'The Scene Vienna':

some Hapsburg elements in *Measure for Measure*

by Jan Cole

This essay represents some initial research in response to Christopher Dams' challenge to extend the approach taken by Richard Paul Roe in *The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* (2011) and to look at the plays in other European settings with respect to locations and what they might reveal of the author's knowledge. Christopher noted that *Measure for Measure* appears to exist in a Viennese vacuum, peopled by characters with Latin/Greek or English names. Could it be that Vienna is either a typographical error or an editorial gloss for some other city, perhaps Venice? The plot is driven by a draconian law against adultery, which to my mind has a Venetian ring. I could discern no local references to Vienna, or indeed to anywhere else at all. (DVS newsletter, 20.3, Spring 2013

This essay will try to ascertain, from the text and contemporary history, whether a Viennese location was originally intended. The only extant text of the play is that in the First Folio (1623). There appears to be at least one clear local reference to Vienna in the play, which is the name of the convent 'Isabella' is about to enter and which belongs to the order of Saint Clare. A church marked 'St Clare' certainly appears on Braun and Hogenberg's view of Vienna published in 1572, but more importantly the order of St Clare had existed in Vienna since the 13th century.
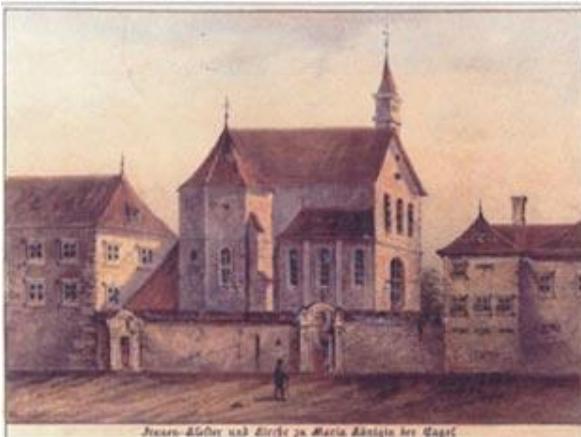
A new convent and church, close to the ducal palace, was built by Elizabeth of Austria, the widow of the French king Charles IX, between 1581 and 1583 on the site of the present Palais Pallavicini (built 1782-84) at Josephsplatz 5, Vienna. It is possible that this fact might be known at least to some travelled members of a theatre audience from that date onwards.

Klarissinnenkloster Maria, Königin der Engel (Convent of Poor Clares)

The heavy moralistic atmosphere of the play also reflects elements of Hapsburgian rule at this period, when the Catholic dynasty was eager to prevent any further spread of Protestantism in Europe.

The basic story of the play - the one on which Cinthio based his tale published in 1565 - had been circulating in southern Europe for some time, with slight variables in its setting, plot and the names of the characters. In most versions the names of the characters are Italian, but in some they are French. Why then was Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* set in Vienna? This question is difficult to answer with certainty.

Measure for Measure is certainly a 'problem play' in several ways. It is assumed (though the documentary authenticity has been questioned) that it was performed on 26 December 1604, the night before Oxford's daughter, Susan Vere, was married to Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery. If it was staged on this occasion, the play's emphasis on virginity and (despite the potential sexual immoralities of the plot) on legitimate sexual relations within marriage was presumably felt to be appropriate for a pre-nuptial celebration. Nothing is known of the play before this date or afterwards until it appeared in the *Comedies* section of the First Folio published in 1623. The play's known printed sources take us back to the years between 1565 and 1583. Giraldo Cinthio (1504-1573) included the tale in his prose work *Hecatommithi* (1565). George Whetstone (1550-1587) dramatised Cinthio's tale in English as a two-part play, *Promus and Cassandra* (1578), which was probably never staged. A little later Whetstone translated Cinthio's tale again, this time in prose, in his *Heptameron of Civil Discourses* (1582). Cinthio also dramatised his own prose tale as the tragic-comedy *Epitia* (published 1583).

Cinthio's tale was set in Innsbruck

In Cinthio's tale the ruler is not a 'Duke' but an 'Emperor' called 'Massimiano' or Maximilian, the name of two sixteenth-century Holy Roman Emperors and Hapsburg rulers, and the author of *Measure for Measure,* if following Cinthio, may have regarded this in itself as a directive to setting the play in Austria. Cinthio's location for the action is Innsbruck ('Inspruchi') in the western Tyrol. This was, indeed, the residence of the Emperor Maximillian in the 1490s and later of Ferdinand II, who became ruler of the Tyrol in 1564. Halfway between Munich and Verona, Innsbruck commands the northern access to the Brenner Pass, one of the lowest and easiest mountain passes across the Alps into Italy.

However, Whetstone's *Promus and Cassandra* situated the story in a city called Julio, following classical geography (Ptolemy's 'Juliobona') to match the classical names of his protagonists. The author and translator, Lewes Lewkenor (1560-1637) identified 'Juliobana' with Vienna, as did a French dictionary published in 1670. Whetstone's

sometime ruler of Julio was 'Corvinus, King of Hungary and Bohemia', and this relates to a real Corvinus who attacked Austria several times, installed a governor there, and died there in 1490 – see Draudt (2005) and Sjögren (1961).

The author of *Measure for Measure* (matching Whetstone's location) has the location as Vienna, but gave the ruler an Italian name ('Vincentio') and the Italian title of 'Duke'. In fact, the ruler of Vienna was an Emperor (Maximilian II, 1527-1576), followed by his son the Emperor Rudolph II (1562-1612) until 1583 when he moved his court to Prague, leaving his brother, Archduke Ernst (1553-1595) in charge of Vienna. Vienna was known as the seat of the Hapsburg rulers until 1583 and again from 1612.

The earliest known version of the tale was set in Milan

The earliest documented version of the story exists in a letter of 1547 written by Joseph Macarius, a Hungarian student living in Vienna, to a relative and benefactor living in Hungary. He told the story as follows:

> Two citizens of **a town near Milan** had a quarrel, resulting in one of them being fatally stabbed by the other. The perpetrator was arrested and thrown into prison. His beautiful wife tried every means to secure his pardon and release, requesting the same from **the chief magistrate who went by the name of 'the Spanish Count'**. The Count was a bachelor and, infatuated by her beauty, informed her that the only price he would accept for her husband's pardon would be possession of her.

> Not knowing what to do, she begged time to reflect on the proposition. She then consulted her relatives, particularly her brother-in-law, who advised that she should save her husband's life at any cost and that, since she was not a willing party to the act, her soul would remain free of sin. The day after she had submitted to the Count, she learnt that he had beheaded her husband. She reproached him with this but, finding that he turned a deaf ear to her, she travelled to Milan to consult **'Don Ferdinando Gonzaga, the brother of the Duke of Mantua and the Emperor's vice-regent for that province'**. Gonzaga advised the woman to keep silent.

> Two months later, he invited the magistrate and his citizens to a banquet **in Milan**, ordering the deceived wife to be present but hidden. After the banquet, Gonzaga called the magistrate aside to another room and informed him of his offence. He then ordered the magistrate to marry the woman and pay her 3,000 ducats as dowry. Conducting him back to the hall, the woman was called forth, together with a priest, and they were married. Gonzaga told the woman that her honour had been restored, but he ordered that the

magistrate should be beheaded the next day 'as a requital for this woman's first husband's death'. The sentence was carried out and approved of by the Emperor.

In the letter, Macarius noted that there were several versions of the story in circulation and wondered whether his correspondent hadn't heard a better one. The letter is dated from Vienna, 1 October 1547, and survives in the Hungarian Public Record Office in Budapest among the papers of the Nádasdy family. Had the tale originated earlier in Italy and travelled to Vienna? If so, we might also ask why Cinthio changed the location of the events from Milan to Innsbruck?

A tragic version of the story was written in Latin verse by Claude Rouillet (published 1556) and then translated into French in 1563. Another French version in *Traité de la Conformité des merveilles anciennes avec les modernes* by Estienne (1566) named the corrupt judge as the Prévost de la Vouste -compare Shakespeare's 'Provost', a term for an administrator that was also used in Vienna (Patrouch). A version appeared in Belleforest in the sixth book of *Histoires Tragiques* (1582), where the events take place in Turin and the corrupt judge is named as the governor of Piedmont, deputy ruler for Henri II. Other versions appeared, including one by Thomas Lupton in the second part of *Too Good to Be True* (1581) and in Thomas Beard's *The Theatre of God's Judgements* (1589; 1597), a savage treatise on immorality and its punishment.

According to a note in J.O. Halliwell-Phillips's critical edition of *Shakespeare's Works* (1853-1865), the same version as Macarius noted in his letter appeared later in Simon Goulart's *Histoires Admirables et Memorables advenues de nostre temps* (various dates are given for this in different sources: 1603, 1607, 1618), where, intriguingly, the date of 1547 is given for the tale's events. The exact repetition of the date suggests, perhaps, that Goulart knew that the tale had been circulating in Vienna at that time. In Goulart's version the town where the events took place is named as Como in Italy. Since Como is less than 50 kilometres north of Milan, it seems likely he was putting a name to the earlier version that had set the events in 'a town near Milan'. The magistrate or 'Spanish Count' is referred to in Goulart's version as 'a Spanish captain', and the wronged woman makes her complaint to 'the Duke of Ferrara'. Had the Italian tale, which had travelled to Vienna, then travelled on to Paris?

Francesco Cusani's *Storia di Milano* (1861) states that the ruler of Milan in 1546 was 'Don Ferrante' or Ferdinando Gonzaga (d. 1557), and this concurs with Macarius's version. However, Macarius was mistaken in calling him the 'brother of the Duke of Mantua'. This was Francesco Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua in 1547. Ferdinando's brother was Frederico Gonzaga. However, Ferdinando Gonzaga did bear the name of 'Count'

as one of his titles. One can readily understand how the complexities of the genealogy of ruling families confused Macarius, and how the titles of 'dukes' and 'counts' could be easily mixed up.[1]

Whetstone was in Oxford's literary circle in the 1570s

Oxford almost certainly knew George Whetstone (c.1544-c.1587), who came from a wealthy family at Walcot Manor in Barnack near Stamford, Lincolnshire. The Whetstone family would have known the Cecil family at their estates nearby. The Whetstones also had family in Suffolk and Essex. In 1572, Whetstone served as a soldier in the Netherlands, where he met George Gascoigne and Thomas Churchyard, both known to Oxford. Whetstone had written some commendatory verses prefixed to Gascoigne's *Posies* (1575). Returning to London, he was living in Holborn when he published *The Rocke of Regarde* (1576), a collection of sixty-eight tales in prose and verse adapted from Italian originals, in four sections with dedications to the daughter of Lord Grey of Wilton and to Thomas Cecil. In October 1577, Gascoigne died while he was Whetstone's guest at Barnack, and this was commemorated by Whetstone in a verse pamphlet that was published as *A Remembrance of the well-employed life and godly end of George Gascoigne, Esquire.* He also contributed a poem to *The Paradise of Dainty Devises* (1578), and in the same year appeared his adaptation of Cinthio's tale from *Hecatommithi,* which he called *Promus and Cassandra.* This contained a preface addressed to William Fleetwood, the Recorder for London, in which he commented on contemporary drama in Europe and England. In September 1578, Whetstone accompanied Humphrey Gilbert on his expedition to Newfoundland, returning in May 1579. In 1580 he visited Italy.

His *Heptameron of Civil Discourses* (1582) was dedicated to Christopher Hatton and contains a curious commendation of a certain 'Segnior Phyloxenus' - *Whatsoever is worthy in this book belongeth to* Segnior Phyloxenus *and his courtly favourers…*It is not clear to whom Whetstone was referring as 'Phyloxenus', but the pseudonym (a Greek name which appears in Pausanius' *Guide to Greece* as the friend of Dionysius when he was the dictator of Sicily) is suggestive of a punning allusion to Oxford and his literary circle. Gascoigne had coined a similar pseudonym when he claimed that his *Certain Notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or rhyme in English* (appended to his *Posies*) was written *at the request of* Master Eduardo *Donati.* Both names may be allusions to Edward de Vere.

In the prose version of the tale in his *Heptameron of Civil Discourses* (1582), Whetstone's full title is *The rare Historie of Promus and Cassandra reported by* Isabella. I have been unable to ascertain whether this name occurs in Cinthio's tale or in other versions,

but Whetstone certainly used the name for his narrator, the same name that appeared prominently as the heroine of *Measure for Measure.*

Roger North and Jacopo Strada in Vienna

The English courtier and diplomat, Roger North (1530-1600), the brother of Thomas North, the translator of Plutarch, was in Vienna in 1568. He was sent there, with the Earl of Sussex, to invest the Emperor Maximilian II with the order of the Garter. From 1564 Maximilian's brother, Archduke Charles, was in negotiations to marry Elizabeth I, and it is said that North discouraged the suit by putting forward an opinion that the queen would never marry. However, on his return he was commissioned to present the queen with a portrait of Archduke Charles. Six years later, North was at the French court in Paris in 1574-75, when Oxford was there at the beginning of his continental travels, and the two were together again on the Queen's Progress into East Anglia in the summer of 1578.

From Roger North (and also when he lived in Venice in 1575) Oxford is likely to have heard something about the Viennese court and Jacopo Strada (1507-1588). The latter was an Italian polymath, painter, architect, linguist, collector and merchant of art, who had been trained with the painter Guiliano Romano in Mantua, and whose portrait was painted by Titian in 1567. Strada had settled in Vienna in 1556, in a house on the site of the present Bankgasse 12, and from 1564 became Court Antiquary there to the Hapsburg rulers at the Hofburg palace. He was in Munich in 1566, in Venice in 1567-68 and returned to Vienna in 1568, where he put his artistic knowledge at the disposal of the Hapsburg court. Strada acquired sculptures and works of art for three successive Hapsburg emperors – Ferdinand I, Maximilian II and Rudolph II. In 1568 North and Strada were in Vienna at the same time and would have known each other at court there. Strada is believed to have worked with Maximilian II on his new summer palace, the *Schloss Neugebade* at Simmering to the south-east of the city*,* advising on its buildings and decorations and drawing up plans for its rooms and its elaborate gardens.

The construction, however, came to an abrupt end with Maximilian I's death in 1576. There was no further rebuilding and in 1583 Rudolph II moved the court to Prague. Little evidence of Renaissance Vienna remains, and the few courtyards and gateways that remain show the influence of northern Italian architecture, particularly Venice, Milan and Verona. The imperial palace of the *Schonbrunn* (originally a mansion owned by Maximilian II) was developed only from 1642, eventually becoming the elaborate Baroque edifice to be seen today.
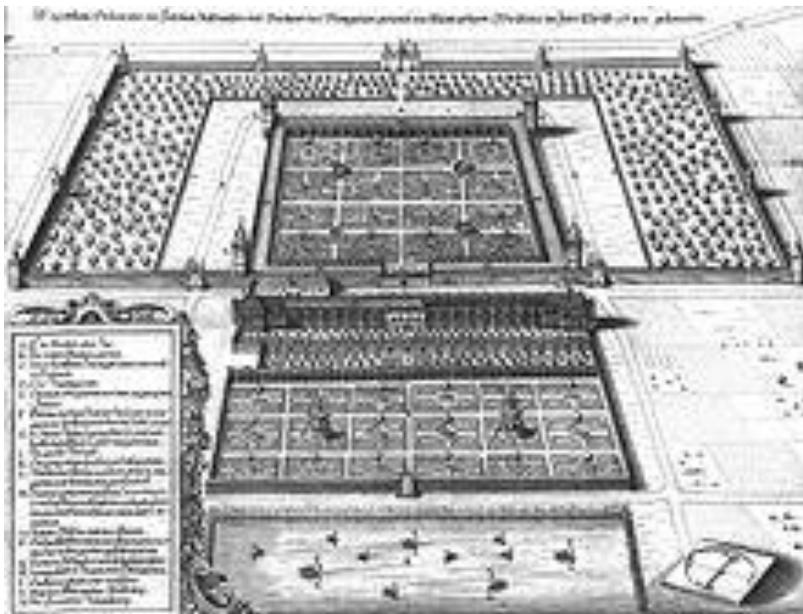
Gardens of Schloss Neugebade, Vienna (1649)

However, the *Schloss Neugebade* and its gardens have been recently restored. It consisted of a long linear complex of buildings, relatively plain in appearance, with brick-walled ornamental gardens on either long side of it. Around one of these gardens was a large plantation (probably of fruit-trees, but it may well have included vineyards, since the area was already well-known for wine production), with several access gates and doors. If there is an actual Viennese topography in *Measure for Measure,* the *Neugebade* is the obvious candidate for 'Angelo's house'. It is possible that the elaborate directions involving Mariana's entry into Angelo's house for the 'bedtrick' assignation (Act IV, sc.i) reflect aspects of the layout of the *Schloss Neugebade:*

> He hath a garden circummur'd with brick,
>
> Whose western side is with a vineyard back'd;
>
> And to that vineyard is a planchèd gate
>
> That to his opening is this bigger key;
>
> This other doth command a little door
>
> Which from the vineyard to the garden leads.

It has been noted that this description may also fit the vineyard that Edward de Vere owned as part of his Wivenhoe estates in Essex. This may be compared with the precise directions to the shepherd's 'cote' or cottage in *As You Like It,* which fits the topography of Castle Hedingham, where a lane leading south from the village is still called 'Sheepcote Lane'. From an Oxfordian point of view, it is not impossible that the author included (by association) English locations known to him in some of these seemingly very specific topographical directions in the plays, folding them in with other known locations abroad.[2]

Other English travellers in Vienna

The remarks of two English travellers suggest that Vienna in the last years of Archduke Ernst's rule, and for the next decade at least, was an unattractive city. Fynes Moryson spent three days there in 1593, noting that the streets were narrow and dangerous at night 'from the great number of disordered people'. In 1616 William Lithgow visited Vienna and thought it was 'in no way comparable to a hundred cities that I have seen'. Both statements seem to reflect the social, political and physical decline of the city that followed Rudolph II's departure to Prague in 1583, and after the deputy ruler, Archduke Ernst also moved his court; he died in Brussels in 1595. If both these comments reflect the opinion of Englishmen after 1583, this may have some bearing on the playwright's choice of Vienna for *Measure for Measure,* a city with a reputation for unruliness.[3]

Shakespeare's 'Vienna'

Measure for Measure is the only Shakespeare play that has Vienna as a location. The only other play that mentions Vienna is *Hamlet* (Act III, sc.ii), where the city is given as the location of the 'Mousetrap' play:

> 'The Mousetrap'. . . . is the image of a murder done in **Vienna** – Gonzago is the Duke's name; his wife's, Baptista… A poisons him i'th'garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago. The story is extant, and written in very choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

It is known that this refers to the story of the murder of the Duke of Urbino by Luigi Gonzaga in 1538. The place-name 'Vienna' in *Hamlet* appears to be a printer's error for 'Venice'.[4] However, we cannot necessarily extrapolate from this that the 'Vienna' in *Measure for Measure* is also a typographical error.

However, it is interesting that the Gonzaga name also appears in the earliest version of the plot on which *Measure for Measure* was based, and that this was circulating in

Vienna in 1547. There is also a curious echo of Hamlet's meditations upon death when Claudio considers his own execution:

> Aye, but to die and go we know not where;
>
> To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;
>
> This sensible warm motion to become
>
> A kneaded clod, and the delighted spirit
>
> To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
>
> In thrilling region of thick-ribbèd ice;
>
> To be imprison'd in the viewless winds
>
> And blown with restless violence round about
>
> The pendant world; or to be worse than worst
>
> Of those that lawless and incertain thoughts
>
> Imagine howling. O, 'tis too horrible!   Act III, Sc. I

This may be a reflection of the possibility that the original *Hamlet* and *Measure for Measure* were written about the same time, i.e. the early to mid 1580s.

The Stratfordian view is that the play dates from 1604 and reflects aspects of early Stuart rule under James I, and this assumption dominates orthodox discussion. Some commentators believe that Thomas Middleton, as editor of the play for the Folio in 1621 changed the source's Italian (sic) location for an Austrian one, for no explicable reason. In fact, Cinthio's location is not Italy but Austria. Orthodox commentators are at pains to relate the play's politics to James I's first parliaments, citing speeches in the House of Commons, but giving no explanation as to how the actor William Shaxsper could have heard such a speech.[5] However, the text of *Measure for Measure* clearly emphasises Vienna throughout - the city is named no less than nine times - and there are also references to Hungary and Poland in the play, countries which were very relevant to the Hapsburg rulers of Austria. Whether or not the text was altered for inclusion in the First Folio, the play that we have clearly exists in a dramatised Catholic Vienna. The Viennese setting has been rather loosely related to newsletters of 1595 - see Kamps & Raber (2004). Gary Taylor (2004) has suggested that the play's original setting was not Vienna but somewhere in the Mediterranean, probably Ferarra in Italy.

From an Oxfordian viewpoint, we can be sure that the settings of the plays were chosen for a reason. Most have been shown to be precise in respect of Oxford's experience and travels, as well as his topographical, political, historical and cultural knowledge. It is not known whether Oxford visited Vienna. It was perhaps too far east with regard to his chosen place for crossing the Alps, which is assumed to have been

the St Gothard Pass. It would have meant a long journey by barge along the Danube, entering from one of its tributaries in Germany, perhaps the one near Augsburg. We know that Oxford was in Strasburg in early April 1575, possibly in Augsburg afterwards and in Venice by mid-May. It seems unlikely, given these dates, that he would have gone so far east as Vienna, and then travelled westwards again to the St Gothard Pass (unless he took the easier St Brenner Pass). However, we can state two good reasons for him to have been interested enough to visit Vienna: one would be as a follow-up visit from an English courtier to Maximilian II (whom Roger North had invested with the Garter in 1568); the other would be to visit the Italian polymath, Jacopo Strada. Both reasons would have made him welcome there.

Philip Johnson's Oxfordian essay showed that there are good reasons for believing that France in the early 1580s was in the author's mind when writing *Measure for Measure*[6], and yet the play is not set in Paris or Lyons. Johnson's research was largely based on parallels to names and events in the France of Henri III, whom we know Oxford met on the occasion of Henri's wedding in 1575. Henri III succeeded his brother Charles IX who died in 1574. Charles's marriage to Elisabeth of Austria in 1570, connected the royal family of France with the archdukedoms of Austria. Elisabeth (1554-1592) was the daughter of Maximilian II, Holy Roman Emperor, King of Bohemia from 1562 and King of Hungary from 1563. It is these connections, I suggest, that were somehow thrown into the melting pot in the writing of *Measure for Measure,* and which would date the play's original to about 1583-84.

Overall, the play's features of an absent ruler (disguised as a monk), of deputised rule, of sexual purity opposed to sexual immorality, of increased severity of law (particularly over sexual matters), give it an almost paranoid atmosphere that echoes several elements of the Counter Reformation, the Catholic Hapsburgs' drive to oppose the spread of Protestantism in Europe. Firstly, the Hapsburgs ruled such vast areas of land in Austria, Bohemia and Hungary that localised deputy rule (by the emperor's nephews or brothers) was the norm. Secondly, active religious commitment was a component ideal of Hapsburg womanhood, in which they acted as charitable counterparts to the severity of the ruler.[7] The importance of regulations regarding sexual behaviour in the Counter Reformation has also been noted by scholars of the period.[8] The play's torrid ambience, in both serious main plot and comic subplot, has been recently referred to as containing a 'brothel-haunting sexuality' and 'the demonic corruptibility of desire'.[9]

The emphasis in the sub-plot on the Vienna suburbs and prostitution is ambiguous. This would seem to relate more appropriately to London, and its comic dimension is certainly that of the familiar Shakespearean English lower class and the characters bear

English names. But the only record of a statute to demolish brothels belongs to the 1540s, and Henry VIII's proclamation was in any case unsuccessful. In Vienna, however, the suburbs were where the Protestants lived, having been allowed to dwell outside the city walls by the tolerant Maxmilian II. This fact sets up a moral axis in the play between Catholic city and Protestant suburbs, in which the severe authority of the former is depicted as a stick to beat the laxity of the latter with. The forthright immoralities of the comic sub-plot would be wholly acceptable to a non-Puritan but Protestant Elizabethan audience. Conversely, the same audience would have regarded the potential immoralities of the main plot as revealing only the hypocrisy and deception of European Catholicism. This point has not been noticed in Stratfordian discussions of the play.

Although the word 'precise', associated with English Puritanism, appears several times in the play, the Viennese setting would suppose in the audience's mind that Catholicism was the play's state religion, and also that the severer aspects of its government reflected the ideas of the Jesuits, who had their own churches in Vienna and were raising their status in Austria (the universities of Graz and of Innsbruck were founded on the Jesuit colleges of the 1570s and '80s). At the same time, the Jesuits were attempting to infiltrate English culture via espionage. *Measure for Measure,* therefore, may have reflected a deeply ironic and timely religious critique in the 1580s - Philip II of Spain was the son of a Hapsburg emperor, after all – with fears that a Spanish invasion of England would topple Elizabeth I. The same is true of 1604, when the position of James I on the Catholics was ambiguous and, after the Peace Treaty with Spain, he was being approached for more toleration.

Rulers 'disguised' as monks

Shakespeare altered the original plot significantly, changing husband and wife to brother and sister, and making her a novitiate nun. This considerably raised the play's intensity as regards the morality issues. The major addition was to have the ruler absent himself by disguise, comment on the morals of his city and, indeed, becoming the catalyst for the ensuing plot. In reality, there were rulers who absented themselves, and there were rulers who went among their people in disguise from time to time.

As Johnson's essay observes, Henri III was sometimes given to religious fervour, dressing or behaving like a monk.[10] His brother Charles IX did the same, and several of the Hapsburg rulers were also known to have displayed this trait. The Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V (1500-1558) eventually abdicated all his thrones and retired to spend his last years in a Spanish monastery. Rudolf II (1552-1612), the brother of Elisabeth of Austria, removed his court from Vienna to Prague in 1583 to establish an

isolated court more interested in occultism than in politics, and where John Dee visited him in 1583-84. The absent Rudolf left the governing of Vienna to his brother Archduke Ernst. In both cases, such retirement necessitated temporary rule by 'cadet princes', brought partition to the empire, changes in the relations between the countries of Europe, revolts that offered opportunities to the rivals of the Hapsburgs, and international religious enmity.[11]

Charles IX's bride, the beautiful Elisabeth (Ysabel) of Austria, (1554-1592) was born in Vienna and, at the age of sixteen in January 1571, made her official entry into Paris.

Elisabeth of Austria (Archduchess Ysabel of Hapsburg) 1554-1592

Founder of the Convent of Poor Clares in Vienna c. 1583-4

Just before her grand entry into the city, she fell ill with bronchitis at the Chateau of Madrid in the Bois du Boulogne and was nursed by Charles and his mother, Catherine de Medici. Charles ordered clowns and dancers to entertain her.

When she had recovered, Charles and his sisters decided to have some fun among the Parisian crowds. Disguised as common *bourgeois* they set out for the fair at St Germain. Charles went as a coachman wearing a large hat to hide his face and, recognising one of his courtiers in the street, gave the fellow a lash with his whip. The man was about to strike him back when Charles removed his hat to reveal himself. Having enjoyed this rough joke, he went again to the fair, this time borrowing the robes of a Carmelite monk and leading a procession of friends similarly dressed.[12] This sacrilegious behaviour, as well as the generally licentious tenor of the French court,

must have scandalised the pious Elisabeth of Austria. Could Oxford have learnt about this escapade when he was at the French court in 1575? It is echoed in the disguise that 'Duke Vincentio' assumes in *Measure for Measure.*

The marriage of Elisabeth to Charles was short and unhappy for her, since Charles preferred the company of his mistress. She was pregnant during the horrors of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in August 1572 and in October gave birth to a daughter, Marie-Isabelle, who would die in Paris in 1578. When Charles IX died in August 1574, Catherine de Medici at first tried to persuade her to marry her next son, now Henri III, who had been made (briefly) King of Poland. This she refused and returned to Vienna, where her brother Archduke Ernest (1553-1595) was the Hapsburg regent. She never remarried but went on to develop her own connections and religious influence, eventually establishing the Convent of Poor Clares, Mary Queen of Angels, on land she had bought near Stallburg in Vienna, the *Klarissinnenkloster Maria Königin der Engel*, also known as the Queen's Monastery. Henceforth, she devoted her life to acts of piety, poor relief and health care. The convent church was consecrated on 2 August 1583. The community was a strictly sequestered contemplative order of women dedicated to celibacy. This historical fact is overlooked in Stratfordian discussions of the play.

There are several possible sources for Shakespeare's choice of the name 'Isabella'. The most obvious one is Saint Isabella of France (1225-1270), the wife of Louis VIII and Blanche of Castille, after whom the 'Isabella Rule' of the order of Saint Clare was named. A statue of her was carved on the church of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, near the Louvre in Paris. Two other contemporary possibilities are Isabella Clara Eugenia (1566-1633), who married Archduke Albert of Austria, ruler of the Spanish Netherlands. She was the daughter of Philip II of Spain and Elizabeth of Valois. Her paternal grandparents were the Emperor Charles V and Isabella of Portugal, and her maternal grandparents were Henri II and Catherine de Medici. Another, mentioned above, is Elizabeth of Austria who founded the convent in Vienna and who German-speaking scholars refer to as 'Ysabel of Hapsburg, Archduchess of Austria'. The name Elisabeth was equivalent to the eastern European 'Alzbeta' and 'Ysabel' and to the Italian 'Isabella'.[13]

If, as Johnson suggests, the author of *Measure for Measure* had indeed had France of the 1580s in mind, then it seems probable that Charles IX's Viennese widow may have especially come to mind as an analogy to 'Isabella' - she who 'wishes a more strict restraint / Upon the sisterhood, the votaries of Saint Clare' (Act I, sc. iv). From an Oxfordian point of view, the choice of name could have arisen from Oxford's known meetings and talks with the French royal family in 1575, and later knowledge of Charles IX's widow's return to Vienna. Obviously in *Measure for Measure* the parallel with

Elisabeth/Ysabel of Austria ends with her name and the name of her convent. On the other hand, the name matches that of Whetstone's narrator in *Promus and Cassandra.* The choice could be a simple transference, or an associative mixture of all of the above. Braun and Hogenberg's view of Vienna shows the main city gate opposite the Danube, where ships are docking. In front of the gate is a large crescent-shaped public space.

Braun and Hogenberg's view of Vienna (1617)

Measure for Measure & **Vienese locations**

Measure for Measure	Sixteenth century Vienna
Duke's palace	*Hofburg* (Michaelerplatz, 1010 Vienna)
Angelo's house, gardens and gates	*Schloss Neugebade,* its gardens and plantations (Simmering, 1110 Vienna)
vineyard	plantation at *Schloss Neugebad;* cf. Oxford's vineyard at Wivenhoe, Essex
Convent of Saint Clare	*Klarissenkloster Maria Königin der Engel* (Josefplatz 5, 1010 Vienna); a convent of Clares existed in London, but was dissolved c.1536

Monastery	One of many. After the first Turkish siege of 1529, the Hapsburgs and the Catholic church built a veritable spate of monasteries in Vienna. There were no monasteries in London at the time Shakespeare was writing and their sites had been used for housing since the mid-1530s.
St Luke's church	There were several churches, but St Luke's is not identified on Braun & Hogenberg's map. Was 'Shakespeare' thinking of St Luke's in Verona?
Moated grange	A 'grange' was a complex of farms and barns belonging to a monastery, particularly of the Cistercian order, whose economy was based on farming and viticulture. There was a 12th century Cistercian monastery in the Vienna Woods, the *Stift Heiligenkreutz,* which survives today and is still active as a monastery. cf. Bilton Grange on Oxford's land at Bilton Hall, Warwickshire, originally belonging to Pipewell Abbey (Cistercian).
Prison	Yes, but not specifically identified
City walls	Yes.
City gate	Yes. There were several, but not specifically identified
Public place near city gate	Yes, but not specifically identified *
Suburbs	Yes, where Protestants were allowed to live, cf. communities in *Measure for Measure*
Consecrated fount a league below the city	Yes. This suggests knowledge of the thermal springs used since Roman times. There were several to the south of the city, and in 2010 they were developed into a contemporary spa complex, the *Therme Wien* (Kurbadstrasse 14, 1100 Vienna). The springs and wells were almost certainly Christianised as holy wells and therefore 'consecrated'. In the 16th century they were outside the city; a league is 2-3 miles. In the play, Vincentio arranges to meet Angelo there to effect his supposed re-entry into Vienna. If *Schloss*

> *Neugebade* is regarded as Angelo's house, he would have had a short journey to the 'fount', from where he and the Duke would journey northwards toward the city gates. This may suggest a surreptitious entry at a 'back gate' in the south, pointing up the Duke's pretense of absence. If he had really been in Poland, he would have re-entered via the Danube at the north gate. There were also two sculptured fountains near the *Tiefer Graben,* one dating from c.1455 and one built c.1561.

Though only one location is specified (the Convent of Saint Clare), others are largely generic (e.g. city walls and gates); all but one (St Luke's church) of the twelve locations in *Measure for Measure* can be associated with the topography of Vienna in 1583.

Conclusion

From an Oxfordian point of view, we can be certain that the author of *Measure for Measure* was aware of the story as it appeared in Cinthio's Italian and in Whetstone's English, and quite possibly aware of other versions in Latin, Italian and French. The Vienna setting matches Whetstone's classical Vienna ('Julio') and may suggest an awareness that the basic story was circulating in Vienna some years before Cinthio used it. The story seems to have originated in Italy, spread to Vienna, and then into France and England. It seems likely that Oxford knew of it by 1575 or earlier. If this was the case, his knowledge of the basic plot may have *pre-dated* Whetstone's English version of 1578. Oxford returned from Italy in 1576 and, already acquainted with the group of English soldier-poets (Whetstone, Gascoigne, Churchyard), it is possible that Whetstone got the idea of writing his English version of the tale from Oxford, and not that 'Shakespeare' got it from Whetstone, as in the orthodox scholarly narrative. In *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays* (1930) Eva Turner Clark quoted the editor of the 'Irving Shakespeare' on this point:

> Shakespeare was not indebted to Whetstone for a single thought, not for a casual expression, excepting as far as similarity of situation may be said to have necessarily occasioned corresponding states of feeling and employment of language. (*Hidden Allusions*. ed. Ruth Lloyd Miller, 1974, p.450)

In addition, through his friendship with Roger North and as a courtier, Oxford would have been aware of the political and cultural situation in Vienna under

Maximilian II and later under Archduke Ernst and Elizabeth of Austria (whom North had met in Paris in October 1574 to convey condolences on her husband's death).

As with other Shakespeare plays, *Measure for Measure* had multiple sources, both printed ones and those that circulated verbally with variants of names and places. The playwright's dramatic imagination enabled him to select what he needed from his sources, to alter locations and names as he felt fit, and to enhance the basic plot by changes and additions, producing from all these ingredients his own original drama for the stage. Shakespeare's 'Vienna', then, is not a vacuum but perhaps a mixture of Italy, Austria, England (in the characters and names of the secondary plot), and perhaps France. In the same way, *Twelfth Night* is not a vacuum but a mixture of Italy, the Adriatic coast and England. As Monica Matei-Chesnoiu has noted:

> Shakespeare <u>fused</u> classical tradition, names, places, in a way of his own; he <u>displaced</u> them from their points of origin, <u>collated</u> several such stories in a single powerful visual metaphor, and <u>transported</u> it into a new space, the stage, where such scenes could not be shown directly. [14]

We might add that he fused, displaced and collated time-scales as well. As we explore the plays set elsewhere in Europe, we may find that they show such multiple fusions, displacements and collations, and that (as Roe has shown) only the plays set in Italy possess a very exact and precise topography. This, in itself, is significant.

Notes

1 The content of this section is derived from the article by L.L.K. in *Notes and Queries* (1893), series viii, vol. iv, pp.83-84 (1893) - available at Wikisource, and as cited by W. W. Lawrence in *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies,* Penguin Shakespeare Library, Penguin (1969), pp. 86-88. See also J. W. Lever (ed), *Measure for Measure,* The Arden[2] Shakespeare (1965, 2008), introduction pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

2 Imlay, Elizabeth: 'The Earl of Oxford's Manor in Wivenhoe", DVS Newsletter, April 2006; Cole, J. 'Oxford's Land Sales, Castle Hedingham and the Sheepcote in *As You Like It'*.

3. The comments of Fynes Moryson and William Lithgow are from Penrose, B. *Urbane Travellers*, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press (1942), p.14 and p.140

4. Magri, Noemi: 'Hamlet's "The Murder of Gonzago" in contemporary documents' in *Such Fruits out of Italy* (reprinted from DVS Newsletter, June 2009).

5. Roberts, C: 'The Politics of Persuasion: *Measure for Measure* and Cinthio's *Hecatommithi.*' *Early Modern Literary Studies* 7.3 (January, 2002): 2.1-17 (essay online); see also Taylor (2004).

6. Johnson, P. '*Measure for Measure* and the French Connection' in *Great Oxford: Essays on the Life and Work of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604,* Parapress (2004), pp.196-200

7. For the social and political ideals of the Hapsburgs at this period see www.habsburger.net, especially 'The Age of Confessional Division, 1526-1648'

8. Patrouch, J.F. *Sexualität und Herrschaft: sexuelles fehlverhalten in Strafprozessen vor drei grundherrlichen gerichten Oberösterreichs,* cited in Patrouch, J.F. *A Queen's Piety:Elisabeth of Hapsburg and the Veneration of Saints,* Florida International University (essay online).

9. Fernie, E. 'To sin in loving virtue': desire and possession in *Measure for Measure'* in *Sillages Critiques,* 15 (January 2013) – essay online

10. Johnson, P., *Measure for Measure* and the French Connection' in *Great Oxford,* p.197.

11. Gunn, S.: 'War, Religion and the State' in *Early Modern Europe: an Oxford History,* ed. Euan Cameron, Oxford UP (1999), pbk. 2001, p.110

12. Frieda, L.: *Catherine de Medici,* Phoenix (2003), p.264

13. Elisabeth of Austria left Paris for Vienna in the first week of August 1575 and therefore Oxford could have met her at the French court in Paris during February-March of the same year – Freer, M.W. *Henri III*, *King of France and Poland* (1888), vol.2 p.40. For Elizabeth known as Ysabel see Patrouch, J.F. *A Woman's Space: rule, place and Ysabel of Hapsburg, 1570-1592,* Florida International University (essay online).

14. Matei-Chesnoiu, M: *Early Modern Drama and the Eastern European Elsewhere: representations of liminal locality in Shakespeare and his contemporaries,* Associated University Press (2009), p.25

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Gurr, A. "Livery, Liberty and the Original Staging of *Measure for Measure*", *La Clé de Langues,* Feb 2013 - In this article, Stratfordian theatre historian, Andrew Gurr, relates Shakespeare's knowledge of the Poor Clares to the pre-Reformation order

that was resident at the Minories convent in the parish of St Aldgate Without, London. However, this convent had been dissolved since 1539.

Kamps, I. & Raber, K. (eds). *Measure for Measure:* Texts and Contexts, Bedford/St Martin's (Boston), 2004 - The editors cite passages from *News from Rome, Venice and Vienna, Touching the Present Proceedings of the Turks against the Christians in Austria, Hungary and Helvetia* (1595). However, these do not seem to be relevant to the play.

Sjögren, G. "The Setting of *Measure for Measure*", *Revue de Littérature Comparée* 35 (1961) pp 25-39.

Taylor, G. "Shakespeare's Mediterranean *Measure for Measure*" in Clayton, T. et al (eds), *Shakespeare and the Mediterranean: Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress, Valencia, 2001,* Univ. of Delaware Press (2004), pp.243-269 This essay argues that the play was originally set in Ferarra and that Thomas Middleton was responsible for changing the setting to Vienna.