Elizabethan Views of the "Other": French, Spanish, and Russians in *Love's Labor's Lost*

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The abundant use of foreign settings and characters throughout Shakespeare's canon provides us with a basis for conjecture about his own perspective on various nationalities, and perhaps that of Elizabethans in general. Admittedly, it may not always be possible to distinguish between the dramatist's personal biases and his appropriation of popular prejudices for dramatic effect. While he was not above caricaturizing foreigners (for example, the Welsh Sir Hugh Evans and the French Dr. Caius in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*),[1] Shakespeare often demonstrates a more sophisticated international outlook than what we know to have been the popular Elizabethan sense of the differences between the English and other peoples.[2] *Love's Labour's Lost* serves as an excellent text for examining his depiction of foreigners, because it brings together French lords and ladies, a Spaniard, noblemen masquerading as Russians, and some comic lowlife figures who seem to have wandered into the French royal preserve from an English village.[3] At the same time, an understanding of England's relations with France, Spain, and Russia from the 1570s to the 1590s can illuminate some of the oddities in this charming but perplexing play.

During the reign of Edward VI (r. 1547-1553), England was inundated with French Huguenots and other foreign Protestants seeking refuge from persecution. Many of the French stayed on into the reigns of Mary (r. 1553-1558) and Elizabeth I, finding employment as tutors and teaching principles of humanism along with the French language. To the English, French culture set an unattainably high standard of excellence.[4] French was the language of choice for many English courtiers, according to observers as early as 1550 and as late as 1591.[5] The English nobility of the late 16th century also employed numerous French riding masters, French dancing masters, French cooks, and French instructors in the (Italian) art of fencing. French imports included

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wines, manuals of needlework, and—most notably—fashionable apparel.[6] French visitors to the English court were treated with every courtesy. It was in the best interests of Queen Elizabeth (r. 1558-1603) to maintain good relations with France, especially in view of the Vatican's efforts to promote a Spanish invasion of England. To that end, Elizabeth prolonged for thirteen years the negotiations for a marriage between herself and a member of the French (Catholic) royal family. Even after her ally Henri de Navarre suddenly converted to Catholicism in July 1593 (in his immortal words, "Paris vaut une messe"), Elizabeth maintained their alliance, though she vented her feelings in a mildly chastising letter to him: "It is dangerous to do evil, even for a good end."[7]

Most Elizabethans did not share in the cordial sentiments of the queen and her court toward the French. Indeed, Hoenselaars claims that "the influx of foreigners during the second half of the sixteenth century placed a heavy burden on the native economy and coupled nascent national awareness with a strident form of popular xenophobia."[8] With reference to the 1590s, he notes further that "xenophobia and clashes between Englishmen and foreigners may have been rampant among the lower and middle classes at times; but in learned circles and among the aristocracy the exchange of culture and ideas thrived in an atmosphere of cordiality."[9] Shakespeare's history plays, according to Cumberland Clark, "reflected the national prejudice against France born of centuries of struggle," [10] and they appeal to a "crude" "patriotism."[11] Thomas Nashe's comment in *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1587) typifies the English commoner's view of the French: "What is there in France to be learned more than in England, but falsehood in fellowship, perfect slovenry, to love no man but for my pleasure, to swear 'Ah par la mort Dieu', when a man's hams are scabbed."[12] Estienne Perlin, a French priest who spent two years in England and Scotland, published his observations in Paris in 1558. He reported that "the people of this nation hate the French to death, considering us their old enemies, and universally call us *France shent*, *France dog*, that is to say 'despicable Frenchman,' 'French dog,' and also call us 'whoreson,' 'villain,' 'son of a bitch,' ... It annoys me that these peasants, in their own country, spit in our faces, whereas when they come to France, they are honored and revered like little gods; that is, the French prove themselves to be open-hearted and noble-spirited."[13]

The image of the French that comes across in *Love's Labour's Lost* accords more closely with the courtly attitude than with that of the populace. With respect to Spaniards and Russians, there seems to have been less divergence between the aristocrat's and the commoner's view of the "other": Spain was the arch-enemy, and the Russians could safely be regarded as figures of fun. Even so, in consideration of vicissitudes in English foreign policy during the reign of Elizabeth I, the date of composition of *Love's Labour's Lost* is pertinent. Its date, moreover, is germane to our interpretation of Shakespeare's treatment of the French characters in the play. In his groundbreaking studies of the historical background to *Love's Labour's Lost*, the French scholar Abel Lefranc pointed out that the play is, "in fact, the representation of a scintillating episode in our history. ... The events that form the basis for the play occurred precisely between 1578 and 1584. ... The very substance of the play, far more than previous scholars have imagined, is impregnated with quite recognizable French elements. ... Indeed, the work stands as testimony that the dramatist had a virtually impeccable and absolutely amazing aquaintance with aspects of France and Navarre of the period that could have been known to only a very limited number of people. ... One is led to suspect that the author, whoever he was, must have sojourned for a time at the court of Henri de Navarre and of Marguerite de Valois."[14] If Lefranc is correct—and there is, indeed, other evidence linking the play to the early dates that he specifies—then the play offers not so much an image of "Frenchness" as an ordinary Elizabethan would have perceived it, but rather some specific portraits of individual members of the nobility who happened to be French.

Our *terminus ad quem* for the dating of *Love's Labour's Lost* is the 1598 publication of the quarto edition. We know by its title page that this was a revised version. That page reads: "A Pleasant Conceited Comedie called, Loves labors lost. As it was presented before her Highness this last Christmas. Newly corrected and augmented By W. Shakespere. Imprinted at London by W.W. for Cutbert Burby. 1598." Further indications of revision include the repeated lines in IV.3 (lines 292-314 are echoed in lines 315ff); a similar redundancy in V.2;[15] and the use of generic names (King, Braggart, Boy, Clown, Constable, Pedant, Curate) in some scenes for the characters named Ferdinand of Navarre, Don Armado, Moth, Costard, Dull, Holofernes, and Nathaniel in other scenes.[16]

The dating of the earlier version or versions of *Love's Labour's Lost* must be conjectured according to topical references in the text. Numerous internal references point to 1578 as the original date of composition,[17] and this is corroborated by the external evidence that *The Double Maske: A Maske of Amasones* and *A Maske of Knights* was presented at court on 11 January 1579 to honor the French envoy Simier, whose coming had been announced three months earlier.[18] Described in the records of the Court Revels as "an entertainment in imitation of a tournament between six ladies and a like number of gentlemen who surrendered to them," *The Double Maske* may well have been the Ur-*Love's Labour's Lost*.[19] A piece depicting French ladies and knights engaged in a combat of wit would certainly have been considered appropriate entertainment for Simier and his entourage. Of the internal evidence, most compelling is the fact that Euphuism—of which *Love's Labour's Lost* is universally acknowledged to be a textbook example—was a courtly fad in 1578-79, and even a year or so later the play's witticisms and in-jokes about that linguistic affectation among members of the court would have been quite stale. Earlier in 1578 the Queen had made a progress during which Thomas Churchyard presented a pageant of Nine Worthies, apparently just as ineptly as the one we see in *Love's Labour's Lost.*[20]

In France that same year, the Duc d'Alençon gave an elaborate entertainment which included soldiers masquerading as Russians.[21] Pierre de la Primaudaye's *L'Académie française*, a treatise on four young gentlemen of Anjou who spend their days in self improvement through study, exercise, and moral conversation, was published in French in 1577 and may be considered a probable source for the play.[22] And of particular significance is the "scintillating episode" to which Lefranc alludes: on 2 October 1578, Marguerite de Valois met with her husband, Henri de Navarre, after a two-year separation. She had travelled to the south of France with her "flying squadron" (*escadron volant*) of attractive maids-of-honor for the reunion in Nérac, but religious factionalism was so intense at the time that the Protestant husband and his Catholic wife could not safely reside in the same city, a situation echoed in the exclusion of the Princess from Ferdinand of Navarre's court in *Love's Labour's Lost.* Another concern of Henri de Navarre and Marguerite was her unpaid dowry, against which he was holding parts of Aquitaine; this too parallels the business discussed by Ferdinand of Navarre and the Princess in the play.[23] Despite these problems, the encounter was celebrated with various festivities and entertainments, including some held outdoors in the lovely park of the chateau de Nérac. Lefranc notes that textual allusions to the park that is the setting for *Love's Labour's Lost* evoke the milieu just as Marguerite de Valois describes it in her memoirs.[24] Her memoirs record also that "the King my Husband being followed by a handsome troupe of lords and gentlemen, as honorable as the finest gallants I've ever seen at court; and there was nothing less than admirable about them, except that they were Huguenots."[25] Even the "Nine Worthies" figure prominently in the gathering at Nérac. The royal chateaux at Pau and at Nérac were furnished with two series of large tapestries depicting the Nine Worthies. French court records show that in November 1578 one complete set of these tapestries was transported from Pau to Nérac, presumably for the enjoyment of Marguerite, her mother, and her maids of honor.[26] That Shakespeare had these tapestries in mind when he wrote the play is evident in Costard's reproach to Sir Nathaniel for his poor performance as Alexander the Great (V.2.569-70): "O! sir, you have overthrown Alisander the conqueror. You will be scraped out of the painted cloth for this."

There is some evidence testifying to an interim revision of *Love's Labour's*

Lost between 1578 and 1598, probably in 1592.[27] A confusing attribution of lines in II.1 of the Quarto raises the possibility that an earlier version had "only three pairs of lovers."[28] This squares nicely with the fact that the names of Maréchal Biron (Berowne) and Duc de Longueville (Longaville) were well known in England even before 1591, when Elizabeth sent troops under the Earl of Essex to aid the cause of Henri IV of France, but the Duc de Mayenne (Dumain) remained Henri's foe until 1593.[29] Thus, the intermediate version—making the original six generic pairs of ladies and gentlemen (Amasones and Knights) into three couples with specific personal names—would have been written before 1593, leaving the incorporation of Dumain and Katherine for the version published in quarto in 1598. What we have then is a comedy originally written as a playful spoof of Euphuism combined with a tribute to the French manners and fashions that were so admired at the English court in the 1570s; later revised to tie the attractive leading characters to actual historical figures who were sympathetically regarded by the English (possibly even using their real names, judging by the fact that the Princess of France is occasionally listed as Queen in the Quarto); and finally revised—to make the politically sensitive identities less obvious to the man in the street, while further amusing the court by giving Ferdinand and his fellow oath-takers their comeuppance at the end of the play—after 1593, when Henri de Navarre converted to Catholicism, forswearing his Protestantism. As Berowne comments in IV.3.359: "It is religion to be thus forsworn."

Numerous other details in *Love's Labour's Lost* betray Shakespeare's first-hand knowledge of personalities and circumstances at the French court.[30] There were, for example, at the court of Henri IV actual people with the same names as secondary characters in the play: Antoine Boyet, minister of finance; de La Motte, a squire like his namesake Moth; and Marcadé.[31] Lefranc notes that "the art of rhyming was practiced at the court of Navarre perhaps more than at any other: Marguerite de Valois composed many love poems, as did Henri."[32] The infamously amorous Henri de Navarre also had a habit of writing his love poems on both sides of the page with verses filling the margins, folding them like letters, and drawing around the wax seal an emblem signifying a kiss.[33] Thus the Princess describes the letter she has received from Ferdinand: "...as much love in rhyme/ As would be cramm'd up in a sheet of paper,/ Writ o' both sides the leaf, margent and all,/ That he was fain to seal on Cupid's name" (V.2.6-9). A few lines later, Katharine speaks of her sister, who died of love; this too has its historical counterpart in the death of the lovely young Hélène de Tournon at Brabant in the summer of 1577, as recounted in the memoirs of Marguerite de Valois.[34] These are but a few of the many specific allusions and brain-teasing references clearly intended for the amusement of a coterie audience. From this we might generalize that in the writing of *Love's*

Labour's Lost Shakespeare was not thinking of the French characters as national types, but as avatars of individuals known to members of Elizabeth's court.

According to Cumberland Clark, the "anti-French feeling" of the Elizabethan chronicle plays and of "the English nation as a whole" manifests itself in the imputation of three chief faults to the French: treachery, fickleness, and cowardice.[35] *Love's Labour's Lost* does imply fickleness in the French king and his three lords who first break their oaths "not to see ladies" for three years, and who later swear oaths to the wrong women.[36] However, unlike the patriotically-motivated history plays, this comedy geared to courtly sensibilities offers largely sympathetic portrayals of the French. The four couples are physically attractive, well-mannered, quick-witted, and act with the best of intentions. Even the business dealings between Ferdinand and the Princess are conducted with the utmost grace (II.1.128-178). It is possible, however, that some of the same qualities that delighted the audience at court could have taken on quite different overtones in the popular perception. The banter of the ladies among themselves, egged on by Boyet, in IV.1 is so ribald that Costard, upon hearing it, marvels: "O' my troth, most sweet jests! most incony vulgar wit; When it comes so smoothly off, so obscenely as it were, so fit" (IV.1.143-4). Such "sweet vulgarity and smooth obscenity" is seen as very French by the 19th-century German critic G.G. Gervinus,[37] and it is possible that the average Elizabethan may have taken a similarly jaundiced view of fine ladies speaking smut. At the same time, the French characters' self-conscious displays of refined rhetoric and manners would have struck the level-headed average Englishman as excessive. Yet if excess of refinement is regarded as a fault, it must be admitted that such matters are relative. Among the upper-class characters, it is the Princess's attendant Boyet who truly demonstrates affectation of speech and manners pushed to the extreme. Indeed, Berowne describes him as "the ape of form, monsieur the nice ... Honey-tongu'd Boyet" (V.2.325,335). The irony of seeing Boyet as an exemplar of French excess is that the character was undoubtedly intended to be a caricature of Sir Philip Sidney, whose relationship with Edward De Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, was colored by considerable animosity, especially after their oft-reported "falling out at tennis"[38] in September 1579. Sidney's affectation was well known at court. Furthermore, he blatantly plagiarized lines from both Edmund Spenser and Edward De Vere for a pastoral he presented at Wilton. Sidney's habit of literary theft (many of his poems are verbatim translations from the French of Ronsard and Desportes)[39] undoubtedly inspired Berowne's description of Boyet:

> This fellow pecks up wit, as pigeons pease,
> And utters it again when God doth please.
> He is wit's pedlar, and retails his wares
> At wakes, and wassails, meetings, markets, fairs. (V.2.315-8).

Thus, Boyet—on balance the only less than sympathetic French character in *Love's Labour's Lost*—was, to the knowing audience at court, not representative of a Frenchman at all. Unquestionably, Shakespeare wrote *Love's Labour's Lost* from a courtly perspective, and the court's attitude toward France was cordial, at least during the period from 1578 to 1593. Could the play's 1598 publication (the first printed play to bear the name "William Shake-speare") have been a calculated step taken under Elizabeth's encouragement? She would have realized that the ordinary Englishman would view it as satire on the effete, frivolous, Catholic French. This would serve to reinforce Protestantism among the citizenry while she herself, above the fray, could maintain strong diplomatic ties with France.

England's attitude toward Spain was considerably less ambiguous. The English people hated Spain even when their queen, Mary Tudor (Elizabeth's older half-sister) was married to Philip of Spain (the future Felipe II). During Elizabeth's reign, Spain controlled the New World, Portugal, the Kingdom of Naples, the Duchy of Milan, and the Low Countries, including the commercial port of Antwerp. The Pope was urging Felipe II to employ his nation's huge "invincible" galleons in an attack on England, and thus Elizabeth sustained her tenuous alliance with France (even after Anglo-French diplomatic relations were seriously shaken by the slaughter of 30,000 Huguenots in the St Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572) as a means of gaining time to build up England's naval force. According to Cumberland Clark, English hatred of Spain was "at once racial, imperial, commercial, and religious."[40] Anti-Spanish feelings are evident in the persistent English literary stereotype of the Spaniard "which comprises most of the vices and shortcomings known to man," according to William S. Maltby. "When the Spaniard has the upper hand, his cruelty and hauteur are unsupportable. When reduced to his proper stature by some unimpeachably nordic hero, he is cringing and mean-spirited, a coward whose love of plots and treacheries is exceeded only by his incompetence in carrying them out."[41] The English view of Spain as a "cruel and barbarous nation"[42] was corroborated by the 1583 publication of an English translation of the *Brevissima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias* (1542) by Bartolomé de las Casas, chronicling the shocking acts of cruelty perpetrated by Spaniards against the innocent natives of the New World. Elizabeth herself sanctioned English anti-Hispanism with the official publication of her propagandistic *Declaration of the Causes Moving the Queen of England to give aid to the Defence of the People afflicted and oppressed in the Lowe Countries* (1585), which described the bloodthirstiness of Spanish troops in the Netherlands.[43] England's defeat of the attacking Spanish Armada in 1588 marked the high point of anti-Spanish feeling in England, and pamphleteers duly sensationalized the event. By exaggerating the size of the invading fleet, an implication of Spanish incompetence was added to Spain's reputation for inhuman barbarism.[44]

Given the vehemence of those attitudes, it seems surprising that Don Armado, the "refined traveller of Spain" (I.1.162) in *Love's Labour's Lost*, should be such a complex character in whom there is no imputation of villainy and very little of cowardice. Certainly, he is a ridiculous figure, a source of amusement for the courtiers and the butt of many jokes, verbally one-upped even by his diminutive squire Moth. Yet Ferdinand's description of him bears little relationship to either the official or the popular Elizabethan conception of Spaniards:

> A man in all the world's new fashion planted,
> That hath a mint of phrases in his brain;
> One who the music of his own vain tongue
> Doth ravish like enchanting harmony;
> A man of complements, whom right and wrong
> Have chose as umpire of their mutiny:
> This child of fancy, that Armado hight,
> For interim to our studies shall relate
> In high-born words the worth of many a knight
> From tawny Spain, lost in the world's debate. (I.1.163-172)

The qualities attributed to him here are: fashionable (Euphuistic) verbal display, conceit, courteous manners with perhaps an element of affectation, punctiliousness about the rules governing affairs of honor (duelling), high birth or good breeding, and a patriotic delight in bragging about little-known Spaniards. This largely sympathetic description undoubtedly survives from the 1578 version of the play, not only because of its reference to Euphuism as a "new fashion," but also because Elizabeth was then stilll concerned with buying time for an English naval build-up by keeping diplomatic channels open with Felipe II.[45] The more ridiculous attributes of the character may well have been added after the 1588 defeat of the Armada, at which time his name would have been changed from Braggart to Armado.

Gustav Ungerer has proposed that Don Armado is based upon a highly visible Spanish turncoat, Antonio Pérez, who had lost his post as chief minister under Felipe II through his own treacherous attempt to undermine relations between the Spanish king and his half-brother, Don John of Austria. Pérez escaped to Europe where he carried out a propaganda war of revenge against Felipe II, arriving in England, on a mission for Henri de Navarre, in April 1593. Ungerer analyzes various ways in which Pérez resembled Armado: both are Spanish; both write letters in Senecan prose style; both are described as "peregrinate" and "odd;" Armado's relationship with Jaquenetta resembles that of Pérez with Doña Juana Coello.[46] The description of Don Armado in V.1.9-14 apparently applied recognizably to Pérez: "his humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behavior vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it." However, before we extend this commentary from Pérez to Spaniards in general, it must be noted that these lines are spoken by Holofernes, who is, if anything, even more ridiculous a character than Don Armado.[47]

It is important to remember that the figure of the braggart soldier or *miles gloriosus* originated in Roman comedy and became a staple of the Italian commedia dell'arte, where it was traditional to depict the swashbuckling *capitano* as a Spaniard, perhaps in part because the foreign accent served as an added source of humor for Italian audiences. O.J. Campbell traces the evolution of the *capitano* in the Italian comedy, showing how "most of the roughness and noisy extravagance of the role disappeared to be replaced by the polished elegance of a gloved gentleman, who carries on his warfare with the utmost dignity and seriousness".[48] Campbell rightly notes that Shakespeare's Don Armado is "no swashbuckler and windy braggart, but a fop in manners and a virtuoso in speech."[49] He further points out that the most famous of all Italian commedia dell'arte *capitanos* was Francesco Andreini, who was well known for his incorporation of literary conceits into his speeches. Andreini had, like Don Armado, "a mint of phrases in his brain" (I.1.164). As a member of the Gelosi company, Andreini performed before the French court in 1571, 1574, 1576, 1599, and 1603-4.[50] It is probable that Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, saw the performances when he was visiting the court in Paris in 1576. Only three commedia dell'arte troupes are known to have visited Elizabethan England (in 1573, 1576, and 1578), and records of their performances are limited to London and to the court on progress. Yet most scholars agree with Richard David's recognition of the play's debt to the commedia dell'arte. He states: "Armado would have been impossible without the Captain and his kin."[51]

Other theories have been put forth to tie Don Armado to various known personages. In IV.1.99-101, Boyet says: "This Armado is a Spaniard, that keeps here in court;/ a phantasime, a Monarcho, and one that makes sport/ To the prince and his book-mates." Monarcho was a real person, a half-crazed, vainglorious Italian hanger-on at Elizabeth's court. Among the writers who recorded his antics was Thomas Churchyard.[52] Eva Turner Clark emphasizes a political subtext to the play: she sees Don Armado as representative of Don John of Austria and Jaquenetta as Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, who intrigued with Don John against Elizabeth.[53] Some have seen both Don Armado and Holofernes as caricatures of John Florio, a prominent Italian resident in England.[54] Finally, Armado is seen by Oxfordians as one facet of the probable author of the play, Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, who had been transformed into an "Italianated" Englishman during his European tour of 1575-6. Garbed in the latest fashions from the continent and leading the Euphuist faction at court in a "show-off" use of language, Oxford often functioned as a self-mocking "court jester" for Elizabeth.[55] The point of identifying all these optional prototypes for Don Armado is to suggest, again, that the character does not necessarily or primarily represent a Spaniard or a Spanish national type. As Cordasco observes: "For the spectator, Armado was the contemporary Spaniard; for the initiate, he was undoubtedly much more."[56]

When it comes to the Muscovites (a synonym for Russians) in *Love's Labour's Lost*, there can be no question that the portrayal is a caricature. The Muscovite sequence is a set piece, a masking dance, in which Ferdinand and friends assume stereotypical traits to pass themselves off as exotic foreigners. Their entrance is cued by a trumpet, and they are preceded by blackamoors. The costume references are sparse: "disguised like Russians, and visored" (V.2.157), "in shapeless gear" (V.2.303), and "in Russian habit" (V.2.368). The original intent of the four lords toward the ladies is to "with some strange pastime solace them" (IV.3.373), to pave the way to Love with "revels, dances, masks, and merry hours" (IV.2.375). Boyet reports to the ladies that "their purpose is to parle, to court and dance" (V.2.122). We learn also from Boyet that the men have taken the trouble to teach Moth to speak with a Russian accent and to adopt a certain style of movement: "Action and accent did they teach him there;/ 'Thus must thou speak, and thus thy body bear'" (V.2.100). Presumably the disguised men adopt the same accent and movement, for Rosalind later recalls "their rough carriage so ridiculous" (V.2.306). Before they even appear, the Princess decides that "they do it but in mockery merriment" (V.2.139); and when they leave, she says: "Twenty adieus, my frozen Muscovites" (V.2.265). Returning to the ladies as themselves, the lords seem genuinely surprised that the ladies saw through their disguises (V.2.385-395). All these indications suggest that Elizabethan convention ascribed some readily recognizable traits to Russian nationals.

Russia had been "discovered" by the English only in 1553, when a ship commanded by Richard Chancellor left an Arctic expedition to seek refuge in the White Sea; Chancellor then accepted the Tsar's invitation to visit Moscow. A Russia Company was chartered the following year to exploit opportunities for trade between the two realms. "By the end of the century," according to Lloyd E. Berry and Robert O. Crummey, "Elizabeth's subjects had accumulated a store of experience of Muscovite life and customs far richer than that of any other European nation."[57] Travellers' reports available to Elizabethan readers were: accounts of the voyages of Richard Chancellor in 1553, Anthony

Jenkinson in 1557, George Turberville in 1568-9, and Sir Thomas Randolph in 1568-9, all published by Hakluyt in 1589; Giles Fletcher's important work, *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, describing his year in Russia, 1588-89, published in 1591. (The *Travels* of Sir Jerome Horsey, based upon his visits and years of residence in Russia between 1573 and 1591, existed only in manuscript until 1856.) Despite differences in tone (due to the different personalities of the observers), these documents are consistent in their descriptions of Russian character, lifestyle, manners, and dress. The Elizabethan travellers all viewed the Russians as backward, rude and cruel to one another, hard-drinking, and adulterous. Fletcher, for example, noted "their manner of bringing up (void of all good learning and civil behavior).... [T]he whole country is filled with rapine and murder. They make no account of the life of a man. ... As for the truth of his word the Russe for the most part maketh small regard of it so he may gain by a lie and breach of his promise."[58] The observation about Russian lying[59] might perhaps seem pertinent with reference to the lords who forswear their oaths. Rosaline's comment on the "Muscovites" after their exit—"gross, gross; fat, fat" (V.2.268)—accords with Fletcher's description of the Russians: "they are for the most part of a large size and of very fleshy bodies, accounting it a grace to be somewhat gross and burly, and therefore they nourish and spread their beards to have them long and broad."[60] Some excerpts from the verse epistles of George Turberville will further indicate what Shakespeare envisioned for the masque of Muscovites:

> The Russie men are round of bodies, fully fac'd,
> The greatest part with bellies big that overhang the waist,
> Flat-headed for the most, with faces nothing fair
> But brown by reason of the stove and closeness of the air.
>
> ....
>
> Their garments be not gay nor handsome to the eye:
> A cap aloft their heads they have that standeth very high,
> Which ***kolpak*** they do term. They wear no ruffs at all.
> The best have collars set with pearl, ***rubashka*** they do call.
> Their shirts in Russie long, they work them down before,
> And on the sleeves with colored silks two inches good or more.
> Aloft their shirts they wear a garment jacketwise
> High ***odnoriadka*** ; and about his burly waist he ties
> His ***portki***, which instead of better breeches be;
> Of linen cloth that garment is, no codpiece is to see.
>
> ....
>
> And over all a ***shuba*** furr'd, and thus the Russie goes.[61]

Like the French and Spanish references in *Love's Labour's Lost*, the Muscovite sequence is rooted in actual circumstances known to members of the English court. According to Horsey, Tsar Ivan IV ("the Terrible") was contemplating a proposal of marriage to Elizabeth in 1571. Although nothing came of that impulse, Ivan IV continued to dream of marriage to an Englishwoman, preferably a close relative of the "virgin queen." An English doctor at his court described Lady Mary Hastings, daughter of the second Earl of Huntingdon, and the tsar determined to make her his wife, even though he was still married to his seventh wife. To that end, he sent Fyodor Pisemsky as envoy extraordinary to negotiate the marriage and to bring back a portrait of the lady. Pisemsky arrived in London in September 1582, but it was the following May before he was able to see Lady Mary.[62] Horsey described the encounter: "Her majesty caused that lady to be attended on with divers great ladies and maids of honor and young noblemen, the number of each appointed to be seen by the said ambassador in York House garden. She put on a stately countenance accordingly. The ambassador, attended with divers other noblemen and others, was brought before her ladyship; cast down his countenance; fell prostrate to her feet, rose, ran back from her, his face still towards her, she and the rest admiring at his manner. Said by an interpreter it did suffice him to behold the angel he hoped should be his master's spouse; commended her angelical countenance, state, and admirable beauty. She was after called by her familiar friends in court the empress of Muscovy."[63] Thus, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, when Longaville exclaims "O sweet Maria, empress of my love!" (IV.3.53), the courtly audience would have remembered Mary's missed opportunity to be empress of Muscovy and enjoyed a good laugh.

And again we see that—even though Ferdinand, Berowne, Longaville, and Dumain assume stereotypical traits that would identify them as Russians in the popular imagination—setting the play in its true historical context yields references to specific individuals and circumstances known to the court, and the comedic value of these in-jokes must have far outweighed that of facile caricature when performed for its intended audience. The inescapable conclusion is that while Shakespeare may not have been averse to having public playhouse audiences find humor in broad ethnic and national stereotypes, he was primarily writing for the more refined sensibilities of a coterie audience.

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Notes

[1] It should be noted that Shakespeare's use of caricature could be said to encompass his fellow Englishmen, such as the tavern lowlife surrounding Falstaff. Typical of the many observations on English character that are found in Shakespeare's work is Falstaff's comment: "It was always yet the trick of our English nation, if they have a good thing, to make it too common" (*Henry IV, Part 2*, I.2).

[2] See, for example, Marienstras, 101-3; Hoenselaars, 32.

[3] Campbell demonstrates that Don Armado as well as the English types (Costard, Holofernes, Nathaniel, and even Dull) have their origins in the stock figures of the Italian commedia dell'arte; see especially pp. 33-43 of his article.

[4] According to Lee, for example, "in some forty French provincial towns printing presses were at work without intermission from the earliest years of the sixteenth century, and were in constant process of multiplication in the hundred years that followed. ... There is nothing in the annals of the English Renaissance which can compare with this diffusion of intellectual energy and ambition" (26).

[5] Jacques Peletier du Mans, *Dialogues de l'Ortographe* (1550); Mellema (1591); both cited by Lee, 44.

[6] Lee, 47-53.

[7] Perry (her translation of Elizabeth's French), 297.

[8] Hoenselaars, 27.

[9] Ibid., 52.

[10] Cumberland Clark, 136.

[11] Ibid., 138.

[12] Lee, 50.

[13] From Perlin's *Description des royaulmes d'Angleterre et d'Ecosse* (Paris, 1558), cited by Lee, 59-60: "Les gens de ceste nation hayent à mort les Francoys, comme leurs vielz ennemis, et du tout nous appellent *France chenesve, France dogue*, qui est à dire 'maraultz François', 'chiens François', et autrement nous appellent *orson*, 'villains', 'filz de putring' .... Il me desplait que ces vilains, estans en leur pays, nous crachent à la face, et eulx, estans à la France, on les honore et revere comme petis dieux; en ce, les Francois se monstrent francs de coeur et noble d'esperit." The English translation in the text is my own, as are other translations from the French, unless otherwise attributed.

[14] Lefranc's two-volume work *Sous le masque de William Shakespeare* (1919) includes an extensive analysis of *Love's Labour's Lost*. The statements cited here are from his 1936 article on the play, pp.411-2, 414-5.

[15] According to David, the redundant lines are "clearly an early draft, somehow left uncancelled by Shakespeare although he had written new lines for Rosaline and Berowne, and borrowed from the old for Dumain and Katharine" (p. 180, note to lines 809-14).

[16] See David, xxii.

[17] Will Shakspere of Stratford-upon-Avon would have been only fourteen years old in 1578, but it is hoped that the reader will examine the evidence objectively. It must be stated from the outset that this author brings an Oxfordian perspective to this study; that is, my research over the years has forced me, as a matter of intellectual honesty, to accept Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) as the most likely author of the plays and poems published under the pseudonym William Shake-speare.

[18] Simier's mission was to negotiate a marriage between Queen Elizabeth and the Duc d'Alençon, brother of Henri III (r. 1574-1589) and brother-in-law of Henri de Navarre, the future Henri IV (r. 1589-1610). The latter, a close friend of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, is generally acknowledged to have been the model for the character of Ferdinand of Navarre in *Love's Labour's Lost.* Among the textual references to the envoy Simier's suit on behalf of François, Duc d'Alençon is Costard's line (III.1.119): "O! marry me to one Frances—I smell some l'envoy, some goose in this."

[19] Eva Turner Clark, 136; Ogburn, 173.

[20] Thomas Churchyard, *A Discourse of the Queenes Maiesties entertainment in Suffolk and Norfolk: with a description of many things then presently seene* (1578). See comments on this event by Wikander, 6, 29, 32. See also Eva Turner Clark, 243. Churchyard, an associate of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, may have been the model for the character of Costard (Ogburn 198).

[21] Ogburn, 195.

[22] T. Bowes's English translation, *The French Academie*, was published in 1586; see excerpts in Bullough, 434-5.

[23] Eva Turner Clark, 183-4.

[24] Lefranc (1936), 412.

[25] Marguerite de Valois, 163.

[26] Lefranc (1936), 425-6.

[27] In 1592, Queen Elizabeth visited Oxford University in violation of her own 1561 statute forbidding the lodging of women on the premises of a college or cathedral; she had done this only twice before, in 1564 and in 1566. Thus she was guilty of an "oath forsworn" like Ferdinand and friends in the play. Performed at court, the play would have amused the Queen with its gently mocking reminder that she, like the Princess in the play, must be refused admittance to certain precincts (Eva Turner Clark 142-3).

See also Ruth Loyd Miller's essay in this volume.

[28] See David, xx.

[29] Civil war was at its height in France in 1589-94. In II.1.224-6 of the play, the Princess obliquely alludes to France's wars of religion when she tells her ladies that "this civil war of wits were much better us'd/ On Navarre and his book-men, for here 'tis abused."

[30] Edward De Vere spent time at the French court in the first months of 1575 and again in March and April of 1576. There he formed friendships with Marguerite de Valois and Henri de Navarre, the future "Reine Margot" and Henri IV. The warmth of the relationship between the latter and Oxford is evident in a letter (5 October 1595) to Oxford from the French king. The text of that letter is given in French and English in Eva Turner Clark, 131-2.

[31] Lefranc II (1919), 60; in his 1936 article Lefranc argues for the overlapping identification of Boyet with Marguerite de Valois's chancellor Guy du Faur Pibrac (1529-1584), a political opportunist of rare eloquence, who also accompanied her to Nérac in 1578.

[32] Ibid., 62.

[33] Ibid., 64-5.

[34] Ibid., 74-9; see also Lefranc (1936), 422-5.

[35] Cumberland Clark, 139.

[36] Henri de Navarre was a notorious womanizer, a trait which earned him the nickname le Vert-Galant. His mistresses included Jacqueline de Bueil (Contesse de Moret), Corisande (Contesse de Gramont), Charlotte des Essarts (Contesse de Romorantin), Antoinette Guercheville, Henriette d'Entragues, Esther Imbert, Charlotte of Montmorency, and most importantly, Gabrielle d'Estrées.

[37] G.G. Gervinus, *Shakespeare Commentaries* (1877); cited by Cumberland Clark, 145-6.

[38] *Hamlet* II.1.58.

[39] Looney I, 248-50.

[40] Cumberland Clark, p. 214.

[41] Maltby, 6.

[42] Ibid., 20.

[43] Ibid., 55.

[44] Ibid., 76-8.

[45] In a letter dated 20 December 1577, Elizabeth wrote to Felipe II: "We beg very affectionately that all suspicions may be banished from between us, if any such have been raised by the arts of wicked men with the object of destroying that close friendship which we enjoyed in our earlier years." On 16 March 1578, Elizabeth received Felipe II's ambassador Don Bernardino

de Mendoza, who had been instructed that Felipe II hoped to have Elizabeth "on our side and that as a friend and sister she will turn her arms as she promises to do, to our support" (Perry, 233-4).

[46] Ungerer II, 377-92.

[47] The intermediate revision of the play undoubtedly made Holofernes into a caricature of the pedant Gabriel Harvey, who publicly praised his benefactor Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, while privately satirizing him in verses that much resemble the speech by Holofernes quoted here. Note that as the scene continues Holofernes appears to be won over by Armado (whom some have seen as De Vere's mocking self-portrait). It is significant that in the pageant of the Nine Worthies, Holofernes is cast as Judas (Looney II, 244).

[48] Campbell, 24.

[49] Ibid., 23.

[50] Ibid., 25.

[51] David, xxxi.

[52] Churchyard was a longtime servant of Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. See David, 67, for further references to Monarcho.

[53] Eva Turner Clark, 157, 161.

[54] Sells, 212.

[55] In that capacity, Oxford's relationship to Elizabeth is echoed in that of Feste to Olivia and the Fool to King Lear. Among the many clues associating Oxford with Don Armado is the name itself: Armado is an anagram of "O drama"; that is, "O"xford's "drama" (Ogburn 196). There is also much of Oxford in both Berowne and Longaville; Berowne's speeches incorporate the identifying "O" almost to excess.

[56] Cordasco, 6.

[57] Berry and Crummey, xiii.

[58] Giles Fletcher in Berry and Crummey, 245.

[59] For an interesting analysis of Russian lying, see Edmund Wilson, *A Window on Russia* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1972), 203-6.

[60] Ibid., 241.

[61] Turberville "To Parker," in Berry and Crummey, 81.

[62] Payne and Romanoff, 406-9.

[63] Berry and Crummey, 301; see also Bullough, 442. According to Payne and Romanoff, Lady Mary was at first intrigued by the idea of becoming an empress, but, after learning more about Ivan the Terrible, begged Queen Elizabeth to get her out of the situation. Elizabeth directed Pisemsky to explain to the Tsar that Lady Mary's ill health would not permit her to make the difficult journey to Moscow (409).