Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi

"A Dog's Revenge": Comparative Viability of an Early Modern Verbal, Pictorial, And Dramatic Proverb

"Bir Köpeğin İntikamı": Erken Modern Dönemden Sözel, Resimsel ve Dramatik Bir Atasözünün Karşılaştırmalı Yaşayabilirliği

Jameson Kısmet Bell[1] 🆔

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Abstract: This article presents a comparative study of three media modalities by which the proverb "a dog's revenge" is presented in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Latin, German, and English contexts. A proverb can be briefly defined as short, pity saying in general use. However, when one moves beyond a linguistic interpretation to an analysis of the material, these concise sayings that many people know and use assume an instability similar to aphorisms, sententia, maxims, dicta, or other short forms. By comparing the materials of the short proverbial saying "A dog's revenge" in Erasmus' *Adages* (1532), Mathius Holzwart's emblem book *Emblematum Tyrocinia* (1581), and William Shakespeare's seventeenth-century drama, *Cymbeline* (1611), this article emphasizes the viability of the proverb beyond speech acts. Whether oral, graphic, pictorial, dramatic, or some other medium, focus on a proverb's materiality shows that the life of a proverb is woven into its citationality in various media and materials, not just speech. Unpacking the tension between the signified meaning of proverbial speech and its material form also reveals the potential inviability, or death of the proverb through alternate uses, forgetfulness, or disuse.

Öz: Bu makale, "bir köpeğin intikamı" atasözünün on altıncı ve on yedinci yüzyıl Latin, Alman ve İngiliz bağlamlarında sunulduğu üç medya yönteminin karşılaştırmalı bir çalışmasını sunmaktadır. Atasözü kısaca genel kullanımda olan kısa ve özlü sözler olarak tanımlanabilir. Ancak, dilbilimsel bir analizin ötesine geçip somut analize inildiğinde, pek çok insanın bildiği ve kullandığı bu özlü sözler aforizma, hüküm, özdeyiş, vecize ya da diğer kısa formlara benzer bir istikrarsızlığa bürünür. Bu makale, Erasmus'un *Adages* (1532), Mathius Holzwart'ın *Emblematum Tyrocinia* (1581) adlı amblem kitabı ve William Shakespeare'in on yedinci yüzyıl draması *Cymbeline* 'deki (1611) "Bir köpeğin intikamı" adlı kısa atasözünün unsurlarını karşılaştırarak, bu atasözünün söz eylemlerinin ötesindeki yaşayabilirliğini vurgulamaktadır. İster sözlü, ister grafik, resimsel, dramatik ya da başka bir mecra olsun, bir atasözünün somutluğuna odaklanmak, bir atasözünün yaşamının sadece konuşmada değil, çeşitli medya ve materyallerde atıfta bulunulmasıyla örüldüğünü gösterir. Atasözü ifadesinin gösterilen anlamı ile somut biçimi arasındaki gerilimi incelemek, atasözünün alternatif kullanımlar, unutulma veya kullanılmama yoluyla potansiyel yaşayamazlığını veya ölümünü de ortaya çıkarır.

[1] Asst. Prof., Boğaziçi University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Western Languages and Literature, j.kismetbell@bogazici.edu.tr

Introduction[2] to the Proverb, *A Dog's Revenge*

This article presents a comparative study of three media modalities by which the proverb "a dog's revenge" is presented in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Latin, German, and English contexts. A proverb can be briefly defined as "A short pithy saying in general use."[3] However, when one looks a little closer, these concise sayings that many people know and use assume an instability similar to aphorisms, sententia, maxims, dicta, or other short forms.[4] Anna Litovkina even writes that "proverbs have never been sacrosanct,"[5] and can become other literary genres and even anti-proverbs through simple shifts in the sentence's structure by "replacing a single word, substituting two or more words, changing the second part of the proverb, adding a tail to the original text, adding literal interpretations, punning, word-repetition, melding two proverbs, and word-order reversal."[6] As such, the three-word proverb "A dog's revenge" requires more attention that goes beyond both genre and form than has been the focus of historical studies.

This article argues that further attention to the proverb that moves beyond a linguistic analysis to the material reveals that proverbs need not be verbal. Whether oral, graphic, pictorial, dramatic, or some other medium, focus on a proverb's materiality allows contemporary researchers in comparative literature, cultural, and media studies to unpack the tension between the material and signified meaning of proverbial speech. This comparison uses but goes beyond traditional comparative literature methods that focus on meaning as presented in different languages, tropes, topics, or other rhetorical figures. Instead, by comparing the materials of examples of short proverbial speech in Erasmus' *Adages* (1532), Mathius Holzwart's (b. ca. 1530) emblem book *Emblematum Tyrocinia* (1581), and William Shakespeare's seventeenth-century drama, *Cymbeline* (1611) this article emphasizes the viability and inviability of the proverbial form in general, and "A dog's revenge" in these particular works. After discussing viability in relation to speech acts and citationality, this article analyzes each of these works concerning their materiality as spoken, printed, pictorial, and dramatic.

Media Archeology of Proverbial Signs

Since the early 2000s, media archeologists have been active in their explorations of how contemporary materialities are imagined through past media. Digital circuitry, film, radio, and other diverse machines rely heavily on past media's structural and psychic demands. New media is always introduced into old media structures and their fantasies of the future. Investigating historically situated combinations of material and imagination creates the possibilities (and impossibilities) of how the world is made "real." Without historical structures, Jussi Parikka writes in "Imaginary Media: Mapping Weird Objects," of his recent book—*What is Media Archeology?*—that actual or "real" media is useless.[7] Any medium contains its use value through its imagined technical possibilities and, even more importantly, through its impossibilities and eventual inviability. In this sense, material objects are always proverbial in their use: the viability of a material object is related to general notions of its imagined past, present, or future use. In a recent study of the relationship between topoi and media, Erkki Huhtamo offers commonplaces (topoi) as a "useful tool of making sense of media culture."[8] We become familiar with particular media and their material configurations, which allow for certain patterns to develop while discouraging others. General topics can then be "turned," creating proverbs that are spoken but also proverbial use of materials themselves. Exploring the "viability" of proverbial speech necessarily then also leads to an exploration of the "inviability" or "death" of the form of materials by which proverbs are passed around. The death of a proverb appears through either alternate uses, forgetfulness, or disuse.

This article uses the terms viable and inviable—from the Latin "vita" as "life" but also "viable" as "capable or incapable of sustaining life"[9]—to account for an alternate approach to media, short literature, and the relationship

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[3] Elizabeth Knowles, "Proverb," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable$ The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[4] Gary Saul Morson, "The Aphorism: Fragments from the Breakdown of Reason," *New Literary History* 34, no. 3 (2003): 429. Though Morson's focus in this article is definitions of aphorisms, dicta, and maxims, his sources pull examples from John Bartlett's (1980) *Familiar Quotations: A Collection of Passages, Phrases, and Proverbs.*

[5] Anna T. Litovkina, *Women Through Anti-Proverbs* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 26.

[6] Litovkina, *Women Through Anti-Proverbs*, 29.

[7] Jussi Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012).

[8] Erkki Huhtamo, "Dismantle the Fairy Engine: Media Archaeology as Topos Study" in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, ed. Jussi Parikka and Erkki Huhtamo (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 34.

[9] "Vita" in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

between signs and material bodies. Though these terms "life" and "death" are themselves loaded with meaning, they are used metaphorically here to counter biological, technological, and political definitions of "life" and "death" that are framed by discourses of power. The proverb fits Michel Foucault's concept of a "node" from his *Archeology of Knowledge*, or a material object that offers a place and time "where the past, present, and future overlap."[10] The viability of these objects or nodes echoes Jacque Derrida's concept of "citationality" or "iterability" that was subsequently applied to body practices by Judith Butler. Moving beyond speech acts to their material, an object's viability is the ability of objects and bodies to circulate within a network of meaning.[11] In this way, material objects—such as bodies that speak, printed words or pictures, a book or a play—are enacted through social, cultural, and epistemic patterning of the general within a specific place and time. A proverb gains life when cited, manipulated, or adapted to new media. It dies when it is forgotten or silenced. Finding the border between life and death of an object requires an alternate approach to the proverb or the relationship of general thought to specific embodiedness.[12]

As a continuation of this introduction, a brief look at Erasmus, Holtzwart and Shakespeare's use of proverbs shows the importance of material. In his *Adages*, a book of ancient and modern proverbs published in 1532, Erasmus from Rotterdam (1466-1536) describes a unique Macedonian proverb that is the focus of this article: *Canis vindictam*, which translates as "a dog's revenge." For Erasmus, the historical meaning of a dog's revenge relates to "those who unexpectedly pay the penalty to the victims of some injury they have inflicted in the past."[13] Erasmus then reports many ancient stories of dogs seeking revenge on behalf of their owners, sometimes long after the wrongdoing or crime was committed. However, this meaning was no longer used, cited, or repeated. Instead, by the early sixteenth century, the contemporary use of the proverb had shifted when traced through his copious collection of connected stories, anecdotes, and tales to receive renewed vivacity.

Besides Erasmus' *Adages*, reference to "a dog's revenge" also appears in Mathius Holzwart's (b. ca. 1530) emblem book, *Emblematum Tyrocinia* (1581). The newly created emblem genre appeared in the early sixteenth century as the co-presentation of the tri-part structure of a short inscription, picture, and interpretation.[14] Rather than represent a picture of a dog seeking vengeance for its owner, Holzwart presents the proverb's unembellished signified meaning in both Latin and German, along with a woodcut image, and an interpretive poem (Fig. 1). The inscription appears as:

> *Nulla culpa poena caret*
> *Es pleibt kein vnrecht ohngestrafft*
> No injustice goes unpunished[15]

In the metaphor theory proposed by I.A. Richards, the literal words "No injustice goes unpunished" are the metaphor's tenor, yet there is a different verbal vehicle and comparison here: the verbal description of a dog is missing.[16] Instead, and even though there are dogs represented in the emblem's picture (Fig. 1), Holzwart and the printer Johan Fischart substituted the vehicle of visual representation of "a dog's revenge" with both poetic and pictorial representations of the myth of Diana/Artemis, Orion, and a scorpion (Fig. 1). This substitution of a vengeful dog with gods and fortune, gives the proverb renewed life in old clothes through the interaction theory of metaphor proposed by Black, Lakoff and Johnson, and Draaaisma. This interaction model goes beyond the sluggish theory of only two domains (vehicle and tenor) and allows one to explore the signifying strategies of the material of printed words, woodblock images, and the many emblems collected in this one book.[17]

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[10] Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans. Sheridan Smith (New York: Routledge, 2002), 23.

[11] Jacque Derrida, *"Limited, Inc."* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988), 18.; Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 3–13. For theory of speech acts, see John Austin, *How to Do Things With Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

[12] For theories of "embodiedness" and "biographies of objects" see Daston's *Biographies of Scientific Objects* (2000); Cave's *Thinking with Literature* (2016), Dawson's *Degrees of Embodiment* (2014), and Andy Clark's *Natural Born Cyborgs* (2003) and "The Extended Mind" (1998).

[13] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, trans. R.A.B. Mynors, vol. 32 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 96.

[14] Daniel Russell, *Emblematic Structures in Renaissance French Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).; Peter Daly, *Literature in the Light of the Emblem: Structural Parallels between the Emblem and Literature in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 6–8.

[15] Mathius Holzwart, *Emblematum Tyrocinia* (Strassburg: Fischart, 1581), XXXVII. Translations are my own.

[16] I.A. Richards, *"The Philosophy of Rhetoric"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936).

[17] Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), 38.; George. Lakoff and Mark. Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2010), 50–54.; Douwe Draaisma, "Metaphors

The last example of this proverb appeared in William Shakespeare's (1564-1616) seventeenth-century drama, *Cymbeline* (1611). In this play, the evil stepmother titled "Cymbeline's Queen" attempts to use poison to enact a wicked plot. However, she tests this poison on "cats and dogs" and thus reveals her plans first to the doctor, later to the hero Posthumus, his love Imogen, the king, and finally, the audience. The doctor even reveals his suspicions at the beginning of the play and his knowledge of The Queen's plot in the final scene through the "killing creatures vile, as cats and dogs."[18] In this instance the proverb appears, not through oral speech, a printed text or woodcut images, but through the action of the play itself. Though the "dogs" died through this early form of scientific experimentation with poison, they enacted their revenge through the astute observation and actions of the doctor. By comparing three unique material presentations of this proverb, the reader can see that proverbs need not be "proverbs" in the linguistic sense: a general idea can be presented in a unique material form to transform the material itself.

By focusing on the viability of a proverb in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Latin, German, and English literature—by way of Erasmus, Holzwart, and Shakespeare—this article does not so much attempt to bring these authors and texts into the enclosure of "use," "real," or "possible." Rather, media archeology explores the limits by which a medium allows the imagination to transgress the border between the possible and impossible, the viable and the inviable, and our bodies and the other. This article neither attempts to outline the historical continuity between proverbs past and present, nor trace the tropes of "angry or revenge" and "dogs" as if this proverb appears as a formulaic unit of speech that is equally translatable to any medium. Traditional formalist criticism and the New Historicist's art of "necromancy" by which the anecdote can somehow "charm the dead" is a myth that allows literary criticism to recreate a short genre as "a touch of the real."[19] Greenblatt and Gallagher's New Historicism assumes the anecdote in its "raw particularity" escapes the institutionalization of formal prose and the hegemonic structures of the modern world while fulfilling a yearning of modern critics: "We wanted the touch of the real in the way that in an earlier period, people wanted the touch of the transcendent."[20] Though the anecdote and proverb are structurally similar—relatively short expressions—the proverb is a hybrid form that blends the general and particular, while the anecdote claims to be entirely particular.

Media Archeology, as opposed to New Historicism, is uniquely suited to explore the limits and excess of a medium. Focus on the varying media through which the proverb is expressed requires an alternate methodology, one that incorporates the "excess," "genius," "magic," "spirit" or "the repressive presence of what it does not say."[21] Approaching the proverb through the "viability" and "inviability" of its material—its life and death in media—offers such a method.[22] In the next section, this article focuses on the life of this proverb "a dog's revenge" that appears uniquely in Erasmus, Holzwart, and Shakespeare's diverse representations to reveal the viability and inviability of particular media and their afterlives.

The First Proverbial Node: Erasmus' Dogs
As we shift to the first of three specific proverbial representations, it is important to remember one primary assumption about any medium: media are inherently messy, weird, and heterogeneous.[23] Yet, as one tries to organize, discipline, and control the use of media, they become embodied in perception and sensation. The literary critic G. S. Morson describes disciplining speech historically so that "for thousands of years, proverbs have been collected in treasuries of wisdom, along with the sayings of sages and the dicta of philosophers or lawgivers."[24] These manuscript collections then help create genre and reciprocally influence speech. The source of Erasmus' *Canis vindictam* (A dog's revenge) appears to be a story about the tragic poet Euripides. Erasmus recounts several anecdotes, one of which where Euripides

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of Memory: A History of Ideas about the Mind" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 10–11.

[18] William Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, ed. Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine (Washington D. C.: Folger Shakespeare Library, 2020), 247.

[19] Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 20–22.

[20] Gallagher and Greenblatt, 30.

[21] Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology?*, 41–62.

[22] Foucault's meta-discussion on the units of discourse, their transformations, apparent connections and disconnections, and especially discontinuity as a focus for modern knowledge practices overlaps nicely with the media archeological approach to media. Rather than search of the langauge behind speech—"the real," as Greenblatt and Gallagher call it—we call follow what Foucault writes: we need to "grasp the statement in the exact specificity of its occurrence [networked medium]; determine the conditions of existence, fix at least its limits, establish its correlations with other statements that may be connected with it, and show what other forms of statement it excludes (27-28)." Establishing these parameters marks the life and death of media.

[23] Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology?*, 41–43.

[24] Gary Saul Morson, *The Long and Short of It: From Aphorism to Novel* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2012), 14.

was torn to pieces and eaten by the king's dogs when he was unable to pay a debt. The vivid description of this scene was repeated in several sources, some of which included "dogs" and "revenge" for unpaid debt, but some that were very far removed from these topoi.[25] For example, Erasmus reports fellow poets made up the story of Euripides out of jealousy and in "another version, to the effect that he was dismembered not by hounds but by women."[26]

The rest of the entry on "A dog's revenge" is full of similar anecdotes, yet they are very far from the literal meaning of a dog taking revenge to the point that the "modern meaning" in Erasmus' time had nothing to do with the original. This pattern repeats itself for most of the thousands of entries in the reference work. In the introduction to the extended version of his *Adages* (1532)—which began in 1500 with 800 entries and by 1532 had exploded to over 4,000— Erasmus states his own intention for collecting his book of proverbs. He first offers a definition that parallels the modern one: "A proverb is a saying in popular use, remarkable for some shrewd and novel turn."[27] Before we look at the modern meaning in Erasmus' time, it is important to mention the life of the material of the proverb.

In relation to material and media, Erasmus tells the reader how important proverbs are for rhetoric, "I will show what a sound contribution they can make if cleverly used in appropriate places, and finally how it is by no means everyone who can make the right use of proverbs."[28] Erasmus' printed book was intended as a reference work to improve speech, transforming sound into sight and back to sound again…with more discipline. Erasmus offers an insight into how sound was disciplined and used as a communication medium. Following Cicero and Quintilian, Erasmus classifies the proverb as part of rhetoric, but distinguishes it from the aphorism and the apothogem. He writes of the proverb, "A proverb is a saying in popular use, remarkable for some shrewd and novel turn."[29] These three-part divisions—popular use, memorable, and novelty (wit)—help offer a frame for his selection of "adages" (proverbs) for his text. Though proverbs, aphorisms or apothogems can often be confused, they should be classified distinctly.

In order to discipline these specific types of speech, Erasmus offers a comparative method. For example, an aphorism (sententia) does not participate in the same "remarkable quality" of the proverb and the apothogem because it (the aphorism) raises itself above the situational, omitting reference to a "here and now" and presents general import, or truth.[30] The proverb is similar but more precisely, it should only offer "a witty reply" that is "here and now." The aphorism does not share in "novelty" because the universal value of the aphorism transcends the new and old: it is an idea in material form. For Erasmus, the aphorism also omits "common speech" of the apothogem and proverb that refers to specific situations. As a *sententia*, the aphorism was considered the spoken form of "thought itself." Erasmus offers three examples that can help clarify the difference between these three forms:

Proverb: Wine speaks the truth
Aphorism: Ill-will feeds on the living but is quiet after death
Apothegm: Caesar's wife must not only be innocent, she must be above suspicion[31]

What each of these have in common, which has been shown by Cave (1979) and Bath (1996) —the proverb, aphorism, and apothogem—is the emphasis on metaphor and visual description, or the use of the rhetorical devices of *illustratio* and *enargeia* to persuade the listener to assent.[32] These two words are often interchanged in early modern writings on rhetoric, even though there is an important difference. Whereas the illustratio offers a verbal or visual representation of a thing/idea (res), enargeia carries with it an added component: the description must carry with it a vividness or liveliness. Whereas llustratio is more related to ekphrastic writing, enargeia appears if the verbal image were alive in one's imagination rather than in words. Erasmus offers the following rule for enargeia: "When we do not explain a thing simply, but display it to be looked at as if it were expressed in coulour in a picture, so that it may seem that we have painted, not narrated, and that the reader has seen, not heard. This rhetorical rule brings pleasure to the reader, strikes the memory better."[33] Bath and Cave both emphasize the "vivid" quality, i.e. the life-like quality, the spirit, and color or

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[25] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, 1989, 32:96–97.

[26] Erasmus, 32:96.

[27] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips, vol. 31 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 4.

[28] Erasmus, 31:9.

[29] Erasmus, 31:4.

[30] Erasmus, 31:9.

[31] Erasmus, 31:8–9.

[32] Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (New York: Longman, 1994).; Terence Cave, *Thinking with Literature: Towards a Cognitive Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[33] Erasmus, 31:17.

"animating" power of enargeia that can be applied to the proverb.[34]

In using *enargeia* to shape speech to give the appearance of life, we are still in the tradition of Horaces' *ut picta poesis* in which words and images are interchangeable as long as they are related the "res," which could either be the thing or thought.[35] The rhetorical adornment strikes the heart, causes pleasure, and forces the listener's imagination to see something as a living image one has only heard in words. Enargeia causes the imagination to visualize a thing and be imaginatively involved in creating the object. With enargeia, one's imagination functions as if an object that is not present is present and vice versa, without enargeia, the represented thing becomes, old, worn, or simply disappears from memory and discourse.[36]

In relation to speech, an orator can "enliven" an audience through the shaping of his or her voice with rhetorical devices, gestures, fashion, and other connotative codes. Whereas traditional studies of enargeia focus on the vivifying effect in the listener's imagination, it is just as important to recognize the vivifying effect on the speaker. Enargeia "marks" the body of speaker as alive. In addition, the speaker can use a reference to a proverb from a book like Erasmus' *Adages* to expand one's memory and increase one's statue in society through *copious* speech.[37] Though Cave focuses on French literature in the renaissance, the importance of the adjective "copious" to describe a literary creation is important: reference works like Erasmus' were created to allow speakers to appear to have a greater memory, vocabulary, and poetic repertoire than they actually did.

However, it is a messy transition when one moves from embodied speech to the dead letters of writing in ink and reading a printed book. The visual sequence of uniform letters on the page, along with spaces, margins, and miscellaneous visual presentations books employ, all require much more of the writer and reader to avoid a crisis of imagination. Erasmus implies as much with his justification for such a collection of short sayings when he shows the origin of proverbial thought as coming from the oracles of the gods, ancient poets, and city dramas of tragedy and comedy.[38] The proverb of the book is always attempting to draw on and condense this ancient source of power, however distant it may be.

Erasmus also offers two cautions when employing the proverb to avoid failure. First, the speaker should avoid using them too frequently. In this, Erasmus employs *enargeia* to make his point: "they [proverbs] should not be overcrowded like a painting should not have too many figures so that their shadows do not fall on one another."[39] This restriction on the frequency of certain types of speech helps the proverb retain its surplus of meaning. Secondly, to invoke the authority of aphoristic speech, Erasmus argues that it requires "advanced correction" to invoke its special status. That is, "special" speech should come with a warning such as, "As they say, As the old saying goes," which separates common from wisdom speech. Without such a warning, the "marked" nature of the proverb blends into the sounds of everyday, or "thoughtless" speech. The limits to aphoristic speech—frequency and advanced correction—offer the edges to its viability in speech. Outside of these boarders, at least for Erasmus, the proverb dies.

"But we must return to our proverb," Erasmus writes after a long discourse on the history of "A dog's revenge."[40] Recognizing a media difference between ancient anecdotes about dogs seeking revenge and its contemporary use, which only can be "properly used in this further context, when the author of some wrongdoing is deliberately concealed."[41] In this modern version of the proverb, there are no dogs; there is no revenge. He then locates the proverb as it was popular or "current in Germany in our own day when something happens which undoubtedly causes damage though the culprit

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[34] While Michael Bath and the early work by Terrence Cave have both provided extremely useful entry points into the studies of proverbs in relation to the rhetorical concept of *enargeia*, this article's focus on media archeology can move beyond the classification of *enargeia* as a category of rhetoric and see it as a description of all "viable" objects.

[35] The problematic use of *res* in early modern rhetoric to signify a "thing" and an "idea" has been discussed in detail by Cave (1979).

[36] Jack Greenstein offers a parallel history of *enargeia* in changes occurring in visual arts of the Italian Renaissance. In his analysis, the surface of a painting becomes the focus—lines and colors—where by *historia* can be revealed. There was a high degree of overlap of vocabulary between the humanist theories of translation and the visual artist's method of representation. Greenblatt and Gallagher criticize the use of *enargeia* as producing only a "reality effect" and nothing more (29). If however, one does not assume there is "more" than this "reality [life] effect," then *enargeia* becomes extremely useful.

[37] Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[38] Erasmus, 31:5–6.

[39] Erasmus, 31:19.

[40] Erasmus, 32:97.

[41] Erasmus, 32:97.

is in doubt and no one can be held responsible."[42]

As we have seen, the speech by which one uses "A dog's revenge" has a vivacity through enargeia, yet as the signified meaning becomes idiomatic, completely unrelated to dogs or revenge, the interaction between the metaphorical vehicle and tenor radically change. The material of the reference collection, and the "marked" nature of proverbial speech loses its luster with the introduction of topography.[43] Proverbs do not work if no one knows the meaning; otherwise said, they have to be in "popular use." Erasmus ends the entry on "A dog's revenge" by showing its death: the modern definition of "unknown authorship" was now associated with a pseudo-cause so that the wicked event must have been caused by not by a dog's revenge, but by "the bite of a dog."[44]

The Second Proverbial Node: Mathius Holzwart's Proverbial Emblems

If we shift to the second discursive node where by "a dog's revenge" appears, we find a curious example in Mathius Holzwart's *Emblematum Tyrocinia* (Emblem Illustrations) from 1581. Before we look closely at emblem thirty-six, or "Nulla culpa poena caret," it is important to situate the emblem in its historical context of shifting allegiances between oral, printed, and pictorial representations of short literature. Specifically, from where did the hybrid form of inscription, picture, and subscription come?

Very little is known about the author Mathius Holzwart other than what he describes in the prefaces of his emblem book and a few other published works. He was born in Würtemberg around 1530 and dedicated his *Emblematum Tyrocinia* to Lord Friedrich of Würtemburg. Holzwart used this dedication to describe a change of mind as well as social conditions in the fifty years from his childhood to the publication of his emblem book. He was reluctant as a youth to adapt the new emblematic form of inscription, picture, subscription because of their "weakness of invention" and intended vulgar audience of "the common people."[45] The use of pictures to illustrate (illustration) an idea did not have the sententious power of aphorisms. However, over time, emblem books grew in popularity and this book could take advantage of the new acceptance of the emblem form.

Yet, besides this one-page dedication, Holzwart writes little else of the new mixed media form, where pictures and words go together.[46] The book contains seventy-one emblems, most of which are borrowed from other sources. For more on "A dog's revenge" as well as on emblem theory in the sixteenth century, one needs to look both in the preface written by the printer Johannes Fischart and other emblem books and theories circulating around the continent in the late sixteenth century.[47]

The printer Fischart wrote in the preface that this new genre had yet to appear in German, though it was popular in other languages. The etymological origins of the Greek "Emblema" comes from "engraving and other applied arts, whereby works are decorated and embellished with images and epigrams."[48] In addition, these sources offer enigmatic, secret, and hermetic representations that can be found in all arts such as, "weaving fabrics, tapestries, and carpets, furniture, architecture, statues, and many other plastic arts."[49] While the artist of the decorative woodcuts is not named in the book itself, in 1587 another book with the same images was published that named a Tobias Stimmer as the artist and woodcutter. The publication date of 1581 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the first emblem book, *Emblematum Liber* (1531), published in Augsburg by the Italian humanist Andreas Aliciato (1492-1550). The sheer number of emblem books that appeared in half a century attest to their popularity: by the seventeenth century, Mario Praz listed at least six hundred authors with over eight hundred editions published across Europe, creating hundreds of thousands of individual emblems.[50]

As with Erasmus's *Adages*, the goal of emblem books was to present popular, esoteric, witty, or wise sayings.

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[42] Erasmus, 32:97.

[43] Tesa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*, 1550-1640 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).; Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* 2 Vols. (West Hanover: Cambridge University Press, 1979).; Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1962).

[44] Erasmus, 32:97.

[45] Holzwart, *Emblematum Tyrocinia*, Dedication.

[46] John Landwehr, *German Emblem Books: 1531-1888* (Leiden: Dekker & Gumber, 1972).

[47] Albrecht Schöne, *Emblematik Und Drama Im Zeitalter Des Barock* (München: Beck, 1968), 21.

[48] Holzwart, *Emblematum Tyrocinia*, Preface.

[49] Holzwart, Preface.

[50] Mario Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, 2nd ed. (Roma: Edizioni De Storia E Letteratura, 1938), 58.

However, the addition of images and poetic interpretations, as well as translations from Latin to vernacular languages, used the addition of hybridity to these proverbial sentences to reach a wider audience. The difference Holtzwart mentions between a *sententia* (aphorism) and a *proverb* became important for both definition and criticism of the emblem. Whereas sententiae (aphorisms) were of noble topics, dealing with classical themes and heroic ideals, the proverb, as defined above, was a witting saying of common knowledge. Both Erasmus and Holzwart were part of the developing humanist project in Northern Europe that gave direct access to Greek and Latin sources rather than poor translations, commentaries or glosses by medieval theologians.

The first such collection of hybrid word-image proverbs came from the humanist Andrea Alciato of Milan (1492-1550), who sent a collection of short impresa and epigrams to a friend in Augsburg. As the manuscript was circulating in Augsburg in 1531, the printer Heinrich Steyner published 104 of these epigrams with the addition of woodcut images based on his own stock set of crude woodblocks. Within the next fifty years, these emblem books were translated into vernacular language and spread around the continent to French, Spanish, English, and finally German lands. The supplement of the visual image to the printed text gave what many sixteenth-century emblem and impresa writers like Paulo Giovo (1483-1552) of Milan and Claude Mignault (1536-1606) of Paris called "the body" to "the soul" of the proverb. Pre-dating I. A. Richards' definition of the tenor and vehicle of the metaphor by five hundred years, the soul of the emblem was its verbal signified meaning while the body of the emblem was the visual representation, or pictura. Together, the rhetorical use of energeia created a living whole. Because the short verbal inscription was pure soul or thought, and thus, it was difficult to decipher the connection between the signifier and signified unless it was already known, the printed image and poem provided context by which to interpret the wisdom speech.

Turning specifically to emblem thirty-six (Fig. 1), the reciprocal interpretation of image and text becomes an important starting point for Albrecht Schöne's foundational study on emblems and literature.[51] Schöne was the first to describe the "double function" of the emblem, where each element both illustrates and explains (Abilden und Auslegen) or represents and interprets (Darstellen und Deutens) the other elements.[52] The tri-part structure is a complete whole made of parts, where each part helped represent and explain the other parts, enlivening each other. The proverb at the top, "No injustice goes unpunished," the wood-cut image in the middle with two figures, dogs, and use of linear perspective to present foreground and background, as well as the poem below, all reciprocally represent and interpret to produce a vivid idea not found in the emblem itself (Fig. 1). Holzwart translates the Latin poem below the image into German, which I have translated to English below,

> While the beautiful huntress Diana
> Went on a hunt with her dogs,
> The naïve Orion sees the beautiful goddess
> And is wounded on the spot.
> The unfortunate man instantly wants more;
> Though she flees as fast as she can,
> He doesn't stop pursuing her
> Until the end of the earth.
> There, in the darkness hides a scorpion
> That stings him in the foot so that
> He becomes completely weak and dies.
> Therefore, every crime, even if done in secret,
> Has a punishment and cannot remain hidden.[53]

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[51] Schöne, *Emblematik Und Drama Im Zeitalter Des Barock*, 21.

[52] Schöne, 21–33.
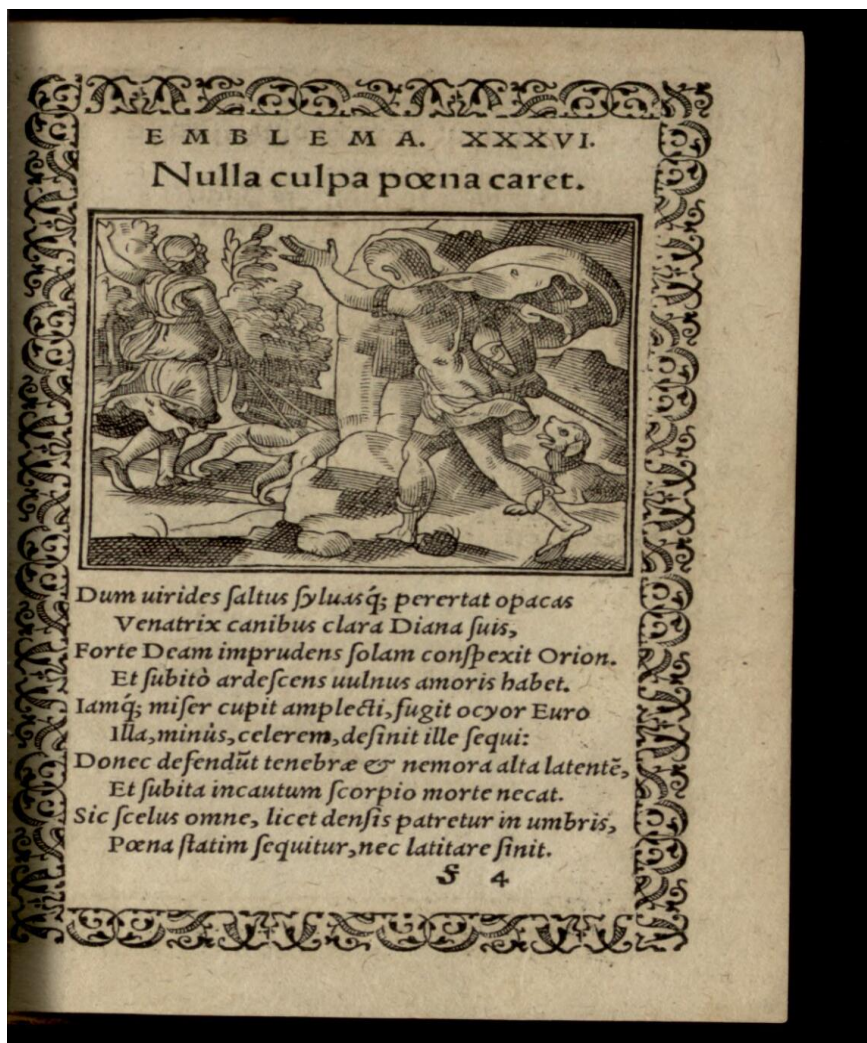
[53] Holzwart, *Emblematum Tyrocinia*, 36.

Fig. 1 Emblem 36 of Mathius Holzwart's *Emblematum Tyrocinia*. Bayrische StaatsBibliothek, VD16H4548

When compared with Erasmus' "A dog's revenge," the "no crime goes unpunished" seems to fit the historical meaning that "a dog will get his revenge". However, the reference to dogs appears different in both the poem and the woodcut image: these are hunting dogs, work animals of the nobles. The dogs, however, do not wound Orion. This "revenge" is taken by the scorpion, which lives "at the end of the earth." Like Erasmus' etiology of the popular proverb, "dogs" could be substituted by jealous poets, women, or another popular commonplaces (topoi) like the scorpion. "There" in the poem is the end of the earth, where Orion is killed by a scorpion. "The end of the earth" is the sky, where the constellation Orion spends eternity as a reminder of divine justice. Though the structure of the punishment for a crime is still clear, the vehicles carrying this rhetorical meaning have shifted to more popular Greek myths. Even so, there is more to the emblem.

If one looks closely, even though there are dogs represented in the woodcut, there is no visible scorpion. From Schöne's theory of double meaning, one can deduce the sequence by which the emblem was constructed. First, the verbal proverb appears. Second, the image was created based on the inscription, "no crime goes unpunished" to fulfill Erasmus' rhetorical rule, that speech should be enlivened though energeia, or "expressed in coulour in a picture."[54] Finally, the poem, was created as an interpretation of the proverb and image using ekphrasis. Together, these three representations offer continual patterns of limiting and opening of the signified meaning through the play of image and text, repeatedly representing and signifying in an almost riddle-like presentation of a secret meaning. The crime here, while general in the proverb "A dog's revenge," is very specific: Orion is punished for 1) voyeurism and 2) relentlessly hunting Diana.

[54] Erasmus, 31:17.

Though it is not mentioned in either the proverb or the poem, a closer look at the woodblock picture reveals another unique feature. While Diana is running with her dogs in the background, and Orion is chasing her in the foreground, a singular dog is represented as behind Orion with its mouth open. Though this could be a straggling dog from Diana's pack, it also could be a trace of the dog's revenge from Erasmus' *Adages*. More research would be need to confirm the substitution of the dog for the scorpion, and the reappearance of Diana's dog in the moment of revenge.

The Third Proverbial Node: Shakespeare's *Creatures Vile*

The final node of the viable proverb appears in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, first performed in 1609 and published in the First Folio in 1623. Historically, this dramatic work has not been easily classifiable into traditional dramatic genres of tragedy, comedy, or history. While this drama is often read through the myth of Jupiter, the eagle, and dreams that appear throughout the drama, the common animal and "dog's revenge" also fit the structure of this drama. Through the blending of epic, magical, and romance themes, as well as Roman and pastoral iconography, Arthur C. Kirsch complained that Cymbeline was "resistant to any coherent interpretation".[55] Kirsch followed Samuel Johnson's sharp critique of the play that mixes so many confusions, and to be so incongruous "as to be a waste of criticism."[56] Though Johnson placed it among tragedies, and Northrop Frye and Barbara Mowat as Romance,"[57] more recent work by Peggy M. Simonds situates it as tragicomedy.[58] The problem of genre leads readers to what Wilson Knight called the play's unique status that "probably exceeds any other Shakespearean play in its fecundity of classical, and especially mythological reference."[59] While categories and lists are important foundational work, attention to one of the classical references leads us back to "a dog's revenge."

This proverb "a dog's revenge" also allows for a brief plot summary and introduction to the characters. The titular character, Cymbeline, is an ancient King of Britain who owes tribute to Rome soon after the transition from Republic to Empire. His daughter, Imogen, falls in love with and marries the commoner Posthumus Leonatus. Banished by the king for his disobedience and secret wedding, Posthumus travels to Rome and brags of his wife's faithfulness, eventually betting the Italian Iachimo that he could not seduce her. The test is to be proven by a ring and a bracelet, the lovers' secretly exchanged objects. While the plot turns multiple times through doubles, disguises, and deception, the dog's revenge appears in both Act One and Act Five through the Queen, Imogen's wicked stepmother's actions.

In Act I, scene 5, the Queen attempts to have her step-daughter Imogen's marriage annulled in favor of her own vengeful son, Cloten. After asking the doctor Cornelius for poison, the doctor reveals the plot:

> I do not like her. She doth think she has
> Strange ling'ring poisons. I do know her spirit,
> And will not trust one of her malice with
> A drug of such damned nature. Those she has
> Will stupefy and dull the sense awhile,
> Which first perchance she'll prove on cats and dogs,
> Then afterward up higher.[60]

After having asked her about the need and purpose of the poison, the Queen lies to the doctor and states she is learning pharmacology to make perfumes that the king might woo her more. However, the doctor had already suspected the Queen will test the poison on "cats and dogs," which made him conclude she would later try them on people, or "those up higher." In order to prevent this, the doctor diluted the poison so that it gave the appearance of death, which both brings tension of discovery and pain of recognition later in the drama. Thinking it poison, the Queen gives it to Posthumus' servant Pisano as a "cordial" that can save anyone's life.

Unlike Erasmus' retelling of the proverb that connects the rhetorical trope of a dog's revenge with just punishment, Shakespeare's drama actual reveals how the maltreatment of cats and dogs in the beginning of the play eventually kills

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[55] Arthur C. Kirsch, "Cymbeline and Coterie Dramaturgy," *English Literary History* 34, (1967): 294.

[56] Samuel Johnson, *Notes to Shakespeare*, vol. 3 (Los Angeles: University of California, 1958), 307.

[57] Barbara Mowat, *The Dramaturgy of Shakespeare's Romances* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1976).; Northrop Frye, *A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965). See also

[58] Peggy Simonds, *Myth, Emblem and Music in Shakespeare's Cymbeline: An Iconographic Reconstruction* (Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1992), 29–66.

[59] Wilson Knight, *The Crown of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), 183.

[60] Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, Act I.5, 40-45.

the Queen and her son Cloten through action. The animal-killing poison appears again after Iachimo returns to Italy with the bracelet he stole from Imogen while she slept. This proof of her infidelity sends Posthumus into a bitter rage, from which he commands his servant Pisano to kill Imogen. Pisano can do no such thing, but sends her away from the court in disguise with the "box" from the Queen.[61]

While in disguise away from the court in Wales, Imogen falls ill and takes the cordial for health while hiding in a cave with company she later learns are her long-lost brothers. The brothers, Guiderius and Arvigarus, see and fight Cloten wearing Posthumus' clothes in disguise. Guiderius kills and decapitates the Queen's son and find Imogen seemingly dead as well. When Imogen awakes, she despairs when upon finding, "A headless man? The garments of Posthumus?"[62] Posthumus returns to Britain dressed as a Roman to fight Cymbeline and the Britons, who have yet to pay the tribute. The two brothers fight bravely for Cymbeline, take Posthumus captive, and jail him.

Before the doubles, disguises, and deception are reveled, Posthumus reports his desperation and misery at the loss of his the favor of his king Cymbeline, his wife Imogen, and describes his life as one where "the dogs o'th'street [to] bay at me."[63] Iachimo reveals his own trick, such that Imogen had been faithful all along and he deceived Posthumus by his "cunning."[64] The doctor finally reveals to all that "the Queen is dead" and he protected the Cymbeline, the King, Posthumus, Imogen, and the entire kingdom,

> The Queen, sir, very oft importuned me
> To temper poisons for her, still pretending
> The satisfaction of her knowledge only
> In killing creatures vile, as cats and dogs,
> Of no esteem. I, dreading that her purpose
> Was of more danger, did compound for her
> A certain stuff which, being ta'en, would cease
> The present power of life, but in short time
> All offices of nature should again
> Do their due functions.[65]

In the end, the poison used to kill "creatures vile" was no poison at all: it was tempered by the doctor's wit. Posthumus also believed that "the dog's baying at him in the street" was a sign of his own guilt and later punishment in jail. Yet, it turns out otherwise and god's justice is revealed through a dream. Posthumus' jailhouse dream is interpreted by a soothsayer to reveal a restoration of balance, where "The fingers of the powers above do tune the harmony of this peace."[66] All evil is banished through the deaths of the Queen and her son Cloten; virtue is rewarded though Cymbeline's reunion with his lost sons, Posthumus' reunion with his faithful wife Imogen, and Britain's reunion with Rome. In this drama, the action of the play reveals that "the dog's revenge" is both overturned and powerless as well as full of life and portentousness. Rather than a rhetorical phrase to be used to "enliven speech" at appropriate times, or a printed inscription of wisdom that can find various interactive metaphorical vehicles—dogs, poets, women, scorpions—the drama *Cymbeline* reveals the undetermined yet viable quality of the proverb in use: it is alive in truth and its very negation.

Conclusion

Though a reading of the materiality of proverbial speech, specifically "a dog's revenge," this article has shown that a proverb's signified meaning is determined by its material instantiation. The viability of a proverb lies in its ability to circulate in various media, not in the relationship between the tenor and vehicle of its metaphorical structure. Erasmus' *Adages* was one of the most influential works of humanist literature, which revealed the nuanced analysis of classical and modern proverbs finds its energeia in the analysis itself that can be compared and printed in a reference work, not in the proverbial statement. The ancient proverb "A dog's revenge," where the criminal is always revealed, finds its very negation in "The bite of a dog," which represents a crime that is never revealed.

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[61] Shakespeare, Act III.5,187.
[62] Shakespeare, Act V.2, 207.
[63] Shakespeare, Act V.4, 223.
[64] Shakespeare, Act V.4, 205.
[65] Shakespeare, Act V.5, 296-305.
[66] Shakespeare, Act V.4, 464-465.

Holzwart's *Emblematum Tyrocinia* presents an alternate method to teach school boys proper rhetorical phrases, one that both employs but goes beyond Erasmus' *Adages*. Whereas verbal proverbs require the use of energeia to presents proverbial speech "as if" it was a picture, the emblem presents speech "and" a picture, as well as the union and interpretation of both through the poetic subscription. Rhetorical speech, which had historically enlivened the mind, now enlivened sight through the myriad of emblematic forms decorating furniture, tapestries, architecture and many other materials. It is not ironic that the new viability of the emblematic form in the sixteenth century takes the same form as its inviability or death in the eighteenth century. Holzwart's claim to use the newly popular emblem genre to teach boys becomes the only use for emblematic forms two hundred years later as trivial children's books, comics and childish moralization.[67] This birth and death of a genre can be called "the dog's revenge" of media.

The final appearance of this proverb in Shakespeare's play *Cymbeline* reveals that in action, proverbial speech cannot be determined by reliance on historical meaning. The same proverb "a dog's revenge" is both true and false. While Posthumus is mistaken that the dogs are barking at him because he is guilty, the dead dogs from the Queen's experimentations return to enact their revenge on the evil plotter. Here is not the meaning of the proverb, but the ability to see the proverb as a "node within a network" of signification. [68] Foucault continues by writing that each node carries with it "a complex field of discourse," which I interpret to mean that each proverb carries with it both life and death. The sheer number of the proverbial references in *Cymbeline* points to something else occurring, which can lead to two conclusions. First, the visual proverb from the printed text is part of a larger "node" of early modern knowledge dissemination: Holzwart's emblem book, along with Erasmus' *Adages* and Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, are taking part in a larger system of inscription that actively invigorated objects through proverbial speech, a witty turn of the general.

Secondly, an audience that is attuned to the external, visual viability of the proverb is also one adapted to the excess of the proverb that is continually using a medium to imagine its future and, thus own death. The viability of a proverb appears in assimilating a messy and weird medium within a network of signification. As soon as I, we, or culture is/are familiar with the general outlines of a medium, to have turned it in countless general and pithy ways, we find the seeds of its own death.

Extended Abstract

This article presents a comparative study of three media modalities by which the proverb "a dog's revenge" is presented in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Latin, German, and English contexts. A proverb can be briefly defined as a short, pithy saying in general use. However, when one moves beyond a linguistic interpretation to an analysis of the material, these concise sayings that many people know and use assume an instability similar to aphorisms, sententia, maxims, dicta, or other short forms. By comparing the materials of the short proverbial saying "A dog's revenge" in Erasmus' *Adages* (1532), Mathius Holzwart's emblem book *Emblematum Tyrocinia* (1581), and William Shakespeare's seventeenth-century drama, *Cymbeline* (1611), this article emphasizes the viability of the proverb beyond speech acts. Whether oral, graphic, pictorial, dramatic, or some other medium, focus on a proverb's materiality shows that the life of a proverb is woven into its citationality in various media and materials, not just speech. Unpacking the tension between the signified meaning of proverbial speech and its material form also reveals the potential inviability, or death of the proverb through alternate uses, forgetfulness, or disuse.

For example, Erasmus from Rotterdam (1466-1536) describes a unique Macedonian proverb that is the focus of this article: *Canis vindictam*, which translates as "a dog's revenge." For Erasmus, the historical meaning of a dog's revenge relates to stories of dogs seeking revenge for their masters such that the proverb means, "those who unexpectedly pay the penalty to the victims of some injury they have inflicted in the past." Erasmus emphasizes an orator who can enliven their speech with *enargeia* through the shaping of his or her voice with rhetorical devices, gestures, fashion, and other connotative codes. However, over time, the proverb had come to mean something radically new; in Erasmus' modern version of the proverb, there are no dogs and there is no revenge.

Mathius Holzwart's emblem book *Emblematum Tyrocinia* (1581) shifts the medium from speech to printed words and pictures, or the emblem genre. Holzwart's emblem emphasizes the signified meaning, or "No justice goes unpunished."

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[67] Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1967), chapter 7.; Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture*, chapter 10.

[68] Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, 27.

Using yet going beyond the metaphor theory proposed by I.A. Richards, the literal words "No injustice goes unpunished" are the metaphor's tenor, yet rather than a dog seeking revenge, the vehicle of both poetic and pictorial representations present the myth of Diana and the scorpion's eternal punishment of Orion.

The final appearance of the proverb appears in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, first performed in 1609 and published in the First Folio in 1623. Through dramatic action—rather than oral rhetoric, printed words and images—the proverb appears when the Queen attempts to have her step-daughter Imogen's marriage annulled in favor of her own vengeful son, Cloten. The doctor discovers the evil through her experimentation on and "killing creatures vile, as cats and dogs." What is more, the hero Posthumus also believed that "the dog's baying at him in the street" was a sign of his own guilt and later punishment in jail. Here we see both the power and impotency of the proverb: its signification can mean both guilt and innocence, depending on how it is enacted on stage.

Through a reading of the materiality of proverbial speech, specifically "a dog's revenge," this article shows that a proverb's signified meaning is determined by its material instantiation. The viability of a proverb lies in its ability to circulate in various media, not in the relationship between the tenor and vehicle of its metaphorical structure. Through an analysis of a rhetorical phrase to be used to "enliven speech" at appropriate times, or a printed inscription and pictures of wisdom that can find various interactive metaphorical vehicles—dogs, poets, women, scorpions—and the dramatic action of *Cymbeline,* attention to the material of a proverb reveals the undetermined viability of its use: proverbs are alive in citation not in meaning.

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