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SHAKESPEARE, PORTRAITURE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

BY

MARCIA POINTON

> Authentic Busts of Shakespeare, Camden and B. Jonson
> The Busts that have been commonly sold, professing to represent the features of these estimable writers, are notoriously devoid of authenticity, truth and likeness. Although they may serve to amuse children, as any other plaster, or wax dolls would; yet they are unworthy of a place in the library of a man of taste and literature. To supplant such things, J. BRITTON engaged Mr. W. SCOULAR to make reduced Models from the Monumental Busts at Westminster and Stratford Church, and these he has executed with fidelity and taste. They are 18 inches in height, by twelve inches in width: each is fixed to a pedestal of three books, and each is preserved by a thin wash of paint, in stone colour, by which means they can be always kept clean. The price is Two Guineas each: or Five Guineas for the Three.[1]

In 1968 the French literary critic Roland Barthes proclaimed the death of the author (translated into English in 1977).[2] My essay is about the *life* of the author not as Barthes understood it in terms of the interpretation of literary texts as expressions of authorial intent or personality, nor as a question of biographical data, but in the sense of the 'afterlife', or the mythologisation of a literary personality through pictorial imagery. Travellers in the British Isles can seldom be in doubt that Shakespeare is alive and well. In Stratford-upon-Avon's Henley Street, tourists gather to photograph the bard's birthplace or to visit 'the world of Shakespeare' which, in a manifestation of transculturation characteristic of our times, is situated adjacent to the American fast-food shop 'Dunkin Donuts': fast food for the body, fast food for the mind. The represented facial features that have become as familiar as those of Alexander the Great, Socrates, or the Emperor Augustus, accost us from pub signs, switch cards,[3] book spines, and advertisements for everything from

[1] *Prospectuses of Books, Engravings, Lithographs, &c., Collected, With the View, not only of Showing the State of the Literature, Arts & Sciences, of the Passing Day, But as too Often Illustrative of the Vanity of Human Wishes no less than of Human Intentions,* 5 vols., British Library 1879. b. 1. vol ii (1820 pencilled in), p. 204.

[2] This is available in a number of editions, e.g. Stephen Heath (ed.), *Roland Barthes. Image. Music. Text* (London: Fontana, 1977).

[3] The National Westminster Bank has used a holograph portrait of Shakespeare on its service card since 1994. For contemporary 'bardolatory', see G. Holderness (ed.), *The Shakespeare Myth* (Manchester: University Press, 1988).

auctions of car number plates to whisky.[4] Moreover, readers in the British Library now confront Shakespeare's portrait every time they use the computer catalogue as it is incorporated into the initial screen.

The portraits of Socrates that have come down to us are all posthumous; they were executed hundreds of years after the philosopher's death.[5] They are cyphers or head-symbols that stand in for, and do service as, the *idea* of an ancient philosopher whose work is admired and for whose image the western world experiences a powerful need. Portraits of Augustus date from his own lifetime and were commissioned by the Emperor himself. But we should not make the mistake of thinking, when we look at such artefacts, that we are viewing a likeness of Augustus; his contemporary Suetonius tells us that the Emperor "had clear bright eyes [...], few teeth which were small and dirty [...] his hair was yellowish and slightly curly, his eyebrows met and his nose jutted out and then turned inwards. He was [...] rather short [...] on his body were spots, birth marks, and callouses [...].[6] Just like politicians today, Augustus recognised that portraiture was a powerful weapon, and he organised his image accordingly; in the Prima Porta statue (Vatican Museum, Rome) he is represented as half military leader, half God. A portrait like this was highly effective as a public statement; it cannot, however, tell us what the Emperor looked like as a human being.

There are no portraits of Shakespeare produced in his lifetime. Nor are there any eye-witness accounts. Even had there survived documentation of this kind, we should still need to regard it as a form of interpretation, as a construct. Portraits – and I include photographic portraits – are fictions which work with the idea of the real, arranging a series of motifs that are associated with the corporal and physiological presence of a sitter into a synthetic image. 'Likeness' and 'truth' are pictorial effects produced by artists translating a multitude of sightings and other sense impressions, as well as bodies of knowledge derived from third parties about character etc., onto a two-dimensional surface. Our longing to know something

[4] CMA Auctions Classic Car Collection, advertisement of an auction of "attractive vehicle registration numbers" to be held at the Civic Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon, 16 April 1996. The leaflet advertising this event includes a portrait of Shakespeare and the quotation from *The Tempest:* "Such stuff as dreams are made on". Macallan malt whisky was advertised in *The Guardian* in March 1996 in an image which contained only two features: a Droeshout derived bust of Shakespeare labelled "A writer" and a bottle of whisky labelled "*The* malt".

[5] For a discussion of the continuities of Socrates portraiture, see John Henderson, "Seeing Through Socrates", *Art History,* 19:3 (September 1996).

[6] Quoted in Susan Walker and Andrew Burnett, *The Image of Augustus* (London: British Museum Publications, 1981), p. 1. For a full treatment of the relationship between portraiture and power in antiquity see Andrew Stewart, *Faces of Power. Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford; University of California Press; 1993).

about the appearance of great and famous individuals, as well as about those we love and hate, ensures a mass circulation for magazines like *Hello* containing life-like colour representations of icons such as the Princess of Wales, or Princess Caroline of Monaco. Their images provide a space for fantasy, for the interrogation of *an other* to whom we will never speak in person. The very absence of a portrait from Shakespeare's own lifetime merely sharpens this process, makes the quest more urgent, and the prize more unattainable. 'Shakespeare' in this paper is, therefore, taken to be an historic and literary figure whose very elusiveness of identity produces an unprecedented space for fantasy. For late nineteenth-century Weimar, for example, Shakespeare was represented as the epitome of Bavarian conviviality in Paul Thumanns's 1864 image of Shakespeare drinking and smoking with a companion of Falstaffian girth (pl. 1); with the accessory of a labourer's hard hat, he is instantly modern, a most compelling spokesman for the restoration of his own theatre, the Globe, in the city of London.[7]

In this essay I shall suggest that the case of Shakespeare offers an exceptionally well-documented case of the way in which portraiture functions in the creation of narratives of national identity. Images of Shakespeare create an 'empty frame' effect; the impossibility of either authenticating the image of Shakespeare against any known reality, and the cypher effect that results from the perpetual repetition of the basic physiognomic features ensures that Shakespeare stages for us a psychic gap between desire and fulfilment. It is on account of the reduction of Shakespeare's features to a physiognomic cypher that Picasso (competing with Shakespeare for universality of reputation) was able naughtily to subvert the revered head by adding spectacles in a drawing that has become, itself, a household image through its use on the covers of the *Cambridge University Press New Shakespeare*.[8] Into this space our desire for a lost past, for national greatness, for what is real and authentic can be played out. Such fantasies all depend ultimately upon the conviction that Shakespeare, the historical subject, can be grasped and known, despite all evidence empirical and theoretical to the contrary. The story of Shakespeare portraiture is a story of the triumph of art over life, and of desire over knowledge. This dynamic is strongly sustained by national institutional structures, whether of the small provincial gallery like Folkestone which in 1934 displayed "Shakespeare as he was, and as artists have shown him" from the Spielmann

[7] Advertisement for the restoration of the Globe, published by International Shakespeare Globe Centre Ltd., 1996.

[8] The drawing is in a private collection, NPG negative 12040.

collection,[9] or the National Portrait Gallery, whose opening in 1896, was celebrated in *Punch* with a cartoon in which portraits of great English historical figures have literally come alive and are led smiling by Britannia into their new home.[10] A similar idea was used by Rea Irvin in his cover for the *New Yorker* 5 May 1934 in which the statues in Central Park, led by Shakespeare, have descended from their plinths to enjoy some skating on the lake.[11]

Within the traditions of portrait iconography the customary way of representing individuals is by giving them attributes through which they may be identified. Thus Sir Christopher Wren in Kneller's portrait (used by the Bank of England for the £ 50 note in series D) holds a map of St. Paul's cathedral. In the case of a writer like Shakespeare, his attributes are his plays. There is, therefore, a strong tendency to portray him with his characters, as their creator in an explicit analogy with the Old Testament act of creation. It is thus, flanked by Falstaff, Hal and other characters, that Shakespeare appears in the statue by Lord Ronald Gower erected in Stratford in 1908, in William Blake's portrait bust of 1800 for William Hayley's library at Felpham, now in Manchester City Art Gallery, and in nineteenth-century frontispieces to popular editions of the works, such as that by the Dalziel Brothers to Knight's Pictorial Shakespeare (pl. 2).[12]

What must have been a most spectacular example of this process was the exhibition in the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly ca. 1880 of a now unlocated painting "Shakespeare the Glory of Great Britain" by the Belgian artist Jules Leonard (1827–1897). The descriptive account he wrote for the benefit of visitors runs to many pages and describes Shakespeare "seated in the clouds as a deity [...] a philosopher and thinker [...] with gigantic brain and profound look, with wan com-

[9] Public Art Gallery, Folkestone, *Catalogue of an Exhibition entitled Shakespeare as he was, and as artists have shown him, from the private collection of Mr. M. H. Spielmann, FSA*, October 1st to 13th, 1934; Spielmann's collection was sold to America in 1937. *The Daily Telegraph* 15 March 1937 carried a report by A.C.R. Carter headed "The Portraits of Shakespeare [...] Sale to American Collector".

[10] *Punch* 11 April 1896. For an illustration of this cartoon in the context of the foundation of the National Portrait Gallery, London, see Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993) Epilogue.

[11] The original design is in the Museum of the City of New York, no. 67.100.273.

[12] *Knight's Pictorial Shakespeare. New Edition, with additional illustrations* (London and New York: Virtue & Co. ca. 1838).

plexion, and pale with nightly thought and the lip spiritual and full of raillery."[13] The difficulty of producing a posthumous likeness of a writer, a likeness that must be an imaginative projection however successfully it draws on earlier effigies, engravings, and other representations, is a consequence of the discursivity of 'Shakespeare'; the name Shakespeare can never merely signify an individual in history, its meanings are forever changing, and forever challenging classification. The paradox of an image that will always be overwhelmed by the subject's words is already recognised, of course, in Ben Jonson's famous lines to accompany the frontispiece to the first folio: "O, could he but have drawne his wit as well in brasse, as he hath hit His face, the print would then surpasse All, that was ever writ in Brasse. But since he cannot, Reader, looke not on his Picture, but his Booke". These lines constitute an instruction to ignore the image because the poet's words are his portrait.

When I refer to 'Shakespeare', I intend the name to be understood in Foucault's terms as an "author function" or a signifier of Jacobean culture, English greatness, dramatic excellence.[14] One consequence of the compelling discursivity of 'Shakespeare' is that his figure is incorporated into dramatic tableaux shaped by popular contemporary literary notions and performance practice as for example, with Shakespeare seated, Hamlet-like, in his study surrounded by volumes of Plutarch and Holinshed, in an engraving of ca. 1860 (Albert Payne after G. E. Hicks, after a no longer extant late eighteenth-century painting by Benjamin Wilson), and the German lithograph after J. F. A. Schrader (1815–1900) in which Shakespeare, arrested for poaching in the Charlecote estate, is brought before Sir Thomas Lucy.[15] This almost certainly apocryphal story originated in 1709 in Rowe's memoir but became extremely popular in the nineteenth century as a consequence of Lockhart's endorsement and embellishment in his Life of Sir Walter Scott.[16]

[13] *A Descriptive Account of the Great Picture, Shakespeare, or the Glory of Great Britain; painted by Leonard, and now on view at the Leonard Gallery, Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, from 10 till 6. Admission, one shilling.* (London: Cooper & McLaren, no date) p. 3.

[14] M. Foucault, "What is an Author?" (1969, first English transl. 1979), in David Lodge (ed.), *Modern Criticism and Theory. A Reader* (London and New York: Longman, 1988), pp. 197–210.

[15] Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon, P 26. IV. c and P 26. IV, e.

[16] J. G. Lockhart, *The Life of Sir Walter Scott Bart. 1771–1832* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1896), p. 682.

I have referred to effigies and types on which artists and sculptors based their work. So what were these?[17] There are only three serious historical contenders as portraits of Shakespeare, that is contenders with a provenance that goes a good way towards demonstrating the image to have been produced as a likeness of the individual as he was in life, and intended to serve as a representation of that subject. There are other images which have functioned as portraits for owners, viewers and consumers (witness the concerns of my opening quotation) and which are, therefore, also portraits of Shakespeare in the sociological sense. There is also the question of a death-mask, to which I will return. The three contenders are well known. The effigy in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford on Avon was made by the London sculptor Gerard Johnson or Jansen and installed ca. 1623, that is some seven years after Shakespeare's death. In an interesting episode of puritanical semi-iconoclasm, it was painted white at the behest of Malone, the greatest of Shakespeare's editors, who was shocked by its colour in 1793.[18] It is hard to avoid

[17] There is a huge bibliography on Shakespeare portraiture; major items both scholarly and anecdotal are: P. Bertram, "What Shakespeare looked like...", *The Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries* 61 (June 1979); J. Boaden, *An Inquiry into the [...] Portraits of Shakespeare* (London: printed for Robert Triphook, 1827); E. T. Craig, *Shakespeare's Portraits Phrenologically Considered* (30 April 1864), repr. Philadelphia, 1875 (no publisher, copy Memorial Library Stratford-upon-Avon); O. W. Driver, *The Shakespearean Portraits and other Addenda,* revised edn. (Northampton, Mass.: Metcalf Printing Co. [1964], 1966); M. Edmond, "The Chandos Portrait: a Suggested painter", *Burlington Magazine* 124 (March 1982); M. Edmond, "It was for Gentle Shakespeare Cut", *SQ* 42,3 (Fall 1991); H. R. Forster, *A Few Remarks on the Chandos Portrait of Shakespeare recently purchased at Stowe* (London: fifty copies for private distribution, 1849); J. H. Friswell, *Life Portraits of William Shakespeare* (London: Sampson Low, Son & Marston, 1864); Sir G. Greenwood, *The Stratford Bust and the Droeshout Engraving* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1925); L. Hotson, *Shakespeare by Hilliard* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1977); W. S. Ogden, "Shakespeare's (sic) Portraiture: Painted, Graven and Metallic", *The British Numismatic Journal* 7 (1910); William Page, "A Study of Shakespeare's Portraits", *Scribner's Magazine* (May 1876, printed as a book and published London: Chiswick Press, 1876); David Piper, *O Sweet Mr. Shakespeare I'll have his Picture* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1964); Stanley Robinson, *The Portraits and Likenesses of Shakespeare. An Authentic Account* (London, no publisher named, 1887); George Scharf, *A Few Observations Connected with the Chandos Portrait of Shakespeare [...]* (London: National Portrait Gallery, March 1856); George Scharf, "On the Principal Portraits of Shakespeare", *Notes and Queries* (Oxford: OUP, 23 April 1864, reprinted as a book, London: Spottiswoode & Co., 1864); M. H. Spielmann, *The Portraits of Shakespeare,* vol x of The Stratford Town edn. of Shakespeare (1906–7, 25 copies printed for separate circulation, NPG copy presented to Lionel Cust by author); A. H. Wall, *Shakespeare's Face. A Monologue* (Stratford-upon-Avon: Herald Printing Office, 1890); A. Wivell, *An Inquiry into [...] the Shakespeare Portraits* (London: Published by the author, 1827); P. Wislicenus, *Nachweise zu Shakespeares Totenmaske: Die Echtheit der Maske* (Jena: Eugen Diedrichs Verlag; Darmstadt: H. Hohman, 1913, the NPG copy contains MS. letters from the author).

[18] David Piper, op. cit., introduction.

the conclusion that Malone found the coloured effigy disturbing not merely on aesthetic grounds; the open-eyed look and red lips must have offered to an editor preoccupied with blank white pages and the purification of the text, an uncomfortable reminder that history does not always match imagination, that it is fleshy, banal, untidy, vulgar. Despite Malone's reservations the effigy was an object of veneration from the early eighteenth century though it was always recognised as a fairly unsophisticated piece of provincial sculpture which, even after its classicisation with white paint, remained essentially stolid and workmanlike. Nonetheless many casts were taken of the head from 1737 onwards and it was re-organised by engravers in images such as that produced in 1820 by Finden after Thurston. It appears most dramatically as the object of Sir Walter Scott's devotion in a painting attributed to William Allen and now in the Shakespeare Memorial Library at Stratford-upon-Avon. Scott visited Stratford in April 1828 and wrote in his journal: "We visited the tomb of the mighty wizard. It is in the bad taste of James I's reign but what a magic does the locality possess. There are stately monuments of forgotten families but when you have seen Shakespeare what care we for the rest?"[19]

The title-page of the first folio of 1623 is signed Martin Droeshout and is, by the standards of engraved portraiture of the period, already old-fashioned looking, though this may well have seemed not inappropriate for a posthumous image. It has been convincingly argued by Mary Edmond[20] that this is not, as had been assumed, the work of Droeshout the younger who would have been fifteen at the time and could never have seen Shakespeare, but of the elder Droeshout who was born in Brussels in the 1560s. At the same time it is suggested that this work is engraved after a missing portrait by Marcus Gheeraerts. Certainly the artistic and commercial practices of the period make it *virtually* certain that it was engraved after some missing portrait. Undoubtedly Edmond's research, based on a reading of the actual manuscript notes of the antiquarian George Vertue (rather than on the transcript published by the Walpole Society)[21] is immensely important for our knowledge of the origins of the seventeenth-century portraits of Shakespeare, but it remains fairly speculative. Moreover, as my interest lies in the dispersal and dissemination of these images rather than in their origins, I will not linger over the question of authorship and authenticity. The Droeshout type is that used by Blake and by Picasso, and it frequently reappears, sometimes half length as in the original, but more often simply head and shoulders. In a late nineteenth-century replica (by William Key) the accompanying text attempts to authenticate the image by comparing it with the Stratford effigy, and by reproducing a series of auto-

[19] W. E. K. Anderson (ed.), *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott* (Oxford: University Press, 1972), p. 454.

[20] M. Edmond, *SQ*, op. cit.

[21] "The Notebooks of George Vertue", *The Walpole Society* (Oxford: OUP, 1930–1947).

graphs.[22] The Droeshout type is also that most frequently reproduced by publishers for dust-jackets of the works.

By far the most popular of the three seventeenth-century images of Shakespeare is the so-called Chandos portrait (pl. 3), first recorded about 1719 but traceable through oral evidence and hearsay back to the actor Thomas Betterton.[23] The artist is allegedly a John Taylor, whom Mary Edmond has identified as a leading member of the Painter-Stainers Company who would have been in his thirties during Shakespeare's lifetime. The Chandos portrait, number 1 in the National Portrait Gallery, to which I will return, is an object of high national interest. For the moment, let us note that it rapidly gained ascendancy over both the Stratford effigy and the Droeshout portrait, though it should be noted that combinations and superimpositions are not uncommon, as in the mid-nineteenth-century wood engraving by William Linton which has a Droeshout body with a head which has Chandos eyes but a beard deriving from the Stratford effigy.[24] The Chandos portrait has been the matrix for a vast number of popular replicas; it was used by Jacob Tonson as his shop sign and trade mark (see, for example the titlepage of *The Spectator).* The basic Tonson bust was elaborated by an unknown engraver into a full-length figure in a graceful Apollo Belvedere derived posture standing before an Ann Hathaway type cottage.[25] Van der Gucht 'frenchified' Chandos with allegorical figures as early as 1709, George Vertue reversed the image in 1719 for the folio series of Heads published by Houbraken, and by the mid-eighteenth century it was widely known as a head and shoulders with, or without, rococo frame and ornament.[26] It provided the portrait image for De Rapin's *History of*

[22] The engraving is undated and bears no publisher's signature. It gives the address 118, St. John St. Road (sic.). The inscription reads (above): "copied from the first edition of his works, published by Jaggard & Blount, 1623. See special room, British Museum, *Urban's Magazine,* 1759, vol: 29, page 257, informs us, that this head is as much like the monumental effigy (at Stratford-upon-Avon) as a print can be". Below the portrait are the family arms of Shakespeare, Johnson's lines, and autographs of Shakespeare and witnesses, "see his will in the prerogative ct. Doctors Commons", Heinz Archive, National Portrait Gallery, London.

[23] M. Edmond, op. cit., *Burlington Magazine.* John Hayes, the former Director of the National Portrait Gallery, London, recorded his scepticism about Edmond's conclusions (MS., National Portrait Gallery Registry); the issue has been further examined by Darren Emerson Lay in "The Taylor of St. Paul's", *Times Literary Supplement* (24 May 1996), p. 17.

[24] In an elaborate frame containing topographical views of locations associated with Shakespeare, inscribed: "presented to the subscribers to Cassell's Illustrated Shakespeare", Heinz Archive, National Portrait Gallery.

[25] Undated engraving, signed I. Fougeron (Ignace Fougeron was an engraver active in London in the eighteenth century), Shakespeare Memorial Library, P. 26 IV (b).

[26] See D. Piper, op. cit. pp. 16–17 for a discussion of these interpretations. For full details see F. O'Donoghue, FSA, *Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits* 4 (London: British Museum, 1914).

England of 1725, and was meticulously copied by Ozias Humphrey in 1783 for the Shakespeare editor, Malone, who carefully recorded the provenance of both the original and his drawing on 29 June 1784.[27] Chandos also provided the inspiration for many busts, as in the garden scene by John Hamilton Mortimer representing the Powell family in 1768 (Garrick Club, London), and in Flaxman's monument to George Steevens of 1800.[28] It remained immensely popular throughout the nineteenth century[29] and its appeal remains undiminished today, as evinced by the souvenir shops of Stratford on Avon.

What, then, does this vast replication of imagery contribute to what Benedict Anderson has called the creation of 'imagined communities'? Born before the Act of Union that brought together England, Wales and Scotland under one legislature, Shakespeare was undoubtedly English and, despite some slippage to encompass a unified British identity, he has remained quintessentially a signifier of Englishness – hence the poignancy of Sir Walter Scott's encounter with his effigy, the Scottish bard moved at contemplating the site of the mortal remains of his great English predecessor. For the eighteenth century, Shakespeare represented what was English and what was modern. Hence in Hogarth's virulent attack upon the Italophile Lord Burlington, *Masquerades and Operas,*[30] the works of Shakespeare, Pope and Swift are being carted away before William Kent's Palladian gateway crowned by busts of Raphael and Michelangelo. Shakespeare was thus a key player in the battle of the ancients versus the moderns. And here imagery could more accurately strike its target than words, since by merely setting Shakespeare's bust alongside those of Tasso or Cervantes the point could be made that these moderns were a match for Homer and Virgil. Nor was there any need in imagery to account for the vagaries of Shakespeare's style when judged by the canon of Racine or Corneille. In the grounds of Stowe House in Buckinghamshire, where William Kent designed for Lord Cobham a Temple of British Worthies in the 1730s, Shakespeare heads a Pantheon of British literati. Moreover, the medium of the portrait bust with its associations with Imperial Rome is inescapably nationalistic. It is a model that was

[27] See photograph in Heinz Archive, National Portrait Gallery, London.

[28] St. Matthias, Poplar. See David Piper, op. cit. p. 34. G. Steevens's own collection of Shakespeare imagery can be found in his extra-illustrated Shakespeare in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester. I am grateful to Lucy Peltz for drawing these volumes to my attention.

[29] See, for example, Le Goux after S. Harding with a view of the Globe beneath (undated, ca. 1840) and an anonymous engraved bust in an oval surrounded by four portraits of nineteenth-century actors and actresses, the Stratford effigy, and a view of Stratford (unsigned and undated), both Stratford Memorial Library.

[30] First state, Feb. 1723/4. See R. Paulson, *Hogarth* (vol. I, *The "Modern Moral Subject" 1697–1732)* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers UP, 1991), pl. 20.

followed in Ludwigs I's Walhalla near Regensburg 1830–42 and subverted highly effectively by Anselm Kiefer in *Wege der Weltweisheit (The Ways of Worldly Wisdom)* 1976–77 (Private collection: Stuttgart).

Portrait busts were also a prerequisite as library furniture in eighteenth-century England; in the words of one contemporary commentator such images "at once make judgement of the wit of authors by their Books, and by their bodies [...] excite a generous and well-born soul to follow their tracks."[31] Not everyone had access to such libraries as Trinity College Dublin or the Wren Library in Trinity College Cambridge. But the sentiments could be widely disseminated through the purchase of busts produced by manufacturers advertising in terms such as those of my opening quotation or through engraved busts as in this anonymous early nineteenth-century assemblage (pl. 4).

That Shakespeare is a cypher for national identity can be demonstrated most clearly when we observe that in times of war or of threatened hostilities to the nation, his image is constructed and reproduced with peculiar intensity. Indeed, the most famous image of Shakespeare after the Chandos portrait, that is his memorial in Westminster Abbey, was erected at a moment of intense national anxiety. It is an entirely synthetic production, by the sculptor Peter Scheemakers, after a design by William Kent. It combines the pointed beard and domed head of the Stratford effigy, with the déshabille relaxation of the Chandos portrait. The figure was given the 'scissor leg' pose fashionable in eighteenth century portraiture but with a slight stiffness alluding perhaps to Hilliard's famous miniature of an unknown man surrounded by roses. The figure wears the eighteenth-century version of Van Dyck costume that was fashionable among the sitters of Reynolds and Gainsborough and is accompanied by busts of Queen Elizabeth I, Henry V, and Richard III. The monument is, as Ingrid Roscoe has recently demonstrated, a profoundly nationalistic gesture: it was erected as a result of a campaign in 1739 when England was preparing for war with France.[32] In 1740–1 it was installed in Poet's corner in the South West transept of Westminster Abbey. The portrait heads carved on the base point up the nationalist narrative. Elizabeth was the monarch of Shakespeare's youth and stood for invincibility before the Spanish armada, and Henry V was Shakespeare's most charismatic warlord. It is surely significant that this, rather than the Stratford effigy or the Chandos portrait, was used in the early years of

[31] Quoted by M. Baker in "The Portrait Sculpture" in D. McKitterick (ed.), *The Making of the Wren Library* (Cambridge: University Press, 1995).

[32] See Ingrid Roscoe, "The Monument to the memory of Shakespeare", *Church Monuments* (England: Church Monument Society, 1994, IX) and M. Dobson, *The Making of a National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship 1660–1769* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1992).

Margaret Thatcher's government for the £ 20 note in the first Bank of England series to carry historic portraits.

Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery may, I have argued elsewhere, be understood at one level as a direct response to the threat of Napoleon.[33] Ironically Boydell was ruined by the very fact that the wars closed up the French market for English prints. This did not happen, however, until after Boydell had commissioned from Thomas Banks, RA, a major work of sculpture to serve both as grand entrance to the Gallery in Pall Mall and, in an engraving by Smith of 1796, as the frontispiece (the metaphorical entrance) to the collection of engravings that he commissioned after the paintings displayed in the Gallery. It also appeared, with a valuable record of the façade of this now demolished edifice, in the *European Magazine.* The *alto relievo* shows Shakespeare poised elegantly on a rocky summit (the pinnacle of Parnassus no doubt), accompanied by the muse of painting on the right and drama on the left. It eventually found a resting place in a quiet corner of New Place Gardens in Stratford-upon-Avon.[34]

Shakespeare served also as a national icon during the first and the second world war.[35] War-time seems to have provoked bouts of discovery; while claims are made periodically for unknown portraits of Shakespeare from the late seventeenth century to our own day, it is the case that they occur more frequently in war-time and that such claims at those times are framed within a particular nationalist rhetoric. Thus in 1912 visitors to Llandudno in Wales could view a so-called newly discovered portrait of Shakespeare (allegedly bearing the signature "Jo Taylor") prior to its exhibition in London's Earl's Court Centre as part of a display called "Shakespeare's England".[36] In 1916, an artist named Estella Canziani produced a cannibalised Shakespeare image that, accompanied by the words from *King Lear* ("A man may see how this world goes with no eyes" [4.6.]), was sold for the benefit of soldiers and sailors blinded in the war.[37] The publication in 1917 of a Chandos derived portrait of Shakespeare surrounded by rousing passages from Shakespeare's works all pertaining to England, and intended for use in schools on Shakespeare

[33] Walter Pape and Frederick Burwick (eds.), *Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery* (Bottrop: Verlag Peter Pomp, 1996).

[34] See Elaine Schaffer. p. 76 in Walter Pape and Frederick Burwick, op. cit.

[35] For an extremely interesting comparison of the tercentenary celebrations of 1916 in England and Germany see Balz Engler, "Shakespeare in the Trenches", *ShS* (Cambridge: CUP), vol. 44, 1991.

[36] Extract from *Llandudno Advertiser,* 8 June 1912, Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon, P. 26. III. o.

[37] *Shakespeare Tercentenary Memorial,* published by S. H. & Co. Ltd., Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon, P. 26. IV. c.

Day invokes an intense nationalist nostalgia[38] (pl. 5). The mood of the Great War invocations of Shakespeare is summed up by St John Adcock in 1914 in an article headed "The Poetry of War" published in a journal called *The Reader.* Adcock self-righteously defends the nation of shopkeepers, the greatest of whom he claims was Shakespeare, against the Prussians who cultivate fierce moustaches and wear spiked helmets. This article is accompanied by a bust of Shakespeare and the quotation: "thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just"[39]; the chauvinist discourse exemplified here has been amply explained by Balz Engler in his account of the competitive claims of the Germans and the English for rights to Shakespeare.

In the midst of the second world war, a newly discovered Shakespeare portrait, improbably attributed to Franz Hals, hit the headlines. On the front page of *Reynolds News* 5 November 1944 (pl. 6) framed by heroic accounts of allied advances, the head of a bald man (almost certainly an Old Testament prophet and definitely not Shakespeare) gazes out at readers. The "off-the-war scoop" concerning a painting said to have been "in the care of an Italian priest, who was interned for three years in the Isle of Man" was secured through the friendship of the colourful Tom Driberg with the dramatist Clifford Bax.[40] If a Shakespeare is needed, one will certainly be found. The significance of discourses and representations of historic cultural materials for political and ideological ends is vividly demonstrated at the end of the war, when, in August 1948, in the British sector of Berlin, the population was entertained to a concert of Tudor music by the Cambridge madrigal society, performances of *Measure for Measure* (with its appropriately pacific themes) and (less explicably) Webster's *The White Devil* by the Marlowe Society, along with lectures on Shakespeare by luminaries such as Allardyce Nicholl and Henry Charlton. The concert took place in a spacious mansion in the Grunewald district; in order to complete the imperialist gesture, the house was apparently decorated for the occasion with the flags of St. George and St. Andrew while British soldiers dressed up as beefeaters stood guard. Meanwhile at the British Information Centre in the Kurfurstendamm, the centre-piece of an exhibition of engravings and photographs of the most famous Shakespeare actors over three centuries was the portrait of Shakespeare attributed to Franz Hals described above.[41]

[38] *The Teachers World* (London: Montagu House, Russell Squ.), 11 April 1917, copy in Heinz Archive, National Portrait Gallery. For the significance of Shakespeare Day, see Balz Engler, op. cit.

[39] A. St. John Adcock, "The Poetry of War", *The Reader* (London: no publisher, October 1914), copy in the Heinz Archive, the National Portrait Gallery, London.

[40] *Reynolds News,* 9 November 1944.

[41] Unattributed newscutting, "Berlin Aug. 22" (in ink – 1948), Heinz Archive, National Portrait Gallery, London.

All this appropriation of a cultural past for explicitly political purposes may seem disagreeable. The capacity of the literary and the visual to transcend national difference, as well as embody it, is also manifest in the history of portraits of Shakespeare. In 1950 the librarian of the Shakespeare Library at Stratford received in the post from a British Council official a unique and intriguing document which he (perhaps with a typical English disclaimer) suggests may be thrown away if it is of no interest! The letter accompanies a not unskilfully executed woodcut which, according to the accompanying letter, was made by a Pole in a concentration camp (presumably copying a book cover) and given to the writer in Warsaw in 1946.[42]

The heroicisation of Shakespeare which has continued well into our own time, as the ugly bronze statue that adorns the foyer of the Stratford Shakespeare Centre testifies, has also opened the figure of Shakespeare up to subversion and satire. The heroism of Shakespeare turns ordinary mortals into pygmies at the time of the Shakespeare memorial committee in 1864; a cartoon shows an ugly gaggle of men with ladders at the foot of a gigantic version of the Stratford effigy, struggling to paste advertisements.[43] But conversely, the contemporary theatre manager in a cartoon in the magazine *Fun* in 1869 can only fill a house with "sensation drama" and he sees the bard off the premises with the words: "somehow your pieces don't draw" (pl. 7). A modern-day Shakespeare with a monocle, and standing in the posture of the Westminster Abbey statue presides over a heap of novels and a poster listing plays with titles such as "The Colleen" and "After Dark" while advertisements on the walls behind him call for 200 hands and 3,000 legs for a ballet. Today it is possible to purchase a postcard in Stratford in which the idea of Shakespeares's genius is undercut with an image of a bleary-eyed bard struggling to arrive at the line "All the world's a stage". Discarded versions, one of which reads "The world is sort of like a stage" lie on the floor and the motto WS loves [♥] AH is carved on the side of the desk.[44]

It is possible to see the history of Shakespeare portraiture as exemplary of the process through which vernacular and functional artefacts which are regional in style and made in relatively humble media are gradually elevated and transformed. The Stratford effigy is made of Gloucestershire limestone but the eighteenth-century statues, that in Westminster Abbey by Peter Scheemakers, Roubiliac's life-sized statue of Shakespeare for Garrick's Temple at Twickenham of 1757 (of which terracotta models also exist) now in the British Museum, and Rysbrack's

[42] A. E. Morgan, The British Council, London to Levi Fox, Esq., Shakespeare's Birthplace, Stratford-on-Avon, 8 September 1950, MS. Shakespeare Library, Stratford-upon-Avon.

[43] "Shakespeare among the Pigmies", *Punch* (30 January 1866).

[44] *Shakespeare Scribbles,* illustration by Tony Naylor, published by Harlequin Supplies Ltd., 1994.

bust of ca. 1760 now in Birmingham City Art Gallery are all in marble.[45] Similarly, the humble medium of the mass circulation print in which the Droeshout portrait appeared gives way to the grandiose and large scale oil painting as exemplified with the Chesterfield portrait of ca. 1670 (Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon) which extends the Chandos head and shoulders into a grand Baroque three-quarter-length. Many artists and men of letters owned oil replicas, or free adaptations of the Chandos portrait, including Dryden and Roubiliac, who made his own copy.[46]

Nonetheless, despite this 'upward mobility' from vernacular to high art, Shakespeare remained eminently open to appropriation and adaptation. Two episodes will serve vividly to convey how Shakespeare, as an imaginative space, could be filled by personal fantasy. David Garrick, the pre-eminent Shakespearean actor of the eighteenth century had, perhaps, not only a particular need but also a right to produce his own Shakespeare. He did not hesitate to do so. In 1762, he built a Shakespeare Temple in his garden beside the Thames at Twickenham. The statue by Roubiliac now in the British Museum was the centre-piece (collection of the Earl of Durham); he was portrayed with his family, master of this domain, by Zoffany. He was also portrayed by Gainsborough ca. 1766–69 in a pose that quotes the Scheemakers monument to Shakespeare in Westminster Abbey, beside a pediment bearing a Rysbrack bust of Shakespeare. This painting was destroyed in 1946. The theme was taken up by the popular press: the *London magazine* of 1769, for example, placed a bare-headed Garrick in classical profile alongside a bust of Shakespeare projected from the Chandos portrait which is, of course, full face (pl. 8). 1769 was the year of the great Stratford Jubilee, a gigantic festival conceived and organised by Garrick, the culmination of which was Garrick saluting Shakespeare in his Ode on the occasion. Those attending acquired Shakespeare favours[47] and those unable to attend could see Garrick's oration as engraved by Saunders after Van der Gucht in 1773[48], or enjoy the sensational image of Garrick delivering his ode surrounded by Shakespearean characters by Caroline Watson after Robert Edge Pine.[49] After Garrick's death, a memorial was erected in Westminster Abbey in 1795–8 on a horizontal axis facing that of Shakespeare. The

[45] For a succinct discussion of Roubiliac's contribution to Shakespeare statuary, see David Bindman and Malcolm Baker, *Roubiliac and the Eighteenth-century Monument* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press) 1995, ch. 7.

[46] H. M. Government Art Collections, reproduced in David Bindman and Malcolm Baker, op cit. pl. 60.

[47] For details of portraiture in this medium, see W. S. Ogden, op. cit.

[48] Reproduced and discussed in David Piper, op cit., pp. 30–31.

[49] Dated 1784, used as a frontispiece in M. Dobson, op. cit., where it is wrongly attributed to Charles Watson.

work of H. Webber shows Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy, a theme first explored by Sir Joshua Reynolds in his portrait of 1760–1 (private collection), standing and closing, or opening, curtains as on a stage, beneath a bust of Shakespeare hanging in a small roundel. For the late eighteenth century Shakespeare was understood to have been rescued by Garrick who thereby possessed a special claim to knowledge. This idea was typically articulated within a narrative of portraiture in a satirical poem published in 1770 about people attending an auction:

> Close in a corner SHAKESPEARE'S bust
> Neglected stood, defil'd with dust;
> When GARRICK saw it, with respect
> He bow'd and spake to this effect,
> "O! Thou who could'st with ease impart,
> The passions of the human heart,
> Who studiously look'd nature through
> And shew'd her in each point of view.
> Shall it be told in future, I
> When thou wert sold, stood tamely by,
> Forbid it all the pow'rs above,
> Duty forbid, forbid it love,"
> And thence to shew his high regard,
> He to his bosom hug'd the bard.[50]

In the early years of this century, another person of theatrical disposition laid claim to a personal link with Shakespeare, using the medium of portraiture to demonstrate that connection in his search for public recognition. Shakespeare Hirst (for so he called himself), according to the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* of 1st March 1902, was a small-time antique dealer near Huddersfield in Yorkshire who owned, and exhibited for a fee, paintings attributed to Raphael, Cimabue, Leonardo, Rubens and other acknowledged masters.[51] Chief among his exhibits was a supposed portrait of Shakespeare painted by Elsheimer in Rome in 1608. "Mr Hirst is persuaded", says the reporter laconically, "that Shakespeare went to Rome often". Shakespeare Hirst's exhibition offers a fascinating insight into the consumption of high art as popular culture in a provincial city at the turn of the century:

[50] *The Auction a Poem. A Familiar Epistle to a Friend With the Head of Harpocrates, the God of Silence amongst the Egyptians, in a Ring* (1770), British Library 840. k. 11 (14), pp. 11–12.

[51] Keighley Snowden, "A Despised Collector" *(Yorkshire Weekly Post,* Saturday 1 March 1902), cutting, Heinz Archive, National Portrait Gallery.

> It is in a mahogany case with folding doors, on an easel in the best light of the upper room, a low, severe square room, in which, with all the reverent care in the world, I could not move about without kicking the frames of piled masterpieces. Silently Mr. Hirst opened the case; and I saw the face and bust of a handsome bearded man.[52]

Several advertising bills from Hirst's exhibition survive suggesting that his show toured the north of England; the "Scarborough Crucifixion" and "other rare masterpieces by the great Sir Peter Paul Rubens" as well as "marvellous lost pictures by the best of Spanish painters Velaszquez" were exhibited along with the "only life portraits ever painted in the world of the immortal Wm. Shakespeare and his favourite daughter Susanna" at 22 Grand Arcade, Briggate, Leeds, admission sixpence.[53] None of the exhibits from Shakespeare Hirst's collection are known to have survived but he was clearly not an uneducated man and he certainly possessed tenacity. On Shakespeare's birthday in 1906, he addressed all Fine Art critics whether they belong to the British Museum, the National Gallery, the Louvre, or anywhere else on this habitable globe in support of his own portrait of Shakespeare. The Chandos portrait, he claims, is largely the work of Sir Joshua Reynolds and the Stratford effigy a "scarecrow bust".[54]

Shakespeare portraits can never have had, either before or since, such an impassioned spokesman as Shakespeare Hirst (though Leslie Hotson's attempts in 1977 to prove that Hilliard's *Young man with a hand reaching from a cloud* is Shakespeare comes very close)[55] nor such a distinguished activist as David Garrick. Yet hundreds of individuals have invested in Shakespeare imagery emotively, if not also financially. The word 'souvenir' means 'memory' and reminders, or memories of Shakespeare have been a staple of the national economy and, particularly, of Stratford on Avon and Westminster Abbey since the early eighteenth century. The Heinz Archive at the National Portrait Gallery contains many files of letters from hopeful collectors around the world begging for authentication of images found, purchased and inherited. Few now possess libraries adorned with busts but mantlepieces, pianos, bookshelves, desks and other domestic surfaces, as well as scrapbooks and photo albums testify to the national significance of the Shakespeare image and to the possibilities for personal appropriation and customisation. By cutting and pasting, inscribing and annotating mass-produced imagery, the indi-

[52] K. Snowden.

[53] Posters survive in the Shakespeare files at the Heinz Archive, National Portrait Gallery, London. They are undated.

[54] Broadsheet "Shakespeareana. Another Birthday Gift, April 23rd, 1906", Heinz Archive, National Portrait Gallery.

[55] See Roy Strong's review of L. Hotson, *Shakespeare by Hilliard. A Portrait Deciphered,* op. cit., "No man's hand", *The Times* 6 October 1977.

vidual constructs his or her own Shakespeare as with this page of items gathered by an anonymous visitor to the 1864 Stratford tercentenary (pl. 9). The personalised collection includes engravings and photographs after the Chandos and Droeshout portraits, the so-called 'Wivell portrait', the Stratford effigy, and an early picture postcard from Stratford-upon-Avon. A quotation is inscribed above, and the note "These photographs I obtained at Stratford at the Tercentenary 1854" appears in the centre. If this last inscription is true, it must represent one of the earliest examples of the commercial use of photography. An artefact like this represents consumption as a form of production; the object constitutes a personal claim to access English history, to register the passing of time and, through the mingling of text and image, to celebrate that which may defeat time – that is both the idea of Shakespeare and his work *and* the commemorative object that outlives the collector.

One of the images included in the postcard mentioned above shows the room in which Shakespeare was allegedly born. This almost empty and very simple room was frequently represented,[56] perhaps most significantly by Henry Wallis in 1853.[57] The cultural vacuum ensured by the absence of an authentic portrait has, it seems, licensed the displacement of the fascination with the historical individual, Shakespeare, onto his surroundings. To be sure, we have Goethe's Weimar, Mozart's Vienna, and Wordsworth's Grasmere as well as a host of other locations defined by the literary. In the case of Shakespeare we can perhaps see at work in a particularly acute way, the process of reification whereby the material remnants come to stand in for a past that is understood to be subliminal. As J. A. Hammerton wrote, on visiting Stratford for the first time in 1898:

> To stand beneath the roof that first sheltered Shakespeare and to let one's fancy flit about the rooms, is to experience a delight which it were hopeless to express in mere written words. But one can then understand and appreciate the feeling which brings men and women from far lands beyong the seas to this little Midland town, that they may stand in the small, mean-looking apartment where Shakespeare was born. For Americans, especially, it is easy to see wherein the fascination lies – coming from the gaudy, mushroom cities of the west, to this quiet, old-world place, where nobody "hustles", and witnessing the humble surroundings of one who has peopled the world of fancy with a host of characters that will charm mankind for ages after the modern civilisation of the West has crumbled away, they are deeply moved when they contemplate the unpretentious nature of the home into which 'the most imperial intellect of all time' was born.[58]

[56] See, for example, *The Sphere* (24 April 1920) 97.

[57] Tate Gallery, London, reproduced in M. Pointon, op. cit.

[58] J. A. Hammerton, "A First Visit to Stratford-on-Avon", *The Birmingham Weekly Post* (16 April 1898).

Shakespeare – as imaged through the topography of his birthplace (Stratford in general, and the room in which he is said to have been born in particular) – offers an opportunity for the materialisation of particular personal acts of imagination. The counterpoint to this free-play is the pseudo-scientific discourse of authenticity that has for many years centred on the Darmstadt death mask.[59] I shall not rehearse the arguments, counter-arguments, the measurings and the tests. I will merely draw attention to the quicksands of portraiture as cultural production which I have mapped onto the person of Shakespeare in the course of this paper and I will confine myself to a number of salient points. Firstly, enquiries into the identity of the Darmstadt death mask have been going on since the 1820s[60], and techniques of superimposition had been around since the eighteenth century.[61] Secondly, there is certainly an issue of national prerogative involved in debates over the death mask. Germany in the nineteenth century led the world in Shakespeare scholarship, something undoubtedly problematic for the English-speaking nations[62], and a passionate identification with the historical individual Shakespeare as well as a will to celebrate his life is nothing new in German culture. It was, after all, the German Shakespeare Society that was responsible for erecting in 1904 a statue of Shakespeare in Weimar.[63] The cultural context for the early twentieth-century fascination with the idea of an authentic portrait of Shakespeare is embedded in the history of the Darmstadt death mask and is perhaps most vividly exemplified by the impassioned endeavours of the American artist William Page who had been commissioned in the 1870s to produce life-sized pictures of the head of Christ and the head of Shakespeare. Unable, for obvious reasons, to locate a satisfactorily authentic portrait of Christ, Page became obsessed by the idea of the death mask, went to Germany in search of it, and subsequently published his account, an extraordinarily

[59] Interest in this death mask, the origins of which are exhaustively discussed in P. Wislicenus, *Nachweise zu Shakespeares Totenmaske,* op. cit. and which was popularised in the magazine section of the *New York Sunday American* (27 February 1916), has recently been revived by the forensically related work of Prof. Dr. Hildegard Hammerschmidt-Hummel. Her findings were reported widely in the English press (see, for example, *Daily Mail* [19 October 1995]; *The Times* [24 April 1996]). I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Hammerschmidt-Hummel for communicating with me personally. I regret that I remain as an historian unconvinced by her findings.

[60] See Boaden, 1824; Wivell, 1827; Scharf 1864; Robinson 1887, A. H. Wall 1890, op. cit.

[61] An attempt to superimpose Chandos onto Droeshout was engraved by T. Trotter and published by W. Richardson, 1 November 1794, a specimen of this engraving is in the Heinz Archive, the National Portrait Gallery, where there is also to be found a more recent unpublished thesis using similar techniques (L. Gurney, "Droeshout's Dilemma and the Authenticity of the Grafton Portrait", MS., 1966).

[62] See B. Engler, op. cit.

[63] Still standing, across the river from Goethe's Gartenhaus. This event was briefly reported rather than celebrated in the English press, see, for example, *The Daily News* (25 April 1904).

mystical and reverential piece.[64] The current interest in the Darmstadt death mask is, therefore, less a new discovery than part of a longstanding preoccupation with authenticating one image by reference to another. None of these endeavours take account of the fact that all images of Shakespeare, in whatever medium, are representations made after the subject's death and are therefore fictions. A death mask is not a portrait, nor is it in any sense 'true' to a living subject, it also is a work of art, albeit a fairly literal one. It involves the intervention of a technician or craftsman to produce an object in malleable material which has its own particular properties – one of which is that it changes as it dries. Examination of a death mask is not, therefore, analogous to the inspection of a face.[65] The individuals who produced death masks had their own professionalism and were dictated to by aesthetic, moral and religious standards. Just as today's funeral directors or undertakers arrange corpses, make them up, pad them out to idealise them, so also producers of death masks cannot have been immune to a bit of filing or sandpapering, the odd tweak here and there, a little pat to the wet plaster and so on. Moreover, even if we ignore the inevitable intervention of the human hand, all a death mask can show is the face after death; it is not a portrait, it is a representation of a face after the physiological changes consequent upon death have taken place. It is, moreover, historically extremely unlikely that anyone would have made a death mask of Shakespeare. Only royalty or nobility were accorded this honour at this period; the popularisation of death masks of poets and artists is part of the romantic nineteenth-century interest in artistic physiognomy.

Evidence that compares a death mask with other material evidence pertaining to Shakespeare is, as I have suggested, testing one fiction against another. Supposing the Darmstadt death mask is proven to be identical with a synthesis of the Chandos portrait and the Stratford effigy, all that will show us is that it conforms to a fairly common standard of face representation within a given, rather wide, historical period of time. At the end of the day, I suggest, it matters little. We will never know what Shakespeare looked like as we cannot have access to his person. Even if we had, it is most probable that we would each receive a different impression; the variation in witnesses' descriptions of the perpetrators of crimes testifies to the extraordinary range of viewing possibilities, recognitions, memories that are involved in any sighting of a human subject. Where one of us sees a tall bald man,

[64] William Page first published his account in *Scribner's Magazine*, May 1876; it was reprinted as *A Study of Shakespeare's Portraits by William Page, Artist, Ex-President of the Academy of Design, New York*, op. cit.

[65] cf also facial reconstruction techniques in archaeology as demonstrated, for example, in A. J. Prag, "Seven Faces from Grave Circle B at Mycenae", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 90 (1995).

another sees a person of medium stature with a thinning head of hair. More important is recognition of the reasons for our continuing search for the authentic image, the Shakespeare grail. These searches will doubtlessly continue and so, happily, will the scepticism that accompanies them.[66]

I will conclude by returning to the Chandos portrait. Approaching the National Portrait Gallery in St. Martin's Lane, one cannot fail to be conscious of the importance of theatrical history. Drury Lane and Covent Garden are adjacent, and Sir Henry Irving's statue (by T. Brock) stands resolutely at one corner. The most celebrated image of Shakespeare, formerly the property of the Dukes of Chandos, was purchased at the sale in 1848 of the contents of Stowe House in Buckinghamshire and was given by the first Earl of Ellesmere to the newly founded National Portrait Gallery in 1856. A letter from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Earl, dated 10 June 1856, records the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for "your munificent donation to the public of the Chandos Shakespeare portrait for the intended National Portrait Gallery. As it is the first, so it will be one of the most interesting pictures that collection will include."[67] This has certainly proved to be the case. Number 1 in the National Portrait Gallery catalogue, if not the *sine qua non* of the National Collection, the Chandos Shakespeare certainly helped to shape the acquisition and hanging of a group of works of art that invited mid-Victorian viewers to understand their nation's past through the medium of the Tudor, Stuart and Jacobean court culture. The first keeper of the National Portrait Gallery, George Scharf, son of an immigrant German draughtsman, was a remarkable man: administrator, scholar, artist. He kept meticulous and extensive notes in which he recorded portraits that he saw in sale rooms and country houses. He also kept notes of how the paintings in the national collection were hung, first in a modest town house serving as a gallery at George St. Westminster (pl. 10) where we may remark how the paintings are packed in. The Chandos Shakespeare, because it was so precious, was in a mahogany case just to the left of the fireplace and covered in glass. In 1871, the collection moved to more spacious premises at South Kensington where the Chandos portrait was placed in a grand frame with a cast of the Stratford effigy above, and what I take to be the Droeshout print to the right.[68] Below is a case of autographs which were popularly regarded as an adjunct to portraiture; a signature could be understood to be a kind of self-portrait, a trace of

[66] As exemplary of the continuing interest, we might take the article "Is this the real Shakespeare?" by Graham Dark ('New discovery shows him as young man of good looks') published in the *Daily Express* (4 June 1958); as exemplary of the scepticism we might consider the cartoon in the *Independent* Arts section (24 March 1994) in which a search for Shakespeare produces an alias for Cervantes and, ultimately for Elvis ('all shaked up!').

[67] National Portrait Gallery, Register no. 1.

[68] See M. Pointon, op. cit., pl. 288.

the authentic presence of a human being and expressive of their character. This is a display that aspires to be didactic and scientific. It is the work of a man who is already as much an art historian as an antiquarian. Today, the Chandos Shakespeare is less crowded by other images, in accordance with modern hanging practices, but it still forms the focal point of a display that seeks to demonstrate the achievements of England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To the left is the Ditchley portrait of Elizabeth I standing on a map of England, above a portrait of Sir Robert Hatton, and to the right Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. In front is a case of miniatures. The appeal of Shakespeare in the Museum of British History is unabated; the Chandos portrait features prominently on current publicity, along with Scott of the Antarctic, the actress Ellen Terry, and Queen Elizabeth II as a child with her mother. George Scharf's description of the Chandos portrait in its materiality, published in *Notes and Queries* in 1864 has not been superceded. It is a just reminder that what we regard, when we view the portrait of Shakespeare, is paint on canvas. It can only, with certitude, be identified in its materiality. This also, of course, has its history and is not the same now as it was when it was executed. Even as we read the words of the first Director of the NPG – and few can have scrutinised this object so thoroughly – we realize that even this apparently technical description is also linguistically shaped; this portrait of a portrait evokes a poignancy in the contemplation of an object worn by time, interrogating it in the hope (a hope still very much alive) that it may yet reveal some certainty. It is to Scharf that I will therefore give the final word:

> It is painted on coarse English canvas, covered with a groundwork of greenish grey, which has been rubbed bare in several parts, where the coarse threads of canvas happen most to project. Only a few parts of the face have been retouched with a reddish paint. Some portions of the hair seem to have been darkened, and a few touches of deep madder red may have been added to give point to the nostrils and eyelids. The background is a rich dark red; but the whole of the picture has become blackened, partly as a consequence of the grey ground protruding, and partly from the red colours of the flesh tints having deepened to a brownish tone. This at first sight gives the complexion a dull swarthy hue [...].[69]

This essay is a revised version of a lecture given in Bochum in 1996 to the conference of the Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft. I am grateful to the President of the organisation for inviting me to Bochum and to those attending the conference for their helpful comments and

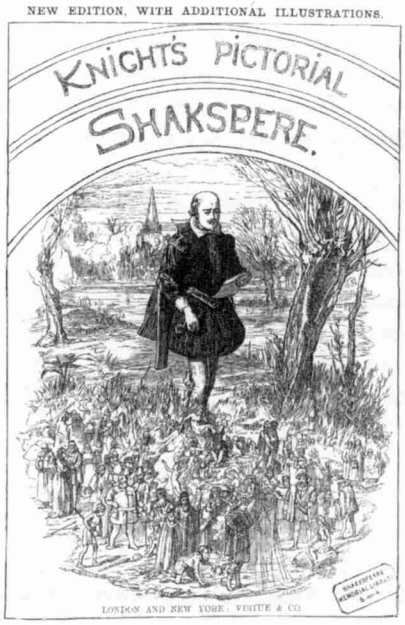
[69] G. Scharf, "On the Principal Portraits of Shakespeare", op. cit. 1864 (signed copy in the National Portrait Gallery, dated May 1864), p. 8.

suggestions. I would also like to thank Dr. Tom Matheson for his encouragement and Ms. Lucy Peltz for locating a number of relevant texts for me. Most of the material upon which this essay is based is to be found either in the Heinz Archive at the National Portrait Gallery, London or in the Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon. I am extremely grateful to the staff of both institutions for the courteous and constructive way in which they helped me in my research.

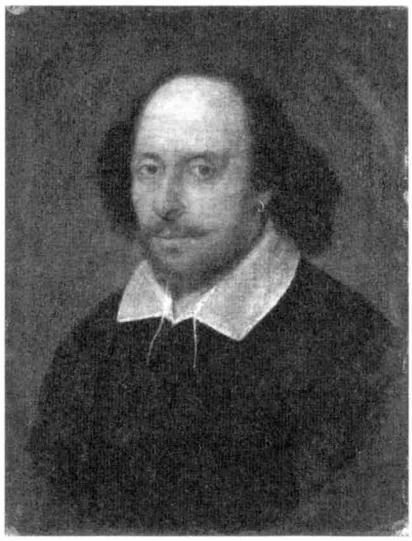
Zusammenfassung

In diesem Artikel werden die sogenannten 'echten' Portraits Shakespeares einschließlich der Darmstädter Totenmaske, aber auch Denkmäler und andere Abbildungen späterer Jahrhunderte nicht auf ihre Authentizität hin untersucht, sondern als Zeugnisse das Nachlebens des Dramatikers interpretiert. Auf der Gundlage des Begriffs Autorfunktion im Sinne Foucaults werden die verschiedenen Darstellungen Shakespeares als Signifikanten für englische Renaissance, für Englands nationale Kultur oder für den Inbegriff höchster dramatischer Kunst gedeutet.

Pl. 1: Paul Thumann, *Shakespeare and companions,* wood-engraving, Weimar, 1864, Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon.

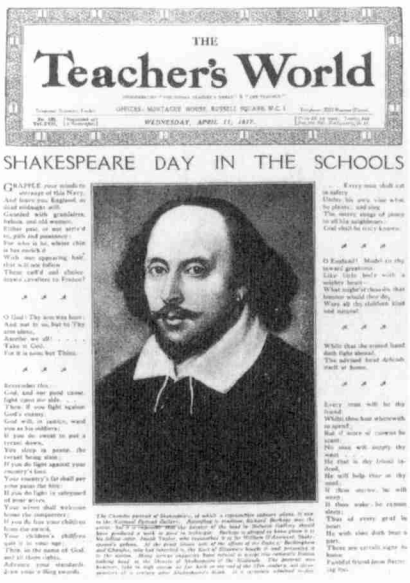


Pl. 2: Dalziel Brothers, frontispiece to *Knight's Pictorial Shakespeare,* Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon.



Pl. 3: The Chandos *Shakespeare,* courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London.

Pl. 4: Anon, *Celebrated Authors,* lithograph, National Portrait Gallery Archive, London.

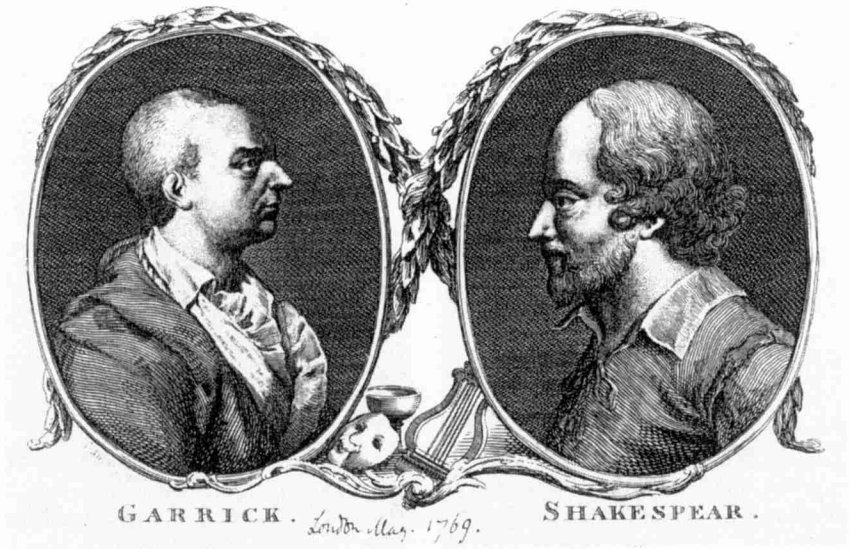

THE
Teacher's World
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 1917.
SHAKESPEARE DAY IN THE SCHOOLS

Pl. 5: *The Teachers's World,* 11 April 1917, National Portrait Gallery Archive, London.

LATE LONDON SPECIAL
REYNOLDS NEWS
SUNDAY CITIZEN
TANK ARMY STORMS BUDAPEST
Now We Shall Invade Central Germany' says Moscow
Maas Battle Near Victorious End
'OBLITERATOR' ON RUHR CENTRE
'RUSSIAN FRIENDSHIP ESSENTIAL'
Whole of Greece is Now Free
I'm Most Grateful To

Pl. 6: *Reynolds News,* 5 November 1944, National Portrait Gallery Archive, London.

Pl. 7: Dalziel after Barnard, "A Stage Lower", *Fun* 2 October 1869, Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon.



Pl. 8: *Garrick and Shakespeare,* anon. engraving from *London Magazine,* 1769, National Portrait Gallery Archive, London.

Pl. 9: Scrapbook page, Stratford tercentenary, Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Pl. 10: *View of front room of National Portrait Gallery, London,* 26 February 1866, drawing from George Scharf's notebooks, National Portrait Gallery Archive, London.