Review Article

Interdisciplinary Examination of Improvisation of Power, Tyranny and Chaos in William Shakespeare's *King John* and *Henry VIII*

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Abstract

The present study examines Stephen Greenblatt's theories on the Improvisation of Power and Tyranny in the light of Chaos Theory in William Shakespeare's *King John* and *Henry VIII* to investigate the complex web of nonviolent psychological dominance over the human mind based on empathy through displacement and absorption, modifying the symbolic order to generate or restrict chaos. The vicissitudes of a tyrant and the underlying factors that make up the infrastructure of the various tyranny in *King John* and *Henry VIII* are investigated and how tyrants take advantage of the improvisation of power to exercise power and carry out their mostly tyrannical and Machiavellian plans to create a new desired order out of the stimulated chaos. When the initial order is disturbed deliberately by the improvisors, entropy maximizes to the level of a secondary order, ensued from disorder and trivial fluctuations end up in significant changes. Controlling the chaotic situation to acquire the desired outcomes is the goal of improvisors, however, different results are due to multiple contributing factors such as their ability on manipulating reality, as it is seen in the divergent paths, to which each play is drawn. Both monarchs defy the prevailing religious narrative, yet it is Henry VIII's ability to improvise ensures his victory, whereas King John's failure stems from his inability to strategically exploit the tumultuous circumstances to his advantage. Pandulph's triumph over King John proves how the improvisation of power deconstructs traditional hierarchical power relations and can make them horizontal, vertical, diagonal, or ascending.

Keywords: Chaos/Chaotics, Empathy, Improvisation of Power, Tyrant/Tyranny

INTRODUCTION

According to the *First Folio*, Shakespeare's collection of historical plays includes two tetralogies. The first tetralogy consists of *Henry VI Parts I, II, and III*, as well as *Richard III*, while the second tetralogy includes *Richard II*, *Henry IV Parts I and II*, and *Henry V*.

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Additionally, there are two individual plays, *King John* and *Henry VIII*. For this research, *King John* and *Henry VIII* have been selected to explore the complex network of nonviolent psychological domination of the human mind through the manipulation of symbolic order, achieved by means of displacement and absorption of the desired structure to control the

degree of entropy to reach a satisfactory new order.

This interdisciplinary study investigates Stephen Greenblatt's theories of the improvisation of power as well as tyranny in the light of chaos theory in these two plays. The improvisation of power often serves to complicate hierarchical relationships through indirect methods of exerting power, typically to further Machiavellian tyrannical objectives, prioritize demonic purposes, or pursue personal and non-political interests. However, in some cases, it is employed to prevent the expansion of tyranny. The improvisation of power in William Shakespeare's histories happens in two levels. In one level, Shakespeare shows how characters improvise and in a more profonde level, he becomes the master improviser, who hypnotizes us with his stories.

Shakespeare…remains throughout his career the supreme purveyor of ''empathy,'' the fashioner of narrative selves, the master improviser. Where Montaigne withdrew to his study, Shakespeare became the presiding genius of a popular, urban art form with the capacity to foster psychic mobility in the service of Elizabethan power; he became the principal maker of what we may see as the prototype of the mass media Professor Lerner so admires (Greenblatt, 2005, p.185-6).

Shakespeare uses history as raw material to create interpretations of the era, and the story may have loose associations with the historical material he employs. These differences arise partly for dramatic effect and partly due to existing biases and considerations. However, as an improviser, Shakespeare creates more realistic characters than the historical figures themselves. As readers and spectators, we are so captivated by his artistry that we often remember the monarchs as he portrays them. His insights extend beyond political situations, providing a comprehensive overview of relationships across various social classes, from aristocrats to brothels and tavern dwellers.

King John is the oldest monarch depicted in the *First Folio*. The play represents King John, the king of England from 1199 to 1216, renowned for his role in the signing Magna Carta in English history. The play deconstructs the Elizabethan dominant discourse of divine order in the universe. *King John*'s form embodies uncertainty of content and, with a sense of organic unity, leaves the reader or audience in a state of confusion and ambiguity. King John can be considered Shakespeare's most incoherent historical character. His inconsistency and lack of integrity lead to constant radical shifts in his approach to governing the country and his international relationships, including those with the Roman Catholic Church.

Shakespeare wrote *Henry VIII* about two decades after his other historical plays. This play covers the period in English history when Henry VIII struggles against Roman Catholic laws to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and marry Anne Boleyn. King Henry VIII's role as a master improviser who improvises against other improvisers is incredible. Initially dependent on courtiers, Henry VIII gradually takes control and transforms into an omnipotent king. While the courtiers play their part in implementing this master plan, they are eventually used up and discarded in a Machiavellian manner. The young sentimental prince evolves into a ruthless tyrant, although this transformation is depicted with political consideration and caution.

The current study investigates the complex web of nonviolent psychological dominance over the human mind by manipulating the symbolic order through the stages of displacement and absorption in William Shakespeare's *King John* and *Henry VIII* in the light of chaos theory. The current study seeks to investigate how Western psychic mobility and its embodiment in empathy and the improvisation of power influence medieval English society as represented by William Shakespeare in such plays, and how the resulting power dynamic influences the way the country is governed. Greenblatt depicts the vagaries of a tyrant as well as the fundamental components that comprise the foundation of tyranny. The result would be the majority's ultimate subjugation via the improvisation of power, paving the way for the Machiavellian minority to wield

power and carry out their generally auto-cratic and self-interested plans to establish a new desirable order out of the stimulated chaos.

The significance of this research lies in the fact that by examining Shakespeare's historical works through the lens of the improvisation of power, a framework is established that challenges the traditional understanding of power dynamics. This framework allows for a range of new possibilities in terms of how power can be exerted, including vertically, horizontally, upwards, or diagonally. The interdisciplinary integration of three distinct theories - the improvisation of power, tyranny, and chaos theory - to analyze Shakespeare's historical works is both original and groundbreaking. It offers a fresh perspective on power dynamics as depicted in Shakespeare's histories, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of such relationships.

METHODOLOGY
Michel Foucault and the Concept of Power
Foucault's ideas are primarily rooted in Friedrich Nietzsche's. Foucault, along with some other critics, believes that "truth was simply a version of events preferred, indeed imposed, by the dominant or ruling group in society" (Brannigan, 2016, p.42). Based on this idea, Foucault suggests that, unlike old history, what he calls "the new history" deals with "discontinuity and rupture, the moments of transformation and difference" (Brannigan, 2016, p.46). In epistemological gaps, new discourses emerge and define new norms and social practices based on power relations. According to Foucault, the reciprocal relationship between individuals and institutions provides us with a perspective on how power works and circulates among different parties. Therefore, power is not something to be exclusively possessed, but rather something in circulation that functions and is exercised in different situations and by different people.

To Foucault, power is not necessarily either productive, as Marxists and feminists believe, or destructive. Another aspect of power is its incoherent nature. Due to the resistance of subjects, power lacks absolute unity and integrity.

Many scholars adopt Foucault's ideas on power as their theoretical perspective. For example, Lawrence Stone, the English historicist, and Jonathan Dollimore, the British theorist, use Foucault's ideas to explain the situation of monarchs represented in Shakespeare's plays. "Jacobean drama, Shakespeare above all, is said to reflect this long-term undermining of established institutions, an undermining which led to revolutionary collapse" (Cressy, 1991, p.126).

Empathy and the Improvisation of Power
Daniel Lerner, in "The Passing of Traditional Society," argues that the West is a mobile society. In other words, in addition to their rationality and commitment to the achievements of the Enlightenment Era, Western people possess a mobile sensibility that makes them flexible to change. The self-distancing and projecting oneself to the others, which he calls empathy, may be positive or negative and can arise interjection or projection. Lerner declares: "Projection facilitates identification by assigning to the object certain preferred attributes of the self-others are "incorporate"… Introjection enlarges identity by attributing to the self-certain desirable attributes of the object…We shall use the word empathy as shorthand for both these mechanisms" (1964, p.49).

Greenblatt extends this idea to Renaissance studies, particularly Shakespeare's plays, to the extent that he states, "what Professor Lerner calls 'empathy,' Shakespeare calls 'Iago'" (Greenblatt, 2005, p.164). Improvisation relies on the talent of acting. The improviser must be capable of temporarily changing themselves and transforming their identity. It requires a divorce between the mind and the heart. What an improviser thinks, is different from what represent. Through improvisation, the perception of the victim's truth becomes an ideological construct that bears similarity to the original structure in order to be believable. An ideology that deviates significantly from the original set of beliefs may result in utter failure. Another aspect of improvisation is the lack of reciprocity in the exertion of power. In the process of improvisation, two operations take place: displacement and absorption. Greenblatt defines

displacement as "the process whereby a prior symbolic structure is compelled to coexist with other centers of attention that do not necessarily conflict with the original structure but are not swept up in its gravitational pull" (2005, p.167), and absorption as "the process whereby a symbolic structure is taken into the ego so completely that it ceases to exist as an external phenomenon" (2005, p.167).

Shakespeare is considered the master improviser who employs empathy to fashion selves most effectively. "To be sure, there are many other explorations of these materials in Shakespeare – one thinks of Richard III wooing Anne or, in comedy, of Rosalind playfully taking advantage of the disguise that exile has forced upon her…" (Greenblatt, 2005, p.169). He as the author of the characters, who are engaged in the process of improvisation of power in the context of the plays and he as a master improviser who influences our historical approaches through his way of representation. Shakespeare inserts his worldview into his audience's mind during the displacement process and naturalizes it through the absorption process so that the audience is brainwashed without the playwright being persecuted. Queen Elizabeth admits that she is Richard II, a king who was forced to abdicate and was assassinated in the prison, while Shakespeare is not threatened after Queen's declaration. The improvisation happens in such a way that she is convinced that the idea has risen from her own mind.

According to the current research, the types of improvisation of power, which are employed by Shakespeare are versatile, since such strategy is not confined to the traditional approach to power exertion, which was previously thought to be vertical. The horizontal improvisation of power is supposed to happen between peers of the same rank. While the vertical improvisation of power apparently happens in the cases that the improviser has a higher rank, the upward or ascending improvisation of power occurs when the improviser is inferior. The diagonal improvisation of power is the result of interaction of two individuals from different institutes such as church and court. Such classification is not mentioned

in Greenblatt's theory and is considered to be one of the findings and implications of the present study.

Tyrant

In *Tyrant*, by looking at Shakespeare's plays, Greenblatt masterfully portrays a tyrant and their characteristics. He reveals Shakespeare's constant preoccupation with how a society succumbs to tyranny and falls into the hands of a tyrant. The main distinction between a leader and a tyrant lies in the willingness or unwillingness of the subjects they rule over. The main questions are why deeply rooted and well-established social and political institutions fail to resist the tyrant and why a vast majority of people submit to the tyranny despite being aware of the deception. Greenblatt argues that there is a complex psychological mechanism that leads a nation to forget their ideals and succumb to a tyrant who acts impulsively and irrationally, disregarding law and ethics. Shakespeare effectively illustrates the tragic consequences of a nation's submission to tyranny, including moral corruption, wastage of resources, loss of life, and the desperate and heroic measures required to restore a damaged nation to some level of well-being (Greenblatt, 2018, p.6).

Chaos Theory

The chaos became interesting when the scientists found out that non-linear sequences, which seemed accidental and haphazard, are actually deterministic and follow their own rules.

> The word "chaos" goes back to Greek mythology, where it had two meanings: The primeval emptiness of the universe before things came into being [and] the abyss of the underworld. Later it referred to the original state of things. In religion it has had many different and ambiguous meanings over many centuries. Today in everyday English it usually means a condition of utter confusion, totally lacking in order or organization (Williams, 1997, p.23PDF).

Chaos theory investigates disordered systems to find order. Order and disorder are assumed to be in a binary opposition. Order is associated

with being categorized and analyzed while disorder is allied with chaos that cannot be easily pinned down in statistics. Therefore, the chaos theory is quintessentially contradictory. While it seems to be unpredictable, it has orderly underlying infrastructure, which needs complex mathematical calculations to be studied. From schizophrenic eye movements to the fluctuations in the stock market, chaos theory has found its way through different disciplines.

> One could construct a history that would treat this development as if it emerged solely from the internal logic of the scientific tradition, for example by analyzing competing definitions of entropy and examining their relation to information theory. But the context that made disorder appeared as complex information is not confined to scientific inquiry alone…All of these factors, and more, contributed to the cultural matrix out of which the science of chaos grew. (Hayles (Ed.), 1991, pp.6-7).

Therefore, chaos cannot be studied disregarding its context. The contributing elements must be taken into consideration to approach more accurate and precise results as chaos is culture-bound. Chaotics provides us with a source of new information not only in science but also in a variety of discourses. "Whereas Newtonian mechanics envisions the universe through inertial reference frames that extend infinitely far in space and time, chaotics concentrates exact symmetries." (Hayles (Ed.), 1991, p.7). Chaotics encourages us to see order in a new light and conceptualize it in a way that include the unpredictability and asymmetries as well. While chaotics may seem totally scientific, it can be applied to different disciplines such as literature. Since chaotics has such epistemological power to investigate random and unpredictable non-linear systems; it is also applicable to social disciplines, such as literature. Both literature and science are imbedded within culture. Due to its transformative potential, literature plays a significant role in culture. "When it comes to the kind of complex, unpredictable behavior typical of nonlinear systems, literature has a longer history of dealing with it and is more suited to describe its complexities than science." (Hayles (Ed.), 1991,

p.21). Some of the applications of chaotics in literature are:

Attractor: An attractor is a fractal that develops from an iterated function system as a result of drawing every random orbit to it. "An attractor is any point of a system's cycle that seems to attract the system to it. The midpoint of a pendulum's path is an example. A pendulum, no longer pushed, spontaneously returns to this point" (Hayles (Ed.), 1991, p.8).

Butterfly Effect: The trivial differences in language usage could end up in major changes in result. "What is at work is a typical butterfly effect, in which a minor incident precipitates uncontrollable turbulence and results in large-scale catastrophe. Or it might also be those multiple seemingly insignificant causes result in temporarily uncontrollable turbulences leading to unforeseen results" (Slethaug, 2012, p.19).

Fractal: A fractal consistently resembles the original shape through magnifying.

Maxwell's Demon: Maxwell's demon is assumed as an intelligent being that would hypothetically defy the second law of thermodynamics and can decrease entropy.

> Maxwell's Demon is a fantasy about an animistic figure who can control dissipation through an exercise of will. The Demon thus occupies the slim margin of escape Kelvin left open when he said that heat death is inevitable if man remains "as at present constituted." Changed just enough to enable him to do "what is impossible for us," the Demon transcends human limits but still remains "essentially finite" (Hayles, 1990, p.43).

Recursive symmetry, which means when oscillation creates repeated from across different length scales

> A figure or system displays recursive symmetry when the same general form is repeated across many different length scales, as though the form were being progressively enlarged or diminished. Railroad ties disappearing into the distance have this property; so does turbulent flow, with swirls inside swirls of the same form, inside of which are still smaller swirls. The importance of recursive symmetry to complex systems derives from

the kind of perspective required to see the predictability that lies hidden within their unpredictable evolutions (Hayles (Ed.), 1991, p.7).

Self-organization: Self-organization, also known as spontaneous order in social sciences, is a process where local interactions in a disorderly system result in an overall order. This process, often initiated by random fluctuations, is strong and often positive, creating some spots of predictability in chaos theory.

Prigogine and Stengers argue against this traditional view. They envision entropy as an engine driving the world toward increasing complexity rather than toward death. They calculate that in systems far from equilibrium, entropy production is so high that local decreases in entropy can take place without violating the second law. Under certain circumstances, this mechanism allows a system to engage in spontaneous self-organization (Hayles (Ed.), 1991, p.13).

Self-similarity: It represents a kind of similarity between the particulars and the general or the elements and the whole. "Scientists have discovered that these strange attractors contain a self-similarity across scales. That is, when a segment is isolated and magnified, it displays the features of the larger structure in the smaller segment. Each of these fragments or fractals simultaneously reveals things about itself and its scale as well as the larger complex and its scale" (Slethaug, 2012, pp. xxviii-xxix).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Greenblatt Reader, edited by Michael Payne, is a collection of the most significant articles by Stephen Greenblatt on Renaissance, Cultural Studies, and Shakespeare. It provides an overview of the main features of New Historicism, which is not merely a literary critical doctrine but also an approach and a way of looking at history and literature. Among the articles published in this anthology, "The Improvisation of Power" is the focus of the current research.

Tyrant: Shakespeare on Power by Stephen Greenblatt examines Shakespeare's perspectives on insatiable lust for unlimited power and absolutism, drawing from the mirror of the past and medieval English kings in his history plays to modern forms of tyranny embodied by rulers like Donald Trump. Greenblatt explores the features of tyranny as well as the psychological and socio-economic aspects of dictatorial regimes. He emphasizes the role of demagogues and collaborators in aiding the narcissistic tyrant's rise to power and the severe consequences that follow.

Shakespeare's History Plays by Warren Chernaik examines Shakespeare's histories and gives scholarly commentaries on each. The present study focuses not only on the textual evidences but also theatrical and cinematic adaptations. The book begins with a preliminary introduction to Renaissance notion of history and Shakespeare's histories and continues with the controversial debates of the different critics. It deals with *Chronicles of Hall, Tillyard, and Holinshed* and different views of the contemporary sceptics, liberals, as well as New Historicists'. The remaining seven chapters belong to *Henry VI, Richard III, King John, Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V,* and *Henry VIII* respectively.

The first book to explore modern American fiction from the perspective of chaos theory is *Beautiful Chaos*. Numerous literary critics and other academics of the arts have embraced chaos theory since James Gleick's *Chaos: Making a New Science* was published in 1987. *Beautiful Chaos* examines the relationship between chaos theory and contemporary American fiction and explains fundamental concepts of orderly and dynamic systems as well as the numerous ways that chaos theory has been portrayed in literature.

In *Chaos Bound: Orderly Disorder in Contemporary Literature and Science*, N. Katherine Hayles explores connections between modern literature, critical theory, and the science of chaos. She discovers new interpretations of chaos, which are no longer perceived as disorder but rather as a source of knowledge and complexity, in both scientific and literary discourse. Hayles demonstrates how key aspects of chaos theory are incorporated into the works of poststructuralist theorists including Barthes, Lyotard, Derrida, Serres, and de Man.

Bloom's Modern Critical Views - William Shakespeare: *Histories*, edited by Harold Bloom, is another comprehensive anthology featuring contemporary critical views. As the most canonical and quintessential playwright in the world, Shakespeare has been the primary focus of major critics and scholars working in related fields. This volume presents some of the most important critical perspectives on his works.

ARGUUMENT

The Improvisation of Power, Tyranny, and Chaos in King John

King John 's form depicts the uncertainty and chaos of the content, which leaves the reader or audience in confusion and ambiguity. The play's inconclusive and disorganized structure may lead the reader to become disoriented within an interminable labyrinth of chaos. "Rackin has suggested that the episodic structure of the play accurately reflects 'a world without faith and ceremony, where failure and success ride on the shifting wings of chance'. (Chernaik, 2007, p.72). King John can be considered as the most incoherent historical character Shakespeare has portrayed. His inconsistency and lack of integrity cause constant radical shifts in his way of governing the country, which lead to tyranny and chaos. The improvisers seize the opportunity of chaotic status que to fulfill their ambition and redirect their victims' confused minds through the improvisation of power as they desire.

Chatillon, the representative of the King of France, attempts to persuade King John through the diagonal improvisation of power to abdicate in favor of his nephew, Arthur, the legitimate son of Henry II's fourth son, Jeffry II, and holds a higher claim to the crown compared to his uncle, John, Henry II's fifth son. Chatillon states, "Desiring thee to lay aside the sword / Which sways usurpingly these several titles, / And put these same into young Arthur's hand, / Thy nephew and right royal sovereign" (King John, 1590s/2000, 1.1.7-15). King John stubbornly responds, "Here have we war for war and blood for blood, / Controlment for controlment: so answer France" (King John, 1590s/2000, 1.1.19-20). The desired structure,

which Chatillon wants to displace is that legitimacy in monarchy is based on the order of birth and royal line of succession, which should be observed. The goal of such improvisation of power is to prevent chaos and war and settle the case through negotiation. King John, as a usurper and tyrant, is fully aware of his misdeeds and is not easily swayed by the desired structure that contradicts his self-interests. Tyrants are often unwilling to solve the problems democratically. They command and expect other to obey them unconditionally. Their absolutism and stubbornness complicate political challenges.

The role of Geoffrey's death in King John's usurping the throne is the example of how a small difference can make a big change in Chaos theory. The butterfly effect, which signifies how minor changes can have nonlinear effects on a complex system, starts at a point out of the scope of play, when Geoffrey II, Duke of Brittany, his elder brother and heir to the throne of England after his father, Henry II, dies in 1186. In order to control the initial fluctuation, Geoffrey II's death before his father's, it was supposed that Arthur I, Duke of Brittany, Geoffrey's righteous son, would succeed. However; it doesn't happen either, as John, Henry II's youngest son, seizes the opportunity and usurp the throne. The butterfly effect signifies how a trivial initial difference would cause major changes in outcomes. All the destructive issues that happen both domestically and internationally are the result of such initial divergence, which lead into an illegitimate monarch's coming to power.

Thematically, the issue of legitimacy and the right to power repeats in the inheritance dispute between two brothers, Robert and Philip Faulconbridge, with the suspicion that Robert may be the illegitimate son of Richard I and King John's nephew. Queen Eleanor reinforces this hypothesis and improvises to deny his familial connection to the Faulconbridge family and admit to being a bastard, based on the displaced structure of Robert's vague resemblance to Richard. Such improvisation is vertical due to the improviser's higher hierarchical status As Robert is ambitious enough, the displaced structure is absorbed

immediately and Robert states: "The advantage of his absence took the King / And in the meantime sojourned at my father's; / Where how he did prevail, I shame to speak, / But truth is truth..." (King John, 1590s/2000, 1.1.102-108). Eleanor's motive to improvise may be to keep him in the court to support John. She does not know him well but for the improvisation of power, finding the right structure in the right time to be displaced and absorbed would be enough. As Greenblatt puts it "He does not need a profound or even reasonably accurate understanding of his victims; he would rather deal in probable impossibilities than improbable possibilities" (2005, p.171).

The parallelism between the two situations lies in the matter of legitimacy. Is John more legitimate to be the king, or is Arthur? Is Robert the legitimate son of the late Faulconbridge or the illegitimate son of Richard I? King John bestows upon Robert a new name and a new identity, stating, "From henceforth bear his name whose form thou barest: / Kneel thou down Philip, but rise greater. / [Philip kneels. King John dubs him a knight, / tapping him on the shoulder with his sword.] Arise sir Richard and Plantagenet" (King John, 1590s/2000, 1.1.164-167). The old identity dies and transforms into a new one, constructed through fictionalization and invented narratives, which is a quintessential part of the improvisation of power. "… the process of fictionalization…transforms a fixed symbolic structure into a flexible construct ripe for improvisational entry. This process is at work in Shakespeare's play, where we may more accurately identify it as submission to narrative self-fashioning." (Greenblatt, 2005, p. 170). Since identity and subjectivity are constructed through Lacanian symbolic order, they possess a linguistic essence and have the potential to be changed through words.

An example of upward improvisation of power happens when Robert tries to convince his mother to reinforce the fictionalization. Lady Faulconbridge confesses or fabricates that "King Richard Coeur-de-lion was thy father, / By long and vehement suit I was seduced / To make room for him in my husband's bed. / Heaven lay not my transgression to my charge! ..." (King John, 1590s/2000, 1.1.261-266), as storytelling or fabrication is the heart of the improvisation of power. The Bastard relieves her of guilt, stating, "...Madam, I would not wish a better father. / Some sins do bear their privilege on earth, / And so doth yours; ..." (King John, 1590s/2000, 1.1. 268-270). Then, the Bastard solidifies his improvisation, warning her that any denial of the newly accepted structure would be a grave sin.

According to the chaos theory, the fluctuations are either controlled or repressed (as in Bastard's case) or get out of hand as what happens following the death of Henry II's all sons but John before him and their being either childless or at least having no legitimate son and John's tyranny in usurping the throne, which was basically Arthur's right. Consequently, the entropy increases and creates chaos and leads into a chain of unpredicted uncommon incidents such as Arthur's mother's alliance with France's King Philip, which eventually leads to England joining the war. In King Philip's declaration of war, there is doubt in his altruistic motives. He attempts to portray himself as benevolent and just, but in reality, he is a power-hungry tyrant, as he happens to betray Arthur.

In order to justify it, Chatillon uses the word "Christendom" to provoke their religious beliefs and present the war as a sacred duty. Around the tyrants, there are supporters, who try to adapt mass consciousness to the tyrants' commands and demands and through the improvisation of power, among many other complicated ideological strategies and apparatuses. Misusing the words and changing their signification is a common way to make the dictatorial words more pleasant and reasonable. "The tyrant gives the order, but he obviously does not carry it out himself. And his collaborators include far more than the man with an axe; …" (Greenblatt, 2018, p.50PDF)

King John also uses religious and divine excuses for the improvisation of power, stating, "...Whiles we, God's wrathful agent, do correct / Their proud contempt that beats His peace to heaven..." (King John, 1590s/2000, 2.1.87-89). The desired structure to be displaced should be in conformity with the victim's

symbolic order to be accepted and absorbed with minimum resistance. Religion, as the dominant discourse in the Middle Ages, is mostly a suitable structure for the improvisation of power in Shakespeare's histories.

> If improvisation is made possible by the subversive perception of another's truth as an ideological construct, that construct must at the same time be grasped in terms that bear a certain structural resemblance to one's own set of beliefs. An ideology that is perceived as entirely alien would permit no point of histrionic entry: it could be destroyed but not performed (Greenblatt, 2005, p.166).

King John attempts to convince Arthur to join him, saying, "...Arthur of Bretagne, yield thee to my hand; / And out of my dear love I'll give thee more / Than e'er the coward hand of France can win: / Submit thee, boy." (King John, 1590s/2000, 2.1.159-162). Queen Eleanor supports this idea and says, "Come to thy grandam, child." (King John, 1590s/2000, 2.1.163). The improvisation of power is done based on empathy. The victim should be convinced that the improviser is his/her friend to trust him/her. Arthur is not improvised as he knows that their affection is pretentious and insincere.

As the French want to increase their power by improvisation to gain control of the city, King John tries to neutralize their improvisation by warning the citizens, "...And now, instead of bullets wrapped in fire, / To make a shaking fever in your walls, / They shoot but calm words folded up in smoke / To make a faithless error in your ears, ..." (King John, 1590s/2000, 2.1.236-239). Neither one is successful in the improvisation of power due to lack of empathy. In both cases of Arthur's joining King John's army and the citizens' opening the gates, the improvisation of power fails due to lack of empathy and trust. The improvised one should be convinced that the improviser has benevolent sentiments. Lack of trust breaks the bond, so, subversion of truth in the form of a displaced and then absorbed structure fails.

Denouncing the church, King John claims to do it in order not to support tyranny. He believes that the church imposes tolls in the name of the Pope to accumulate wealth and gain more power. So, it is on him to stand tyranny. He challenges the Pope's legitimacy by referring to him as someone who has usurped authority, stating, "...So tell the pope, all reverence set apart / To him and his usurped authority." (King John, 1590s/2000, 3.1.164-166). King John claims that he does not stand with corrupt tyrannical authorities and declares his fight against the Roman church. Pandulph, as the master improviser in the play, seizes the opportunity to reassure King Philip that he must break his oath to King John in order to fulfill a greater oath to the church. "... O, let thy vow / First made to [God] first be to [God] performed, / That is, to be the champion of our church! ..." (King John, 1590s/2000, 3.1.275-277).

Pandulph stirs up the situation to increase entropy and chaos and restores it to reach a new order to sustain dynamism in his governing system and reinforce his role, as the representative of Roman Catholic church. In order to maintain its dominance over its subjects, the church makes some changes to show its power and supremacy. In the absence of central power in the British court, there is no attractor to control the system. According to Chaos theory, an attractor is a collection of states that are invariant under dynamics and towards which nearby states approach throughout dynamic evolution. In fact, the attractor is somewhere outside the court, in the Roman Catholic church, which represents by Pandulph. He is the attractor, to which both kings gravitate.

To reinforce his influence on the king, Pandulph uses improvisation for the young Dauphin, as well. The displaced structure is an analogous parallelism between Arthur and Blanche to introduce King John as a threat to both. Pandulph's desired structure to be displaced is that Blanche, Dauphin's wife, can claim the same thing as Arthur did since Arthur and Blanche are cousins. Pandulph wants to persuade Dauphin that the same danger threatens Blanche, as King John is a tyrant who cannot tolerate anyone standing in his way. Pandulph succeeds in provoking the Dauphin against King John, setting the stage for King Philip to enter the war against King John.

The improvisation of power is a deliberate pre-planned strategy, which is performed intentionally. What happens between Hubert and Arthur may not follow the systematic pattern of the improvisation of power, as the power of his true and heartfelt emotional words moves Hubert. An emotional scene unfolds between Hubert and Arthur, who loves Hubert like a father, as Hubert contemplates killing him by order of the king. King John has decided to murder his nephew to feel safe. "Although insecurity, overconfidence, and murderous rage are strange bedfellows, they all coexist in the tyrant's soul." (Greenblatt, 2018, p.70PDF). He has chosen Hubert to kill him as he thinks he has the flexibility to be improvised and convinced to kill the child. "Tyrants throughout history have relied on finding followers with flexible consciences, the Catesbys, Tyrrells, and Buckinghams of the world, intent on their own advances." (Chernaik, 2007, p.55). Hubert is aware that the child's words touch his heart and the structure is displaced. "[*Aside*] His words do take possession of my bosom." (King John, 1590s/2000, 4.1.34) but the modesty and honesty of the young prince is quite persuasive. King John has chosen the wrong person as his butcher, which proves his lack of political strategy and competency as a king. Based on Chaos theory, King John's tyrannical decision to murder Arthur causes maximum entropy. These mischiefs make the divergence wider and end up in severe, irreversible consequences. The courtiers' dissatisfaction rocket when they become aware of his devilish intention in killing the young boy, which results in Baron's revolt.

In such chaotic situation, Pandulph, the master improviser of the play, succeeds and achieve his goal in cutting King John down to size, then he restores him, "[*handing John, the crown*] Take again / From this my hand, as holding of the Pope, / Your sovereign greatness and authority." (King John, 1590s/2000, 5.1.3-5). Pandulph openly and frankly admits that it was his actions that caused the turmoil, based on King John's defiance of the Pope. The Roman Catholic church's influence on England along with other European countries has been tremendous, which seems to be underrated by King John. "The mastermind behind these designs, it was widely believed, was none other than the pope in Rome; … his hidden legions in England were the thousands of "Church papists" who dutifully attended Anglican services but harbored allegiance to Catholicism in their hearts." (Greenblatt, 2018, p. 10PDF). Such a role playing is one of the main components of the improvisation of power as Greenblatt comments on Iago "We should add that Iago includes himself in this ceaseless narrative invention; indeed, as we have seen from the start, a successful improvisational career depends upon role-playing, which is in turn allied to the capacity, as Professor Lerner defines empathy, ''to see oneself in the other fellow's situation'' "(2005, p.171).

The restored king finds no chance to enjoy peace as he is poisoned to death soon. The analogy between the king and the country can be explained through self-similarity. According to Chaos theory, when sections of a figure are miniature reproductions of the whole, the figure is said to as self-similar. If a figure can be divided into components that are precise duplicates of the whole, it is rigorously self-similar. King John's poisoning at the end of the play represents the general socio-political poisoning in the whole country in a greater scale. King John's body symbolizes the political body and his illness and death represent the severe political deterioration. Eleanor's death makes John lonely and helpless without any guardian or support, so is England, which has lost both its international and religious allies and turns into a defenseless land. King John dies and the entropy decreases by his son's succession. What happens here, can be explained by self-organization in Chaos theory. Self-organization is the process through which people arrange their social relationships to bring about a new order without the aid of outside intervention. King John's death puts an end to a chaotic era and by his son's succession, a new order is substituted and England goes through self-organization.

The Improvisation of Power, Tyranny, and Chaos in Henry VIII

The most distinct difference between Henry VIII

and King John is the political tactics, which the former has and the latter lacks. Henry VIII rebels against both church and people's common beliefs, but his charismatic character as well as his ability in the improvisation of power enable him to control the chaotic situation and play the role of attractor, toward whom the whole system gravitates. An attractor, based on Chaos theory, is a collection of states that are invariant under dynamics and toward which nearby states approach throughout dynamic evolution, therefore, everyone attempts to employ techniques to get close to him as he is main source of power and attraction.

Courtiers who gain power via improvisation will become a threat to others because they will be able to influence the court's arrangements and affect the king's judgments. Buckingham considers Cardinal Wolsey's money and position with cynicism, believing Wolsey of scheming against him. Norfolk supports Buckingham's fears, detailing Wolsey's web of influence by being close to the king. Norfolk notes Wolsey's lack of hereditary nobility as well as any connected allies. His strategy centers around the improvisation of power. To make the monarch aware of the improviser's actual character or to prove his malice, a higher degree of the improvisation of power is required. Buckingham is an idealist who still believes in medieval codes of chivalry and honor. He believes that truth and honesty can counteract the improvisation of power, unaware that the displaced structures have already been absorbed and internalized by the victim. However, before Buckingham can fully oppose Wolsey, he is arrested for treason upon Wolsey's entrance. As an experienced improviser of power, Wolsey predicts and stays ahead of his opponents and enemies. The improvisation creates a sense of hyper-vigilance and constant alertness in improvisers. They have to predict others' next move and respond to it proactively.

Neutralizing the improvisation of power needs intelligence and tactfulness. The queen understands Wolsey's influence over the king and tactfully appeals to Henry by displaying modesty and obedience. During court proceedings, Henry VIII makes decisions regarding trade and taxes, with Wolsey supporting his

choices while Catherine disagrees, citing the burden on the common people. Igniting his affection, she convinces him that she shares half of his power. By adhering to the image of women being submissive and obedient, Catherine wisely influences the king and neutralizes Wolsey's improvisation of power. "The tyrant is obsessed with loyalty from his inner circle, but he can never be entirely confident that he has it. The only people who will serve him are self-interested scoundrels, … he has no interest in honest loyalty or dispassionate, independent judgment. Instead, he wants flattery, confirmation, and obedience." (Greenblatt, 2018, p.58PDF). Recognizing the severity of the situation, the king is improvised and places the blame on Wolsey, whom he accuses of orchestrating the taxation without his knowledge. Wolsey defends himself, claiming that he is not solely responsible. However, Catherine counters his claim, asserting that he is the mastermind behind the plot, and no one takes a step without his advice and permission.

The improvisation of power disrupts existing power relationships and affects political power dynamics in Shakespeare's stories. Greenblatt focuses on the complex and indirect exercise of power through improvisation, which can destabilize traditional hierarchical relationships. No one is immune to such intellectual and ideological manipulation. From this perspective, Greenblatt's approach resembles Deleuze and Guattari's concept of rhizomes, challenging the traditional vertical conception of power. Shakespeare's historical plays demonstrate that even rulers can be deceived and have their minds influenced and controlled by improvisers. This framework offers a variety of power relationships, intentions, and motives, which can have positive or destructive effects.

Wolsey, who has been discredited in the previous case, attempts to regain his power by redirecting the king's anger towards Buckingham through the upward/diagonal improvisation of power, "...Not friended by his wish, to your high person, / His will is most malignant; and it stretches / Beyond you, to your friends." (Henry VIII, 1613/2007, 1.2.159-161). The king has made up his mind but seeks further evidence to strengthen his conviction. "There's

mischief in this man! Canst thou say further?" (Henry VIII, 1613/2007, 1.2.215). More narratives can reinforce the plan, no matter they are true or not. The reasons are subsequently fabricated to support such a decision. The surveyor tries to bolster Buckingham's accusations by linking him to his father's involvement in the murders of the two child princes during the time of Richard III. This solidifies the case, and the king exclaims, "A giant traitor" (Henry VIII, 1613/2007, 1.2.230).

> A tyrant does not need to traffic in facts or supply evidence. He expects his accusation to be enough. If he says that someone has been betraying him, or laughing at him, or spying on him, it must be the case. Anyone who contradicts him is either a liar or an idiot. The last thing the tyrant wants, even when he appears to solicit it, is an independent opinion. What he actually wants is loyalty, and by loyalty he does not mean integrity, honor, or responsibility (Greenblatt, 2018, p.79PDF).

In the great characters' downfall, evidences of self-similarity are seen. Based on Chaos theory, when sections of a figure are miniature reproductions of the whole, it is called self-similarity. If a figure can be divided into components that are precise duplicates of the whole, it is rigorously self-similar. In Henry VIII's court, a person is disfavored and then is victimized through a chain of the improvisation of power. The king stands outside these fractals but he is the one, who creates a kind of closure at the right moment. Although the court may seem chaotic by the king's divorce which leads into his excommunication from the Roman Catholic church (not represented directly in the play) and repetitive trials for treason, but there is an underlying orderly structure, made by Henry VIII, which put everything together and keep balance.

The improvisation of power is one of strategies, used commonly in sexual proceedings, as well. Henry VIII uses it in Wolsey's extravagant feast, to seduce Anne Boleyn, "The fairest hand I ever touched! O beauty, / Till now I never knew thee." (Henry VIII, 1613/2007, 1.4.97-98). Anne is young, beautiful, and intelligent, with the potential to be the

mother of many sons. "The tyrant …is driven by a range of sexual anxieties: a compulsive need to prove his manhood, dread of impotence, a nagging apprehension that he will not be found sufficiently attractive or powerful, a fear of failure. Hence the penchant for bullying, the vicious misogyny, and the explosive violence" (Greenblatt, 2018, p.65PDF).

In order to get rid of the queen, King Henry and Wolsey try to find a justifiable structure for their improvisation of power. It seems that questioning the legitimacy of the king's marriage to Catherine, as she was his sister-in-law (his brother's wife) before marrying him, would be effective, as the desired structure is quite compatible with the religious mentalities of both the nobles and commoners. According to the Bible: "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness" (Leviticus 18:16). Since Roman Catholicism dominates the collective consciousness, a structure that allows a sinner to repent and atone for their wrongdoings would be impressive. Based on the butterfly effect in chaos theory, there is a small difference, which ends up in massive change. Again, this issue happens prior to the scope of the play. It starts when a religious man like Henry VIII marries his brother's widow with the excuse of the former marriage not having been consummated. Marrying one's brother's wife is forbidden according to the Bible, therefore, such a trespass is interpreted as the cause of her failed pregnancies and stillbirths.

The relationship between the king and the cardinals is quite complicated. They both need each other to reinforce their power, but at the same time, they do not trust each other, and each can become a victim of a double play. "KING. [*aside*] I may perceive / These cardinals trifle with me: abhor / This dilatory sloth and tricks of Rome" (Henry VIII, 1613/2007, 2.4.260-262). The improvisation of power influences identities. Greenblatt discusses the early modern period when ancient religious beliefs of the medieval Catholic Church were replaced by humanism through the revival of Roman and Greek classics. Consequently, the Renaissance man's primary concern was the need for a new identity. Identity

is not fixed or unchangeable. In the process of the improvisation of power, improvisers shed their own identities and adapt themselves to the thoughts of their victims. They can identify with the victim through self-refashioning, aligning their ideologies and actions. Improvisers are skilled actors who claim structural and ideological similarities with their victims, seeking their trust while concealing their true intentions. Through disguise, improvisers transform and acquire new identities. The art of disguise lies at the heart of improvisation.

Wolsey discovers that Henry VIII demands him to prioritize obtaining the divorce above all else. However, Katharine happens to be the emperor's aunt, and the Pope is hesitant to anger the emperor by granting Henry's desires. On one hand, Wolsey desires the divorce, but on the other hand, he aims to safeguard his position by composing a letter to the Pope. By revealing Wolsey's dishonesty to the king, Henry VIII becomes aware of Wolsey's considerable power, which now poses a potential threat. "What piles of wealth hath he accumulated / To his own portion! and what expense by th' hour / Seems to flow from him! ..." (Henry VIII, 1613/2007, 3.2.140-142). The man who formerly terrorized others and was the most powerful man in the king's court is going to become completely destitute overnight. This represents the very nature of power that Shakespeare tries to depict: fragile, transient, and elusive. Henry VIII harshly attacks Wolsey, whose power seems to have terrified the king. He tries to cover his fear with accusation.

Wolsey's identity and reputation are dramatically affected by such improvisation of power, the king does. As Greenblatt puts it in his reviewing of *Otello*: "But Iago knows that an identity that has been fashioned as a story can be unfashioned, refashioned, inscribed anew in a different narrative: it is the fate of stories to be consumed or, as we say more politely, interpreted." (Greenblatt, 2005, p.171). Courtiers who are too powerful can be a potential threat. Therefore, the circulation of power should be structured in a way that places the king at the summit, with all courtiers' powers serving to enhance and reinforce the king's authority. Wolsey tries to defend his services

to the king as a faithful subject, but the improvisation of power is effective when a sense of trust and empathy (even if fake) exists. Henry VIII has lost his faith in Wolsey, and his pleas fall on deaf ears. Wolsey is brought to his knees. All his assets and wealth are confiscated, and he is relieved of his royal duties and banished. Eventually, Wolsey, who has fallen out of favor, dies of grief before facing trial.

Henry controls the increasing turbulence and entropy through the trial and downfall of well-known figures such as Catherine of Aragon, Buckingham, or Wolsey. These propagandic gestures balances the entropy and reinforces the king's will to power. He uses such repeating strategy as recursive symmetry to rebalance his power in an upper-level once a while. In fact, based on Chaos theory, similar fractals create recursive symmetry due to their patterned repetition. He wants to be the exclusive omnipotent authority in the court, who decides on the life and death of everyone. He condemns Buckingham, disfavors Catherine and Wolsey, and forgives and support Cranmer to keep his full dominance on his subjects' faith. The courtiers conspire against Cranmer, the new archbishop, accusing him of charges simply because of his closeness to the king. Cranmer defends himself against his enemies' malevolent improvisation of power. "...There's none stands under more calumnious tongues / Than I myself, poor man" (Henry VIII, 1613/2007, 5.1.139-140).

The process of improvisation of power is more difficult and complicated. If not executed properly, there is a risk of backfire. Henry VIII likes Cranmer and intervenes to save him by neutralizing their improvisation of power. According to the second law of thermodynamics, the entropy increases in a closed system. Proposed by the mathematician James Clerk Maxwell, Maxwell's Demon is an imaginary creature who can keep entropy low and contradicts the second law of thermodynamics. Henry VIII plays the role of Maxwell's Demon in the court. He has already given his ring to Cranmer as a safe conduct, to be used just in case. As the trial progresses, the circle of envious and malevolent improvisers tightens. Cranmer uses the king's gift as a powerful tool. "...By

virtue of that ring, I take my cause / Out of the gripes of cruel men, and give it / To a most noble judge, the king my master" (Henry VIII, 1613/2007, 5.2.164-166). Henry VIII enters and strongly defends Cranmer. His power surpasses the others and neutralizes their plot. He orders Cranmer not be harmed while he, the king, is alive.

By the birth of Elizabeth at the end of the play, the country goes through self-organization, which seems to be Henry VIII's main goal. According to Chaos theory, self-organization, or spontaneous order, emerges from local interactions in a disorderly system, often triggered by random variations amplified by positive feedback. In such systems, a new order is created by internal forces naturally without any external intervention. This new order is desirable for the king since he becomes the head of the church, divorces his first wife and marries young Anne Boleyn. He creates chaos and restores order through a certain arrangement. While, during the play, there are explicit evidences of the improvisation of power among the courtiers, Henry VIII is supposed to be the master improviser, who improvises the court to achieve his goals and uses courtiers' plans against one another as improvisational strategies to implement his own. As direct reference to such a matter of delicacy could be fatally dangerous, Shakespeare uses the oblique angle to imply it. "Shakespeare approaches his culture not, like Marlowe, as rebel and blasphemer, but rather as dutiful servant, content to improvise a part of his own within its orthodoxy. And if after centuries, that improvisation has been revealed to us as embodying an almost boundless challenge to the culture's every tenet, a devastation of every source, …" (Greenblatt, 2005, p.186).

CONCLUSION

The improvisation of power, represented in William Shakespeare's history, is rooted in the fundamentalism of medieval Roman Catholicism. The Church's insatiable thirst for wealth and power accumulation led to persistent meddling in political matters. Consequently, a common ground for cooperation and mutual support between court and church was established. In the medieval English court, the monarchs' coronation service was conducted under the supervision of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which was similar to the consecration of bishops in that it included symbols, garments, and anointing. The church symbolically gave the court authority and sanctity, while the courtiers' loyalty to the monarch represented an oath to the church. However, because of competing interests in socioeconomic and political matters, this complicated connection frequently resulted in rivalry, competitiveness, and friction.

Due to potential similarities in legislation and authority, the combined role of the church and the court might make their relationship more difficult. When people disobeyed, they risked excommunication as well as judicial orders, which muddied the distinctions between church and state authority. Few attempts to curtail the power of the church have been effective throughout history, and often the insubordinate kings have been forced to confess their sins and surrender to the Pope, eventually. Henry VIII and King John both criticized ecclesiastical officials. King John faced an insecure and unstable monarchy due to his lack of supporters both inside and outside the nation. He eventually needed to make peace with the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, despite the Pope's disapproval, Henry VIII successfully formed his own church after making peace with his foreign neighbors and gaining considerable authority in the court. Fighting two fronts in a battle might have disastrous effects.

The establishment of a court inside a court complicated and upended hierarchical connections, requiring more devious methods for individuals to accomplish objectives. The gap between appearance and reality encouraged people to pretend to be patriotic and religious Christians while pursuing wealth and power. This psychological duality in the characters led into problems like deceit, fraud, abuse, manipulation, and the impromptu use of authority. In Shakespeare's histories, tyrants might utilize the improvisation of power as a tactic to persuade others to support their despotic goals

indirectly. A tyrant builds a more desired order by upsetting the current one and increasing entropy in his favor. Through the improvisation of power, he subtly influences people to believe that the creation of this new order was their original idea and that there is broad agreement on what he does. The improvisation of power is a tactic that can be employed to both initiate and end chaos. In technical terms, entropy—the measure of a system's degree of disorder or randomness—is challenged by the improvisation of power. In order to replace the previous order with a new one that the improviser finds more desirable, it can enhance entropy by causing chaos. A stable system begins to reformulate itself in a secondary equilibrium that may be higher or lower than the original equilibrium when it loses its initial balance and begins to increase in entropy to the maximum level.

Furthermore, the improvisation of power can reduce entropy and conquer disorder in a chaotic environment. Usually, this is carried out when the improviser intends to restrict tyranny or disarray or to impose his ideal plan in order to achieve his objectives. King John created and grew a chaotic situation, but he lacked the lingual ability to improvise to bring it under control. The situation got out of control to the brink of explosion as the entropy rose. The king passed away hopelessly. Pandulph managed to seize the chance to cause havoc and win the match. When Henry VIII's expectations were not met in divorcing his elderly wife and marrying a younger one, he unleashed havoc. He was such a skilled improviser that he could use others to fulfill his objectives. He employed a variety of micro-strategies to maintain his supremacy and influence. He established a sort of secondary equilibrium by destroying enemies and bolstering allies through the improvisation of power. These minor adjustments restored his royal kingly balance.

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