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**A COMPARISON OF THE HISTORICAL FIGURE OF EDWARD II WITH
THE LITERARY PORTRAYAL IN THE WORK OF CHRISTOPHER
MARLOWE**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval(a) samostatně a použil(a) jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

Plzeň, duben 2014

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Děkuji vedoucí bakalářské práce PhDr. Ivoňě Mišterové, PhD. za laskavý přístup, cenné rady a věcné připomínky, které mi poskytla v průběhu zpracování této práce.

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1 Introduction

The comparison of the historical figure of Edward II with the literary portrayal in Christopher Marlowe's historical play is considered a crucial part of the thesis. It is demanding to compare all the differences and similarities between what historical sources present and the portrayal of Edward II in the work of Christopher Marlowe, whose plays are considered the most dramatic of the 16th century.[1] This will be compared in following parts of the thesis. The thesis is divided into three parts. The first two parts are theoretical and then there is the practical one. The first part consists of three chapters and eight subchapters. It starts with Edward's accession to the throne, his favourite Gaveston, the marriage with Isabella and mentioned are also the Despencers. It all ends with the death of Edward II.

The second part is based on Marlowe's play *"The Troublesome Reign and Lamentable Death of Edward the Second, King of England, with the Tragical Fall of Proud Mortimer"*. The play is divided into five acts and twenty-five scenes and serves as a second part of the comparison of two portrayals. It indicates Marlowe's point of view on Edward's life as well as troubles.

The last part of the thesis is practical and consists of a systematic comparison of Marlowe's literary portrayal and the historical sources, that were compared with each other. It examines similarities and differences as well as author's potential deviation from the process. The last part attempts to find out as to whether Christopher Marlowe's portrayal of Edward II was accurate and plausible or not. The first half of the last segment focuses on similarities and differences while the second one discusses Marlowe's historical accuracy.

The aim of the thesis is to compare the historical figure of Edward II with his portrayal in the work of Christopher Marlowe and to work out as precise comparison as possible. Taking into consideration that Marlowe's play is much more difficult to understand mainly due to the language that had been used that time, historical sources are comprehensible and easier to perceive.

2 The very beginning of Edward's reign

2.1 The King's first favourite

Edward II was born on April 25 1284 in England as the fourth son of Edward I and Eleanor of Castile and became the first Prince of Wales.[2] For his interesting life and acts he went down in English history. One of the main reasons can be considered his later reign, that caused many troubles to him. Also, he tended to homosexuality and obeying his lovers ensured him death. Despite all mistakes that he made during his reign, he can be rightfully considered one of the most interesting monarchs that ever sit on the throne in England.

Edward II was one of eighteen descendants of Edward I. Although he became a new king of England, his reign was not found satisfying for the barons,[3] that did not agree with his favour to Gaveston. The question is if the interest from Edward's side was taken as a sexual one or not.[4]

Piers Gaveston was Edward's closest person. They knew each other from their childhood and spent most of the time together. They even enjoyed walking in the streets, in secret.[5] It is important to mention how Edward got so close to Gaveston. Paradoxely, his father, Edward I, decided to keep Gaveston close to his son in his household, approximately in 1297. Gaveston himself was a capable son of a Gascon knight and his ability was pleasant for the king.[6] When Edward I got a feeling that Gaveston did not have a good influence on his son, he decided to send him into exile. This did not take long. Edward I died on July 7 1307.[7] Edward's first act after his father's death was recalling Gaveston.[8]

Edward and Gaveston were together again. The king's weakness was a dependence on his favourite. Despite his father's displeasure, Gaveston played an important role in Edward's life and considered their relationship a brotherhood.

Edward was excited of being a new king, of having a power to control the people and all the barons at the royal court. Though Edward's love might have belonged to Gaveston, he was supposed to marry Isabella, a daughter of Philip IV of France. Under the pressure of the nobility and Philip IV himself,[9] Edward was forced to take into consideration all potential impacts. One was for sure he had to send Gaveston into exile.

Gaveston spent some time in Ireland. Nevertheless, in June 1309 he was recalled back to England by the nobility of England, the Pope and Philip IV.[10] In fact, Gaveston came back as a worse person. He detected his success in Ireland and started to give his earls nicknames.[11] Nevertheless, the barons did not find Gaveston's stay satisfying and some of the earls refused to take part in Parliament, if Gaveston stayed at the court.[12]

Other person, who could not stand Gaveston, was Edward's cousin, Thomas of Lancaster. Honestly said, Thomas of Lancaster did not have a good relationship with his cousin Edward either but that was not really important at the moment. But as he got a great wealth after his father-in-law death, he became a powerful man.

Isabella had not found anything interesting about Gaveston either, except his arrogant behaviour and bad manners. Later she found out that

all the jewels that Edward received from Philip IV of France, was given to Gaveston.

"She was staring in front of her because she could not have believed her eyes-Piers Gaveston had had a chain with diamonds and rubies on his neck – the loot of the Templars – that her father had given to Edward." (translation mine) [13]

In August 1311, Edward received the final Ordinances. Some of the ordinances were concerned with administrative reform and some with legal reform.[14] One of the important ones was concerned with Gaveston that was found an inappropriate companion of the King for his tricky counsels. The Ordinance decided about Gaveston's exile in 1311.

2.2. Gaveston's Death

In January 1312, Gaveston appeared back in England. There is no specific reason why he did so.[15] Nevertheless he made Edward happy though his existence was slowly coming to an end. After that Edward together with Gaveston and Isabella spent some time in York. There she finally got pregnant which made her very happy. England would finally have a responsible king.

Edward and Gaveston fled together when they found out that Thomas of Lancaster was about to chase them with his troops. They left from Tynemouth to Scarborough. Scarborough was not a place to stay longer than needed but was considered a great refuge.[16]

Edward sensed the seriousness of situation and decided to leave Gaveston at the castle in order to gather the troops. Lacanster's men arrived to the castle soon after and Gaveston realized that he had no

place to escape and surrendered. The Earl of Pembroke promised him safety on their way to the south.[17]

In June they arrived in Deddington and the Earl of Pembroke left Gaveston at the rectory. The Earl of Warwick found out where Gaveston was at the moment and came to capture him. He was led to Warwick Castle where he also spent several days. The Earl of Pembroke realized what happened and wanted to set the situation right. He found the Earl of Gloucester, Gaveston's brother-in-law, but he refused to help. It was too late to do anything, Gaveston was found a traitor. On June 1312, he was taken to Blacklow Hill, accompanied by the Earls. There he was executed.

2.3. The Battle of Bannockburn

Edward did not pay much attention to the situation that had been happening in Scotland. In 1313, Robert Bruce took an advantage of Edward's indifference and raised his troops to reconquer the Scottish lands again. He raided two castles, Roxborough and Edinburgh. Soon after, Pembroke came to Edward urging him to go to war with the Scots. Since the death of Edward I they had lost most of the lands that had been conquered before. Edward soon realized what he caused and decided to act. He was counting with the Earls to help him in the battle. He was wrong, they refused. The reason why the Earls did not come help him was simple; Edward had not consulted anything with them before he decided to fight.[18]

Edward got ready for the battle. He was very confident about his troops. Pembroke was a very good warrior and wanted to make sure that the troops would have got the best equipment for this battle. Although

the Earls did not come to help, they sent a number of knights. Edward had big troops containing many experienced soldiers. By this he wanted to make Robert Bruce worried because the equipment of Bruce's troops was much worse than Edward's. The battle was supposed to be at Bannockburn. Since there were many swamps around, that could have been a great opportunity for Bruce and his troops.

Self-confident Edward did not know his limits. He was persuaded that he could win the battle, be it thanks to his soldiers or equipment. Despite the difference, Bruce's men were successful and Edward suffered a defeat. His troops got tired on the way to Bannockburn and they were not strong enough to fight better. Moreover, Robert Bruce felt comfortable with being in his own country and had a strong support of his soldiers.[19] The guardians came to the conclusion that they should draw back but Edward did not want to. In the end of all, Pembroke convinced Edward to do so although the king could not stand his defeat. His return to England was worse than he expected, he was coming home as a loser. Since then, a king was unhappy.

Edward considered an escape degrading. He was not proud of it and realized that he lost many brave soldiers. Soon after, he was forced to leave for York with Thomas of Lancaster. Though Thomas of Lancaster was the king's cousin, he was his big enemy. More than that, Lancaster was rich, smart and powerful man. In York Edward had a chance to see how many lands he had lost since his father died. Lancaster took an advantage of Edward's situation and tried to persuade him to change his way of thinking. Lancaster also pointed out that the posts that Edward had been giving to his favourites, were not appropriate.

Lancaster had been pretending to help his cousin but basically he had not. Everything was a good trick how to get closer to the Crown.[20] It was not known that Despenser had been doing all this for his own good. He seemed to be an organized man that knew what to expect. Edward was too distracted.

3 Hugh le Despenser, a new favourite

Edward became weak. He partially missed Gaveston and also needed a friend. The country was full of hunger and illness, many people died. Since the Scots won the last battle, Edward expected them not to rest long. Isabella also noticed that something was not alright but she was used to it from previous years. The queen needed to get pregnant once more in order to have more descendants.

Meanwhile, Edward's acts did not correspond to the acts of a king. After some time, Edward finally found two friends, Hugh Despenser Senior and his son, having the same name. Thanks to the marriage of his son with a rich wife that was a heiress to the earldom of Gloucester, the whole family came to a great wealth.[21] Hugh Despenser the Younger and Edward spent much time together which was not pleasant for the baron. The situation was very similar to the one with Gaveston and there appeared complaints about the situation taking place in England. The royal family had enough food for bad times while the poor had nothing to eat.

Regarding the queen, she had heard about the Despenser's greed and hated him as much as Gaveston.[22] One more reason was Edward's behaviour that was the same as before. Hugh le Despenser

was conscious of Isabelle's hate but she did not make him scared. Edward's great wealth was a sufficient motivation indeed. Meanwhile, in June 1318, there appeared a man called John of Powderham who claimed the people that he was the actual son of Edward I.[23] This caused a stir and the queen expressed her displeasure. John of Powderham was arrested and later, without giving any proofs, executed. Some considered him a mad and by his death the whole situation was concluded.[24]

In 1318, Edward and Thomas of Lancaster left for Berwick, the queen stayed in Brotherton. Robert de Bruce was the commander of the Scottish troops and was known to be a great warrior indeed.[25] Edward did not want to give up his lands, though he could not do much. He could not and was not able to get rid off the Scots occupying Yorkshire.[26] In comparison with Edward that was not able to do anything, this gave the Scots a good impression of having a chance to win.

3.1. The Despensers and the Mortimers

Hugh le Despenser still occupied an important position in his life. Furthermore, the Despensers were not really popular by public due to their greed. It is demanding to mention that The Mortimer did not have good relations with the Despensers. The Elder Mortimer had been fighting by Edward's father side many years. For some time, Mortimer's lands were confiscated but after the death of Edward I, Edward II gave all possessions back to him.[27]

Soon after, the Mortimers found out that Hugh le Despenser talked to Edward about the fact, that the Mortimers possessed a great wealth

and that should be limited. This caused that the Mortimers got angry and confiscated all Despenser's property.[28] Hugh le Despenser complained about the situation to Edward, that promised to get all his property back, and also wanted to punish the Mortimers for what they had done. To solve the problem, it was demanding to discuss the whole situation with the barons. Edward could not do anything without their permission. He was unpleasantly surprised when most of the barons did not agree with his suggestion. Thomas of Lancaster was convinced that the Despensers owned more wealth than they should. He also suggested to expel the Despensers from the country and to take all the wealth back as most of it never belonged to them.[29] The Despensers were under pressure and eventually had no chance to succeed. They left the country in August 1321.

3.2. The Downfall of the Despensers

Isabella was heading to London in early October. On the way back she wanted to get some rest at Leeds Castle that was supervised by Lady Badlesmere.[30] Nevertheless, Badlesmere's wife refused to let the queen in which caused a considerable indignation. By the end of October, Lady Badlesmere was sent to the Tower. After that, Edward got a vision of success and decided to head for Mortimer's lands. Roger Mortimer and Thomas of Lancaster had good relations with each other. When Edward was about to conquer Mortimer's estates, the Earl of Lancaster warned him against the king. Nevertheless, due to lack of soldiers, neither Lancaster nor Mortimer, were able to gather the troops. Edward won. His enemies, the Elder Mortimer and also his son, Roger Mortimer Junior were captured and sent to the Tower of London. Regarding Thomas of Lancaster, he was defeated at the Battle of Boroughbridge and taken to Pontefract Castle.[31] In 1322, he was sentenced to death. Due to his royal origin he was not considered a traitor and his head was just cut off.

4 Isabella's revenge

In 1324, Edward and Hugh Despenser confiscated all of Isabella's wealth and more than that, she was supervised by Despenser's wife, which was very humiliating for her as a queen.[32] There she found out that Edward, listening to his favourite's conseils, might be dangerous for her and decided to act radically. She had been writing letters to her brother, King Charles IV of France, telling him about the situation in England. Soon after in 1325, Isabella went to France as a delegate of Edward II after King Charles IV of France took a possession of Edward's French Ownership.[33] Her purpose was not to negotiate a peace treaty but to gather troops and stand against Edward. Isabella found an alliance in Roger Mortimer and they became lovers. Together they got a tricky plan how to get rid of Edward and replace him by their thirteen-year old son, Prince Edward. When Isabella procured a peace treaty for England, Edward II was supposed to visit France as well. He eventually fell ill and sent his oldest son instead.

4.1. Isabella's offensive

In September of the same year, Edward wanted Isabella to come back to England. She did not want to depart from France and made excuses. Charles IV had a suspicion that his sister schemed against Edward but gave her a permission to stay longer.[34] Nevertheless he did not want to have any problems connected with his country and decided to send Isabella and her son back to England. Isabella saw through the brother's plan and fled with Mortimer and her son to the province of Hainaut.

There Isabella gathered the troops and in 1326, together with Mortimer invaded England. Edward was considerably surprised by Isabella's offensive, started to panic and escaped to Wales.[35] Isabella's men first captured the Elder Despenser who was executed as a traitor. Hugh Despenser Junior was about to hide in Cardiff but did not succeed. He was executed as a traitor as well, on November 25. The only person left was the king.

4.2. Edward's imprisonment

On January 1327, Edward II was imprisoned at Kenilworth Castle. There he also abdicated in favour of his son.[36] Henry of Lancaster, the 3rd Earl of Lancaster and Leicester, was supposed to take charge of him. Meanwhile, Isabella wanted to put their son on the throne as soon as possible. Due to his young age, she would take over the government as a regent.[37] To her surprise, the parliament decided not to entrust the regency to her. Nevertheless, the Prince was under pressure and suffered by the consequences.

"He loved his father as much as his mother because he always treated him kindly, showed him affection and was proud of him. Yet his mother charmed him. When she took him to France, he felt unease towards his father. In Hainaut he got a rest thanks to Filippa. But after returning to England things got moving. There was a war between parents. The Despensers were killed in a brutal way and his father imprisoned. What will be they doing to me?" (translation mine) [38]

The King was no longer fit to rule. Even though they put much pressure on fifteen year-old boy, he astonished. He decided not to reign until he got his father's permission which made Isabella angry.[39] Meanwhile, Edward was held in prison waiting for help. Although Henry of Lancaster and Edward never had good relations with each other before, this had changed. Lancaster became his faithful servant as well as a friend.

4.3. The Death of Edward II

An affair between Isabella and Mortimer was not really pleasant for the people. Also, Edward's situation started to be unstable and this made the queen upset. Isabella wanted bad conditions for Edward as a revenge for the past. Henry of Lancaster was deposed and Edward was sent to Berkley Castle.[40] There he got two wardens, named Maltravers and Berkley, to supervise him. Edward was forced to live in bad conditions, in a small cold room without light.[41] Although it was very humiliating for a king, Edward was determined to live and fight for his life. Nevertheless, Edward's life did not match with Isabella's plans. Mortimer and she soon became conscious of a possible danger and immediately decided to act. They came up to the final decision. That the King could no longer live.[42]

Edward had to be killed the same night. Due to the fact, that he could not have any visible signs on his skin, the way of murder had to be considered.[43] On 23 September 1327, Edward was murdered at Berkley Castle. The way of his murder was unusual indeed - the red-hot poker was inserted into his anus.[44] This way might have been very painful but one was for certain, it reliably burned most of his guts and there was no visible sign on his body. After his death, it did not take much time and Edward III revealed Isabella and Mortimer's intrigues. He soon started to act, unfortunately for some.

5 Marlowe's literary portrayal of Edward II

5. 1. Christopher Marlowe in short

Christopher Marlowe was an English dramatist and was born on February 6th 1574. He soon started to be very successful, his career started in London and that is also one of not many things that are known about him. A very interesting thing is that Marlowe was born in the same year like Shakespeare and influenced him in a great way. Among his greatest plays belongs also *Edward II* which is a history play about a young king Edward, his wife and also barons that had been disgusted by his acts and thoughts. Due to his affairs with his favourites, firstly Gaveston and later Hugh le Despenser, he sealed his destiny. The very first edition is called "*The troublesome reigne and lamentable death of Edward the second, King of England, with the tragicall fall of proud Mortimer*" [45] and has been entered into the Stationer's Register right five weeks after Marlowe's death, on July 6th 1593 .

Christopher Marlowe's play called *Edward II* is different. Also, the play shows a shorter version of Edward's life and is divided into five acts and twenty-five scenes beginning from the return of Piers Gaveston and ending with his death.

5.2. The literary portrayal of Edward II

Act 1, Scene 1

The play starts with Gaveston that receives a letter from the King. In the letter Edward recalls him back to country which was very pleasant for him. There is no doubt that Edward had a great delight to call Gaveston back to England as he always had a close relationship to him. Meanwhile, Edward, his lords and barons come from the Parliament that was called especially for this reason. They had been discussing the situation at the Parliament. The group contains these members: Thomas Lancaster, The Mortimers, Edmund; Earl of Kent, Earl of Warwick and many others.

All of them were disgusted by the King's state affairs and also by privileging Gaveston as much as he was able to. Neither barons nor earls had been satisfied with the situation. Also, there were trying to convince Edward to consider the situation. But the idea of being with Gaveston again makes him feel happy and so he denies the opinion of others. Edward also refuses to expel Gaveston from the country and does not accept any other proposals. By such a gesture he made barons angry, afterward all of them left. They also threat Edward with an open war if he does not expel him.

"What, Gaveston! welcome! Kiss not my hand

Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee.

Why should'st thou kneel? Know'st thou not who I am?" [46]

Soon after, Edward makes Gaveston Earl of Cornwall and also guarantees him a protection when needed. When Gaveston was first expelled from the country and so sent into exile, it was made by the

Bishop of Coventry that was, after seeing Gaveston back in the country, considerably disconcerted. As Edward broke the law, the Bishop promises to revenge. Edward does not want to hear anything like that and menaces the bishop to get rid of all his property and to imprison him.

Act 1, Scene II

Next part of the play is happening at Westminster. The lords, in this case Lancaster, the Mortimer, Warwick and Lancaster are meeting together to discuss the distasteful situation happening all around. They are also sorry for the Bishop of Canterbury whose property was given to Gaveston, as the King threatened. The Archbishop of Canterbury comes afterwards who agrees to fight against Gaveston. Suddenly after, Isabella is complaining about her relationship with the King that does not pay any attention to her. The lords feel even more disgusted and feel sorry for the queen and so they suggest her help. Despite all, Isabella is trying to persuade them that they should not fight against the King. Mortimer does not agree with her opinion and wants to take action.

Act 1, Scene III

Gaveston says to Earl of Kent that the lords have left for Lambeth.

“Edmund, the mighty Prince of Lancaster,
That hath more earldoms than an ass can bear,
And both the Mortimers, two goodly men,
With Guy of Warwick, that redoubted knight,
Are gone toward Lambeth there let them remain!” [47]

Act 1, Scene IV

The lords sign the form that is supposed to send Gaveston back to exile. Last line was left for the King. Short afterwards comes Edward together with Gaveston and also Kent. At first, the lords do not let Edward convince them and stand on their decision. They also show the king that they will always want to get rid on Gaveston. After all, Edward decides to sign the cocument even though he did not want to, hoping to make the lords satisfied. Gaveston feels very sorry for the situation and says goodbye to Edward that is also very desperated. Gaveston is supposed to be taken to Ireland.

The queen is complaining about her situation and decides not to be in Gaveston's shadow anymore. She wants to intervene untill she has time. Isabella tells the lords that sending Gaveston to exile is not a good decision and that he should be recalled to England. The lords do not agree with her decision. Isabella takes Mortimer aside and tell him her reasons. It will be much easier to get rid off Gaveston in the country. And for such a reason, they do as she wishes. When Edward finds out the news, he feels happy and full of life again. He thinks about organizing tournaments to celebrate Gaveston's comeback. The Elder Mortimer leaves for Scotland and assigns his nephew to look after the court. His nephew, the younger Mortimer does not understand how can such a low-birth man be the king's favourite and also how can the king be so addicted to him and let himself be influenced by Gaveston at the same time.

Act 2, Scene I

Young Spencer and Baldock are talking together about the Earl of Gloucester that has passed away. Spencer is very smart and tells Baldock he would like to be Gaveston's servant so that he could possibly

get the king's favour. Also, they talk about the fact that Edward's niece must be really happy to hear that Gaveston was recalled back from exile. After that she enters. She is reading the letter informing her about the return of her beloved Gaveston. Then Baldock leaves and the Lady wants Spencer to be her company and go with her to visit Gaveston.

Act 2, Scene II

The King is enthusiastic about the return of Gaveston and is not able to solve any other things. The lords are upset because Edward does not pay attention to anything but Gaveston. Then Gaveston comes back which makes Edward happy. He welcomes him with pleasure and awaits something similar from the lords. His vision was wrong, the lords are not really excited and so salute Gaveston in a poor way which makes the king angry. Soon after Mortimer and Gaveston start to fight which leads to an incident, Mortimer wounds Gaveston. Edward is opposed to the situation and warns the lords. On the contrary, the lords then think of a way how to get rid off Gaveston.

Soon after, the Elder Mortimer has been captured in Scotland. Mortimer Junior feels bad about it and tries to persuade the king to pay for him. For that matter, it was Edward who sent him to war. The king refuses to pay the ransom which makes Mortimer Junior angry. Lancaster and he are telling Edward about all the wrong things he has done during his reign. They also warn him about the fact that most of countries including Scotland, Ireland, northern England and France are not controlled enough as he did not pay much attention to them. Ignoring of the queen, unease of the people or overlooking of state affairs make more troubles to Edward but he does not realize yet. Also, the battle at Bannocksbourn did not go really well and had disastrous consequences. Kent says to Edward

the lords are right and that Gaveston's situation is really bad which makes him upset and decides to dismiss Kent.

Soon after, the queen, Spencer and Gaveston come to the king who is complaining about the current situation and the terrible behaviour of the lords. He also wants to promote Spencer and Baldock. In the end of the scene he announces the marriage between Gaveston and his niece Margaret.

Act 2, Scene III

Next scene takes place close to Tynemouth Castle. Kent would like to fight with the lords. Even though he is the king's brother, the lords respect him and propose to stay with them. They are sure they want to attack Gaveston and everyone who should sympathize with him. As agreed before, the king will be left out of it.

Act 2, Scene IV

The lords are following the king, but also Gaveston, Margaret and Spenser that are not really satisfied with that. Gaveston and Edward start to panic and want to get away though they know it will not be easy. As the queen sympathizes with the lords, she tells them about their plan. Meanwhile Isabella takes a chance and says everywhere how much she is unhappy with no attention from Edward's side. She also threatens to leave the country and take their son with her so the country would be without its successor to the throne.

Act 2, Scene V

Gaveston is captured and taken away. He knows his destiny, he will be executed for fallacious acts in connection with the king.

“Thank you all, my lords: then I perceive,
That heading is one, and hanging is the other,
And death is all.” [48]

Edward asks the lords about the last chance to see his favourite before the execution. The lords initially do not want to but then allow him to do so. Pembroke is willing to take Gaveston to the king and back so that he can be finally executed. The lords agree and so Pembroke’s servant James oversees him.

Act 3, Scene I

Warwick comes to take Gaveston away from James and Pembroke’s men. Even though Pembroke promised Gaveston to see the king before the execution, his wish initially was not heard out.

Act 3, Scene II

The queen comes with their son to inform the king that Normandy has been confiscated by the king of France. Edward then decides to send Isabella and their son to France to solve the situation. Lord Arundel informs Edward II about Gaveston who was executed and also tells him about lord Warwick that came to Pembroke’s men to take Gaveston away. Edward breaks down and wants to take revenge. Afterwards, there comes a fight. Younger Spencer becomes Earl of Gloucester after which the lords do not agree with that. The king is disgusted by the behaviour of the lords and decides to defend himself.

Act 3, Scene III

Edward becomes indignant. The lords are complaining about Edward's behaviour but he does not care and wants to fight and rebel even more.

"A noble attempt and honourable deed,
Is it not, trow ye, to assemble aid,
And levy arms against your lawful king!" [49]

Act 3, Scene IV

Edward wins the battle and all the lords are captured. He is determined to take revenge and show them all his indignation. Baldock, younger Spencer and Levune then think about some strategy against Isabella who is apparently plotting against the king. Levune is sent to France to see the situation and alternatively get Edward ready for that.

Act 4, Scene I

Kent is complaining about his brother's affairs and does not know how to stop him. He warns the king of not to go to France and be a help to the queen.

"Proud Edward, dost thou banish me thy presence?
But I'll to France, and cheer the wronged queen,
And certify what Edward's looseness is.
Unnatural king! to slaughter noblemen

And cherish flatterers! Mortimer, I stay
Thy sweet escape: stand gracious, gloomy night,

To his device.“ [50]

Act 4, Scene II

Meanwhile, little Edward wants the queen to come back to England. Isabella is trying to explain to little prince that neither the king nor the lords are nice to her and that the situation is very bad. When the queen sees Mortimer and Kent alive, she becomes very happy. Mortimer proposes to depose the king and replace him by his young son of which Isabella really approves. Even though little prince does not agree with that at all, they all consider the king's deposition.

Act 4, Scene III

Edward feels proud of his triumph. He also orders to capture and punish Mortimer if he is seen on the English ground. His joy does not last long. A courier tells him about the changes, mainly about the fact that Mortimer, the queen with little prince and Kent are in Hainault to get the troops ready. The king feels disappointed about it, he feels sorry for little Edward that must face to all this. But he decided not to give up.

Act 4, Scene IV

Isabella and Mortimer are encouraging their troops and promising a better future without a king.

“Now, lords, our loving friends and countrymen,
Welcome to England all, with prosperous winds!
Our kindest friends in Belgia have we left,
To cope with friends at home; a heavy case“ [51]

Act 4, Scene V

Edward sees that he has no chance against the queen's troops and Spencer begs him to retreat. Edward does not want to hear about it but later he realizes there is no way out. Isabella feels proud and happy to reach what she was fighting for. Then they name little Edward a new king of England. Kent wants to know what the destiny of little Edward will be as he does not really trust Mortimer and the queen.

Rice AP Howell then comes with Elder Mortimer that is supposed to be executed and informs the queen that Edward with Younger Spencer escaped to Ireland.

Act 4, Scene VI

Edward together with Spencer and Baldock are dressed up as monks. They are trying to hide before Leicester and Rice AP Howell that are coming to an abbey. Unfortunately they are not successful. Soon after their arrival, Leicester and Rice AP Howell come to take Baldock and younger Spencer away. Edward is supposed to go to Killingworth. He is unhappy to face to such a situation.

"Must! it is somewhat hard, when kings must go." [52]

He ultimately has to say goodbye to his friends and go with them. Spencer and Baldock are awared of their faith.

Act 5, Scene I

Leicester and the bishop of Winchester put much presure on Edward. They want him to give up the crown and give it to his younger son but he refuses. He is convinced that the crown would fall down into

Mortimer's hands, not to little Edward. Leicester then threatens the king with disinheriting of prince Edward if he does not sign the document. As he does not have any other option, he signs it and sends a handkerchief to the queen. Mortimer decides to send Lord Berkley to tell the king that since now he will be in his custody.

Act 5, Scene II

Isabella and Mortimer feel proud of what they have done. To their great joy the bishop of Winchester and a messenger come to announce that the king signed the document and so the crown belongs to the Prince. Still, Isabella has considerable doubts that nothing is safe until the king is alive. Mortimer then decides to replace Berkley, who is supposedly too close to king, by Matrevis and Gurney. The plan is to take Edward away, to a random place that nobody knows. Yet Isabella feels something for him and so sends him a ring. Soon after, Mortimer talks to the Earl of Kent about the young Prince. Kent is not able to understand why he is supposed to take care of Prince because it should be the queen who should be responsible for him. Prince Edward feels too young to reign and does not feel comfortable with that. As Kent does not really trust Mortimer, he decides to rescue Edward and so revenge Mortimer.

Act 5, Scene III

Edward is aware of what is waiting for him. He knows Mortimer is responsible for all that and feels tired of it. Kent, in a good intention to help his brother, is imprisoned and taken away.

Act 5, Scene IV

Mortimer decides that the king must die and so he calls Lightborn and tells him all the instruction. There is one main point that there should not be any mark on his body and everything should be done in secret. When Kent is taken to the queen and Mortimer, their judgement is death. Even though Prince Edward feels sorry for Kent and tries to convince both that he shall live, he is executed anyway.

Act 5, Scene V

Lightborne is sent to murder the king. He comes to Berkley Castle to inform Matrevis and Gurney about why he actually arrives. He asks them to prepare a red hot poker and a table to carry out the execution. Edward has got an intention that something like that could be happening and does not really want to fall asleep that night. During the night, Lightborn comes to his chamber and murders the king.

Act 5, Scene VI

Mortimer soon hears about the murder of a king as well as Isabella and Prince Edward. Unfortunately for Mortimer, Prince Edward receives a letter written by him in order to murder a king. He immediately sends him to an execution. Though Isabella caused a substantial part of it, the prince took pity on her.

6 Comparative Analysis

The last part of the thesis focuses on a comparison of the historical figure of Edward II with the literary portrayal in the work of Christopher Marlowe. It is demanding to mention that Edward II can be considered one of the most interesting kings among those that ever reigned in England. In this part of bachelor thesis should be compared the fact, if Christopher Marlowe's literary portrayal of Edward II was accurate or not, and to what extent.

6. 1. Similarities and differences

There are certain differences from the very beginning of Edward's life. The description of Edward II, at least from what we may read about him and how historical sources describe him, is detailed more than in the work of Christopher Marlowe. On the other hand, Marlowe's play called "*The Troublesome Reign and Lamentable Death of Edward the Second, King of England, with the Tragical Fall of Proud Mortimer*", states the most important acts of Edward II as well. The historical play was written in 16th century which signifies that it is considerably complicated to understand the language, though there might exist a modern version of Marlowe's play nowadays.

Nevertheless, certain acts of the play are much shorter and do not give many details.[53] Furthermore, Marlowe's play does not state any specific dates or years. By contrast, literary pieces state many, regarding not only Edward's life, but also the years of the battles, the crown issues and others. The literary piece called "*The Foolies of the King*", written by Jean Plaidy and translated also into Czech, that has been already mentioned before, could serve as a good example. We might find there the dates such as the battle of Bannockburn in 1314, the marriage with Isabella in 1308, his death in 1327 and so on.

6.2. Comparison as a whole

It is demanding to admit that Marlowe's play state important points that occurred in Edward's life. Although some differences were found, it is obvious that the author wanted to include the facts about Edward's reign and give the readers an accurate idea of how the era of Edward II looked like.

The historical figure of Edward II and his literary portrayal are basically very similar. The figure of Edward II is well expressed in the both versions. Edward was known as a young king, completely different to his father.[54] After the death of Edward I he became a new king of England. There exist sources that even state Edward's early life, enriched with the friendship of his favourite Gaveston. Christopher Marlowe dealt with Edward's figure a little bit differently.

In his play, Edward sent a letter to Gaveston to recall him back. This shows that Marlowe eliminated a part of Edward's life which may be considered important, taking into consideration, that there are many facts to talk about, such as Edward's excessive favour to Gaveston or Gaveston's first expulsion from the country. As a good example could serve the historical source called *"Edward II: His Friends, His Enemies, His Death"*, written by Susan Higginbotham, that goes back in time and start already with the reign of Edward's father to introduce the potential readers into the story.

The historical figure of Edward II in Marlowe's portrayal is plausible. The author put emphasis on later relationship between Edward and Gaveston. Regarding the King's favourite, it is necessary to mention, that

the play is divided into two main parts. The first part is focused mainly on Piers Gaveston while the second one describes the situation related to Spencer and also Isabella and Mortimer, whose roles are very important.

Getting back to the historical figure of Edward II, the relationship with Piers Gaveston is described in detail, such as the fact, that Edward called his favourite a brother. Although Gaveston's role did not last long, it took an important part not only in Marlowe's literary portrayal, but also in any historical source and primarily in Edward's personal life. Nevertheless, the comparison gets to the same point just after the king's death. Gaveston came back to England and was close to Edward again. Piers Gaveston considerably influenced Edward by his charm and playfulness. That might have been pleasant for the King but not for the barons that did not agree with Gaveston's return. Marlowe's first act is a clear proof of this statement. Taking into consideration the extent of the historical play, Christopher Marlowe could have devoted more to one specific act, where needed, and less to another such as Isabella's constant complaints in the first part of the play.

It is demanding to mention that some important facts, such as the coronation of Edward II that was supposed to be held, were not found in Marlowe's play. Basically, Edward had a vision of leaving the preparation up to Gaveston which was eventually cancelled when he found out that Gaveston was ordered out of the country once more. This process corresponds with Marlowe's first act of the play. Gaveston was sent to Bamborough Castle in England in the year of 1308. Nevertheless, due to the time span of the play, Marlowe did not state why exactly, was the King's favourite sent back into exile. What corresponds is the fact, that the King was forced to give sanction to Gaveston's exile which states

both Marlowe and historical sources. On the other hand, subsequently, Christopher Marlow states different facts and thus changes the process. According to his play, Isabella persuaded the barons not to send Gaveston into exile because she knew about a faster way how to get rid of him. By this Christopher Marlowe considerably deflected from the given facts. Gaveston was initially expelled from the country to Ireland. Nevertheless, he came back to the court later which made the Earls angry. The historical figure of Edward II with the literary portrayal is balanced yet. The author digressed from accuracy in the following part.

The historical figure of Robert Bruce, that posed a threat to England and to Edward himself, was eliminated in the play. There comes a question for which reason Christopher Marlowe had decided not to include the character such as Robert Bruce, taking into consideration that Bruce played an important role in Edward's life indeed. The Scottish lands that Edward I had conquered during his reign, were under the lead of Edward that did not care much about it. It is obvious then, that Christopher Marlowe eliminated substantial facts.

The process is becoming identical later: Gaveston and Edward were about to flee together. Unlike Marlowe's play, the historical sources state even the place, which was the Scarborough Castle. Edward left Gaveston there alone in order to gather an army. Nevertheless, the king's favourite is captured there and taken away which corresponds with the historical sources. Christopher Marlowe states this incident in short. Gaveston was accused of fallacious acts in connection with the king. Unfortunately, there is no mention of Edward that was, that time, on the way back to York. On the other hand, except this fact, Marlowe described the situation plausibly and accurately.

Marlowe states a little mention of the battle at Bannockburn which was the fight between Edward and Robert the Bruce. The process took much time and Edward's troops lost in the end. It is obvious that the historical sources devote to the battle at Bannockburn more, in view of the fact that Edward II was defeated there. Also, as a considerable difference could be considered the fact, that Marlowe did not include much information about the relationship between Edward and his cousin, Thomas of Lancaster. It is obvious that Christopher Marlowe exchanged the acts. In fact, according to how the historical sources describe Edward II, he firstly wanted to flee with Gaveston and then he left him in order to gather his troops. Soon after, Gaveston was captured by Thomas of Lancaster and his men and imprisoned at Warwick Castle. Afterwards it was the battle at Bannockburn that followed. Marlowe's literary portrayal is considerably different. It was the battle of Bannockburn that happened first and then it was the marriage of Gaveston and Edward's niece, Margaret. Marlowe also indicated certain dislikes of the barons. Edward fled together with Gaveston while Isabella threatened with leaving the country. Marlowe then mentioned Gaveston's execution. He also mentioned who was he arrested by and Pembroke, that was supposed to enable to Gaveston to see the King for the last time before his death. His wish was not heard out.

It is visible that the author did not include other facts, such as the situation taking place at Leeds Castle. This castle was supervised by Badlesmere's wife who refused Isabella to enter in. Also, the process with the Mortimers should be included if we take into consideration that the Mortimers confiscated all wealth of the Despensers and it was Edward II that decided to help by asking the lords. Despite the fact that he did not succeed, it is worth mentioning. The Despensers were ordered out of the

country. It is demanding to mention, that Marlowe made one certain name considerably shorter. The historical sources present Hugh le Despenser as second King's favourite. In Christopher Marlowe's play he might be found under the name of Spencer.

Meanwhile, Isabella met Roger Mortimer and they became lovers. Marlowe included Isabella's departure to France as well. There she was supposed to solve state issues which could be a pretext for meeting Gaveston and conspiring against the King. In the play there is also a mention of their son, Prince Edward that was supposed to stay by her side. In fact, Isabella was staying in France indeed. Nevertheless, Prince Edward was sent to her later.

The chronological order does not agree then. Christopher Marlowe might not have found this necessary. In his fourth act, Isabella and Mortimer were gathering their troops to dethrone Edward and replace him by their son, Edward III. What Christopher Marlowe does not mention is the fact that Isabella did not want to leave France for certain reasons. Also, there is no mention about the letters that had been sent by Edward to Isabella and even to their son in which he was calling them back to England. There is no single mention of Charles IV either. It was him who decided to send Isabella and her son back to England, but they eventually fled together with Mortimer.

The process leads to the moment of Isabella's victory. Edward II was dethroned. In fact, Edward wanted to flee with Hugh Despenser, also called Spencer in Marlowe's play. They eventually landed in Cardiff but due to their conspicuous manners, they were recognized by the people

and imprisoned. Hugh le Despenser was condemned to death. On the contrary, Christopher Marlowe's play states the process differently. Edward II was supposed to flee with Younger Spencer to Ireland. Nevertheless, he was found and taken to Kenilworth Castle, where he was also imprisoned. This means that the author did not mention a brutal execution of Despenser and skipped directly to Edward's imprisonment.

Edward then abdicated in favour of his son and signed the document. As Christopher Marlowe's play presents, Edward signed the required document and thus made his son a king. It is necessary to mention, that Edward II spent several months in comfortable conditions unlike the situation that was supposed to happen later at Berkley Castle. The plot is accurate. In April 1327, Edward II is sent by Isabella and Mortimer to Berkley Castle, to much worse conditions. On the other hand, Marlowe does not describe any of terrible conditions that Edward had to live in. Maltravers and Gurney were Mortimer's henchmen that were supposed to supervise Edward, those are also mentioned in the play.

Shortly afterwards, Lightborne is sent to Berkley Castle to murder the king, which Marlowe states as well. He also had a special preparation for it, mainly because it was necessary to do it in secret. Also, there had to be no marks on Edward's body so that nobody found out that it was a murder. Marlowe's play ends with Edward's death. Nevertheless, the historical sources present even the way of murder as well as the consequences of it.

7 Conclusion

This thesis dealt with the comparison of two portrayals of Edward II, Christopher Marlowe's historical play and with the literary portrayal in the work of Christopher Marlowe. The theoretical part was divided into two parts. The first part of the thesis consisted of how historical sources present the figure of Edward II. This first part is divided into three subchapters, the first one is concerning on Edward's accession to the throne, his beloved Gaveston and his death, the second one on Edward's new favourite Hugh Despenser, and the third one is concerning on the revenge of queen Isabella.

Regarding the literary portrayal in the work of Christopher Marlowe, this was the second part of the thesis. The play includes five acts and twenty-five scenes. It was demanding to describe act by act and scene by scene in order to find as many differences and similarities as possible. Understanding the play made the comparison considerably complicated due to the use of language and blank-verse. [55]

Certain differences were found. The author eliminated certain parts of Edward's life, such as first meeting with Piers Gaveston, the marriage with Isabella, the marriage of Gaveston with Margaret de Clare, the birth of Edward's descendants etc., and either replaced them to other place, mostly to the second part of the play or fully eliminated them. There are no any specific dates or years mentioned. There comes a question why a character such as Robert de Bruce was left out from the play and for which reason, taking into consideration that Bruce was an important historical figure in the life of Edward II. It is obvious that Marlowe's play has a considerable time-range where the important points are mentioned indeed.

Regarding the chronological order, Marlowe does not really follow it. Some parts were skipped and some replaced by another. Also, Marlowe made certain names shorter which made the comprehension rather confusing, as a good example could serve Hugh Despenser, named in Marlowe's play as Spencer. It is necessary to say that the author put many emotions in his masterpiece though it might not be recognizable in the beginning.

Christopher Marlowe's literary portrayal of Edward II could be found as historically accurate. Taking into consideration the fact that the figure of Edward II has much to offer, Christopher Marlowe could have devoted to his personal life more. From the general point of view, Marlowe's portrayal of Edward II is not really accurate due to the omission of the parts mentioned before. Nevertheless, it is necessary to state that Edward II was a king with a remarkable history and the readers may find out more about him and his life, just thanks to Christopher Marlowe.

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10 Abstract

This thesis deals with the comparison of the figure of Edward II and the literary portrayal in the play of Christopher Marlowe. The thesis is divided into three parts from which two parts are theoretical and one is practical. The theoretical part consists of two parts, one is concerning on the literary sources and the second one is concerning on the play by Christopher Marlowe. The practical part is dedicated to the comparison of those two previous theoretical parts. The comparison deals with similarities and differences found between them. The pictures of Edward II, his favourites and his enemies that Edward II had something in common with are included in appendices. The purpose of this thesis is to find as many similarities and differences as possible and to compare, whether Christopher Marlowe's portrayal of Edward II was accurate and plausible or not.

11 Resumé

Tato práce porovnává historickou postavu Eduarda II s jeho literárním ztvárněním ve hře Christophera Marlowa. Práce je rozdělená do tří částí, z čehož dvě jsou teoretické a jedna praktická. Teoretická část se skládá ze dvou částí, první část se zaměřuje na literární zdroje a druhá na hru od Christophera Marlowa. Praktická část je věnována komparaci předešlých dvou teoretických částí. Komparace se zabývá podobnostmi a odlišnostmi nalezeny mezi nimi. Fotografie Eduarda II, jeho oblíbenců a jeho nepřátel, se kterými měl Eduard II něco společného, je možné nalézt v příloze. Účel této práce je najít co nejvíce podobností a odlišností, a porovnat, zda bylo ztvárnění Christophera Marlowa přesné a věrohodné, či ne.

12 APPENDICES

1) Edward II of England



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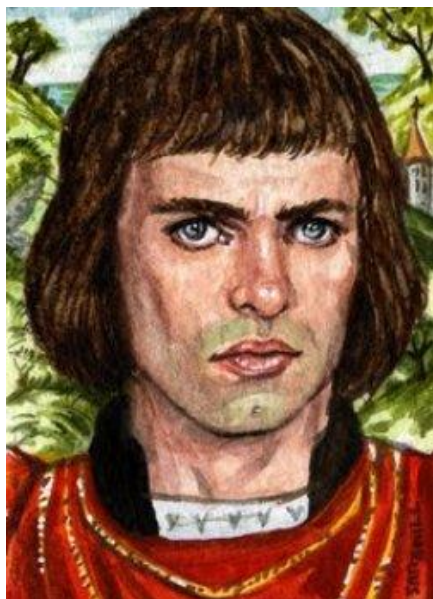
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