

Cultural relationships complicate achieving educational progress under current metropolitan conditions. California's urban centers have reached a multicultural complexity which affects teachers at every level. Metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles and Oakland now share with east London (U.K.) the coexistence of over seventy different linguistic and ethnic groups in their schools. However, the African ex-slave, Terence, once asserted: "homo sum, et nihil humani alienum a me puto": "I am human, and nothing human is foreign to me." And it is not for nothing that Shakespeare was called "our English Terence" (John Davis; c.1611, *Shakespeare Allusion Book*, 1.219). Teachers need a broader sense of context if a positive assimilation of multicultural experience is to be attained, rather than a fragmentary mosaic of each culture's achievements, often defined by adversary relationships.

Our concern is to assimilate Shakespeare to the Hispanic tradition in a way urgently relevant to teachers in California since in *California in the New Millennium*, Mark Baldassare says that in twenty years California will have a population of which, 50% are from Spanish-speaking backgrounds, so the state will become bilingual. The requirement for positive interaction and creative reinforcement will be to validate Anglo/Hispanic traditions, which are parallel and mutually supportive, since they derive from identical roots.

It is necessary to overthrow the prejudicial dogma about earlier phases in their relationship, as demonstrated by TMW's *Shakespeare: the Spanish Connection*. The "patriotic" version of the English relations with Spain from 1500 to 1600 is founded on one phase of the century alone: the piratical adventures of Hawkins, Drake and their ilk. Such adversary aspects of the reign of Elizabeth contrast with the relationship during her sister's marriage to Philip II, and the earlier period of Queen Katherine of Aragon's marriage to Henry VIII. Eamon Duffy has argued in *The Stripping of the Altars* that the English were far less committed to the Reformation than the Anglican tradition would have it, while much of the missionary work in Elizabethan England was carried out by the Spanish Jesuit order, with whom Shakespeare's Family has been associated by E. A. J. Honigmann's investigation of their Catholic associations.

The Renaissance in both England and Spain followed tardy and incomplete patterns in marked contrast with Italian sophistication. Dramatists such as Lope de Vega and Shakespeare subordinated the new unities of Time, Place and Action to popular tastes which favored a highly erratic genre that came to be called tragicomedy, in which sentiment and low humor were realistically commingled. Lope's ironic verse treatise about his "surrender to popular taste," *L'Arte nuevo de hacer comedias esto tiempo* (*The New Art of Making Plays in This Age*) is the best statement of the populist aesthetic of Shakespearean drama, refuting the supercilious censure of public theatres in Sidney's *Defence of Poetry*. Lope even wrote a version of *Romeo and Juliet* with a happy ending, to please his audiences (*Castelvines y Monteses*, a contrast to Lorca's tragic version). The Spanish "corrales" were open-air arenas almost identical in structure and conventions to those of Elizabethan London, with thrust stages, backed by a curtain, and set in a galleried open court with little scenery. Indeed, some of these theatres like Almagro's have survived to illustrate the actual format only approximated to in the reconstructed Globe Theatre in Southwark. Around two hundred English Renaissance plays include the words "Spain" or "Spanish."

Shakespeare was interested in Spanish culture, for the sources of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and his lost play *Cardenio* draw on Montemayor and Cervantes. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, the bravura of Don Armado resembles Don Quixote's. The plot of *Much Ado* turns on the failure of the two most prominent Spanish leaders, Don Pedro and Don John, to assimilate their Spanish cult of Honor to the laid-back culture of their Italian subjects.

Shakespeare's villain, the Bastard Don John derives from the manic behavior of the historical bastard Don Juan de Austria as described by Walsingham's secret agents. As seen in the play, his bastardy denied him the status he felt was his due when he returned to Messina (as in *Much Ado*) after leading the Christian fleets in a successful battle at Lepanto with the Turks in which he was assisted by Cervantes. Don John was feared and hated in England as the first instigator or the idea of an Armada against England, designed to capture Mary Queen of Scots, whom Don John would marry in order to secure himself on the throne of England. He appears in an equally aggressive role in *Love After Death*, a play of Calderon about Don John's role in the final extermination of Moorish culture in Spain. Shakespeare portrayed the macabre figure of Don John in the guise of a saturnine clown, as he is also shown in a Velázquez painting now in the Prado. Neither celebrated the more heroic aspects of this noted general. The career of Velázquez at the Spanish court approximates to that of Shakespeare at the court of James I, and both artists shared a down-to-earth skepticism about royalty and the aristocracy while cherishing the roles of actors, clowns and buffoons.

Shakespeare's empathy with another Spanish figure can be seen in his climactic female role, in which Sarah Siddons excelled even her famous Lady Macbeth: Queen Katherine of Aragon in *Henry VIII*. The historical Queen Katherine was much admired by the English, as Shakespeare shows early in *Henry VIII*. Shakespeare uses her historical divorce to challenge the attack on his romances which he encountered from his protégé Ben Jonson. The very title of *A Winter's Tale* is capped by the original one for *Henry VIII: All Is True*. Katherine's insight, dignity, and humility under extreme stress appear heroic in Shakespeare, and illustrative of the highest feminine excellence, as celebrated by her daughter Mary's tutor, the Spanish humanist Juan Vives, in *De Institutiones Feminae Christianae* (*The Nature of the Christian Woman*). The trial scene is similarly recreated by Calderon in *The English Schism*.

In pre-1849 California there were continuities between Calderon and the Mexican nun Sor Juana who wrote comedies like *The Trials of a Noble House* and *Love is the Greater Labyrinth*, as well as religious plays such as the "autos sacramentales" – *The Staff of Joseph* and *The True Narcissus*, in the tradition of religious drama running back beyond Calderon to the Middle Ages. Her precedent in turn led to the Californian scripts or *pastorelas* or Christmas plays in the medieval tradition. This type of performance was diffused throughout California by the culture of the missions, which staged "pastorelas" such as *Los Pastores* by Padre Florencio Ibañez, with its affinities to the English medieval cycles. This Californian script closely resembles the celebration of Christmas in *The Second Shepherds Play* in theme, concepts, devices, and characterization.

Meanwhile, in the 1840s the Scottish Jack Swan followed the pattern of secular performances by the Spanish and Mexican military at the presidios. He opened up the ground floor rooms of a row of houses in Monterey to create a long hall for use as the first commercial theatre in California, well before the Gold Rush (and still in operation). Jack Swan staged swashbuckling melodramas in the Spanish vein recalled by our modern Zorro, but he also established crucial Shakespearean precedents by staging *The Story of the Gadshill Robbery*, from Shakespeare's Drama of *King Henry IV* and even *Richard III*, along with *Hamlet*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merchant of Venice*. The miners flocked to see distinguished Shakespearean actors such as Edwin Booth. The flourishing Californian traditions of Spanish and English drama in the first half of the nineteenth century led to the creation of a distinctively vigorous "western style of classical acting, as practiced by Edwin Booth. This dynamic theatre explains why one of its representatives, David Belasco, was able to dominate the New York theatre later in the century.

From the early 19th century we have two complementary traditions flourishing, one traceable back through the Mexican drama of Sor Juana and the Baroque art of Calderon deep into the culture or the Middle Ages which Spain shared with England, while the other referred directly back to the Shakespearean dramas or Renaissance England. This complement of Spanish and English theatrical traditions in the Middle Ages, Renaissance and nineteenth century remains current and significant. Today the Chamizal Festival of Classic Hispanic Drama at El Paso in 2000 presented Juan Ruiz de Alarcon's comedy *The Liar*, as originally staged in Los Angeles by the Antaeus company, led by Dakin Matthews. Its hero matches Shakespeare's great liar, Falstaff. The Chamizal Festival celebrates classical Spanish drama. More locally, we find Shakespeare providing speech training for youthful performers in east L.A., for mostly Spanish-speaking immigrant children in the productions of Rafe Esquith's Hobart Shakespeareans. Based in a primary school serving children with English as their second language, these ten-year olds echo a nineteenth-century tradition such as the nine-year-old Ellen Bateman, who excelled on California stages in such roles as Richard III, Shylock, Lady Macbeth, and Hamlet. The development of Shakespearean performance through careful rehearsal of short scenes (such as those in TMW's *Shakespeare: the Spanish Connection*) is an excellent way of training non-English-speaking students in the accurate pronunciation and phrasing of modern English. Jill Holden's Shakespeare Unbound achieved mastery of English among Spanish-speaking students and appreciation or Spanish language via her bilingual stagings of Shakespeare. Similar efforts at Anglo/Hispanic assimilation via Shakespeare have been made by the East Los Angeles Theatre. These are part of a mutually interactive pattern of Hispanic and Anglo traditions which are essential to mutual recognition of two great cultural traditions in California.

Dramatic performance advances cultural enrichment and assists teaching in basic language skills. That Shakespeare anticipated such a role for his work in places like multi-cultural California is indicated in his own words at the climax of *Julius Caesar*:

How many ages hence
Shall this our lofty scene be acted over
In states unborn and accents yet unknown.

(3.1.111-3)

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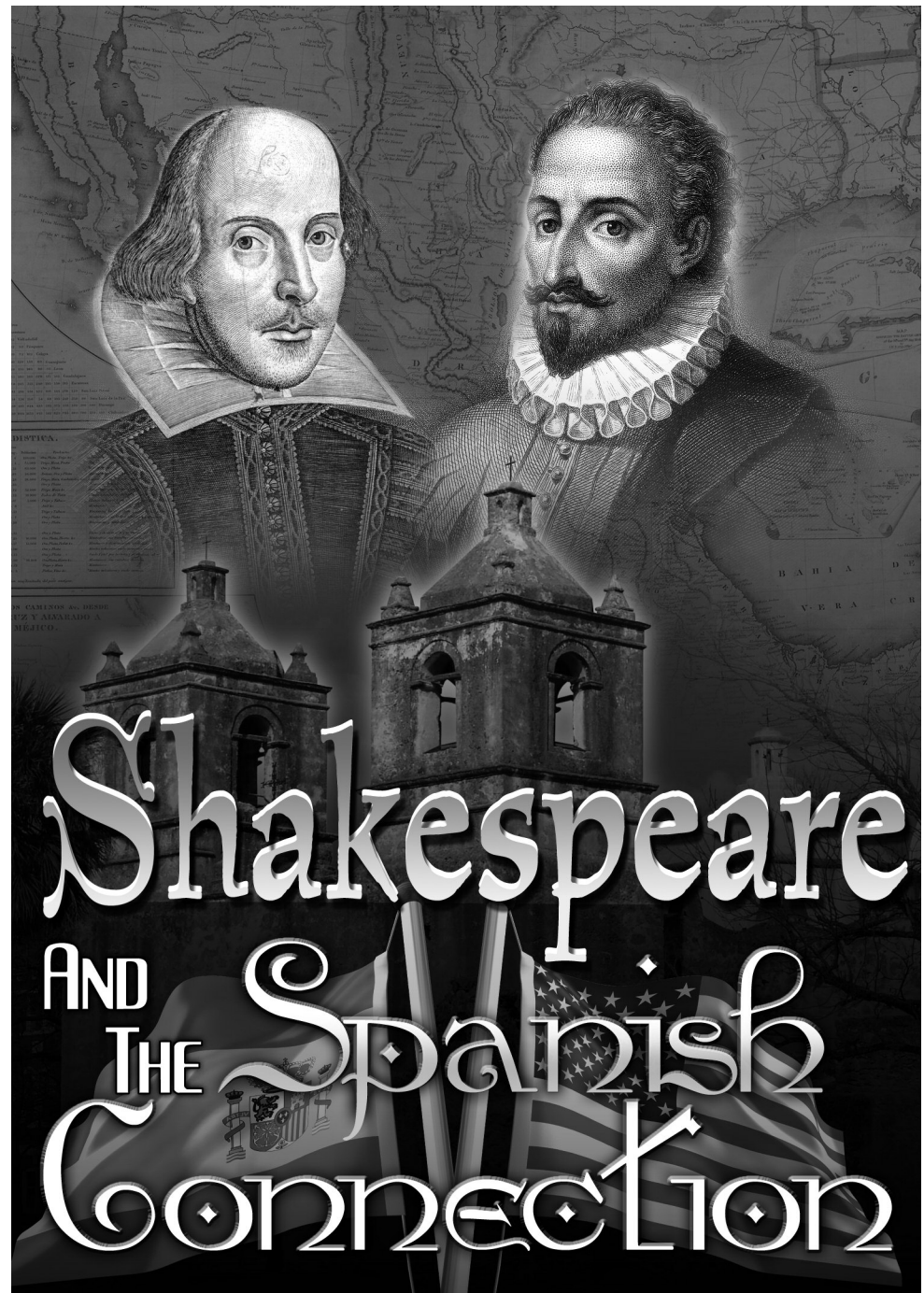
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