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‘Certain condolences, certain vails’: Staging Rusty Armour in Shakespeare’s *Pericles*

In Act 2 of Shakespeare’s *Pericles*, a fisherman draws a suit of armour from the sea just in time for Pericles to participate in a tournament at King Simonides’s court. The armour recalls that of Achilles, Aeneas, and St. Paul, but it is also described as ‘rusty’ (*Per* 2.1.118), making this a less illustrious object than the armour of Pericles’s glorious literary forbearers.¹ We learn that Pericles lost the armour in a shipwreck — he says that ‘the rough seas, that spares not any man, / Took it in rage’ (*Per* 2.1.130–1) — and its return is a type of reparation:

An armour, friends! I pray you, let me see it.
Thanks, Fortune, yet, that after all thy crosses
Thou giv’st me somewhat to repair myself. (*Per* 2.1.119–21)

My focus here is twofold. First, I will examine what this prop might have looked like on stage, how it might have been acquired by the theatre, and why it is ‘rusty’ or ruined.² I am interested in how the reception of this armour by its on-stage audiences affects its reception by its off-stage theatrical audiences. Second, I will examine how found, claimed, or inherited material objects such as stage properties allow one to engage with questions of inherited literary or dramatic form and notions of military ‘spoiling’. Armour was a common spoil of war in early modern Europe, and I am interested in how Pericles’s suit of armour functions as a spoil, or claimed military object, in the play. How can the notion of spoiling be used to examine Shakespeare’s treatment of romance as a genre that is itself spoiled in the double sense of claimed, on the one hand, and decayed or degenerated, on the other?

Igor Kopytoff argues that as specific objects ‘move through different hands, contexts, and uses, [they accumulate] a specific biography, or set of biographies’ — what Kopytoff refers to as the ‘cultural biography’ of the object.³

Pericles's suit of armour possesses certain physical characteristics and a particular history, all of which inform how, and what, it signifies on stage. It possesses two related biographies, both as an actual early modern material object and as a prop that is imbued with dramatic significance. We know that costumes and properties were often recycled from performance to performance in the early modern English public theatres. Marvin Carlson argues that this practice of re-using props causes them to be 'ghosted' by their previous stage incarnations,⁴ and Jonathan Miller notes that the recycling of properties imbues them with an 'afterlife'.⁵ For Carlson, the stage prop looks backwards; for Miller, it looks forward — to the future and to its later incarnations. Pericles informs the audience that the suit of armour 'was mine own, part of mine heritage, / Which my dead father did bequeath to me' (*Per* 2.1.122–3). As the character inherited this garment from his father, so the actor almost certainly would have inherited it from previous performances or from its extra-theatrical life. Pericles recalls his father's own story of the armour's significance. His father said:

'Keep it, my Pericles; it hath been a shield
'Twixt me and death'; — and pointed to his brace —
'For that it sav'd me, keep it; in like necessity,
The which the gods protect thee from, may defend thee!' (2.1.125–8)

Pericles's father insists that the armour's past purpose as a protective 'shield' should also be its purpose in the future. As it was used by the father, so shall it be used by the son. Pericles remembers his father 'point[ing] to his brace' for emphasis. Even in memory, the armour is a material reality as well as an idealized object imbued with significance by the subjects who handle it.

Unfortunately, there are few extant theatre records of transactions for armour and even fewer that indicate what this military clothing may have looked like on stage. Henslowe's diary mentions a transaction for armour:

Lent vnto John thare the 30th of septmber 1602
To paye vnto the armerer for targattes
In full payment the some of ... xxs.⁶

A 'target' is a light round shield or buckler; a shield was conventionally considered part of a suit of armour, as were certain weapons.⁷ Since these shields were being acquired from 'the armerer', they may have been new. Such was

not always the case. As both Peter Stallybrass and Stephen Orgel have noted, the theatre's chief means of acquiring clothing was through the inheritance of second-hand garments.⁸ Stallybrass and Ann Rosalind Jones further note that, 'The theatre itself had become a collector and renter of armour, transforming the insignia of martial prowess into money-making display. But the theatrical stagings often suggested that armour was outmoded'.⁹ Stage armour's status as antiquated may have imbued it with comic potential (like Yorick's out-of-date skull in *Hamlet*) or allowed it to signify oldness in a way that contemporary clothing could not. 'The Enventary tacken of all the properties for my Lord Admeralles men, the 10 of Marche 1598' lists the following:

Item, j wooden hatchett; j leather hatchete.

Item, j copper targate, & xvij foyles.

Item, iiij wooden targates; j greve armer.¹⁰

These entries suggest that 'fake' armour may have been used on stage, for the 'hatchett' and 'targates' are made of wood, as was much funeral armour in the extra-theatrical world.¹¹ What other materials might have been used to create such mock armour we aren't certain of, but papier mâché and *cuir bouilli* may have been options. *Cuir bouilli* was hardened leather created by boiling leather in water and wax and then pressing it into a mould while it was still wet and malleable. It certainly would have been cheaper to produce than steel armour. But some stage armour was certainly real. 'The Enventory of all the aparell of the Lord Admeralles men, taken the 13th of Marche 1598' lists an entry for 'Item, j greve armer',¹² which refers to a piece of armour for the leg below the knee. This order for a particular piece of armour may indicate that the acquisition of whole suits was not a priority or that the theatre companies simply needed to acquire particular pieces to complete inherited suits of armour.

A whole suit of armour has composite parts; this fact raises compelling questions about the staging of military dress. In Henry Peacham's famous 1599 drawing depicting a performance of *Titus Andronicus*, the actor playing Titus wears a Roman breastplate, as do the actors playing Aaron, Chiron, and Demetrius. The two soldiers who attend Titus are outfitted in contemporary Elizabethan military dress. It is likely that in some performances, as in this *Titus* drawing, one segment from a suit of armour — such as a breastplate — signified the whole suit. Unlike Pericles's armour, this armour is 'Roman', but there is no reason to believe that the same practice was not applied to contem-

porary suits of armour. In the prologue to *Henry V*, the chorus asks, 'Or may we cram / Within this wooden O the very casques / That did affright the air at Agincourt?' (*H5* Prologue, 12–14). The audience is asked to 'pardon' the fact that 'casques' (or helmets) must signify whole suits of armour and nonetheless to accept that they do (*H5* Prologue, 15). Like these casques, Titus's breastplate functions synecdochally to suggest a whole suit of armour as well as the personal and cultural values such a suit represents. Ultimately, Pericles will focus on his armour's capacity to signify, or embody, such values. Keir Elam uses the example of armour to illustrate how this 'secondary' meaning is constructed in the theatre:

the theatrical sign inevitably acquires secondary meanings for the audience, relating it to the social moral and ideological values operative in the community of which performers and spectators are part. It may be, for example, that in addition to the denoted class 'armour' a martial costume comes to signify for a particular audience 'valour' or 'manliness'.¹³

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the value of armour was increasingly symbolic, or 'secondary', as the use of gunpowder had rendered suits of armour virtually useless. In other words, a type of clothing that had originally been intended for protection of the self was being used for projection, or performance, of the self. Robbed of its practical value, armour could only signify ceremonially and theatrically.

My interest in *Pericles* 2.1 grows out of a broader interest in military dress on the early modern stage. I am intrigued by how Shakespeare's plays position armour as an object upon which crucial relationships between textual and human bodies, between subjects and objects, and between historical pasts and contemporary moments are literally and figuratively inscribed.¹⁴ Armour figures prominently in Shakespeare's plays, both as a symbolic system and as a material object that is manipulated and worn by players. I mention three brief instances here to contextualize the treatment of armour in *Pericles*. In Act 4 of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Eros enters with a heavy, amorphous, and unwieldy armful of Antony's armour and deposits it on the stage. Cleopatra gathers up the many scattered pieces and, in arming Antony, constructs 'a man of steel' (*Ant* 4.4.34). Pericles also relies on others to clothe him, for he tells the fishermen, 'By your furtherance I am cloth'd in steel' (*Per* 2.1.153). Both *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Pericles* suggest that the subject's military dress objectifies him, that he is transformed into steel by donning his armour. The stage prop,

or object, thus threatens to displace the subject. In Act 1 of *Hamlet*, Horatio informs the audience that the Ghost of King Hamlet wears 'the very armour he had on / When he the ambitious Norway combated' (*Ham* 1.1.59–60). Unlike Pericles's rusted armour, King Hamlet's armour remains uncorrupted and unaffected by the passage of time. His armour is not *similar to* the armour he wore in the past; it is the 'very' same armour. (This phrasing echoes the Chorus's reference to the 'very casques' of Agincourt in the prologue to *Henry V*.) By recognizing and remembering the king's armour, Horatio legitimates the Ghost and renders his immateriality material.¹⁵ King Hamlet's and Pericles's suits of armour are out-of-date in their respective plays; these objects belong to a past that must be narrated by the characters. Pericles's armour legitimates him on the level of the familial (he is his father's son) and on the level of the literary or dramatic (he is a knight in a tradition of romance). In other words, the armour secures and proves his identity. Shakespeare's plays frequently associate armour with the notion of 'proof', as in *Richard II* when Bolingbroke speaks to Gaunt:

Oh thou, the earthly author of my blood,
Whose youthful spirit in me regenerate
Doth with a twofold vigour lift me up
To reach at victory above my head,
Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers,
And with thy blessings steel my lance's point. (*R2* 1.3.69–74)

'Proof' refers to the condition of an object that has stood a test of its power or strength, which in turn proves, or establishes the truth or validity of, its invulnerability. Gaunt's prayers and blessings 'add proof' to Bolingbroke's armour and regenerate his spirit and self. Pericles says that his armour 'repairs' himself (*Per.* 2.1.121). In Bolingbroke's case, the subject possesses the capacity to perfect the object; in that of Pericles, the imperfect object is invested with the power to perfect the subject. The presence of armour in 2.1 underscores for Pericles his father's absence and inspires nostalgic musings about the garment's history and significance. For the tournament's spectators in 2.2 who evaluate the armoured Pericles, the armour is an object without a history, a material thing that lacks attendant narratives. Vladimir Nabokov notes that, 'When we concentrate on a material object, whatever its situation, the very act of attention may lead to our involuntarily sinking into the history of that object'.¹⁶ Pericles's encounter with his armour inspires this very process of

historicizing, for both Pericles himself and the play's audience. At King Simonides's court, however, the material object remains unknown, confusing, and unappealing: a lord says that Pericles is 'strangely furnished' (2.2.52). His history and the history of his clothing are unknown.

Although armour figures prominently in Shakespeare's plays, the early modern English theatre rarely stage rusty armour.¹⁷ The only other reference to the appearance of rusty armour on stage in Shakespeare's plays is in a stage direction at the beginning of 3.5 of the Folio version of *King Richard III*, which indicates that Richard and Buckingham enter 'in rotten Armour, marvellous ill-favoured' (R3 3.5.1). 'Rotten' indicates physically decayed (a literal definition) as well as morally or politically corrupt (a figurative definition). Certainly, Richard's 'rotten' armour emblemizes his moral and political corruption, but — as in *Pericles* — the rusty suit of armour also acts as a crucial prop in the play's performance of England's past. In *Pericles*, both the Fishermen and the lords at the tournament comment on the armour's status as rusty, but these two audiences read the rust differently. At the beginning of Act 2, the chorus Gower informs us that 'he, good prince, having all lost, / By waves from coast to coast is tossed' (*Per* 2.1.33–4). The rusty suit of armour is one of these many objects lost to Pericles — and the only one to be found.¹⁸ As the Second Fisherman draws up his net, he exclaims: 'Help, master, help! Here's a fish hangs in the net, like a poor man's right in the law; t'will hardly come out. Ha, bots on't, 'tis come at last, and 'tis turn'd to a rusty armour' (2.1.115–18). The Second Fisherman's witty social critique echoes the gravedigger's musings in *Hamlet*. As the gravedigger mocks the skulls that he tosses up out of the ground, so the Fisherman shows little regard for this emblem of chivalry that is washed up by the sea. The rust signifies the armour's state of disuse or neglect, as is frequently the case in the Shakespeare canon. In *Coriolanus*, a serving-man exclaims that 'This peace does nothing but rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers' (*Cor* 4.5.226–7). Suffolk describes his weapon in *King Henry VI, Part Two* as 'a vengeful sword, rusted with ease' (2*H6* 3.2.198), and in *Henry V*, Grandpre speaks of the sad state of the English troops in terms of Mars's rusty armour: 'Big Mars seems bankrupt in their beggared host / And faintly through a rusty beaver peeps' (2*H5* 4.2.42–3). Hamlet uses the term figuratively when he asks if the players 'grow rusty' (*Ham* 2.2.337), as does Parolles, who calms himself in *All's Well That Ends Well* with the line 'Rust, sword; cool, blushes' (*AWW* 4.3.331). In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Armado employs essentially the same image: 'Adieu, valour; rust, rapier; be still, drum, for your manager is in love' (*LLL* 1.2.176–7). Like

many heroes of romance, Pericles is naïve and inexperienced; he has yet to be tested and still needs to prove his worth. Similarly, Spenser describes the armour of the Redcrosse Knight in the opening stanza of *The Faerie Queene* as marked with dints and dings though the knight himself has yet to see any battles:

A Gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine,
 Y cladd in mightie armes and siluer shielde,
 Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,
 The cruell markes of many a bloody field;
 Yet armes till that time did he neuer wield:
 His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,
 As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:
 Full iolly knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,
 As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt. (*FQ* I.i.1.1–9)¹⁹

The 'cruell markes' indicate that this object has a history, even if the subject does not. These marks *mark* the armour's role in past battles and establish it as worthy for future use in the 'knightly giusts and fierce encounters' that await the Redcrosse Knight. Pericles's armour has been tossed about in the sea, and now its proper owner must reclaim it.

Pericles immediately re-possesses the armour, claiming it as his: 'it was mine own, part of mine heritage' (*Per* 2.1.122). His repetition of the word 'mine' underscores the armour's status as unique by virtue of its ownership. It is *his own*; it could not possibly belong to another. The armour's appearance also renders it distinct — he says 'I know it by this mark' (2.1.137) — and it is assigned a unique history that connects Pericles to his absent father. Although the object is materially corrupted by rust, Pericles's lengthy tribute insists on its enduring, abstract 'worth' (2.1.135). Read in its entirety, Pericles's speech regarding his lost-and-found garment reads surprisingly like a reunion between subjects (a frequent occurrence in romance, of course):

An armour, friends! I pray you, let me see it.
 Thanks, Fortune, yet, that after all thy crosses
 Thou giv'st me somewhat to repair myself;
 And though it was mine own, part of mine heritage,
 Which my dead father did bequeath to me,
 With this strict charge, even as he left his life:

'Keep it, my Pericles; it hath been a shield
 'Twixt me and death'; — and pointed to his brace—
 'For that it sav'd me, keep it; in like necessity,
 The which the gods protect thee from, may defend thee!
 It kept where I kept — I so dearly lov'd it—
 Till the rough seas, that spares not any man,
 Took it in a rage, though calm'd hath given't again.
 I thank thee for't; my shipwreck now's no ill,
 Since I have here my father gave in his will. (2.1.119–33)

Like the presence on stage of the armour itself, this tribute underscores the absence of the object's former owner. Pericles's address constitutes a type of ekphrasis, but as Leonard Barkan notes, ekphrasis always 'stand[s] in ambiguous relation to the actual object'.²⁰ Although Pericles is determined to assign a narrative to this material object, the object itself resists. This speech acts as an exercise in nostalgia, and it underscores the limitations of the material object in Pericles's nostalgic project. As Susan Stewart notes, nostalgia produces 'inauthentic' longing: 'Nostalgia is a sadness without an object, a sadness which creates a longing that of necessity is inauthentic because it does not take part in lived experience. Rather, it remains behind and before that experience. Nostalgia, like any form of narrative, is always ideological: the past it seeks has never existed except as narrative, and hence, always absent, that past continually threatens to reproduce itself as a felt lack'.²¹ Here, Pericles's 'felt lack' is embodied by the hollowness of the stage property, the void at the center of the material object. Pericles attempts to fill this void by inhabiting the suit of armour in the next scene, but the problem of inauthenticity, or of the difficulty in assigning authentic meaning to this stage property, persists. The court deems Pericles and his clothing 'strange'. The Second Lord observes that Pericles 'well may be a stranger, for he comes / To an honour'd triumph strangely furnished' (2.2.51–2). Moments earlier, Thaisa also says that, 'He seems to be a stranger' (2.2.41). The strangeness of Pericles's rusty dress is what assures his status as a stranger in Pentapolis. To this on-stage court audience, both he and his clothing lack an origin and a history. Pericles and his armour are nothing more than a 'rusty outside' (2.2.49), as one lord notes. Although Pericles immediately recognizes his armour in the previous scene, to the courtiers it is an unknown object and thus lacking in significance. In *Cymbeline*, the dejected and rejected Imogen refers to herself as 'a garment out of fashion' (*Cym* 3.4.53). In donning his suit of armour for the tournament, Pericles, too, becomes no more than this to

his spectators. King Simonides offers the conventional wisdom that 'Opinion's but a fool, that makes us scan / The outward habit by the inward man' (*Per* 2.2.55–6), but this adage also fails to assign meaning to the suit. In other words, the rusty armour may not accurately represent Pericles's inner worth, but what it does represent remains still unclear. If anything, the adage suggests only that clothing either does not signify character or that it signifies the opposite of what one might assume.

The courtiers fixate on the rusty armour but fail to assign it meaning as Pericles does; likewise, the fishermen express no great interest in the armour's significance and history but recognize its worth as an object that might generate income.²² The Second Fisherman hopes to claim, or spoil, the suit for himself: 'Ay, but hark you, my friend; 'twas we that made up this garment through the rough seams of the waters: there are certain condolences, certain vails. I hope, sir, if you thrive, you'll remember from whence you had them' (2.1.147–51). The term 'condolements' refers to expressions of sympathy with another's suffering or loss. However, the Fisherman may mean 'doles', or portions, rather than 'condolements', since he also mentions 'vails' — gifts or gratuities given to those in inferior positions. Such gifts were not necessarily monetary in early modern England. 'Vails' generally referred to feast leftovers or leftover garments, both of which were given to servants. In *Pericles*, the conventions of romance such as tournaments, quests, and chivalric knights are themselves reduced to such 'doles' or 'vails'. The play spoils or claims them as the play's subjects attempt to claim the armour and to assign it meaning. The suit of armour is a leftover from a lost past. The armour's militaristic origins are effaced; it performs violence only symbolically, as in tournaments. Anthony Miller notes that when armour and weaponry are claimed as spoils of war and displayed, these objects are 'pacified into harmless ornaments'.²³ *Pericles* pacifies this lost-and-found suit of armour as a stage prop that both stands for and encourages nostalgia. To claim the armour is to claim ownership of past literary forms and their present incarnations. For the fishermen, the action of claiming the armour is a creative one, an action of '[making] up' and of making. The Second Fisherman insists that "'twas we that made up this garment through the rough seams of the waters' (2.1.147–8). The garment is thus 'made up' in the sense of found and in the sense of composed or fashioned. Likewise, the play is composed or 'made up' of the found, spoiled fragments of romance. The play's first lines — 'To sing a song that old was sung, / From ashes ancient Gower is come' (*Per*. Prologue, 1–2) — establish the choral Gower as both reduced to ashes by the passage of time and simul-

taneously re-composed out of ashes, Phoenix-like, in the present theatrical moment. Indeed, Ben Jonson famously employed a metaphor of degeneration when he referred to *Pericles* as a ‘mouldy tale’, a turn of phrase that suggests a relationship between decayed material objects and textual objects. Like *Pericles*’s armour, romance is claimed in a rusty form.

Notes

I would like to thank John Archer for his generous assistance with this article. I would also like to thank the members of the seminar ‘Theatrical Conventions and Conventions of Theatre History’ at the 2008 Shakespeare Association of America meeting, particularly Barbara Palmer, Alan Dessen, Erin Kelly, and Lawrence Manley.

- 1 All Shakespeare quotations are taken from *The Arden Complete Shakespeare* (London, 1998).
- 2 In designating this suit of armour a stage ‘prop’ or ‘property’, I draw primarily on Andrew Sofer’s definition of a prop as ‘a discrete, material, inanimate object that is visibly manipulated by an actor in the course of a performance. It follows that a stage object must be “triggered” by an actor in order to become a prop (objects shifted by stagehands between scenes do not qualify). Thus a hat or sword remains an article of costume until an actor removes or adjusts it, and a chair remains an item of furniture unless an actor shifts its position’. See Andrew Sofer, *The Stage Life of Props* (Ann Arbor, 2003), 11–12. When *Pericles* dons the armour for his appearance at court, it becomes a costume.
- 3 Igor Kopytoff, ‘The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process’, *The Social Life of Things*, Arjun Appadurai (ed) (Cambridge, 1986), 34.
- 4 Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage* (Ann Arbor, 2003), 7. Spectators who recognized certain stage properties might have referred to them by names that invoked past uses. For example, the beaver worn by the actor who played Old Hamlet might become ‘Old Hamlet’s beaver’, as is the case with some property and costume entries in *Henslowe’s Diary*. It must also be acknowledged, however, that the practice of re-using stage properties may have rendered any given object less distinct and recognizable.
- 5 Jonathan Miller, *The Afterlife of Plays* (San Diego, 1992), 5.
- 6 *Henslowe’s Diary*, R.A. Foakes (ed.) (Cambridge, 1961), 217.
- 7 Alan Dessen and Leslie Thomson note that in early modern stage directions the term ‘arms’ might designate armour, weapons, or a heraldic coat of arms. See Alan Dessen and Leslie Thomson, *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580–1642* (Cambridge, 1999), 11.

- 8 Stallybrass reminds us that 'since there were no ready-made clothes until the later seventeenth century, every record of the buying of a gown or a petticoat or a doublet or breeches must be presumed to refer to the purchase of secondhand clothing unless there is evidence to the contrary. New clothing is recorded by payments for cloth, for ribbon, for lace and points, and for the transformation of these into a garment by a tailor'. See Peter Stallybrass, 'Properties in clothes', *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama*, Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda (eds), 179. Orgel also notes that early modern English theatre costumes were 'for the most part the cast-off clothes of real aristocrats'. See Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations* (Cambridge, 1996), 105. Indeed, Thomas Platter wrote in 1599 that 'The comedians are very expensively and elegantly costumed, since it is usual in England, when important gentlemen or knights die, for their finest clothes to be bequeathed to their servants, and since it is not proper for them to wear such clothes, instead they subsequently give them to the comedians to purchase very cheaply'. See E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1923), 2: 364.
- 9 Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, 2000), 258.
- 10 *Henslowe's Diary*, 320.
- 11 Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 257.
- 12 *Henslowe's Diary*, 323.
- 13 Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (London, 1980), 10.
- 14 In my working definition of the 'subject' or 'subjectivity', I draw on the distinction Linda Charnes makes between 'identity' and 'subjectivity'. Charnes is concerned, as I am here, with how these terms negotiate a relationship between past and present. She outlines the distinction as follows: "Subjectivity" ... means the subject's experience of his or her relationship to his or her "identity". Hence, a necessary space is opened up between "identity" (which is artificially constructed "thingness" of self as it as been constituted in the past) and "subjectivity" (which is the relationship to that "thingness" as it is experienced in the present). See Linda Charnes, *Notorious Identity: Materializing the Subject in Shakespeare* (Cambridge, MA, 1993), 8.
- 15 The armoured ghost of King Hamlet is for Derrida the prime example of what he calls the 'visor effect' in which 'we do not see who looks at us. Even though in his ghost the King looks like himself ... that does not prevent him from looking without being seen: his apparition makes him appear still invisible beneath his armour'. Derrida maintains that the armoured King Hamlet is a 'non-present present, this being-there of an absent or departed one'. See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx* (New York and London, 1993), 7–9. Jones and Stallybrass maintain that the armoured King Hamlet 'activates a specific memory system: the transmission of property, including

armour, as the material “remember me’s” which mark the heir as the living embodiment of his father, Hamlet as Hamlet. If the father dies, his material identity survives in the helm and crest, the target or shield, the coat of arms which heralds carried in front of the coffin at his funeral’. Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 250.

- 16 Vladimir Nabokov, *Transparent Things* (New York, 1972), 1.
- 17 Several non-Shakespearean instances of staging rusty armour appear in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Robert Wilson’s *The Cobler’s Prophecy* (c.1590) has the following stage direction: ‘*Enter Souldier, Raph, Mars his lame Porter in rustie armour, and a broken bill, the Herralld with a pensill and colours.*’ The kingdom is sick owing to the primacy of Contempt, and Mars has been reduced to the state of a Porter. The characters discuss the significance of the rusty armour in some detail. Raph asks, ‘Art thou one of God Mars his traine? / Alas good father thou art lame, / To be a souldier farre vnlustie, / Thy beard is gray thy armour rustie, / Thy bill I thinke be broken too.’ Mars the Porter responds, ‘Friend make not thou so much adoo, / My lamenes comes by warre, / My armours rustines comes by peace, / A maimed souldier made Mars his Porter, / Lo this am I: now questioning cease’ (734–46). His association of peace with rusty armor echoes many Shakespearean references and underscores the objects’ status as fallen off from previous (military) standards. See *The Cobler’s Prophecy*, Malone Society edition, A.C. Wood (ed.) (Oxford, 1914). I am indebted to Alan Dessen for this reference.
- 18 Pericles’s suit of armour is not the only thing to be claimed and cast up by the sea in this play. In Act 3, Thaisa’s supposedly dead body is cast into the sea, and when pirates kidnap Marina in Act 4, Leonine hatches a plan to ‘swear she’s dead / And thrown into the sea’ (4.1.98–9). In other words, the sea in *Pericles* is filled with subjects (Pericles, potentially Marina), objects (the suit of armour), and what Michael Serres calls ‘quasi-objects’ and ‘quasi-subjects’ (the body of Thaisa, which is both alive and dead, subject and object). See Michael Serres, *Statues* (Paris, 1987), 111.
- 19 Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, Thomas P. Roche (ed.) (New York, 1978), 41.
- 20 Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past* (New Haven, 1999), 4.
- 21 Susan Stewart, *On Longing* (Durham and London, 1993), 23.
- 22 For a reading of the role of class and economics in the scene, see Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 258–60. They argue that Pericles is ‘literally “made up” through the labors of the poor’ (259).
- 23 Anthony Miller, *Roman Triumphs and Early Modern English Culture* (New York, 2001), 37.