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EARLY THEORIES ON EAST EUROPEAN SOURCES OF SHAKESPEARE'S "THE TEMPEST AND "THE WINTER'S TALE"

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Results of research in literary history indicate that during the late Renaissance period Shakespeare seems to have had some association with Eastern European history (Lithuanian, Polish and Bohemian). This relationship, however, as well as many other factors in his work, is still relatively unclear. This article attempts to reconsider the more significant literary history and criticism which has claimed to have found in Eastern European history some of the sources for a number of Shakespeare's works, especially *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*.

Early Research

In tracing back the research on Shakespeare's relationship with Eastern European motifs, especially those from Lithuanian history, we must return to the time of Lessing and Herder. The English, according to Richard Wagner, had difficulty understanding Shakespeare; they were aided by German literary historians, who were attracted to Shakespeare for their own purposes — the creation of a national literature — and who made significant contribution to the study and critique of Shakespeare. Lessing and Herder were among the first Germans to concern themselves with Shakespeare. Parenthetically we might mention here that both men were interested in Lithuanian culture: Lessing was enchanted by the natural and poetical character of Lithuanian folksongs, whereas Herder, who lived in Riga for a time, collected Lithuanian folksongs and introduced Goethe to them in Strassburg.

Lessing, in his *Briefe, die neueste Literatur betreffend* (1759, 17th letter) stressed the importance of authentic and natural emotion in Shakespeare's dramatic work. Somewhat later, Herder, in his work *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* (1773), devoted a separate section to Shakespeare, in which, just as Lessing had done when he opposed French pseudo-classicism, Herder praised Shakespeare's naturalness and psychological depth.

Lessing's and Herder's remarks about Shakespeare were not ignored by the German romanticists, who found much inspiration for their own work in Shakespeare, especially in his romantic plays. One of the earliest results of this influence was August Wilhelm Schlegel's translation of Shakespeare's works into the German language, finished by Ludwig Tieck.

Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853) uncovered a new factor in Shakespearean research: he was the first to note the link between Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Ayer's *Comedia von der schoenen Sidea*, a play containing Lithuanian elements. The source of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, which was later found to be associated with Eastern European history, was first discovered by English Shakespearean scholars.

The Search for Sources of "The Tempest"

As Max Koch has already pointed out, four of Shakespeare's plays have no clearly defined and generally accepted source — *The Tempest*, *Love's Labor Lost*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Titus Andronicus* (if the last is to be attributed to

Shakespeare at all).¹

In regard to the source of *The Tempest*, English and German Shakespearean scholars hold different views. While the English tend to look for this source in Romance literatures, or to link the play to concurrent historical events (the discovery of the Bermuda Islands), or to disclaim any influences whatever, the Germans prefer to link this play with the above-mentioned work by Ayler. However, neither the English nor the Germans agree even among themselves, and it is often claimed that the source of *The Tempest* is not yet discovered.

It is generally acknowledged, that Shakespeare did not create any of his works purely from imagination, but utilized various sources. The long-standing difficulty of establishing a source of *The Tempest* that was acceptable to all gave rise to conjecture that perhaps in creating this work Shakespeare relied solely on his imagination. Thus, even the distinguished English Shakespearean scholar Edward Capell (1713-1781), maintained:

it has rather more of the novel in it than in other plays; but no one has yet pretended to have met with such a novel; nor anything else that can be suppos'd to have furnish'd Shakespeare for materials for writing this play; the fable of which must therefore pass for entirely his own production, till the contrary can be made to appear by any future discovery.²

Another famous Shakespearean researcher, the Irishman Edmund Malone (1741-1812), was not disinclined to link certain scenes of *The Tempest* with Robert Greene's *Alphonso*, just as Greene's *Pandosto* was being linked to *The Winter's Tale*.³ But more significant is the fact that from the time of Malone *The Tempest* began to be related to the discovery of the Bermuda Islands shortly before the writing of the play. Much effort was expended by Malone and by G. Chalmers in attempting to elucidate these associations, but their work was regarded critically by another scholar, Joseph Hunter (1783-1861), who felt that similarity was lacking in many of the comparisons.⁴ In truth, Jourdan's account of the Bermuda Islands (*A discovery of the Bermudas, otherwise called the Isle of Devels*, 1610) even had Shakespeare read it, is sufficient to explain only the opening of *The Tempest*, but has no tie with the plot of the work or its historical details. For this reason Captain Somers' shipwreck and his experience is sailing to Virginia were not mentioned in any attempt to explain *The Tempest* until the time of Malone.

The motif of an enchanted isle inhabited by spirits probably suggested to J. P. Collier (1839) a possible comparison of *The Tempest* with Robert Greene's ballad *The enchanted island*. Only later was it noticed that *The Tempest* had been written earlier than this ballad.⁵

It was suggested by J. O. Halliwell that Prospero Adorno, the Duke of Milan, who was in enmity with Ferdinand, the Duke of Naples, should be considered among the competitors of Ayler's *Comedia von der schoenen Sidea*.

A further competitor might be *Noches de Invierno* by the Spanish writer Eslava, in which there is a quarrel between the King of Greece and the King of Bulgaria.⁶ Although the former instance was the subject of Thomas' *Historye of Italye* (1651), the latter is a doubtful source for Shakespeare because of the Spanish language.

Even among English Shakespearean scholars, however, there was support for the significance of Ayler's work, as a source for *The Tempest*. W. J. Thorns (1803-1885) was the first to advance the theory that Ayler's *Sidea* was the source for Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, made further possible by the fact that "traveling actors" may have brought it to Shakespeare's attention. Thorns, very likely, was influenced by Tieck.⁷

In addition, W. Bell finds so many similarities between Ayler's and Shakespeare's plays, that he is led to question who copied whom. Recalling, however, that Ayler died in 1605 and that Shakespeare's *Tempest* was written about 1610, it is impossible that Ayler could have imitated Shakespeare.⁸ Bell thinks that Shakespeare may have seen productions of Hans Sachs' and Ayler's or carnival (Mardi Gras) plays.⁹

In more recent times, attempts have been made to find the relationship between the two plays in the motifs of a universal fairy tale. These attempts have not met with much success, for a fairy tale does not explain the historical references.

One of the newer works about the sources of *The Tempest* is a study by Nosworthy, which was published in an Oxford journal.¹⁰ Nosworthy, proceeding from the position taken by the majority of English scholars, writes:

It would be reasonable to maintain that Shakespeare and Ayler derived their plots independently from some lost folk-tale or other common source, but one point of similarity, which is, however, curious rather than decisive, suggests a somewhat closer connection. The words 'mountain' and 'silver' applied by Prospero and Ariel to the hounds IV. 1 are found in close propinquity in Ayler's play in a speech given to Julia, Engelbrecht's betrothed.¹¹

By reason of words characteristic to hunters, such as "mountain" and "silver", occurring in both plays (*The Tempest*, Act 4, scene 5; *Comedia von der schoenen Sidea*, Act 5, scene 3), Nosworthy draws the conclusion that Ayler's drama was written making use of an original in English and that Ayler may have heard these words in an English play, since in general Ayler liked to translate and adapt English plays, as seen by his *Opus Theatricum* (1618).

Among the Germans, as already noted, Ludwig Tieck was the first to point out the similarities between Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Ayrer's *Sidea*:

Sidea has about it the unmistakable character of an imitation of an English drama, although as yet no work has been found which the German dramatist could have used. The relationship of the duke to the magician, his submission to the latter, and especially the episode of carrying firewood call to mind Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, for which English critics have found no original source. It seems all the more to me that Shakespeare took the idea from the same old source that was followed by Ayrer.¹²

In comparing Shakespeare's and Ayrer's plays, J. Tittmann found a twofold similarity, both in the central theme and in the external elements.¹³ The main plot of both plays consists of the power-struggle of two related rulers and their subsequent reconciliation. A similar theme occurs in *The Winter's Tale* and in *As You Like It*. Scenes of enchantment are found in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In addition to a general similarity, there are some specific parallels. Shakespeare's characters partly resemble Ayrer's: Prospero — Ludloff, Alonso — Leudegast, Ferdinand — Engelbrecht, Miranda — Sidea, Caliban — Molitor.¹⁴

Among the differences between the two plays, perhaps the chief one is Shakespeare's maritime and Ayrer's continental setting of the play. Prospero and his small daughter are placed upon a weak craft to flounder in the sea until they reach an island. But the plot of Shakespeare's play really begins on the continent, in Bohemia.

Shakespeare has emphasized certain characters, such as Prospero and Caliban. Some scenes appear only in Ayrer, as for example, Sidea in an apple tree and the mirror of the spring. Ayrer's play is quite rough and unpolished, whereas Shakespeare's is incomparably smoother; in general, however, there are more similarities than differences.

Although Tieck observes, in the above-mentioned work, that Ayrer changed names as needed, Germanizing them, he must have left the geographical names untouched. Lithuanian names that appear in his play permit us to speculate that the play may have been based upon Lithuanian history or historical legend. One would then guess that the Lithuanian names occur in the hypothetical English play, suggested by Tieck as the original source, since Ayrer, as shown by his other works, usually left names unchanged.

The chief protagonist in Ayrer's *Sidea*, Ludloff (in another place — Leutpolt), is "der Fuerst in Littau" (in Cohn's English translation — "prince of Lithuania"). Leudegast is "der Fuerst in der Wiltau" (or Wilte), that is, the ruler of Vilnius, for, as Jacob Caro notes, the Order of Teutonic Knights referred to Vilnius as Wiltau.¹⁵ That in those times Lithuania was called Littau or Lettou (in its English form) can be seen from the fact that the first Lithuanian printer in London, John Lettou (John of Lithuania) took, according to the custom of the day, the name of his place of origin as his proper name.¹⁶

However, Albert Cohn denies that Ayrer's work has a historical basis and considers it purely legendary,¹⁷ since, according to him, there had been no Lithuanian dukes by those names and Vilnius was never known as Wiltau (J. Caro's claim was based on documents of the Teutonic Order). Moreover, the play contains references to a pre-Christian era. Cohn, being opposed to Tieck's theory, doubts whether the English original would have contained German names, for, as already mentioned, Ayrer usually assumed the names he found without changing them. Most likely Ayrer followed a German original, which after many modifications reached England. Shakespeare may have also heard of Ayrer's play from English comedians returning from Germany.

It is difficult to agree with Cohn's assertion that the names of Lithuania and Poland enter Ayrer's play purely by chance. Along with other characters in the play there is Julia, "des Fuersten in der Wilte fremde Jungkfrau," which the English translator calls "a princess of Poland." Thus Ayrer must have had some kind of an association with Lithuanian and Polish history.

Jacob Caro (1836-1909), a German historian at the University of Breslau, well-acquainted with Lithuanian and Polish history, tried to trace this association. In this matter his point of view has been that of a historian rather than a literary critic.¹⁸

Caro searched for "a common original source of Ayrer and Shakespeare," and he sought to find it in Eastern European history — in the song about Henry Derby's march to Prussia (1390), which contained the history of Vytautas (supposedly Prospero). In his research into the history of the Baits and the Western Slavs, Caro was unable to find a ruler other than Vytautas whose fate a poet would recount. After giving an account of the quarrel between Vytautas and Jogaila, two kinsmen rulers, Caro states that it is impossible for this episode to have remained unknown to the poet for two reasons: the complaint by Vytautas to the Order and the marriage of Princess Anne of Bohemia to England's Richard II.

Vytautas, unlike Prospero, was no magician; according to Caro, however, in Shakespeare's play he was portrayed as ruling spirits and making use of their aid. This curious fact is explained by Caro as a possible result of an account of Lithuania rendered by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (later Pope Pius II) in which he describes its people and customs, and even Vytautas himself. The account is based on information given by the Czech monk, Hieronymus Prahensis (Jerome of Prague). Writing about the pagan customs and superstitions of Žemaičiai, Prahensis refers to Vytautas as an exorcist

(most likely as an enemy of the Teutonic Order). No wonder, then, that Vytautas would have been given such an image in the account of the Prussian march.[19](#)

Caro doubts that the historical facts could have been immediately available to Shakespeare and that he would have used them,

particularly we again and again stress the opinion that the historical material passed through the hands of several poets before it came to the hands of the most perfect master. Who knows what the first minstrel who accompanied Henry Derby had already made of it, and what about all the others ?! Shakespeare's Claribella, the daughter of the King of Naples, who just comes back from her wedding, is related to a novel written in the style of innumerable French novels of the Middle Ages.[20](#)

The opinion that the historical account could have passed through many hands is upheld by R. Boyle, who states that Shakespeare must have learned of the plot from minstrels, who knew it in a form that had already gone through an evolutionary process.[21](#) Therefore, Shakespeare and Ayler could have taken the historical events from two different, already perfected legends and used them for sources. One thing is clear, however: the fable itself did not originate in England.

Wodick, like Caro, considers the Lithuanian names in Ayler's drama a significant fact, for they point to a relationship with Lithuanian history:

How to trace this relationship can be a matter of speculation only. My guess would be this: at the bottom of a common original source of Ayler and Shakespeare there had to be an account of the march to Prussia and a legendary tale about Vytautas. This source may have had Lithuanian names, which Ayler took over, and Shakespeare changed. A journey through England would be the simplest for Ayler to become acquainted with the Lithuanian tale.[22](#)

Some time earlier, Wodick had already expressed his regret that so little attention was paid to the Lithuanian names in Ayler's play, for he thought these names to be some of the most important leads in establishing the connection between Ayler's drama and the plays of English actors, which point to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. In these plays by English actors (comedians), K. J. Fouquet is inclined to see two offshoots from the same stem: (a) the German one related to Prussian-Lithuanian history, and (b) the play of the English comedians related to English-Scottish history, cast into shape in Germany. All other variations set the action on the Mediterranean coast and, where possible to trace, use Spanish, Italian and Byzantine names.[23](#)

While viewing critically Caro's speculations about the Lithuanian element in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, H. H. Furness agrees that, in writing his last fairy tale plays, Shakespeare directed his glance not so much toward Western as toward Eastern Europe, which has such a rich history. But the comparison of historical events with the play itself is made in rather general terms, and the thesis is defended more with enthusiasm than with evidence.[24](#)

Nearer to our own time, Max Förster critically evaluates W. Wodick's work, which supports Caro's thesis, on the grounds that comparisons alone do not provide the thesis with proof. However, Gustav Heinrich, a distinguished Hungarian scholar of German literature and history, upholds the significance of the Lithuanian element in the question of Ayler-Shakespeare relationship.[25](#) Although he, too, finds some similarity between Prospero and Rudolf II, at the same time he notes the following:

it seems that the figure of the exiled king is all the more colored by the quarrel between Witold, King of Lithuania, and his nephew Jagiello of Poland, since Ayler's names irrefutably agree with the persons in these events.[26](#)

He is also convinced that news of these events could have been brought by soldiers from Poland into England, where eventually a play would have originated, which Ayler and Shakespeare alike could have used. Thus a return is made to the same opinion, which more than a hundred years ago was advanced by the German scholars Tieck, Simrock, and Gervinus.

The Search for Sources of "The Winter's Tale"

Almost universally accepted as the source of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* is Robert Greene's (1558-1592) *Pandosto, or The Triumph of Time*, a pastoral narrative, first printed in 1588, and again in 1607 and 1609.[27](#) It is not certain, however, who was the first to uncover this source. It is mentioned at about the same time (1709) by the English critics Charles Gildon and Nicholas Rowe (the first printer of Shakespeare's critical works).[28](#) J. P. Collier thinks that Shakespeare came into contact with the third version, just before beginning to write *The Winter's Tale*.[29](#)

In regard to plot, Shakespeare closely follows Greene. In his drama *Leontes, King of Sicily*, invites Polixenes, King of Bohemia, for a visit, but becomes jealous when his wife, Queen Hermione, begs the guest to remain longer (the Othello-Desdemona motif in a somewhat different form). Camillo is to murder the guest, but flees with him to Bohemia. The king throws Hermione into a dungeon and orders the daughter born to her to be cast out into the desert, which turns out to be

the "Bohemian coast." When Perdita grows up, she is seen by Polixenes' son Florizel, who falls in love with her. The two flee to Sicily, get married, and the old kings are reconciled. The statue of the dead Queen Hermione comes to life.

The theme of the reconciliation of two rulers (the Mon-tecchi-Capuletti motif) is common to both Shakespearean plays *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*. They are more like variations on the same theme. It is said that Shakespeare wrote both plays on the occasion of the marriage between the herzog Ferdinand and princess Elizabeth (in *The Tempest* the name of the son of the King of Naples is also Ferdinand).

From Greene, Shakespeare borrowed the blind jealousy of King Pandosto (Shakespeare's Leontes) of his wife Belaria (Hermione) and Egistus (Polixenes). But there are also some departures, the most important of which is Greene's Oedipus motif: in Greene's work, when the daughter is recovered, the father, overwhelmed by the consciousness of his deed toward her, commits suicide. On the other hand, Shakespeare's Hermione remains alive and, when the action is over, "wakes up." Shakespeare adds Pauline, Antigone, Autolychus, the clown, an extensive sheep-shearing scene, a separate scene about Leontes' small son Mamillius (perhaps in memory of his own early-lost child). In general, Shakespeare removed the crudities present in Greene's work (as he did in Ayler's *Sidea*); instead of blind destiny, a testing, but benign Providence is felt in Shakespeare's work.

More important to us is the question, from where Greene derived the plot for his work and how much of Eastern European history is present in it. A. Dyce, critic of English-Scottish literature and publisher of various critical works of Shakespeare, thinks it possible that Greene's plot was his own "invention." ³⁰ H. H. Furness, however, reminds him of Caro's research in this question; this work, while not denying Greene's contribution, gives basis for a new origin for the plot.³¹ In suggesting a historical basis for *The Winter's Tale*, Caro is more moderate than in regard to *The Tempest*. Furness even agrees to the hypothesis of how the story of Ziemovit, the ruler of Masovia, could have reached England. Finally, he does not object to considering the historical events on the Baltic at the time of Richard II as the source of Greene's novel, especially since the historical changes in Eastern Europe at that time had attracted the attention of Shakespeare himself (just as Schiller's attention was directed to Lithuanian-Polish history towards the end of his creative career, when he was writing *Demetrius*).

In his Columbia University dissertation about Greene, J. C. Jordan, relying not only on Caro's speculations, but on the claim of the English Shakespearean scholar H. Herford, expresses the conviction that at the basis of Greene's work lies the Lithuanian-Polish and Bohemian (Czech) history about Ziemovit, which came to England at the time of Richard II.³²

More than a hundred years ago, this history, reminiscent of Greene's tale, was pointed out by Caro in his article "about the real source of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*." ³³ Taking it from the chronicler of King Casimir, Joannis de Czarnkowo, Caro includes it in a later article about the historical elements in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*.³⁴ The story goes as follows:

When Eufania, the first wife of Ziemovit, died in 1359 and he was left a widower, at the palace of the King of Bohemia he chanced to see a young lady "of a lovely face and great beauty," with whom he fell in love immediately. She came from the family of Silesia's ruler Bolko (Boleslav) and was related to Emperor Charles. Her name was Ludmila or Ludomila. Wasting no time, Ziemovit married her and loved her ardently. Before long, however, rumors were spread in the court that the young duchess disdained this love and had liaisons with others. No one dared to tell Ziemovit of this, but someone passed it on to his sister and her son Psemislav. Ziemovit learned of this while he was in Silesia on a visit. Upon his return home, he ordered that his wife be shut up in a tower and placed under guard. None of her ladies-in-waiting would say anything against the duchess, no matter how severely threatened. The duchess was expecting a child and her husband waited only until she gave birth. After a son was born, in a few weeks Ziemovit ordered servants to torture her to death. But this inhuman deed was followed by terrible rumors on the duke's part, and he repented to the end of his life. The one who was responsible for this tragedy was ordered to be dragged by horses and then hanged. Henry, the child born of the innocent mother, was brought up by a poor woman. When he was three years old, two riders came at night and, in spite of the nurse's resistance, took the child and rode off. Actually, they had been sent by the duchess Margaret, one of Ziemovit's daughters. She was concerned that her step-brother should receive a proper upbringing. Since he closely resembled his father, Ziemovit loved him greatly, provided him with a good education, intended him for the priesthood and willed him the episcopal see in his duchy. When this brought opposition from the archbishop of Gniezno, Ziemovit obtained the see of Plock for his son.

Doubtless, this is the same Henry of Masovia, whom Caro related to Vytautas during the 1391-1392 period, when Vytautas, his wife, and his sister Ringaile were guests at the Ritterswerder castle, where at the same time the young Masovian duke Henry was on a visit, having been sent by Jogaila to make peace between Poland and the Order. (The Lithuanian writer Vincas Krėvė has included Henry of Masovia in his drama *Skirgaila*, Act I, scenes 2 and 4). He was the son of the Duke of Masovia, Ziemovit III, who had lived on good terms with the Lithuanians, and entered into kinship with Vytautas, for in that same Ritterswerder castle Henry married Vytautas' sister Ringaile. Otherwise, Ziemovit was a somewhat brutal personality. He died in 1381, just before the marriage of Anne of Bohemia to Richard II.

Greene's *Pandosto* follows these historical happenings, with the exception that a daughter, rather than a son, is born in prison. It is not known in what form the story came into Greene's hands. Perhaps it is a retelling, in Greene's own fashion, of the account he would have heard. Romantic adventures of the Greek type are built around the narrative. For example,

the pastoral scene, along the lines of Lyle's euphistic precedent, is reminiscent of the Greek Longus *Daphnis and Chloe* scene. Moreover, Shakespeare himself combined the pastoral with historical events.

Greene's tale has a certain similarity to a manuscript of the sixteenth century, discovered by Narbutas, repeated by Furness.³⁵ However, the manuscript contains so many errors, that its authenticity is doubtful. For example, the son of the duchess of Tesen, Psemislav, is called her brother, and the date of the marriage between Ziemovit and Liudmila is somehow entered, although dates are generally disregarded by the folk mind. It would seem that this manuscript is merely an extended account of the report by King Casimir's chronicler. Nevertheless, this extended account, if it is in any way related to the folkways, has some marks of authenticity. A certain parallel, for example, could be drawn between the oracle (Act 3, scene 1) and the journey to the Holy Land. Also, Shakespeare's Camillo, raised by Leontes from low rank, had been a cupbearer, just as Dobek was. Antigone is torn by a bear (Act 3, scene 3), whereas Dobek is torn by horses.

The deed of Margaret, Henry's step-sister, calls to mind Shakespeare's Pauline, who is not mentioned at all in Greene's work. This gives Caro reason to believe that Greene's novel was not the only that Shakespeare used, and that another work could have been existent, built on the same story but with variation. He is led to suspect this even more from the reversal of the roles of Greene's and Shakespeare's chief protagonists. Could it not have been, asks Caro, that "the king of Silesia" became "the king of Sicily," as it has been known to happen in the Middle Ages ? ³⁶

In addition, Simrock's observations of a long prevalent theory among the English that the tale originated from the play gave Caro grounds to retain the Ziemovit-Vytautas history. In both Shakespearean plays the historical event with its subsequent intrigue finally pass into a romantic fairy tale.

Although Caro makes no objection to the theory that Shakespeare may have availed himself of Greene's work, he does advance another hypothesis: that both Greene and Shakespeare may have used one and the same source, developing similar plots with different details. This view is also held by Max Koch and Karl Fouquet; it is not dismissed by H. H. Furness.

Another question is how that original piece, or at least the story, could have come to the attention of both Greene and Shakespeare. Usually the argument here is based on the marriage of princess Anne to Richard II, which had been mediated by Psemislav, son of Ziemovit's sister. "It would be a miracle," says Caro, "if at the English court of Queen Anne there would have been no talk about her distant cousin. But even without this, a stream of information from Prussia could have easily reached England, for relations between the two countries were at all times most cordial." ³⁷ From this might even have originated the old, no longer extant English play. The story might also have been known by Henry's minstrels, heralds, and balladeers.³⁸ In *The Winter's Tale* itself there is mention of fairy tale and ballad.

It is characteristic that Shakespeare, while transferring the action of *The Winter's Tale* to the south, in some scenes returns to the north, throwing across his work a "boreal veil," according to Caro. Even in Greene's novel, the child born in prison, when placed in the boat, is covered with branches against "the rough weather." This is the weather that Prospero speaks about, telling Miranda of his exile. The scene in which Shakespeare's Antigonus perishes from a bear takes place in a northern country. This would show that the setting of the action may have extended as far as Russia, all the more to cross Pandosto's territory with his beloved, Fawnia, calls herself "the daughter of the Russian emperor" (as also does the wife of Egistus, the king of Sicily, in Greene's novel).

With a single exception, no Lithuanian names occur in Greene's novel. Shakespeare changed all of Greene's names, retaining only Mopsa. The significance of the Lithuanian name in Greene's work was probably first pointed out by M. A. Biggs.³⁹ Here he leans on the words of Dorastus in Greene's novel, when Dorastus, attempting to conceal his true identity in order to escape punishment (for Pandosto and Egistus were enemies), says: "I am called Meleagrus and am of noble descent, born and raised in Trapolonia."

Caro considered Trapolonia to be Masovia. But actually Trapolonia was the name given to a larger region, the lands of Lithuania. On this Biggs comments: "Dorastus, wishing to cross Pandosto's territory with his beloved, Fawnia, calls himself 'knight from Trapolonia,' i.e. from Transpolonia, or the land beyond Poland, as Lithuania was called in the sixteenth century." This is supported by the Polish writer S. Kozmian, who finds similarities between Shakespeare's Florizel and Zigmantas Augustas and between Hermione and Radvilaitė, just as Caro had done between Florizel and Henry and between Hermione and Jadvyga.⁴⁰

Biggs also pointed out that Pandosto is in no way a Greek name, but simply a Slavic compound, derived from "pan" and "dostoiny" (a rich and powerful lord). It is not difficult to see that an English minstrel may have changed the common noun, overheard in a foreign country, into a proper one.

The problem of the "Bohemian sea" thus far has remained unsolved. This "sea" was taken by Shakespeare, without any doubt on his part, from Greene and was included in *The Winter's Tale* (Act 3, scene 3). Robert Greene was an educated person, holding a master's degree from the Oxford University of that time ("utriusque academiae in artibus magister"); therefore, he could not have been ignorant about the "Bohemian sea." But Shakespeare has borne the brunt of the change for this "ignorance." On this account even the alderman of Gotham asked John Taylor ("the water poet") how large was the

harbor of Bohemia, whether meat was to be had there, and when had a fleet of ships last arrived there (Taylor had visited Prague in 1620 and reported his impressions).[41](#)

This "Bohemian sea" has been the object of probably more written commentary than any other locality in Shakespeare's dramatic works. Sicily easily fades, though it might have originated from Silesia, as does Milan, which may have arisen from Vilnius, although all we have here is a replacement of one name or word by another.

For example, Lippmann refers to the "Bohemian sea" as "a strange inaccuracy" and is inclined to look for it in the South — in the Sicily-Apulia region. On the other hand, Fraenkel remains closer to the Baltic coast.[42](#) He recalls that the Czech Ottokar had helped the Teutonic Order seize Tvankste, which belonged to the Old Prussians; as a result of this victorious war, the city of Königsberg (Karaliaučius) came into being. To a minstrel not concerned with historical or geographical accuracy, this might have been sufficient indication that Bohemia extended to the Baltic Sea.[43](#)

Lately Ernst Künstler has found that the "Bohemian sea" is derived from Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini's *Gnomologia* (1551), where it is stated that Ottokar's territories reach from the Baltic Sea as far as the Adriatic.[44](#) Greene and Shakespeare probably learned about Piccolomini's "geography" through the Strassburg humanist Jakob Wimpheling, who was known in England and relied on Piccolomini in his work. But Künstler is more inclined to consider the Adriatic as the "Bohemian sea."

All the above-mentioned research would seem to show that the move instigated by J. Caro a hundred years ago, to uncover the possible influence of Eastern European history on Shakespeare's two last dramas has continued to our times. It is especially difficult to trace the specifically Eastern European elements in these plays, not only because they are covered by thick layers of time, but because Shakespeare himself did not have immediate access to his sources, but obtained them indirectly. To this day the early theory of Eastern European source of *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* has not been discounted. The long survival of his view alone suggests that the question merits a new serious consideration of the theory.

NOTES

- 1 Max Koch, "Boyles Shakespeares Wintermärchen und Sturm", *Englische Studien*, 1879, 9, p. 305.
- 2 Horace Howard Furness, *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia, 1892), vol. 9: "The Tempest", p. 307.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 348.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 320.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 315.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 343.
- 7 *The New Monthly Magazine*, 1841, p. 26.
- 8 Furness, *op. cit.*, vol. 9, p. 341.
- 9 W. Bell, *Shakespeare's Puck* (London, 1852), vol. II, p. 289.
- 10 J. M. Nosworthy, "The Narrative Sources of the Tempest", *The Review of English Studies* (Oxford), 1948, 24, pp. 281-292.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 284.
- 12 Karl Simrock, *Quellen des Shakespeare* (Bonn, 1872).
- 13 J. Tittmann, *Schauspiele aus dem 16. Jh.*, 1868, II, p. 151; see also Furness, *op. cit.*, vol. 9, p. 342.
- 14 Furness, *op. cit.*, vol. 9, pp. 325-341, printed the translation of *Die schoene Sidea* but omitted the dramatic personae with Lithuanian names.
- 15 Jacob Caro, "Die historischen Elemente in Shakespeare's 'Sturm' und 'Wintermärchen'", *Englische Studien*, 1878, 9, pp. 141-185.
- 16 D. C. McMurtrie, *The Book* (London, 1962), p. 224; see also *Lietuvių Enciklopedija* (Lithuanian Encyclopedia, Boston), vol. 14, p. 488.
- 17 Albert Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany* (London, 1865); contains Ayres's *Comedia von der schoenen Sidea*. pp. 1-75, taken from Ayres's *Opus Theatricum* (1618).
- 18 Caro, *op. cit.*
- 19 Pius II (Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini), "De Lituania", *Historia. De statu Europae sub Friderico III* (Roma, 1509).
- 20 Caro, *op. cit.*, p. 158.
- 21 R. Boyle, *Shakespeares Wintermärchen und Sturm* (St. Petersburg, 1875), p. 8.
- 22 Wilibald Wodick, *Jacob Ayres Dramen in ihrem Verhaeltnis zur einheimischen Literatur und zum Schauspiel der englischen Komedianten* (Halle, 1912), p. 76.
- 23 Karl Jakob Fouquet, Ayres's "*Sidea*", *Shakespeare's "Tempest" und das Maerchen* (Marburg, 1929), p. 99.
- 24 Furness, *op. cit.*, vol. 9, p. 348.
- 25 Max Förster, "Quellen", *Shak. Jahrbuch*, 1913, vol. 43, p. 231; Gustav Heinrich, "Ayres und Shakespeare", *Magyar Shakespeare-Tar* (Budapest, 1914). Review of Heinrich's article by Arthur Weber, *Shak. Jahrbuch*, 1918, vol. 54, pp. 157-158.
- 26 Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

- 27 Pandosto reprinted by Furness, *op. cit.*
- 28 Furness, *op. cit.*, vol. 9, p. 321.
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 *Ibid.*
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 323.
- 32 John Clark Jordan, *Robert Greene* (New York, 1916).
- 33 J. (Caro), "Ueber die eigentliche Quelle des Wintermaerchens von Shakespeare", *Magazin fuer die Litteratur des Auslandes*, 1863, vol. 64, pp. 392-394.
- 34 Joannis de Czarnkowo, *Chronicon Polonorum* (Monumenta Poloniae Historica), 1824-77, II, 92.
- 35 Furness, *op. cit.*, "The Winter's Tale", pp. 322-323.
- 36 Caro, *op. cit.*, p. 176.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- 38 M. A. Biggs, "The Origin of the Winter's Tale", *Notes and Queries*, 1917, ser. 12, 3:164-165.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 164.
- 40 Wodick, *op. cit.*, p. 609.
- 41 Furness, *op. cit.*, vol. 13, p. 140.
- 42 E. O. Lipmann, "Die Kueste von Bohemen im 'Wintermaerchen'", *Shak. Jahrbuch*, 1872, 27:115-123.
- 43 Ludwig Fraenkel, "Der Streit um die Kueste von Boehmen im 'Wintermaerchen'", *Shak. Jahrbuch*, 1989, 34:346-357.
- 44 Ernst Künstler, "Boehmen am Meer", *Shak. Jahrbuch*, 1955, 91:212-216.