

UDK: 821.111.09 Shakespeare W.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18485/philologia.2019.17.17.4>

## ■ SAILING WITH *PERICLES* – FROM CORTANOVCI TO CHICAGO<sup>1</sup>

**NATAŠA ŠOFRANAC<sup>2</sup>**  
Faculty of Philology  
University of Belgrade  
Serbia

*Perikle* je Šekspirova drama koja je veoma retko izvođena tokom četiri veka od nastanka. Razlog je, verovatno, komplikovana postavka usled Šekspirovog nepoštovanja Aristotelovog pravila o jedinstvu vremena, mesta i radnje, koje je u ovoj drami dostiglo vrhunac – pored trajanja od preko petnaest godina, radnja se dešava na šest lokacija (dva kontinenta!) i teško ju je ispratiti. No, time nam Šekspir daje koordinatni sistem kako drevnog sveta, civilizacije koja je i naše ishodište i baština, tako i sadašnju geopolitičku mapu nekoliko važnih i aktuelnih čvorišta. Besomučna plovidba, beg i traganje, alhemija, odnos između oca i ćerke, jungovski spektar žene, migrantska kriza, Bregzit i trgovina ljudima – sve to nalazimo u drami o princu od Tira. Ovaj rad pruža osvrt na srpsko pozorišno ostvarenje *Perikla*, u kome je naglašena komična nota, preko britanskih do američkih produkcija, koje otvaraju prostor za prezentistička tumačenja u svetlu političkih previranja i prožimanja lokalnog i globalnog konteksta ove drame, čija geografija to svakako podržava i podstiče. Naizgled kao bajka, ova drama nije složena samo po topografiji, brojnim likovima i vremenskom rasponu, već i po višeslojnosti značenja, pitanja i tema koje otvara.

Ključne reči: *Perikle*, Srbija, Britanija, geografija, adaptacija, voda, plovidba, vladavina, otac-ćerka

---

1 This paper was presented at the 2019 European Shakespeare Research Association's conference in Rome (ESRA), titled "*The Serbian Pericles*".

2 Kontakt podaci (Email): [anglistika@fil.bg.ac.rs](mailto:anglistika@fil.bg.ac.rs)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The nearest to Serbia that Shakespeare's geography ever got was Illyria in *Twelfth Night*. That play abounds in gender issues and cosmological geographies, yet, this paper is about another naval play with similar themes – *Pericles*. More specifically, it is about the 2016 Serbian appropriation compared to two American productions and their global and locally specific aspects. It is not insignificant that the hubs of the action are actually the landmarks of early Christianity, though the play itself is placed in pagan times (notably, Antioch and Ephesus). But, so many cultural, political and familial issues are more Elizabethan, British and Christian, just as Shakespeare's conspirators in *Julius Caesar* or *Coriolanus* are more Early Modern than Roman. This is what Richard Burt called discursive determinism (Burt 1991: 112), providing us with three temporal references of the plays: the original age of the plot, Shakespeare's age and our own time.

Shakespeare's *Pericles, the Prince of Tyre*, was entered on the Stationer's Register in 1608; in the same year, a novel titled *The Painful Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre* was published by George Wilkins, believed to have co-authored the play and to have owned a brothel in Shoreditch, which explains Shakespeare's first-hand experience and vivid description of such a place. Apollonius, Prince of Tyre, was a hero of *Confessio Amantis* by John Gower, a poet who becomes the narrator of Shakespeare's play (Shakespeare 1997: 1037).

Pericles and Marina are yet another pair of a father and his motherless daughter, lost and found after a long absence and sea voyage, like Leontes and Perdita, to complete their happiness finding out that the wife/mother was also alive; none too different from Prospero and Miranda in terms of the young daughter's purity and the father's gradual reconciliation to her adulthood and their separation. Gender aspects are also present through the (physical) absence of the mother, ubiquitous in Shakespeare. Just like in *Othello*, we are provided with a full spectrum of female characters, from one extreme to the other, and medium values within the range of that continuum. Marina is not only chaste and pure as an infant (she is barely older than that), but she manages to do the impossible – remain intact in a brothel! And, moreover, she converts a regular client of that service into a penitent and God-abiding citizen who marries her, while getting more than she bargained for, as she becomes the Governor's wife.

## 2. ON PAGE AND ON STAGE

Let us remind ourselves of the plot: Pericles, the Prince of Tyre, goes to Antioch to marry the King's daughter and understands the sordid secret of the royal family: the daughter is a victim of domestic violence, sexual abuse and incest, bearing her father's child. He is advised by his faithful and ever-vigilant advisor to flee the country, otherwise Antioch will send murderers after him. He saves the people of Tarsus from famine, bringing them corn and befriending the grateful royal couple. After a shipwreck, he wins a tournament in Pentapolis, marrying King Simonides' daughter Thaisa and sailing away. His wife dies (or so he thinks), after giving birth to their daughter and he throws her corpse into the sea, to be subsequently found and identified by sailors.

Having no choice, he decides to leave the baby with the friends from Tarsus who owe him a favour. He needs to sort out all the issues at home before it is safe and orderly for his child. But it takes him fifteen years to do so and when he finally does, the friends tell him that his daughter is dead. Mad with grief, he continues his voyage until he arrives in Mytilene and meets his daughter as a miraculous healer and his heart almost bursts with joy. To complete the happiness, goddess Diana directs him to Ephesus and they find Thaisa, their mother and wife, alive in the temple. *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, is, according to Ben Jonson, "a mouldy tale," that was seldom staged in England or the US. As revealed by Cynthia Zarin, in an informal poll of dedicated New York theatre-goers, in March 2016, only one person had seen it (Zarin 2016). But the play opened in Brooklyn, at the Theatre for a New Audience's Polonsky Center, under the direction of Sir Trevor Nunn, the former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, in Stratford-upon-Avon. He had directed thirty-four of Shakespeare's plays, but this was his first *Pericles*.

The play is full of holes, suggests Cynthia Zarin, and some of them are filled in by song. While song and mime are indicated throughout, there are very few textual instructions. In Brooklyn, Gower's speeches have been set to music by the Irish composer Shaun Davey (Zarin 2016). He explains, "When Simonides says to Pericles, 'Your singing was wonderful last night,' is he saying that Pericles has sung? But there's no indication in the script! So, then, what did he sing and whom did he sing to? We've made the song a love song, for Thaisa, who Pericles is wooing, and then that same song becomes a lullaby that Pericles sings to the baby Marina, after Thaisa dies at sea. Fourteen years later, Marina sings the same song to him. He recognizes it, and it brings him back to life. And the audience recognizes it, too. It's an emotional kick—a thread that moves through the play that we have made." (Zarin 2016).

The actor Christian Camargo, who has played Hamlet and Coriolanus at Theatre for a New Audience, and whose film work includes "The Hurt Locker" and the role of Eleazar in "The Twilight Saga," is Pericles in Trevor Nunn's production. His account of Pericles is: "He's Hamlet. Then he matures. Lear goes down into a dark hole, but Pericles comes out into the light, as, Leontes and Prospero do in the later plays. My Pericles is a warrior, but that doesn't mean he's a thug." He paused. "To me, the play is a portal. It's a play about how, when all is lost, one can re-establish a connection with a benevolent universe. When Trevor asked me to play it, my mind went immediately to the Latin quote on Pericles' shield: 'In hope I live.'" (Zarin 2016)

In his article titled "This Great Sea of Joys", Daveen Koh renders a review of the November 2013 production by Burton Taylor Studio, Oxford Playhouse, by the first-time director Edwina Christie's *Pericles*. "The play rarely goes deep", says Koh, "and this is frustrating. Too many characters feel like caricatures, firmly consigned to good or evil. While Marina is feisty and exquisite, she remains an immaculate paragon of virtue. Though passionate and magnanimous, Pericles is too one-dimensional and tepid for a hero. Thaisa is lovely, but not much more. Nevertheless, the play glimmers with beautiful lines, many of which arise from Pericles's pensive but precise reflections." Koh describes the set as "a makeshift and disposable universe. Fitting for a play that straddles nearly two decades and six locations, the backdrop resembled a map: masses of brown parcel paper were crumpled to create craggy continents" – sounds like the Serbian set below.

### 3. THE SERBIAN *PERICLES*

The Serbian 2016 production of *Pericles* was launched under the auspices of Shakespeare Festival, held each year in a picturesque place on the Danube (Cortanovci), in a castle modelled upon Paduan mansions, called “Villa Stankovic”. The Festival is a week-long of plays, talks and other events celebrating Shakespeare, established by Serbia’s famous Shakespearean Nikita Milivojevic, a panelist of the World Shakespeare Congress at the Globe and director of the Serbian *Part I Henry VI* play performed at the 2012 Globe Olympics in the same venue. This Festival, in co-production with an independent local “Ithaca Art Centre” and Sabac Theatre, presented its new production of Shakespeare’s rarely staged romance as a comedy with elements of thriller and adventure, a fairy tale equally relating to children and to adults. When Pericles brings salvation (in form of corn sacks) to Tarsus, there starts a Neapolitan song and everybody dances a trance-like Tarantella, with the actors basking in flour while kneading, which results in pizza that they actually share with the delighted audience. The poet-narrator Gower uses his parchment map to show us where we are each time the place of action changes, passing witty comments along the way and engaging the audience in a meta-theatrical way: “We are here now, in Cortanovci, the Capital of mosquitoes”. Each location marks a different stage of man’s maturity and self-knowledge. He tells us what will follow and summarizes what preceded in witty rhymes, interacting with the actors, calling their names to mark their turn to speak, sometimes choosing a wrong one for the given script. Admirers of classics came down on this production as sacrilegious, but it seems that Shakespeare also ridiculed conventions (especially the Aristotelian dictum), in this play more than any other. Sir Trevor Nunn, who first directed *Pericles* in the same year, after a vast experience with other Shakespeare’s plays, seems to think the same: “It’s confusing. Did he write it as a satire? Was he poking fun at conventions?” ... The play is a ‘curate’s egg’. In England, we use the term to describe a curio. It has an extraordinary and optimistic and unexpected trajectory” (Zarin 2016).

In the Serbian *Pericles*, like in a comedy of humours, with the Tarsus royal couple elegantly mocked and Helicanus, the sage of Tyre, resting on his old reputation’s laurels, senile and pessimistic as ever, without anything smart to say and useless in doing his job (advising Pericles). When Thaisa rises from the dead, in Diana’s temple, everybody faints with amazement and then, lying on the floor for too long, they are impatient to stand up, waiting for Gower’s endless speech to finish and finally kicking him out of the stage. Marina is the torchlight of the whole play, bright and quick, clever and outspoken, not meek and tender like Shakespeare’s tragic heroines, but not robust or entrepreneurial like the strong young women of his comedies. She is a female character who did not need cross-dressing to be assertive and brave, to defend herself in men’s world and even escape rape. Unlike her counterparts from the festive comedies, she didn’t play any bed-trick or battle of the sexes to outwit the men whose mercy she was left at – still, she did the impossible: remained chaste in a brothel! She is also a Shakespearean daughter whose obedience is never questioned, both vis-à-vis her father Pericles and the foster-father Cleon; she did not escape his scheme to get rid of her, as she outshone his own daughter when they grew up, unlike Rosalind who flees the home of her uncle when she was threatened; she is abducted by the pirates. Like in all fairy tales, she is led and safeguarded by Providence more than

her own resilience. But one thing is incontestable – she is never even tempted to taint the purity of her body, her soul or her mind. It remains intact as it is innate.



Figure 1: Pericles in Antioch (Sc. 1)<sup>3</sup>



Figure 2: Pericles brings flour to Tarsus (Sc. 4)

3 All images were downloaded from Galerija Šekspir festival 2015, [www.sekspirfestival.org](http://www.sekspirfestival.org) [18.4.2016].



Figure 3: Gower lives light to Pericles and Thaisa (Sc. 11)



Figure 4: Thaisa faints when she sees her husband and daughter (Sc. 22)

#### 4. THE MEANING AND POWER OF WATER

Marina is the child of the sea and she was named after it. Water and sailing have been part of her life from birth. As suggested by Michel Foucault (Fuko 1980: 19), the effect of water is to carry away, but also to purify. Sailing leaves one to destiny and uncertainty. Her father was a lonely sea-farer in his restless voyages from the first Act, and in that capacity she first meets him. There are strong cultural associations among wandering, water and madness. R.V. O'Brien explores this on the example of Syracusan Antipholus from the *Comedy of Errors*, as a wanderer just disembarked in Ephesus and found mad as he didn't understand the local population speak the language (O' Brien 1996: 1-26). His first soliloquy is about water, as the central metaphor:

He that commends me to mine own content  
Commends me to the thing I cannot get.  
I to the world am like a drop of water  
That in the ocean seeks another drop,  
Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,  
(Unseen, inquisitive) confounds himself. (*Comedy of Errors*, 1.2.33-38)

The metaphor of water dissolved in water is reiterative in Shakespeare's works, as an expression of "losing oneself". Syracusan Antipholus also connects mental confusion and wandering when he bids farewell to the merchant in the second scene: "I will go lose myself, / And wander" (*Comedy of Errors*, 1.2.30-31). "Lose myself" and "wander" mean much the same thing here, but the first phrase also hints at a loss of identity (O' Brien 1996: 2). In *The History of Madness in the Age of Reason*, Foucault reminds of the Ship of Fools taking the mentally ill away from cities and thus purging them and at the same time excommunicating and isolating them (Fuko 1980: 19). Sea voyages are often the psychological vessel for getting there, as in the case of Hamlet's interrupted journey to England, after which he returns a changed man, ready to face Polonius. Water purified Pericles, washed away all traumatic memories and sinful thoughts, so he was able and ready to meet his long-lost daughter and wife as a pure man, though agonized and fatigued. Both the mother and the daughter are also inseparably tied to water – Marina was born aboard and named after the sea, while her mother, believed to be dead, was thrown into the tempestuous waters to rest in peace and to be retrieved from there by the fishermen like treasure.

#### 5. ALL FACES OF WOMAN

Of the four phases of eroticism, epitomized in the four archetypal female figures (Fike 2009: 111), Thaisa would make Sybil, the *Anima* giving wisdom and guidance, and Marina grows into Eve, a spousal *Anima* and worthy partner; the other two types being Sorceress/Helen of Troy, who seduces and provokes destruction, and Virgin Mary, the caring motherly figure. This mother is not even a memory in her daughter's life, believed to have died when the baby was born. Since Marina was raised by complete

strangers in a foreign country, there was nobody to at least treasure the memory of her mother and complete the child's identity. In this, she is yet another motherless daughter like many Shakespeare's heroines, from Ophelia and Lear's daughters to the strong and witty ones in the comedies. The difference is in the absence of Marina's father, who is not dead, but remains an unknown and distant figure who had to entrust her to other people to rear her, until they meet by chance. She has come all the way from Tarsus to Mytilene to meet both her parents and to make up to each other for all the lost years. To find a bonding tissue for the reunified family, Pericles recognizes her mother's eyes in Marina's and that reassures him, more than her name, age or life story. All his suffering now seems justified and explained, though never perceived as a punishment either by himself or by others.

Oliver Ford Davies, a renowned Shakespearean actor, mostly recognizable by his role in *The Star Wars*, translated all his histrionic art and experience into a valuable book on *Shakespeare's Fathers and Daughters*. He quotes Jonathan Miller's observation on the "grammar of relationships" between parents and siblings that we can all relate to, adding Professor Greenblatt's conclusion of the two aspects that dominated Shakespeare's attention: murderous brothers and father-daughter relations (Davies 2017: 1). Professor Stanley Wells, reminds that Shakespeare's fellow playwright and George Wilkins wrote the play *The Miserie of Enforced Marriage* around 1607 and collaborated with Shakespeare on the composition of *Pericles*, the play of Shakespeare's which offers the most sordid portrayal of life in a brothel. He also kept an inn on the notorious Turnbull (Turnmill) Street, which doubled as a brothel (Wells 2010: 29). Katherine Duncan-Jones believes that Shakespeare was a client and may have been venereally infected (Wells 2010: 74). Besides prostitution, *Pericles* features incest as another extreme opposite the saintly purity of the heroine (Wells 2010: 223–225). Incest was regarded with abhorrence and Shakespeare rarely mentions it (c.f. *King Lear*, *Hamlet*). The tutelary goddess of the play is Diana – the goddess of chastity. When Pericles leaves his daughter in the care of Dionyza, he swears 'by bright Diana' that his hair will remain 'unscissored' until she is married (Scene.13.27-30). His wife Thaisa becomes a handmaid in Diana's temple and in the concluding episodes Diana appears to Pericles in a vision guiding him to Thaisa. Boults' "crack the ice of her virginity" resonates the repartees on attacking and defending the barricado of virginity, the enemy of man between Parolles and Helena in *All's Well*<sup>4</sup> or Pandarus, Polonius and other fathers (fatherly figures) who were bargaining with their daughters' virginity and instructing them to keep their price up in tendering<sup>5</sup>. Now, while Shakespearean daughters are usually the paragon of virtue and innocence, mothers are suffocating even when dead and men only feel safe when they are eliminated from the stage. While Janet Adelman dealt with the mothers/wives in Shakespeare's tragedies, explaining the fear of femininity (Adelman, 1992:128), Valerie Traub deals with the same fear and explains the strategy of containment against the threat of female autonomy, maternal power and sexuality (Traub 1995: 120). The threat of women's power suffocates men and even when dead, their presence is too formidable. That's why the statue (Hermione) and the corpse (Thaisa, Ophelia) are the

4 *All's Well That Ends Well*, I.i.115-185

5 c.f. *Troilus and Cressida*, I.ii.285; *Hamlet*, I.iii.107.



preferable forms to which they can pour their hearts out and say all those loving words they kept to themselves while the women were still alive. Serbian psychotherapist and theologian, Professor Vladeta Jerotic, discussed the fear of women in an eponymous essay, claiming that the dual attitude towards woman had its ancient roots in her identification with Nature, from the 27,000 years old statuettes pronouncing the aspects of fertility and reproduction, to the Celtic Anne, the Moon goddess (Jerotic 2002: 96–102). She gives life but also takes it away, as the equivocality of life and death. It is the mother's conservative, instinctive insistence on the "extrauterine, post-embryonic connection" that threatens her child's (son's) separation and individuation. Levy-Bruhl's "participation mystique" is transferred from biological to psychological and it is only after the elimination of women's presence/influence that men regain their power and undergo the necessary transformation to be able to cope with life challenges and restore order. Both Leontes and Pericles grow mature in their respective wives' long absence, both women being devotresses in Diana's temple.

Pericles meets Marina in Mytilene, as an unkempt and desperate old man, who has not spoken to anyone for three months, having learnt of his daughter's alleged death. Meanwhile, Marina has become mature and self-made, obviously aware that the power of words is her major asset and weapon. It helped her escape the murder set up by her jealous foster father, escape the practice of prostitution in brothel and persuade her trafficker to get her a decent job instead. Yet, one cannot deny that she manages to do that, at least partly, thanks to her origin and class status. This is what materialist feminism takes into account, besides the purely psychological. Yet, irrespective of the class, "woman means mother", as Catherine Belsey suggests. She finds Shakespeare's plays illustrative of a patriarchy where they are confined to motherhood and men are promised everything else that means to be human (Belsey 1991: 261). Even princesses and countesses are subordinated to the men in their lives – fathers, brothers and husbands. Any derogation would mean subversion and instability, as blatantly demonstrated by the weird sisters in *Macbeth*. So, despite her healing power, which adorns her with special reputation not unlike that of Helena, the poor physician's daughter in *All's Well*, Marina does not have a say in decisions concerning her life and future: her father decides to "give" her to the Governor just as Prospero handed his daughter Miranda over to Ferdinand ("mine gift and thine own acquisition")<sup>6</sup>. Before that, she is viewed as prey for lustful men surrounding her, again resembling Perdita from *The Winter's Tale*, whose own father was attracted to her, unaware of their kinship. Yet, the power of these young ladies is not in their charms or seduction. They are resilient and self-confident, incredibly mature and honourable in their actions, and that is why they are rewarded with a happy ending. Unlike tragedies, this genre allows for the second chance that the erring fathers get to atone their sins and that enables their daughters with family reunification and their mothers' revival before their own marriage as a new chapter in their forever happy lives. We never get a glimpse into their new lives as spouses, but the "unscene"<sup>7</sup> is not difficult to imagine – from Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* to Kate in *The Shrew*, the new brides are tamed and alive to their assigned roles in the

6 *The Tempest*, IV.i.13.

7 "Unscene" is a term coined by Professor Marjorie Garber, blending "scene" with "unseen". See Garber 2008: 112.

society, after the escapade into equality and independence. Shakespeare was so keen on showing us that they are capable of “all that may become a man”<sup>8</sup>, but it was too early to even dream of equality. As Juliet Dusinberre put it, he thought of them as equal in the world that made them unequal” (Dusinberre 2003: xxix). She is presented to him as semi-divinity, singing and dancing like one immortal, with her sacred physis – her healing powers as if of a saint. Initially he resists to be brought back to life, like King Lear, but she is a miracle-worker and their reunion is hailed by the music of the spheres. This marks the restoration of order and balance, craved in all Shakespeare’s plays and invoked by Ulysses’ “degree speech”. It invokes Plato’s harmony of spheres and music is the integral part of the metaphor:

Take but degree away, untune that string,  
And, hark, what discord follows! each thing meets  
In mere oppugnancy: the bounded waters  
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores  
And make a sop of all this solid globe... (*Troilus and Cressida*, I.iii.29).

The fact that only Pericles can hear the music suggest the other-worldly nature of the parent-child reunion, as noticed by Oliver Ford Davies (Davies 2017: 132). This is clearly juxtaposed to the encounter between the spouses, when goddess Diana directs Pericles to Ephesus to find his wife whom he believed dead for fifteen years – Davies points out that it is not imbued with such emotion and places this form of love definitely far below the one between parent and child. But this form of love is seriously tainted by the other father in the play, Antiochus. He got his own daughter pregnant and organized a contest for her future bridegroom, perversely challenging the contestants with the conundrum of this incest. Antiochus as an oppressive father is also seen as one form of government, tyrannical and murderous, followed by the anarchic Tarsus in Pericles’ next stop, and democracy in Pentapolis.

## 6. POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

Kristin Bezio of Richmond University, USA, explains the analogy of father-ruler and provides an insightful analysis of *Pericles* through diachronic political lenses: the sentiment against Union in post-Elizabethan England and the same attitude towards the EU nowadays (Bezio 2017: 48–63). Her point of departure is Spradley’s identification of Cleon’s wife Dionyza with the position of Great Britain in this familial analogue of Union. His daughter Philoten derives her association with Scotland from her status as Cleon’s *natural* daughter, given that James’s own “natural” political family was Scottish. Marina, as already noted, figures as the familial analogue of the late Queen Elizabeth’s natural daughter, England, here caught in the role of a foster-daughter in Cleon’s Unionesque family. The English anxiety addressed by this familial situation is the fear that “Great Britain” was just another name for Scottish domination (Bezio 2017: 106). Allegorically,

---

8 *Macbeth*, I.vii.47.

according to Bezio, Pericles's abandonment of his daughter parallels James's importation of Scots nobles into the court and Privy Council, handing the English nation over to the questionable judgment of foreigners with considerable power.

Although *Pericles* presents an argument against Union, that argument is not based on the xenophobic fear of all things foreign; rather, *Pericles's* objection is based on a fear of tyranny.

Bezio argues that:

“While in Shakespeare's time, collectivising nationalism helped to preserve proto-democratic participatory monarchy, modern Western nationalism, like that in the United Kingdom and the United States, is rooted in a neoliberal conception of separatism in which historical exceptionalism can only be maintained through isolationism and exclusion. ...[It] is secondary to an internet-fostered sense of global, rather than national, citizenship. A citizenship which is, interestingly, more like that of Pericles or Marina, developed through their movements from nation to nation. Those under 25 are therefore much more likely to identify with people of other nations who share some of their ideologies, much like Marina, whose ability to share goodness was unrestricted and incorruptible”.

As such, concludes Bezio, Marina represents the ability of England as a collective nation to survive the ravages of famine, war, and even a barbaric foreign king. Her fortitude, like that of Marina, will, Shakespeare suggests, persuade James (eventually) to adopt the English style of rule for a united Great Britain under the helm not of Scotland, but of England—returns triumphantly to Tyre where Pericles re-assumes the throne and rules wisely and well (Bezio 2017: 59).

In the fisherman's allegory of the life of fish in the sea, Kiernan Ryan noticed political allusions similar to those of unweeded garden, *Richard II* or *Hamlet* (Ryan 2015: 81). The whale devours the fry. But, the solution is to “purge the land of these drones that rob the bee of her honey” (Scene 5, 69–75, 87–88). These ‘drones’ could be the plebeians in *Coriolanus* and *Julius Caesar*, who highlighted the social inequities and uneven distribution of wealth.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Unlike the two above mentioned plays, *Pericles* is not much of a political play at the face value; the eponymous hero is not a single man fighting the system, taking his personal revenge after his idealism was crushed; but he is a single man coping with real vicissitudes, not fighting windmills. His is not the madness of Don Quixote or Hamlet, he is melancholic and mournful with a most obvious cause, not in the least lacking “objective correlative”. And, unlike King Lear's madness furthered by ‘filial ingratitude’, Pericles is saved precisely by the magic of filial love, sacrifice and the in(di)visible bond, inviolable by time and/or crime. Not even fourteen years of separation could make any estrangement between the father and daughter and the incestuous desire that Leontes felt when he first saw Perdita after a similar period of separation was impossible to

happen to Pericles – he is an epitome of virtue just like his daughter. This is why the play is a romance, not a tragedy like *Lear*, or a problem play like *Winter's Tale*. All the three of them deserved unqualified happiness and a fresh start after reunion. As Trevor Nunn put it, “before *Pericles*, there is *no* joy. Almost *nothing* to relieve the gloom.” (Zarin 2016)

Kristin Bezio suggests that “the play’s highly romanticized final acts serve largely as Shakespeare’s means of escaping censorship or even imprisonment for being too political. (Bezio 2017: 59). Nevertheless, Shakespeare’s *Pericles* concludes with a reminder to James to rule England wisely, for, as Helicanus reminds both Pericles and the audience, if “you love us, we you, and we’ll clasp hands, / When peers thus knit, a kingdom ever stands” (2.4.57-58).

Cynthia Zarin recalls another production of *Pericles*, directed by David Bell in 2014 at the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Bell, like Nunn, was interested in what happened to Shakespeare between *King Lear* and *Pericles*. He explains, “Pericles is perhaps the best example of profound discovery through metaphor. The first half of life is about acquisition, and then suddenly, you are divested of things, and you are left with a single man in a corner of a boat, going from port to port. But then, like Pericles, you may be able to experience sympathy and empathy.” (Zarin 2016) Like in *King Lear*, it takes deprivation and solitude to begin to notice other people’s needs and suffering. “Reason not the need”, says Lear. Bezio (2017: 55) suggests that Pericles is capable of changing and learning from other monarchs’ mistakes (those of Antiochus and Cleon), thus avoiding the trap of being an absolutist himself.

What *Pericles* is to us and what we are to Pericles, in view of presentism, could be found in its topical issues: the Middle East, refugees and sex trafficking. The authoritarian, democratic and anarchist government. Disintegration and reclaiming one’s sovereignty for the fear of losing control. But, first and foremost, it is about love and family, about hope and reconnection, about belonging. It is about the joy of all that. No matter the calamities and all the political wheeling and dealing, if there is a place called ‘home’, sooner or later we’ll return to it and reconnect with our most profound *self*. After a decade and a half of restless travel, having experienced love, mourning, power and loss, Pericles becomes mature and returns home, returns to his true self. Purged by the water and galvanized by its regenerative power, he copes with the demons of his subconsciousness and with latent incestuous father in him, embodied in Antiochus, the father of his prospective bride from the beginning of the play, whose secret Pericles discovers and therefore must flee his country. Perhaps it was the fear that he would make the same father that drove him away from his daughter for so long, waiting for her marriageable age as a propitious moment to return. Like an alchemist, purifying his gold with water, he restores order in his life, family and country, in harmony with the cosmological order reflected in the music of the spheres. Pericles hears this music that brings him back to life, after he was referred to his daughter as a young woman who heals with words. The encounter between father and daughter, invoking that of Lear and Cordelia holding him in her arms, completes the full circle of father-daughter relationship where they swap the roles, the daughter becoming the mother nursing the father as the helpless infant. But, unlike Lear, he is ready to let go of her and reconcile to her transition into adulthood. Separation is consensual and therefore only temporary. His wife is back in his life so he can let his daughter go.

When the father and daughter eventually meet, the fog lifts. Pericles ecstatically implores Helicanus to:

Give me a gash, put me to present pain;  
Lest this great sea of joys rushing upon me  
O'erbear the shores of my mortality,  
And drown me with their sweetness. (*Pericles*, V.i.193-195)

T.S. Eliot was inspired by this play to write his poem "Marina", which recapitulates the story of restless voyage, quest and finding. It confirms the singularity of parental love and sacrifice:

What seas what shores what grey rocks and what islands  
What water lapping the bow  
And scent of pine and the woodthrush singing through the fog  
What images return  
O my daughter.  
...  
let me  
Resign my life for this life, my speech for that unspoken,  
The awakened, lips parted, the hope, the new ships.  
What seas what shores what granite islands towards my timbers  
And woodthrush calling through the fog  
My daughter. (T.S. Eliot 1930)

## REFERENCES

- Adelman, J. 1992. *Suffocating Mothers – Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare Plays, Hamlet to the Tempest*. New York: Routledge.
- Belsey, C. 1991. A Future for Materialist Feminist Criticism. In V. Wayne (ed.) *The Matter of Difference*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 257–271.
- Bezio, K. M. 2017. From Rome to Tyre to London: Shakespeare's Pericles, leadership, anti-absolutism, and English exceptionalism. *Leadership* 13(1), 48–63.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715016663753>.
- Burt, R. 1991. A Dangerous Rome. In Logan, M. R. and P. L. Rudnytsky (eds.) *Contending Kingdoms*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Davies, O.F. 2017. *Shakespeare's Fathers and Daughters*. London: Bloomsbury
- Dusinberre, J. 2003. *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Eliot, T. S. 1930. Marina. [Internet]. Available at: <https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/marina-0> [7.7.2019].
- Fike, A. M. 2009. *A Jungian Study of Shakespeare*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fuko, M. 1980. *Istorija ludila u doba klasicizma*, translated into Serbian by Jelena Stakić. Beograd: NOLIT.
- Garber, M. 2008. *Shakespeare and Modern Culture*. New York: Anchor Books.

- Jerotić, V. 2002. Strah od žene. In M. Savić (ed.) *Najlepši eseji Vladete Jerotića*. Beograd: Prosveta, 96–102.
- Koh, D. 2013. This Great Sea of Joys. *The Oxonian Review*. [Internet]. Available at: <http://www.oxonianreview.org/wp/this-great-sea-of-joys/> [25.9.2019].
- O'Brien, R. V. 1996. The Madness of Syracusan Antipholus. *Early Modern Literary Studies* 2.1: 3, 1–26. [Internet]. Available at: <http://purl.oclc.org/emls/02-1/obrishak.html> [6.3.2013].
- Ryan, K. 2015. *Shakespeare's Universality – Here's Fine Revolution*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Shakespeare, W. 1997. *The Complete Works* (ed. S. Wells). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Traub, V. 1995. Jewels, Statues and Corpses: Containment of Female Erotic Power in Shakespeare's Plays. In D. Barker and I. Kamps (eds.) *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*. London: Verso, 12–142.
- Wells, S. 2010. *Shakespeare, Sex and Love*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zarin, C. 2016. The Continual Riddle of Shakespeare's *Pericles*. [Internet]. Available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-continual-riddle-of-shakespeares-pericles> [24.5.2019].

## SUMMARY

### SAILING WITH *PERICLES* – FROM CORTANOVCI TO CHICAGO

*Pericles* is one of Shakespeare's late plays, written in collaboration and rarely staged – probably due to its complicated plot and disregard for the Aristotelian dictum of three unities. Produced rather late in Shakespeare's professional and private life, it sublimates all the experience of the man, father and actor, permeated by Shakespeare's personal relationship with his wife and daughters, as well as the political uncertainty and anxiety caused by the union with Scotland – akin to the present-day fear of the European Union and rise of British nationalism. Restless sailing, fleeing and seeking, alchemy, father-daughter relationship, Jungian spectrum of woman, migrant crisis, Brexit and human trafficking, all can be found in this play of the Prince of Tyre. This paper takes stock of the Serbian production of *Pericles*, with a pronounced comic note, via British to American stage productions, making way to the presentist interpretations against the backdrop of the ongoing flux and, at the same time, twinning of the local and global context of the play, the geography of which is definitely supportive and stimulating for such an approach. Though resembling a fairy tale by structure, the play's complex topography, *dramatis personae* and time scheme correspond with the manifold meaning, themes and questions that it opens.

**KEYWORDS:** *Pericles*, geography, Serbia, Britain, voyage, water, government, father-daughter, adaptation, appropriation.

#### ARTICLE INFO:

Original research article

Received: May 15 2019

Revised: June 23 2019

Accepted: July 1 2019