference, but also, following Zeffirelli's casting pioneering employs North-American stars such as Denzel Washington and teen idol Keanu Reeves. Branagh's next Shakespearean movies, respectively *Othello* (1995) and *Hamlet* (1996) continued with the practice of casting North-American stars. While the first one cast Lawrence Fishburne as the movie's protagonist Moor, the second applied a different strategy, casting Americans for minor roles; for instance, the first gravedigger was interpreted by Billy Cristal and Osric was interpreted by Robin Williams.

Another novelty for the British history of Shakespeare on film that also started in the 1990s was the resetting of the movies in the viewer's own *milieu*, cutting loose the practice of following the plays 'pseudo-Elizabethan' sceneries. (BOOSE; BURT, 1997, p. 15). Christine Edzard's *As you like it* (1992) changes the traditional pastoral setting into an urban one, in which Rosalind hides out in an industrial wasteland and disguises herself as a man using Levi's Jeans. Similarly, Richard Loncraine's *Richard III* (1995), reframes history, putting the actual events of the War of the Roses 450 years in the future. The movie is set in a fictitious 1930s Britain, Richard transformed into a fascist who wants to usurp power. As it was considerably common ground in the territory of the Bard's filmic adaptations by the time, *Richard III* also cast both English Shakespearean well-known actors, such as Ian McKellen (Richard) and Maggie Smith (Duchess of York) together with American pop stars, such as Robert Downey Jr. (Rivers).

There was also the case of British directors that did not want to conform to new Hollywoodian models and wished to preserve an essentially English Shakespeare, whose lines could be delivered "with proper cadence and clarity" (BOOSE; BURT, 1997, p. 16). Trevor

[30] *The Magnificent Seven* is a movie directed by John Sturges (1910-1992) and starring Steve McQueen. The film was a Old-West remake of the Japanese director Akira Kurosawa's *The Seven Samurai* (1954). The film presents a group of seven gunfighters hired to protect a small village in Mexico from a group of marauders. The film had three sequels, *Return of the Seven* (1966), *Guns of the Magnificent Seven* (1969) and *The Magnificent Seven Ride* (1972). It also inspired a television series which ran from 1998 to 2000, and a 2016 remake.

Nunn's 1996 *Twelfth Night*, was shot in Cornwall, with its typical English interior setting, and employed an all-star English cast, with famous actors and actresses as Helena Bonham Carter, Imelda Staunton and Ben Kingsley. Although the film enjoyed a favorable critical reception, its decision to ignore the box office lure of Hollywood starts ended up affecting the amount of American money invested in the production, also impacting on its publicity in the U.S.

In summary, in the 1990s, even though there was still an oscillation between the drive to "modernize" Shakespeare and the impetus to preserve the qualities that coined the author as a traditional icon of cultural authority, the market for Shakespeare on film was very prosperous − Branagh alone premiered three adaptations as a director and also stared in another, the 1995 *Othello* directed by Oliver Park. Since the 1960s, Zeffirelli had shown Hollywood that adapting the Bard could actually pay off, if only one was flexible enough to rewrite his works into the current tastes of popular culture. As Boose and Burt wittily affirmed, the popularization of Shakespeare was deeply linked with youth culture:

> Dealing with specifically filmic reproductions or appropriations of Shakespeare means that "the popular" must be thought through not only the media and institutions in which Shakespeare is now reproduced—mass culture, Hollywood, celebrity, tabloid—but above all, **youth culture**. (BOOSE; BURT, 1997, p. 17, emphasis added).

Concerning youth culture, Hapgood (1997, p. 94) claims that Branagh excelled Zeffirelli in his ability to make the audience connect with leading characters, simply because he was younger than the Italian director − in the 1990s, Branagh was around 30.

Despite Hapgood's opinion on Branagh's skills towards adapting the Bard for youth culture, Boose and Burt (1997, p. 17) believe that the Shakespearean movie that went the furthest in enunciating itself as a teen film was Baz Luhrmann's 1996 *William Shakespeare's Romeo+Juliet*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio as Romeo and Claire Danes as Juliet. Both DiCaprio and Danes were already known by the teen audience because of their previous roles − while DiCaprio starred in the last season of the popular sit-com "Growing Pains", which aired from 1985 to 1992, as well as the adolescent film *The Basketball Diaries* (1995), Danes was the star of the MTV teenage series "My so-called Life". In fact, according to the critics, MTV channel had a great contribution in promoting the movie. Not only did MTV News do a segment of the film, but the channel also aired a half-hour special on it three times a week before its U.S. release (BOOSE; BURT, 1997, p. 18). Another evidence they point out that *Romeo+Juliet* constructed itself as a youth culture film was that it was market tested at Berkeley University, California, in which viewers who were 39 years old or younger were

asked to fill out a form leaving their impressions about the movie. The studios' marketing campaign proved itself successful, as Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet*, came in first at the box office, the week of its U.S release (BOOSE; BURT, 1997, p. 18).

The trend of making films directed exclusively at a youth culture was a global one and affected not only the history of Shakespeare on film. In the U.S., the director, screenwriter and producer John Hughes (1950-2009), kicked off the tendency in the 1980s with motion pictures like *Sixteen Candles* (1984), *The Breakfast Club* (1985) and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (1986), that were so commercially successful that they became icons in popular culture, inspiring a list of other teen-movies. In the case of Shakespearean movies, it is a consensus that Luhrmann's production acted as a pivot in this process. In the following years, a hoard of other motion pictures targeted at an adolescent audience that were more or less based on the works of the English playwright followed: *Ten Things I hate about you* (1999*), Never Been Kissed* (1999), *O* (2001), *Get over it* (2001), *Deliver us from Eva* (2003) and *She's the man* (2006), just to mention a few. Even now, more than 20 years later, Luhrmann's movie still figures in lists among the best[31] and highest grossing Shakespearean filmic adaptations, as does Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You*[32]. It is because of their prominence and importance in the Bard's filmic canon that both movies were selected as the corpus that composes the case study of the Shakespearean brand, as we shall observe in the following parts of this chapter.

2.2. **The Shakespearean brand in teen tragic adaptations – the case of Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (1996)**

[31] In *The Guardian's* newspaper rank of the best Shakespearean films, Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet* figures in the 10th position while Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You* features in the 6th position. (DICKSON, A. The best Shakespeare films – ranked! *The Guardian*, February 8, 2019. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/feb/08/the-best-shakespeare-films-ranked>. Last access on: February 27, 2020).

[32] As for the rank of the highest grossing Shakespearean movies of the website Money.com, Romeo+Juliet features in the second position, with $ 147,5 million, while 10 Things appears in the fifth position, with $53,5million (ADAMCZYK, Alicia. Shakespeare Has Pulled In Over $1 Billion at the Box Office. Money, April 22, 2016. Available at: <https://money.com/shakespeare-movies-box-office-billions/>. Last access on: February 27, 2020).

As we have mentioned before, Boose and Burt (1997) comment on how Shakespeare's name was considered by many film directors as a market liability in the 1990s; an indication that an adaptation would bring a high culture status and elitism that could drive away popular viewers. For the Australian director Baz Luhrmann (1962-), though, this did not seem an actual risk when he chose to adapt *Romeo and Juliet* in 1996. Luhrmann's movie was the first – in fact, the only one so far − to explicitly present itself as an adaptation of the Bard, acknowledging its source of inspiration in its title. Even though the movie follows closely enough the plays' plot and language, given its pop style, so incompatible with critics' image of Shakespeare as an icon of high culture, reviewers at the time mocked his choice in titling the film. Writing for the *Rolling Stone* Magazine in 1996, critic Peter Travers ironically affirmed: "It's a good thing that Shakespeare gets its name in the title, or you might mistake the opening scenes for Quentin Tarantino's *Romeo and Juliet*" (TRAVERS, 1996, p. 190). Two years later, another reviewer echoed Travers' sentiment by stating: "Good thing Shakespeare's name is included in the title. Otherwise, you might mistake this audacious version of his tale of star-crossed lovers for an extended music video" (JONES apud LEHMANN, p. 190). Such commentaries on Luhrmann's marketing strategy brings to discussion two aspects of adaptations: first, the matter of authorship *versus* originality − an aspect that the latter critic seemed ignorant of when he deemed Romeo and Juliet's story a Shakespeare's 'original' by stating "*his* tale of star-crossed lovers" − ; and second, the matter of signature and identity, which Travers unconsciously highlighted when he pointed the possibility of taking Luhrmann's movie by a Tarantino production. Not coincidentally, both topics, but specially the matter of signature and identity, a theme also dear to the protagonists of *Romeo and Juliet* who strive to live according to their own beliefs, provide relevant elements to the circumscription of the Shakespearean brand, as we shall see next.

First of all, it is worth stressing that, even though Luhrmann's movie bears the name of the canonical playwright, it is not simply a modern restyling of Shakespeare's play, that is, a mere presentation of the well-known love story transposed into modern setting and time. It is, instead, a whole new interpretation of the Shakespearean text that, through the use of incessant cinematic intertextuality as an intentional stylistic device, establishes itself as an authentic postmodern production which leaves its own mark in the history of Shakespeare on film, reinforcing the mythic aspect of the star-crossed lovers' story under the veil of pop-culture.

In *A Theory of Adaptation*, Linda Hutcheon (2013) defends the idea that adaptations are *palimpsestuous* works, *texts* (to use the Barthesian term) that, although constituted as a

weave of citations and references, should not be haunted by their sources nor analyzed in terms of fidelity to their 'original'. Instead, adaptations should be perceived as aesthetic objects in their own right, having their own "Benjaminian aura" (HUTCHEON, 2013, p. 4-6), that is, their own existence in time and space, being ultimately valued as a work on its own. She also defines adaptations as "repetitions with variations" (HUTCHEON, 2013, p. 4-6), eliciting from the adaptor the tasks of: first, interpreting his or her source; then, making it one's own material and finally, exercising one's creativity by producing a new object. So far, it is Hutcheon's theory that provides me with the criterion of judgement of Luhrmann's movie, authorizing me to consider it as a new, creative, independent work which dialogues with a previous text but at the same time, has left its own mark in history. Yet, it is still necessary to establish what entitles me to consider it as a postmodern production. Once again, it is Hutcheon's thoughts that support me.

In *The Politics of Postmodernism* (2002) Hutcheon labels as postmodern any cultural production (architecture, literature, photography, film, painting, video, dance, music, etc.) with an "awareness of cultural continuity and a need to adapt to changing formal demands and social conditions through an ironic contesting of the authority of that same continuity" (HUTCHEON, 2002, p. 103). According to her, the postmodern form of representation *par excellence*, then, is parody. For Hutcheon, parody − sometimes referred by other scholars as ironic question, appropriation, intertextuality or pastiche[33] − involves the reprise of the past art in a critical sense that, through a process of irony, "signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference". (HUTCHEON, 2002, p. 89). She considers that parody foregrounds the politics of representation as it contests

> […] our humanist assumptions about artistic originality and uniqueness and our capitalist notions of ownership and property. With parody – as with any form of reproduction – the notion of the original as rare, single, and valuable (in aesthetic or commercial terms) is called into question. (HUTCHEON, 2002, p. 89).

[33] Pastiche is a concept developed by the literary critic, philosopher and marxist theorist Frederic Jameson (1934 -) to replace parody in postmodern age. Jameson's concept of pastiche opposes to that of Hutcheon's as he believes that postmodern parody is "blank parody", that is, "a neutral practice of mimicry", without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter". (JAMESON, 1991, p. 17). For Jameson postmodern parody is not self-reflexive and does not contain any trace of political and historical awareness. It is for such reason that Hutcheon's concept of parody is preferred in this work.

In the case of *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, then, what qualifies it as postmodern is the presence of intertextuality as a deliberate, built-in characteristic of the movie, ironically designed in order to produce in the audience's mind the aesthetic effect of being aware of the pre-existence of past productions. Labeling the movie as postmodern, thus, means commenting upon this "visually and aurally congested text" (EVANS, 2003, p. 60), this "semiotic overdose" (EVANS, 2003, p. 60), in which the presence of multiple *auteurs* operates. Starting with its own title, Luhrmann suggests his consent to prior encoding at the same time he questions the concept of authorship and "ownership" of an ancient legend by claiming Romeo's and Juliet's story as Shakespeare's. Not merely an adaptation, but an "authorial gambit", as the scholar Courtney Lehmann (2001) suggested in her article, Luhrmann's film reworks the star-crossed lovers' story in such a way that it reinforces both the cultural authority of Shakespeare as well as that of the story itself, which has become over the centuries a brand on its own, establishing the archetype of love in Western civilization.

If one considers the historical perspective, it seems to be impossible to admit Shakespeare's ownership of Romeo and Juliet's story, since he adapted it from previous sources, in the same manner he did with the majority of his plays. As Lehmann (2001) teaches us, in Shakespeare's early modern England, the term 'author' was not connected with the ideas of originality, which only came into existence in the eighteenth century. Situated between the medieval *auctor* − a term derived from scribal culture and its regimens of repetition − and the Romantic notion of an author as an "original genius", the early modern author emerges in the spirit of adaptation, that is, of transforming preexisting texts to fit the socio-cultural conditions (for instance, patronage or censorship) that determine the textual production of their time. It is in such context that Shakespeare, somewhere between 1591 and 1596, produces *Romeo and Juliet,* an adaptation of Arthur Brooke's long poem *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562). But even Brooks' poem was itself an adaptation of a 1559 French collection of tales by Pierre Boaistuau, which, in its turn, also derived from earlier Italian versions by Matteo Bandello and Luigi da Porto. In reality, Romeo and Juliet's story traces far back to ancient Greek mythology and folklore, its plotline bearing resemblance to legends such as Hero and Leander, Pyramus and Thisbe and Tristan and Isolde. In the Renaissance, the theme of 'star-crossed love' became widely popular, but none of previous versions of the story, including Brooks', acquired such fame and notoriety as Shakespeare's, the true responsible for conferring its legendary status.

Lehmann calls our attention to the fact that, unlike other legends which became well-known and recognized by "word of mouth", Romeo and Juliet's story acquired its legendary

status through the written word, by literary transmission. Consequently, the lovers' story got submitted to the cultural authority inherent to the text, that of the author's (or should I say *authors*, in the plural, since multiple agents worked and re-worked this narrative). Thus, in this aspect, when adapting *Romeo and Juliet*, "Luhrmann is not only faced with the sedimentary literary history of the legend, but also with the legendary status of Shakespeare's own play in contemporary culture" (LEHMANN, 2001, p. 200). Here, I should add that, as relevant as the legendary status of the play, the Shakespearean myth and the iconic status of its brand are also elements Luhrmann has to face. As an adaptation, his film lived up to the challenge of producing its own "aura", of leaving its own mark in time and space, almost the same challenge the Bard inadvertently experienced when adapting his play. The difference, of course, is temporal. Writing in early modern England, when notions of originality and authorship were not fully established, Shakespeare's work would not be compared and contrasted with such an accredited, canonical predecessor as happened with Luhrmann's. In a postmodern environment, Luhrmann deliberately took advantage of Shakespeare's position within culture, claiming an affiliation of his own production as a kind of heir to the Bard's legacy. At the same time, as we shall see next, the Australian director also challenged the (mis)conception that Shakespeare belonged exclusively to an elite, high-cultural environment and instead, proved how the playwright's roots were deeply connected with the popular.

According to Lehmann (2001), the title of *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* "marks a curious intervention in the citational authority of both legend *and* performance" (LEHMANN, 2001, p. 200, emphasis in the original). She points out that as critic W.B. Worthen astutely observed earlier, Luhrmann does not present the play's actual name anywhere, since the 'and' in *Romeo and Juliet* is replaced by an '&' framed within a red cross both in opening sequence as well as in the film's advertisement and promotional material. As a result, Luhrmann's title evokes and recalls Shakespeare's play and yet replaces it with its own mark. In Worthen's opinion, "one of the most sophisticated aspects of the film is its alertness to the process of surrogation, its simultaneous invocation and displacement of the original" (WORTHEN apud LEHMANN, 2001, p. 200), which this titling strategy suggests. In mathematics, the "+" symbol indicates addition. Considering this perspective, the title is Luhrmann's first indication of his cinematic style and *modus operandi*, functioning as a kind of foreshadowing: it recalls Shakespeare's canon, but, at the same time, it adds his own postmodern touch to it. Lehmann believes that the red cross in the title provides "a crucial stage direction for rethinking authorship in the age of adaptation. For the plus sign (…) reminds us that authorship in postmodern and early modern culture need not to be conceived

in terms of *negation"* (LEHMANN, 2001, p. 221, emphasis in the original). That means to say that there is room for appreciation for both authors and that, as Hutcheon defended in her *Theory of Adaptation* (2002), a good adaptation is that which highlights its innovative and creative traits.

Many reviewers and scholars, including Lehmann, have observed how Luhrmann has left his own mark in Romeo and Juliet's legend. His cinematic language has been recognized by its peculiar aspects such as the highly texturized, frenzied, music-video-like *mise-en-scène* to the point that, as what happened with Romeo and Juliet's story, it became a trademark of its own, known as the "Bazmark". Agreeing with this position, the director's wife, Catherine Martin, has affirmed: "Whether you love or hate the film, it's completely unique and very much a director's film – it has Baz's vision stamped all over it" (MARTIN apud LEHMANN, 2001, p. 206). In face of these observations, one might think that they would undermine Luhrmann's proclaimed fidelity to Shakespeare advertised in his title. One should remember, however, that, as taught by Hutcheon (2002), the degree of fidelity is not a proper criterion of judgement of an adaptation. Besides, for the attentive eye, Shakespeare's presence is found everywhere within the film.

More than acknowledging the Bard in the title, the director's strategy to tie his production with the canonical playwright was to fill it up with many Shakespearean references, creating what the editor G. Blakemore Evans called, in his Introduction to the New Cambridge edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, a "Shakespeare theme park" (EVANS, 2003, p. 60). Apart from the obvious presence of the Shakespearean text, the other Shakespearean references are most perceptible to a keen audience, as they take the form of wordplay in signs and advertisements of consumable goods that flash before our eyes in fractions of seconds. As examples we can mention the "Out damn'd spot" Dry cleaners, a reference to Lady's Macbeth famous line, "The Merchant of Verona Beach" loan company and also the "Globe Theatre" pool hall (Picture 10), Luhrmann's homage to Shakespeare's renowned theater. Such examples emphasize Shakespeare's high-cultural status, as they are mostly recognized by an audience already familiarized with the playwright's canon, at the same time that they challenge Shakespeare's authority by relocating his works and characters within the consumer culture, once again allowing the movie to receive a postmodern label.

Picture 10 – "The Globe Theatre" Pool Hall, presented as a Shakespearean 'easter-egg' in the 1996 movie *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet.*

Source: Google Images

But the playwright's presence in the film is not only felt in the language spoken by the characters or in the form of Bardolatrous *easter-eggs*. Even though some traditional critics, who insist on comparing Luhrmann's adaptation with the 'original', criticize his cut of approximately 1/3 of the Shakespearean text as well as his rearranging of its remaining parts, claiming it as artificial[34], Lehmann thinks differently. She believes that more than a textual debt to his source, Luhrmann also reveals a *textural* debt to the Bard, since he converts Shakespeare's language into a cinematic, visual one. In her words:

> (…) where his camera fails to commodify and consume Shakespearean verse, Luhrmann adopts an ironizing, literalistic approach to the language. For example, at the Capulet ball, Luhrmann playfully converts Juliet into Romeo's "bright angel" (2.2.26) as she emerges decked out in an angel costume. (LEHMANN, 2001, p. 202)

Besides Romeo's and Juliet's costumes − a knight and an angel, respectively − that present them as archetypal lovers, another example of Luhrmann's textural debt to Shakespeare is his playfulness when depicting the characters' armory. When the Shakespearean text presents words like 'sword' or 'rapier', the director converts them into firearms, the camerawork focusing on characters' holsters and their guns, creating an incongruity between what it is seen and what it is heard. Also important to understand the similarities between the movie and the play are Luhrmann's innovative uses of water imagery and the religious iconography. As wisely observed by Lehmann (2001), "water emerges as a

[34] In relation to his treatment of the Shakespearean verse, Luhrmann is said to keep usually the rhymed verses, as his attempt to make his contemporary characters sound like they belong to Elizabethan England. For such criticism see: CROWDUS, G. Words, Words, Words. *Cineaste*, v. 23, n. 4, p. 13–19. 1998.

distinctly cinematic substitute for the ebb and flow of language through which the lover's relationship unfolds in Shakespeare's play" (LEHMANN, 2001, p. 210).

In the movie, both protagonists are first introduced to the audience in scenes related to water. While Romeo is seen walking by Verona beach's sea; Juliet's first apparition is through an underwater shot, enjoying her isolation from the world in the privacy of her bathtub. She has her eyes wide open and her hair flowing freely (Picture 11). Later, during the Capulet ball, Luhrmann presents us with an analogous underwater shot of Romeo, as he digs his head into a washbasin in an attempt to clear his senses from the effects of ecstasy. Like Juliet, his eyes are wide open (Picture 12). In stylistically connecting these scenes, Luhrmann also brings the lovers close together, despite their families' differences and "grudge".

Pictures 11 and 12 - Underwater shots of the characters of Juliet and Romeo in Luhrmann's film

Source: movie screen shot at 16:06 and 24:26, respectively.

Water is once again used to connect the lovers, as their love-at-first-sight experience occurs through the waters of an aquarium which also serves to isolate them from the chaotic sounds of the ball. Luhrmann's innovative use of water as symbol is also present in the traditional balcony scene, which, in the director's version, was replaced with a swimming pool at the Capulet's mansion. In this case, water also symbolizes an escape from the outside world, as the lovers dive into the pool to avoid being spotted by the mansion's guards and its surveillance cameras. Other crucial moments in the movie are presented in relation to water. Mercutio and Tybalt's fight occurs by the sea, during a storm, while Tybalt's death by the hands of Romeo happens in an artificial pond in the city, with DiCaprio delivering the famous line "O, I am fortune's Fool" (III.1.127) under heavy rain. As Tybalt's blood taints the water, making it red, the audience understands that Romeo and Juliet's relationship will no longer be the same, being also marked by death.

Religious iconography is also ubiquitous in the film. Images of the Virgin Mary, Jesus and saints adorn the Capulet's clothes, cars and their guns (Picture 13). Not even the

characters' own flesh is spared, as Friar Lawrence's back presents us with a huge cross tattoo (Picture 14). Right after the opening scene, in which a TV anchor narrates the lovers' story as local news − Luhrmann's interpretation of Shakespeare's Prologue − the camera rapidly runs through the streets of Verona Beach, stopping and zooming a large statue of Jesus Christ (very similar indeed to the one we have in Rio de Janeiro), as if the statue would judge all of the city's inhabitants and their sinful, reprehensible actions. The statue is framed by two large corporate buildings, one with the name Montague and the other with the name Capulet on it, indicating that the households' strife is due to business competition in a capitalist environment rather than to blood and family as in the original plot. The next scene shows Capulets and Montagues teasing and brawling with each other in a gas station, in a stylistic reference to the movie genre of the spaghetti Western. Before the conflict ends up in the explosion of the venue, members of both households appear harassing a group of nuns that were passing by.

Pictures 13 and 14 - Religious iconography in Tybalt's clothes and gun and Friar Lawrence's Cross Tattoo .

Source: Google Images

Source: Google Images

Some believe that the function of this omnipresence of religious images is to ironically contrast with the violence and to heighten the sense of tragedy. Here, it is interesting to stress one ambiguous postmodern stance of the film: while it affirms certain products such as the very own Shakespearean brand, it also ironizes others, such as the real function of religion in contemporary culture. Critics such as Donaldson (apud EVANS, 2003) and Hawker (apud LEHMANN, 2011) have observed that Luhrmann's "kitschified" presentation of religious icons as fashion accessories has offered religion as a commodity, ultimately emptying their

original redemptive power and becoming meaningless[35]. In contrast, Lehmann believes that Luhrmann's continuous exploitation of the religious imagery apparently bereft of devotion actually unveils a new cult: that of the "Bazmark". She highlights the final moments of the movie, when both his most innovative traits considered as his stylistic signature (the water imagery and religious iconography) merge in the scene of the Capulet's tomb, presenting the audience with the indelible image of the neon blue sea of crosses (Picture 15). Most importantly, though, is the connection she establishes between Luhrmann's cinematic signature and Shakespeare's characters' deepest anxieties.

Picture 15 – The 'blue-neon-sea' of crosses in *Willliam Shakespeare's Romeo+Juliet*.

Source: Google Images

In Shakespeare's play the theme of identity pervades the whole plot: Romeo's and Juliet's ultimate wish to be together is, in reality, their desire to be truthful to their own selves, not following what is pre-determined either by their parents or by Fortune. Juliet's soliloquy "What's in a name?" (II.2.46) epitomizes the theme as she concludes that Romeo's identity would not be altered even if he was called something else; his true essence remaining intact independently of any labels. Agreeing with his lover, Romeo echoes Juliet's anxiety to escape the referentiality of his name, desiring a world where they could both be together: "Call me but love, and I'll be new baptiz'd" (II.2.49). Lehmann (2001) observers how both water and

[35] For more on the topic of the use of religious iconography as a commodity in Luhrmann's movie, see the article "The Americanization of Culture" by Denise Albanese in *Marxist Shakespeares* (2001), edited by Jean E. Howard and Scott Cutler Shershow.

cross iconography come together in the rite of baptism. Paradoxically, thus, it is precisely in demonstrating innovation that Luhrmann reveals his primal baptism in Shakespeare's play.

The director himself seems to agree that there is a lot of Shakespeare in his production. Defending his film in an interview from those who accused it of being very 'MTV-like' and not "Shakespearean" or *cult* enough, Luhrmann explained how his cinematic rhetoric was in fact aligned with that of Shakespeare's language:

> Let's talk about cinematic language. You get a lot of people saying, "Oh my god, you change style every 5 minutes. How MTV. […] What people forget is that Shakespeare was a relentless entertainer. When he played at the Elizabethan stage, he was basically dealing with an audience of 3,000 drunken punters who were selling pigs and geese in the stalls. He played to everyone from the street sweeper to the Queen of England. And his style was to have stand-up comedy one moment, a song and then the highest tragedy right next to it. [...] He was a rambunctious, sexy, violent, entertaining storyteller, and we're trying to make this movie [...] the way Shakespeare might have if he had been a filmaker. We have not shied away from clashing low comedy with high tragedy, which is the style of the play, for it's the low comedy that allows you to embrace the very high emotions of the tragedy. (LUHRMANN apud JOHNSON, 1996).[36]

With such an assertion, either consciously or not, Luhrmann admits some very important aspects we have been discussing in relation to the Shakespearean brand. The first is that Shakespeare's dramatical essence is deeply (and ambiguously) rooted within the popular and his ability to touch, and speak to, both high and low classes. The second, he admits that the image of the playwright as a high-cultural icon in contemporaneity is a construct of different agents within history, other authors different from Shakespeare himself. Finally, he also recognizes that in order to be successful like the Bard, reaching an extremely heterogeneous audience, his marketing strategy should purposefully abandon Shakespeare's high-cultural "aura".

But, as already mentioned at the beginning of this section, in the context of the 1990s film market, explicitly linking one's adaptation with Shakespeare did not seem the best alternative for most movie directors to "popularize" or renew his canon. How, then, did Luhrmann do it? Paradoxically, it was exactly through his bold, parodic, subversive and not to say postmodern strategy. By simultaneously evoking and revising Shakespeare's authority in the ownership of the Romeo and Juliet legend, Luhrmann created his own cinematic signature, his own trademark, also escaping the referentiality of the Shakespearean brand. In Lehmann's words: "[...] with the help of the Bazmark, Luhrmann emerges as a 'brand-name

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[36] JOHNSON, Brian. D. *Souping up the Bard. Shakespeare is Hollywood's latest hot ticket.* 1996. Available at: <http://archive.macleans.ca/article/1996/11/11/souping-up-the-bard>. Last access on: May 15, 2021.

vision that precedes and succeeds the film', becoming a kind of legend in his own right" (LEHMANN, 2001, p. 218). Similar to what happened with David Garrick and Shakespeare in the 18th century, the Bazmark and the Shakespearean brand experienced a symbiotic life, ambiguously referring and revising each other's identities in an infinite continuum, but ultimately thriving on one another.

The movie's statistics proved exactly the opposite of what Boose and Burt (1997) thought to be true: Shakespeare's name was not a market liability, but an extremely valuable asset that the Bazmark appropriated and reworked wisely. According to the website The Numbers.com, the movie's worldwide box office is nowadays 10.2 times the production budget and only on its opening weekend in the U.S. the movie achieved 24% of all its gross income, approximately eleven million dollars[37]. In this instance, *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* clearly exemplifies that, when it comes to building iconic brands, Juliet's question "What's in a name?" remains forever pertinent. It was through its strategic titling that Luhrmann ambiguously provided a sense of continuity and rupture into the identity of the Shakespearean brand that helped us visualize its iconic instance, as established by Holt (2004). By recognizing the legend of the star-crossed lovers as property of Shakespeare, Luhrmann reinforced the already acclaimed Shakespearean brand's feature of transforming stories into unforgettable myths, thus providing a sense of continuity in its identity. At the same time, it also established a rupture into the common belief that Shakespeare was an icon exclusively linked to high-culture. By making Shakespeare fit into the pop-culture aesthetics of Hollywood, Luhrmann was able to provide the English icon with a new American identity, updating the Bard's appeal to teen audiences and ultimately starting a trend in the market of Shakespeare on film that would be followed by Junger, as we shall see next.

2.3. **The Shakespearean brand in teen romantic comedies – the case of Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You* (1999)**

After Luhrmann's tribute to Shakespeare's cultural authority with his production, the Bard remained in fashion within the filmic industry of the 1990s. Only three years after the

[37] Available at: <https://www.the-numbers.com/movie/Romeo-and-Juliet-(1996)#more>. Last access on: June, 2021.

première of *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, a new teen adaptation was made, this time by the North American director Gil Junger (1954-) who decided to use the early comedy *The Taming of the Shrew* (c.1592)[38] as his source. Unlike his Australian colleague's, Junger's movie did not explicitly state its debt to Shakespeare and, because of that, his production better fits within the classification of appropriation rather than that of adaptation, according to Julie Sanders (2006). Sanders states that "in appropriations the intertextual relationship may be less explicit, more embedded, but what is often inescapable is the fact that a political or ethical commitment shapes a writer's, director's, or performer's decision to re-interpret a source text" (SANDERS, 2006, p. 2). It was not coincidental, then, that Junger selected this very controversial play to reinterpret, precisely in the context of the Riot Grrl feminist punk movement in the 1990s. As we shall see next, *10 Things I Hate about You* updates the shrew archetype and transforms Katherine into a feminist, while dealing with the theme of popularity *versus*. maturity in Youth culture. It is precisely because of Junger's ability to address some relevant cultural contradictions of his time that he boosted the Shakespearean brand over to its iconic status.

Much of the controversy that involves *The Taming of the Shrew* derives from critical interpretation and the play's reception through time. For the vast majority of the contemporary audience, the play is considered as misogynistic, one that explicitly favors patriarchal authority. In fact, as scholar Phyllis Rackin (2005) shows us in *Shakespeare and Women*, controversy around the play is not a privilege of our time, as its reception has been disputed since the 16th century. Rackin points out some indications of its unpopularity in early modern England, such as the scanty existence of recorded references as well as its short performance history[39]. But, perhaps the most evident sign that the play did not truthfully

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[38] As editor Ann Thompson explains, to precisely date *The Taming of the Shrew* is a complicated task, due to the existence of another version, different from the one printed in the *First Folio*, known as *The Taming of a Shrew.* Depending on scholars interpretation about the existing relationship betweeen the two versions, that is, whether which one is the source to the other, the play's estimate date varies. It is now generally agreed that *A Shrew* is a sort of memorial reconstruction of *The Shrew*, and since historical evidences suggest that Shakespeare wrote the play for a large theatrical company either in the season that ended with the closing of theaters in 1592 or in the precedent season, this is the date that I refer to in this work. Even so, Thompson alerts us that stylistic comparisons between Shakespeare's *The Shrew* and his other early work leave it open the possibility that the play was written around 1590. Some scholars such as Brian Morris have gone so far to the point of suggesting that the play may be Shakespeare's first in all the canon. (THOMPSON, Anne. Introduction. In: SHAKESPEARE, William. *The Taming of The Shrew.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. p. 2-4).

[39] Rackin informs us that *The Shrew* appeared in print for the first time in the *First Folio*, and that there are only three recorded references of it before 1649, more than fifty years after what is believed to be its theatrical début. The lack of Quarto Editions of *The Shrew* suggests that it was less popular than the version *A Shrew,* since

reflect the attitudes of Shakespeare and his contemporaries regarding women's place in marriage, was John's Fletcher (1579-1625) play *The Woman's Prize or The Tamer Tamed* (1611), a kind of sequel to Shakespeare's *Shrew* and the only theatrical reply one of his works received during his own lifetime, according to editor Ann Thompson. As its title suggests, *The Tamer Tamed* presents Petruchio, now widowed of Katherina and married to Maria, being tamed by his second wife, who refuses to let him consummate their marriage until he behaves properly. About Fletcher's play, Thompson affirms:

> In writing this sequel, Fletcher was in effect putting the play into its traditional context of the war of the sexes, a context in which normally, as in the stories of Boccaccio and Chaucer, a story about a husband outwitting or triumphing over his wife is capped or balanced by one in which a wife outwits her husband, the overall moral being that, despite a theoretical and practical male supremacy, the best marriages are those based on equality and mutual respect [...]. (THOMPSON, 2003, p. 18)

Thompson's comments enlighten us about the fact that the Bard's plot did not present a 'traditional' battle of the sexes since Katherine was not given a chance to 'get even' with Petruchio. Indeed, because Shakespeare's play did not conform to the audience's expectations, this is not only a very plausible reason to explain its unpopularity in the early modern context, but also a justification of the play's position as the one with fewest straight, unaltered performances in the canon.

In relation to its performance history, Thompson (2003, p. 17-24) tells us that *The Shrew*'s theatrical adaptations usually adjust Katherina's role, either by giving her more motivation in accepting Petruchio's behavior or by altering her major final speech in Act V, Scene 2, which is entirely cut or rewritten in an apologetic tone. For example, in David Garrick's *Catherine and Petruchio* (1764), which supplanted Shakespeare's version until mid-nineteenth century, Katherine is given an aside in the wooing scene in order to portray her as someone who will enjoy competing with her husband. Thompson also points as one of Garrick's strategies the transference of some of Petruchio's taming rhetoric to Catherine in an attempt to redress the balance between them and present an equality between the sexes which was not present in the Shakespearean playtext. Another significant alteration made by Garrick was the entire omission of both the Induction and the sub-plot, by presenting Bianca as newly married at the beginning of the play.

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quarto editions were produced to capitalize upon a demand of printed copies of popular plays in performance. She also counts only three performances of the version of the *Folio* until the end of the seventeenth century. (RACKIN, 2005, p. 52-58).

Agreeing with Thompson, Rackin (2005) warns us that ignoring the alterations the play suffered through time as well as the works of other playwrights in Shakespeare's period, "may produce a misleading picture of the assumptions about women's roles that early modern English playgoers were prepared to accept." (RACKIN, 2005, p. 60). Kamaralli (2012) is another scholar who comments on the impact of these alterations in the construction of our contemporary reception of the play, pointing out that the omission of the Induction is, perhaps, the major responsible for its current misogynistic label.

In the Induction, the audience learns that the play they are about to watch, *The Taming of the Shrew*, is a play-within-the-play. In the Shakespearean playtext, Katherine–and Petruchio's relationship, which we now consider to be the 'main plot', was in fact a theatrical representation performed to another character, the drunken tinker Cristopher Sly, who is being tricked into believing he is a lord by a noble man and his servants. As Kamaralli (2012, p. 93-94) suggests, the suppression of this prologue prevents the audience from understanding the whole play as a game of illusion, pretense and disguise, focusing on the taming plot as a faithful depiction of society's expectations on married life, rather than as the farcical, comical representation it seems intended to be. As a result, it makes virtually impossible for any woman in contemporary society not to frown upon Katherine's final speech, praising wifely duties and advocating in favor of a subservient position for women in relation to their husbands.

The omission of the Induction, in fact, has been a common trait in film adaptations and appropriations of the play, an alteration that much contributed to make *The Shrew* popular in contemporary culture. Here, it is relevant to stress that by 'popular' I do not mean appreciated by the audience, but rather that the play has received much attention, both by scholars and the general public alike. Rackin (2005) observes that it is our need to validate present-day beliefs about the role of women as truths since the 16th century what justifies the play's current status within culture. As already mentioned in this chapter, *The Taming of the Shrew* was the first of Shakespeare's plays to be presented in a talking film in 1929, and from that date on, it counted with more than twenty cinematic adaptations and appropriations[40]. Among these, the most famous are considered to be the filmed version of the musical *Kiss me Kate* (1953),

[40] The number of films derived from *The Taming of The Shrew* mentioned is the result of a quick internet research, It contains not only Hollywood Productions, but also movies from other nationalities, such as India and Hungary. Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Taming_of_the_Shrew_on_screen>. Last access on: May 2021.

Zeffirelli's *The Taming of the Shrew* (1967) and, of course, Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You*. In writing for contemporary audiences, all of these directors have transformed Katherina and Petruchio's abusive relationship into a romantic one. However, there is a crucial temporal difference between Junger's production and the other two. As Diana E. Henderson noticed in an essay published in 2003 where she studied both the cinematic as well as the television versions of the play, there is a clustering in the filmed versions of *The Shrew* which coincides with "those decades when feminism has induced conservative responses and when the media are actively encouraging women to find their pleasures in the home" (HENDERSON, 2003, p. 122). As a product of their time, then, both *Kiss me Kate* and Zeffirelli's movie end up presenting a positive view towards the domestication of Kate. Junger's film, on the other hand, is a result of a different time and, as I would like to suggest in spite of all negative criticism that believes otherwise, offers important cultural and gender commentary on the condition of women in the turn of the new millennium.

To rewrite *The Taming of The Shrew* according to the model of the teen comedy conventions, Junger has, as already mentioned, completely abolished the Induction of the play and transformed its setting of the Italian city of Padua into a homonymous North American high school. In this context, Shakespearean poetry is completely nonexistent, since the language spoken by the characters respects adolescent vernacular dialogue. The female protagonists become the senior student Kat Stratford – her last name as a reference to the Bard's hometown − and the sophomore Bianca, sisters who don't get along very well because of their opposite personalities. The male protagonists are Patrick Verona, the teenage version of Shakespeare's Petruchio; Cameron, the equivalent character for the role of Lucentio; and Joey Donner, a character who finds no exact correspondence in the Shakespearean playtext, and yet could be considered as a Gremio-Hortensio combination. The roles of all servants are absent, except for Tranio, who in the movie becomes Michael, Cameron's friend and sort of advisor. The minor characters in the play include Chastity, Bianca's supposedly best friend, who ends up showing her true envious nature at the end, and Mandella, Kat's "Shakesfanatic" friend, whose obsession with the Bard may symbolize Junger's attempt to pay tribute to his source in a similar way that Luhrmann did previously.

The basic story line of the taming plot remains almost the same except for a crucial difference. While in Shakespeare's play marriage is treated as a business, in *10 Things I Hate about You*, due to the young age of the female protagonists, marriage is not a question at all. Nonetheless, both the themes of patriarchal authority and financial interest are present in the movie; the first in the attitudes of Mr. Stratford and the second, in Patrick's. In his attempt to

maintain the connection with Shakespeare's plot, Junger's revision of Baptista produces a caricatural, overzealous father, who is constantly struggling to regulate his daughters' lives. As an obstetrician, Mr. Stratford is exaggeratedly fearful of teenage pregnancy (Picture 16) and it is this fear that provides him with the excuse to establish the rule that Bianca can only date when Kat does so. As a result, the taming plot becomes a scheme organized by the school boys to manipulate Kat's desires because of Bianca's desirability. Because of Baptista's rule, Bianca is introduced at the beginning of the movie as belonging to the "don't-even-think-about-it-group", the group which designates the girls who are out of reach for boys. Interested in dating Bianca, Cameron learns from Michael that he will have to find someone for Kat. They see in the school's new-comer Patrick Verona, depicted in accordance with the 'bad-boy' cliché, a perfect match for Kat and, in need for a sponsor to offer Patrick a monetary compensation for his "effort", they insert Joey within the scheme.

Picture 16 – Mr. Stratford is seen putting a fake pregnant belly on Bianca before she leaves for a date so she can "feel the weight" of her actions in *10 Things I Hate about You*.

Source: Google Images

However, more than dealing exclusively with gender politics and the patriarchal culture, because the movie is destined to teenage audiences, it prioritizes themes related to adolescent development, focusing on its audience's typical concerns while growing up, such as popularity and peer pressure. It is in order to inquire into the theme of popularity that Junger rewrites the dramatical archetype of the shrew as a feminist adolescent in 1990's United States, also reconsidering what should be necessary to "tame" such a girl.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Cambrige Dictionary*, respectively, a 'shrew' constitutes an old-fashioned insult to designate a "bad-tempered

woman" or "an unpleasant woman who is easily annoyed and who argues a lot"[41]. As Kamaralli (2012, p. 3) explains to us, however, the term was gender-neutral in its origin and was intimately connected with speech and eloquence. In early modernity, the European admiration for obedience, chastity and silence as virtues of women transformed the term and it became exclusively associated with the female sex. As a matter of fact, Shakespeare contributed significantly to this particular association of the term with women as he mainly applied it to his female characters – the only occurrence of the term 'shrew' applied to the male sex is when Curtis, one of Petrucchio's servants, uses it to refer to his master in 4.1.63. In early modern England, the shrew was a well-known theatrical archetype, much like that of the fool/clown, clearly identifiable by the audience. Because women were discouraged to make noise, 'shrew' popularly became a synonym for the vocally challenging women, the ones who "continue to speak their truth about the world, no matter what means others employ to silence them" (KAMARALLI, 2012, p. 1).

Although there are better examples of vocally challenging women in other Shakespearean plays, Katherine is still considered as the most famous of his shrews, probably because people get influenced by the title of the play in which she figures. Kamaralli, however, disagrees: "Katherine is not really much of a shrew, particularly not on a scale of Shakespeare's shrews" (KAMARALLI, 2012, p. 89). She explains that the archetype of the shrew relates to an undisciplined woman, one who "creates scenes" (KAMARALLI, 2012, p. 90), and, since Katherine does not have many lines in the whole play and the content of her speech is so little shrewish, she could hardly be considered one:

> She does not interrupt anyone, rarely cuts anyone off, and her encounter with her sister in II.1 is the only instance where hostility seems to be taking the initiative, rather than being a response to a provocation. The first time she appears, in 1.1, she does not speak until she has been insulted by Gremio, and she then responds to a further insult from Hortensio. By modern standards at least, Katherina says very little that seems shrewish and, contrary to an assumption that persisted for many years, this may also be true of the standards of Shakespeare's contemporaries (KAMARALLI, 2012, p. 90-91).

Even though Katherine may not present a consistent shrewish attitude in Kamaralli's point of view, her character illustrates another fact which the scholar aims to pinpoint: women, and especially vocal women, are readily and constantly labeled by society and it is very hard for them to escape it. The adolescent version of Katherine in *10 Things I Hate about*

[41] Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/pt/dicionario/ingles/shrew>. Last Access on: November, 2020.

You, Kat Stratford, is not an exception. Due to her 'defiant' attitudes – Kat is characterized as a girl who likes to study and is passioned by Literature; she is also strong and independent, someone who openly speaks up her mind and defends her ideals, bearing affiliations with the feminist movement − she is labeled as a "hag", a "bitch" and a "loser", by her classmates, her sister and even the school's guidance counselor (!).

If, in Kamaralli's opinion, Katherine is not really a shrew since she does not create any scenes, for Friedman, the author of the article "The Feminist as Shrew in *10 Things I Hate about You*" (2004), there is no doubt that Katherine is one. He affirms that what connects Katherine and Kat is the way in which both "converse freely and abrasively with men" (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 51). But, unlike Katherine, who speaks harshly to particular men (Bianca's suitors) who had offended her, Kat uses her tongue as a weapon to defend her ideas even in the face of figures of authority such as her English teacher, Mr. Morgan. For Friedman, then, Kat's shrewishness takes on a political dimension, since she opposes "the inequities of patriarchal culture" (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 51-52). He supports his argument by mentioning a scene in which Kat expresses her opinion about Hemingway in front of the entire class, who she describes as an "abusive, alcoholic misogynist", and Joey interrupts her with an insult: "As opposed to a bitter, self-righteous hag who has no friends". The whole class applauds Joey, as Kat shoots back: "I guess in this society, being male and an asshole makes you worthy of our time." Friedman points out the importance of this scene in the construction of Kat's personality as an outspoken, feminist woman, who seems not to express a concern about her popularity as her colleagues do. Reflecting on the resignification process that filmic adaptations and appropriations can engender, thus, it is possible to say that *10 Things I Hate about You* seems to reinterpret the 16th century shrew archetype, finding its contemporary correspondence in feminist women who speak up their minds.

Similar to the controversy[42] that *The Taming of the Shrew* inspires, the portrait of Kat's feminism in *10 Things I Hate about You* has also sparked divergence among scholars, who see it as either conservative or progressive. In response to those who believe the feminist movement is depicted in a derogatory manner in the film, the philosopher and professor Michael Friedman (1947-) explains that it is essential to separate the two views the movie presents on feminism. Friedman advocates that, in the first-half of the movie Kat is depicted

[42] For more on the controversy about *The Taming of The Shrew*, see the chapter "Our canon, ourselves" in *Shakespeare and Women*, by Phyllis Rackin (2005) and chapter one in *This is Shakespeare*, by Emma Smith (2009).

as “an embodiment of the media stereotype of the ‘feminazi’”, because of her “unfeminine” fashion choices as well as her “castrating”, aggressive behavior (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 51). While Bianca always appears with a ‘girlie’, ‘princess’ look, wearing colorful dresses, tiaras and even a pearl necklace in a scene that hints on what happened to their mother, Kat usually wears large pants and tops in dark colors or with patterns as those of the army’s camouflage uniform (which Joey sarcastically calls a “Rambo look”), clearly indicating not only that she values her comfort to the detriment of other people’s opinions, but also that she expresses her freedom of mind through her fashion choices. In relation to Kat’s “castrating” behavior, Friedman mentions the dialogue between Kat and Ms. Perky, the guidance counselor, right after Kat’s English teacher has expelled her from the classroom for expressing her opinion on Hemingway:

> **MS. PERKY:** So, I hear you were terrorizing Mr. Morgan’s class, again.
> **KAT:** Expressing my opinion is not a terrorist action.
> **MS. PERKY**: The way you expressed your opinion on Bobby Ridgeway? By the way, his testicle retrieval operation went quite well, in case you’re interested.
> **KAT:** I still maintain that he kicked himself in the balls.
> **(**LUTZ; SMITH apud FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 52-53).

In Friedman’s opinion, this passage illustrates how the movie links Kat’s expression of her feminist opinion with her occasional hostility to men which, in this case, took the form of a violent attack on Ridgeway’s genitalia. “The suggestion seems to be that, because she champions women’s rights, she must despise male sexuality” (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 53). The possibility of Kat’s contempt for men – or, I should rather say, to some patriarchal role models − to influence her own sexuality also emerges in another scene, in which Cameron implicitly asks Bianca if Kat is a lesbian. This doubt on Kat’s sexuality brought by Cameron completes the media caricature of the ‘feminazi’, usually understood as a ‘man-hater’, militant, unfeminine woman with hairy legs and armpits and who supposedly does not dress fashionably due to her same sex preferences.

Besides the ‘feminazi’ stereotype, Kat’s attitudes presented in the first half of the movie also link her to second-wave feminism, that part of the feminist movement history in the 1960s and 1970s. The second wave feminism broadened the debate for gender equalities beyond voting rights, dealing with themes such as reproductive rights, salary equality, child-care support for working women, among others. Unlike the first wave, second-wave provoked an extensive theoretical discussion about the origins of women’s oppression, the nature of

gender, and the role of the family. Many important feminist works were produced in this time, such as *The Feminine Mystique*[43], by Betty Friedan, − in fact, a work featured in Junger's *10 Things*, in a scene which Patrick pretends to have lost his copy in order to talk with Kat in a bookshop − and *Sexual Politics*, by Kate Millett.[44] As a representative of second-wave feminism, besides Friedan, Kat is an avid reader of Sylvia Plath − at some point she appears reading *The Bell Jar* –, and Simone de Beauvoir, her suggestion as a better reading option than Hemingway. Bianca also calls her "Gloria Steinem" in one passage, referring to the 1960's North American journalist, famous for her engagement in women's cause. As Friedman suggests, Kat's feminist references, are "dated and cliché" (2004, p. 53), being incompatible with her own time and requiring some updating for her not to be considered a shrew anymore:

> Thus, the "taming" of the shrew in *10 Things I Hate about You* involves not an enforced submission to male authority, but a rounding off of the sharp edges that make the stereotyped version of the second-wave feminist an anti-social force within the popularity-obsessed world of teen comedy. (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 46-47).

This updating would come in the second half of the movie, when Kat's relation to music is majorly explored, associating her with third-wave feminism, more specifically with the Riot Grrl movement.

The third wave feminism emerged in the mid-1990s. Some of its early adherents were women raised by second-wave feminists, as, for instance, Rebecca Walker, daughter of the African American writer Alice Walker (1944-). Influenced by the postmodernist movement in the academy, third-wave feminists sought to question and redefine the media's transmitted ideas on womanhood, gender, beauty and sexuality. In opposition to stereotypical images of women as either passive, virginal and faithful, or as domineering, demanding and emasculating, third wave feminists redefined the female sex representatives as assertive, powerful, and in control of their own sexuality. The ideas and positioning of the third wave

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[43] *The Feminine Mystique*, first published in 1963, is credited to spark the beginning of second-wave feminism in the United States, as it described women's pervasive dissatisfaction with society in the post war period. According to the *Enclycopedia Britannica*, Friedan "coined the term *feminine mystique* to describe the societal assumption that women could find fulfillment through housework, marriage, sexual passivity, and child rearing alone". In the work, Friedan challenged society's prevailing assumptions that "truly feminine" women would find fullfilment only in the domestic sphere, having no desire for higher education, careers, or a political voice. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Feminine-Mystique>. Last access on: May, 2021.

[44] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/feminism/The-second-wave-of-feminism>. Last access on: June, 2021.

feminism was propelled by different music and plastic artists as well as other subculture groups, such as the Riot Grrl.[45]

According to Heywood and Drake (apud FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 55-56.), Riot Grrl was an extremely influential movement that started in the punk scene in Washington in 1991, addressing the question of women's marginalization within music and other industries. The movement preached a "do-it-yourself" approach to music, hosting skill-sharing workshops, in which women taught each other their skills in different crafts. The Riot Grrl subculture started to be seen by many third-wave feminists as a site that widened the feminist movement beyond the music scene, challenging all forms of oppression such as racism, classism, sexism and homophobia. Kim France points out that Riot Grrl's unifying principle "is that being female is inherently confusing and contradictory and that women have to find a way to be sexy, angry and powerful at the same time." (FRANCE apud FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 56). She highlights the leading singer of the Riot Grrl band Bikini Kill as the best personification of such attitudes.

The band Bikini Kill and other RiotGrrl bands are introduced in the movie in the scene in which Patrick tries to woo Kat in a music concert at Club Skunk. Pretending to share her musical taste, a tip Cameron has previously given him in order to "tame the wild beast", he casually mentions the bands to get her attention. Besides this scene, Friedman points other connections between Kat and the Riot Grrl movement, as for example, the parts in which Kat shows her interest in the "do-it-yourself" approach to music. Not only Kat appears playing a guitar in a music shop, she also explicitly vocalizes her desire to start a band in a passage when she and Patrick are sitting on a car, listening to music – significantly, a song entitled "Cruel to be Kind", a line delivered in *Hamlet* (III.4.199), one of Shakespeare's most misogynistic plays. Friedman (2004, p. 56) explains that Kat's interest in the Bikini Kill typifies she is drawn to angry, punk music, however, it is her desire to form her own band that really shows the audience how deeply she is involved in the particular kind of feminism the Riot Grrl movement fosters.

At the end of the movie, Patrick presents Kat with a guitar, as his attempt at making amends for having accepted Joey's money to date her. This is the scene which perhaps has generated the most controversy in the film, many arguing that the happy ending depicts a

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[45] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/feminism/The-third-wave-of-feminism>. Last access on June, 2021.

regular, heteronormative relationship in which Kat seems to be tamed, consequently symbolizing a patriarchal victory. The same Friedman thinks this scene represents the culmination of Patrick's "taming" of Kat, as she fully embraces the Riot Grrl ethics, evolving into a third-wave feminist who welcomes the contradictions about being a female. In his words: "Kat's feminist spikiness derives from her initial allegiance to second-wave feminism, and when she puts that zealotry behind her, her shrewishness is tamed." (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 58). Even though I strongly agree with Friedman in many aspects, such as that Junger's adaptation conveys positive messages about third-wave feminism that could help overcome the media stereotype of the 'feminazi' and consequently enhance the promotion of the women's rights movement in general, I do not believe that Kat was indeed tamed.

Although she presents a perceptible behavioral change towards the end of the movie, displaying a more relaxed and friendly attitude, Kat was not "tamed" by Patrick since he was not responsible for a complete alteration in her personality. In fact, Kat's most striking feature, her independent, feminist posture, is maintained as she still wants to form a band and study in Sarah Lawrence University, desires she had even before meeting Patrick. In this sense, Kat never submits to male control, and if there is any "taming" at all, it would be a self-taming on Kat's own part. Rather than using the term "taming", I would suggest that Kat has *matured.* It is in the movie's approach to the topic of maturity, which is intimately connected with the theme of popularity in young culture, that I believe Junger was the most successful, making the movie relevant to contemporary audiences and helping the Shakespearean brand to achieve its iconic status.

As most teen comedies of the 1990's, *10 Things* strongly presents a common teenage concern: the theme of popularity and high school status, as well as the compromises adolescents have to make in order to receive their peers' approval. However, unlike most teen comedies, the movie elects an 'outsider' as its protagonist, someone who does not adhere into the popularity code that the High School established as the social norm. Although Kat is not popular within this normatized environment, she is strong, self-assured and is never afraid to speak up her mind. Unlike Shakespeare's Katherine, Kat Stratford is indeed a "vocal woman" in Kamaralli's terms, as she appears in most of the scenes and speaks most of the lines in the movie. The prominent position that such 'shrewish' character receives within the screenplay indeed indicates that her tempestuous personality is not being criticized, but rather, celebrated. By establishing Kat as its protagonist, *10 Things* conveys a very powerful educational message to its adolescent audience − one that actually appears written on a banner fixed on Kat's English classroom wall – "What is popular is not always right; what is right is

not always popular" (Picture 17). With this implicit message, *10 Things* teaches its audience that it is fine to be different and better yet, that you should not alter yourself to fit in any groups, since it may not be the correct thing to do.

Picture 17 – Kat reads a poem in her English class.

On the wall behind her, it's possible to observe part of the banner with the message on popularity. Source: Google Images

This message is not only conveyed in a banner, but also in Kat's own life story. In a very emblematic scene, Kat reveals to her sister that she had been popular once, when she and Joey Donner, the most coveted boy in school, used to date in 9th grade. She also admitted that they had sex one time, because "everybody else was doing it". When Kat changed her mind and decided she was not ready to continue having sex with him, Joey dumped her. Hurt by his posture, Kat swore never again to give into peer pressure, adopting instead the radicalized feminist posture we see at the beginning of the movie. With this background story for the main protagonist, Junger makes his educational message clearer: one that presents feminism as a tool towards maturity and as a salvation to the issues engendered by peer pressure and high-school's popularity contests. Not only Kat but also other characters mature, especially Bianca, as for example in the Prom scene, when the audience testifies her behavioral change.

In reality, the Prom scene represents the climax of the movie, since it allows the revelation of the money scheme between Joey and Patrick to date the two sisters. The event is also relevant considering the fact that "both Kat and Bianca move toward each other on the feminist spectrum until they meet in the middle" (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 59). At the

beginning of the movie, Kat appears tearing up posters of the event and discussing with her friend Mandella about who would want to attend such an "antiquated mating ritual". When Mandella expresses her desire to go, Kat affirms they are "making a statement" in not taking part in it. Ultimately, in what Friedman considered as Kat's "unselfish gesture of feminine solidarity" (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 59), she decides to attend it so that her sister can also go with Cameron. For Kat, then, attending the prom–represents a relaxation of her militant posture as a second-wave feminist and her migration to a new feminist identity. As for Bianca, the event allows her to lose the fear of being identified with the feminist castrating caricature, as she repeats her sister's attitude by kicking Joey on the groin when she learns that he was only going out with her to prove his friends he could "nail her". In Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, the two sisters experience a shift in their personalities, as Bianca transforms from a "docile, obedient maiden to a shrewish wife in the final scene" (FRIEDMAN, 2004, p. 59). In *10 Things I Hate about You*, instead of switching places, both sisters get closer together, as feminism ultimately allows them to form sisterly bonds; and most importantly, to mature, both overcoming the popularity issue that the genre of teen comedy usually imposes on their protagonists.

The genre of teen comedy also imposes to directors the need of a happy ending for the story. In *10 Things I Hate about You*, the happy ending takes the form of forgiveness after Patrick's confession that, even though he had previously accepted money for dating Kat, he actually fell in love with her personality once he had time to know it. In such an ending, what Junger does in *10 Things I Hate about Y*ou is to cleverly depict a balance between what the teenage audience expected from a romantic comedy, that is, the happy ending, with an important feminist educational message − one that teaches girls that they will be loved in their own terms and it is not necessary for them to alter their personalities in order to be admired by others. Rather than reducing the movie's appeal or transforming it into a meaningless cliché, this formula has actually enhanced its commercial success and its admiration in the public's mind. According to the Brazilian magazine *Veja São Paulo*[46], *10 Things I Hate about You* figures in the fifth position of the top ten Shakespearean adaptations and appropriations with the highest grossing, with a U$38 million revenue in the United States and Canada alone. It also figures in the sixth position of a 2019 list that the British newspaper *The Guardian*

[46] Available at: <https://vejasp.abril.com.br/cultura-lazer/shakespeare-maiores-bilheterias-cinema/>.

created to rank the best Shakespearean films[47]. Like these two examples, several other lists from different publications around the world can be found with a quick search on Google, proving that, although many consider the movie cliché or queasy, its popularity is undeniable, having marked a generation of girls. But most importantly, what the movie successfully accomplishes is a refreshing of the Shakespearean myth in accordance with the demands of our times. In face of the cultural disruptions provoked by the emergence of third wave feminism in the 1990s, which strengthened the unacceptability of the Shakespearean brand in promoting any kind of misogynistic messages, Junger revised *The Taming of the Shrew* plot, updating it to present a celebratory message of women instead. In doing so, Junger's appropriation of the story helped to elevate the Shakespearean brand into an iconic status as it allowed the brand to remain relevant in face of the new times, enhancing its longevity in the years to come.

2.4. **Comparing and contrasting the Shakespearean brand in teen adaptations and appropriations**

As mentioned in the Introduction, one of my objectives in presenting the case study in this chapter was to analyze whether the aspect of genre − tragedy *versus* comedy − somehow influenced in the perception of the Shakespearean brand in the audience's mind, affecting or not the commercial result of the selected films. In comparing the gross income of *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* and *10 Things I Hate about You* (table below), it is evident that Luhrmann's movie was the most commercially successful. This success, however, is less related with the fact that *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy and more related with the fact that the star-crossed lovers' story is a legend.

Table 1- Gross income of *Romeo+Juliet* and *10 Things I Hate about You*

	Budget	**Gross US. and Canada**	**Gross worldwide**
Romeo+Juliet	$14,500,000 (estimated)	$46,351,345	$147,554,998
10 Things	$30,000,000 (estimated)	$38,178,166	$53,478,579

Source: IMDB

[47] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/feb/08/the-best-shakespeare-films-ranked>.

While discussing Luhrmann's movie, I also mentioned about Shakespeare's innovative power, which allowed him to transform a pre-existing story into a cultural phenomenon responsible for the construction of archetypical love worldwide. The recognition which *Romeo and Juliet* acquired made it become a brand-within-the-brand, or, to use the marketing studies term, made it part in the Shakespearean brand umbrella[48]. Being an adaptation of a well-known story and also presenting the Bard's name on the movie's title, Luhrmann made double use of the Shakespearean brand, as he reinforced the connection of his own cultural product with the qualities of both the Shakespearean and the *Romeo and Juliet* brands. As a consequence, Luhrmann's marketing strategy led him into an advantage position in relation to Junger, enhancing his chances of commercial success. Therefore, even though I selected movies marketed to the same audience (teenagers) and produced in the same period (1990s) in an attempt to isolate other factors that could somehow affect the movies' commercial performances, the result of my analysis showed that the difference in the movies' gross income is more related to the mode of adaptation selected − either if the cultural product is an adaptation or an appropriation − as well as the branding and marketing strategies to sell these products than to the actual films' genres themselves. In this sense, the case study proved itself valuable because it allowed me to reflect on how Luhrmann's and Junger's productions contributed in different ways in the shaping of the perception of the Shakespearean brand in the audience's mind.

As some adaptation theory scholars such as Sanders (2006) and Fischlin and Fortier (2000) have already observed, adaptors' response to Shakespeare's canonical status is varied: some seek to borrow from the Bard's status, attaching the Shakespearean aura and reputation into their own works in order to enhance their resonance, as it is the case with Luhrmann's *Romeo+ Juliet*, while others adopt a more iconoclastic posture, seeking to supplant or overthrow previous acknowledgments of Shakespeare as an embodiment of the conservative politics, imperialism and patriarchalism, which I believe to be the case with Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You*. In general ways, while adaptations benefit the most from the Shakespearean brand, as they carry to them the positive associations belonging to the source,

[48] Umbrella or family branding is a common marketing strategy used to provide uniformity to certain product lines by grouping them under a single brand name, making them more easily identifiable by customers and enhancing their marketability. Usually this strategy is used to reduce the costs of brand development, being applied to brands that already have positive associations within consumer's minds. As examples of umbrela branding we can mention the individual sub-brands Oral-B, Pantene and Gillette, that belong all to the same company, being part of the Procter and Gamble's umbrela.

in the case of appropriations, because the new cultural products rework parts of the previous understanding of the source, they contribute more actively in the permanent (re)construction of such brand.

Thus, considering Holt's (2004) perspective that an iconic brand is the one which is able to adapt its identity myth so it remains relevant in face of cultural disruptions, I believe that, albeit being the most commercially successful, Luhrmann's movie contributed less than Junger's into the transformation of the Shakespearean brand into an iconic one. As already mentioned, in reworking the previous commonsense perspective of *The Taming of the Shrew* as a misogynistic play which emphasizes patriarchal gender roles and transforming it to portray a feminist message instead, Junger diligently increased the number of positive associations related to the Shakespearean brand in the mind of the teenage audience. Luhrmann's contribution, on the other hand, was to reinforce in this same audience's perception, some of the already identifiable traits in the identity of this powerful brand, as, for example, its universality and plasticity, that is, its availability to remain forever interesting even in different times and contexts.

CONCLUSION – CALL ME BUT SHAKESPEARE'S, AND I'LL BE NEW BAPTIZED

There is a common belief in consumer culture that if a brand is preferred to the detriment of others, then it must be superior somehow. Having the Shakespearean famous quote "What's in a name?" (*Romeo and Juliet*, II.2.46) in mind, my research for this dissertation aimed at acquiring an understanding of the construction of Shakespeare as a brand and at analyzing how this brand operates within the film industry, providing a set of positive characteristics that would enhance the desirability of consumption for these cultural products.

Commenting on Shakespeare's singularity, that is, his supposedly superlative and unique quality that makes him "the greatest" writer in all English literature, the scholar and one of the editors of the *Oxford Shakespeare*, Gary Taylor (1991) noted how the playwright's iconic reputation has been institutionalized, a result of more than four centuries of critical commentary combined with larger social, cultural and political movements that established the aesthetic standards for our contemporary judgement. Taylor summarized this idea by affirming that Shakespeare was a black hole, a region in space in which gravity is so strong that it absorbs everything around it. In his words:

> If Shakespeare has a singularity, it is because he has become a black hole. Light, insight, intelligence, matter – all pour ceaselessly into him, as critics are drawn into the densening vortex of his reputation; they add their own weight to his increasing mass. The light from other stars – other poets, other dramatists – is wrenched and bent as it passes by him on its way to us. He warps cultural space-time; he distorts our view of the universe around him. [...] We find in Shakespeare only what we bring to him or what others have left behind; he gives us back our own values. (TAYLOR, 1991, p. 411).

After studying the process of canonization of Shakespeare from the 17th to the 19th centuries which allowed the emergence of his brand, exposed in the first part of this dissertation, I realized that, as Taylor suggests, the Shakespearean brand is indeed a cultural black hole, the result of an amalgamation of processes, constantly being modeled and remodeled by several agents with different intentions according to their ideologies. Gradually, I became convinced that the common assumption which perceived preferred brands as "naturally" superior did not consider them as the objects of discourse and cultural constructions that they are, ignoring the existence of prevailing systems of belief that not only shape the brands themselves, but also influence and manipulate consumers' perception over

them. This observation led me to conclude that, rather than focusing on defining the identity of the Shakespearean brand − something I would never be able to precisely pinpoint since, like McQuarrie and Phillips (2016), I also understand brands as subjective and fluid entities – or finding its supposed superiority that could add value to cultural products as was my initial intention, it would be best if I focused on the role of specific agents in the construction of our modern understanding of this brand.

In *The Appropriation of Shakespeare*, the scholar Jean I. Marsden (1991) suggested that Ben Jonson's famous observation that Shakespeare "was not of an age but for all time" needed not be exclusively perceived as an endorsement to the claim of his 'universality', but also as an indication of the high level of availability[49] of his plays, which remained accessible for different adaptors through various historical contexts. Marsden noted how "each new generation attempts to redefine Shakespeare's genius in contemporary terms, projecting its desires and anxieties onto his work" (1991, p.1), an observation also later made by Sillars (2013) when commenting about the importance of the Romantics in establishing the idea of the playwright as a 'genius'. If Shakespeare is constantly made new by the process of adaptation, then, evidently, adaptors have a noteworthy significance in the shaping of the Shakespearean brand. It is because of this that theatrical adaptors and appropriators received a special attention in chapter one, particularly in the Restoration period, in which Shakespeare's works were 'purified' to fit the aesthetic patterns of the time. Regarding theatrical adaptations, it is worth highlighting the colossal impact of the actor and director David Garrick (1717-1779), who besides altering many of the Bard's plays, also organized the very first event in his honor, the Jubilee of 1769, which gave rise to the formal cult of the playwright, later known as Bardolatry.

Among his various adaptors, I found that the ones involved in the production of films (directors, screenwriters, producers) exert greater influence on the contemporary fashioning of the Bard's brand, because their works belong to a mass communications medium, with huge reach capability. Hence, the second part of my dissertation presented the transformations of the Shakespearean brand provoked by the film industry in the 20th century, together with a case study of two specific teenage movies of the 1990s, Baz Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (1996) and Gil Junger's *10 Things I Hate about You* (1999). In

[49] On the subject of Shakespeare's availability, Sanders (2006, p. 48) comments that one of the reasons that justify the great number of adaptations from the Bard's canon is a legal and economic factor: the non-existence of the obligation to pay copyright.

the history of Shakespeare on film, the Italian director Franco Zeffirelli (1923-2019) deserves our attention. He was the one responsible for popularizing Shakespeare for the middle classes, as well as for a young audience, inaugurating the niche of teen Shakespearean films. His choices in casting selection would later influence other directors such as Kenneth Branagh and Luhrmann himself.

Once Zeffirelli had made Shakespeare popular, it was necessary to see the Bard's brand in operation in more detail. The case study presented in chapter two allowed me to understand how a brand could be transformed into a cultural icon. The selected teen movies, when compared and contrasted, proved to contribute in different ways and proportions to the elevation of the Shakespearean brand to an iconic level. As we have observed, while Luhrmann's endorsed some of the positive traits already recognized in the identity of the Shakespearean brand, Junger's made some adjustments in its identity myth so it would be more compatible with our contemporary demands, giving back indeed "our own values" as stated by Taylor.

Besides defining Shakespeare as a black hole, Gary Taylor also believed that the Bard was "no less and no more singular than anyone else" (TAYLOR, 1991, p. 411). Although, like Taylor, I also understand Shakespeare's reputation as a cultural construction, in my path of defining the playwright as a brand, I realized that he sure has a singularity. Unlike any other canonical author, Shakespeare became "the God of our idolatry" worldwide precisely because of the excellency in his branding. Something singular about this brand is that it finds itself in permanent dispute, a rhetorical device that operates synchronically and diachronically, always aggregating new meanings and perceptions, without necessarily negating its previous identity. Considering the main aspects of the identity of the Shakespearean brand which I believe are responsible for conferring its enormous cultural value, I should mention its availability – the readiness to be adapted and appropriated – and its range − its simultaneous ability to belong to both high and pop cultures. In summary, what I believe to grant Shakespeare his singularity and iconic status is the brand's continuous capacity of reinventing itself in order to speak to our cultural anxieties, assuring an everlasting relevance.

When Juliet asked herself "What's in a name?", she concluded that in the very manner in which a rose would smell the same even if it was called something else, so would Romeo's essence remain identical had he been given a different title. In face of Juliet's plea to be called otherwise, Romeo responds: "Call me but love, and I'll be new baptised" (II.2.49). In the case

of Shakespeare, the cultural construction which gave him an iconic reputation was precisely the branding of his name. If he was new baptized, he would definitely not be the same.

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