

POPULAR SONG IN EARLY MODERN DRAMA 1580-1620

PAUL LEWIS FABER

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the reciprocal relationship between the song culture of early modern England and its representation in drama of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Unlike past studies, no preference is given to any particular playwright. Rather, the dissertation considers evidence from close to 100 plays in which songs, references to song, and elements of song culture are most abundant.

The study begins with an exploration into the particular ability of early modern audience members to recognise and appreciate sophisticated references to song as they encountered them in drama. Next there is a discussion of some of the more famous characters of song culture whose narratives and reputations – effectively lost to us now – were regularly mined by playwrights. The third part of the study investigates song’s power as represented in fictive spaces. Chapter 4 examines dramatic representations of song performance by elites and their relationship to contemporary decorum. Lastly, Chapter 5 focuses on a point in London’s history where its dramatists appear to have been particularly keen to capitalize on song’s function as a consolidator of cultural identity.

The overriding impression at the end of the study is of early modern playwrights basing representations of song and singing less upon contemporary beliefs surrounding music, its power, and its place in the cosmos, and more upon phenomenological observation of song as it operates in people and in their society.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- AI* Hyder Rollins, *An Analytical Index to the Ballad Entries (1557-1709) in the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London*, 2nd edn (Hatboro: Tradition Press, 1967). References to Rollins' index will supply entry numbers, e.g. *AI* #2109
- DNB* *Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition, ed. by Lawrence Goldman, Oxford University <www.oxforddnb.com>
- EBBA* *The English Broadside Ballad Archive*, Director: Patricia Fumerton, University of California, Santa Barbara <<http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu>>
- EEBO* *Early English Books Online*, ProQuest
<<http://www.eebo.chadwyck.com/home>>
- OED* *Oxford English Dictionary*, online edn, Director: Judy Pearsall, Oxford University Press <<http://www.oed.com>>
- PMOT* William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, 2 vols (London: Cramer, Beale and Chappell, 1859)
- SD* Stage Directions

STYLE, SOURCES AND REFERENCING

This dissertation is grounded in the referencing style of the Modern Humanities Research Association. Supplementary particulars are listed below.

ADDITIONAL CONVENTIONS

Original spelling will be retained except in the use of ‘u’, ‘v’, ‘i’ for ‘j’ and double consonants such as ‘vv’ for ‘w’ and ‘ff’ for ‘f’; these will be modernized. Capitalization and italics will be retained. Indentations will be retained as close as possible to the source text. Punctuation will be retained unless it interferes substantially with clarity. In such cases, the text will be modernized and mention of the change will be made in a note. Titles will be shortened where necessary for concision.

SOURCES

Scholarly editions used for this dissertation include plays from *The New Cambridge Shakespeare*, general editor Brian Gibbons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984-pres.); *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, general editor Fredson Bowers, 10 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979-96); and *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, general editors David Bevington, Martin Butler and Ian Donaldson, 7 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) unless otherwise stated. For plays by Shakespeare and Fletcher, the *New Cambridge Shakespeare* editions are used. Quotations from other dramatic works are taken from modern scholarly editions where available unless the discussion references specific printings. References to plays available only in manuscript are taken from a

scholarly edition of any age if available. Quotations from songs are taken from primary sources where possible. Songs available to the author only via scholarly editions will be referenced accordingly.

CITATIONS

In cases where an editor has divided a play into scenes but not into acts, quotations from that edition shall be designated in the following manner: Sc. 1.23-4. In cases where an editor has divided a play into acts but not into scenes, quotations from that edition shall be designated in the following manner: II, lns. 5-6.

WEBSITES AND ONLINE DATABASES

Hundreds of physical primary sources were consulted for this dissertation via online databases. In the interests of clarity and concision, initial citations of these will include URLs from the containing database's home page rather than complete URLs. For added convenience, the author has provided for examiners a digital version of the dissertation in which all initial citations of sources consulted via the Internet are implanted with a hyperlink. Readers need only click the underlined homepage URL included in the citation and they will be taken directly to the appropriate text and page. For subsequent citations of the same source, readers may refer to the bibliography where a click on corresponding text's URL will take the reader to the full text online. From there, the reader may navigate to the appropriate page as he or she would with a physical document. Citations of purely digital sources will also include a URL for their website's main page, again implanted with a hyperlink.

INTRODUCTION

This project seeks to contribute to a legitimate model of song and its operation in early modern drama. This model is overdue. A number of fine studies treating song in the works of Shakespeare have appeared in the last century, yet similar analyses of his contemporaries are miniscule leaving the current scholarly conception of song in the London theatres manifestly skewed.¹ The majority of English people during this period engaged with song more than they did with any other form of entertainment, and their intimacy with song culture is evident in the ubiquity and variation of examples embellishing the efforts of the playwrights who sought their patronage. Yet so often we find references to song offered little more than a line in the otherwise exhaustive footnotes that inevitably accompany the modern scholarly edition. This trend is beginning to change and the effort below represents an endeavour to assist the transition.

¹ Monograph studies of song in Shakespeare include Richmond Noble, *Shakespeare's Use of Song* (1923) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966); John H. Long, *Shakespeare's Use of Music* (1955) (Cambridge, MA: De Capo Press, 1977); Fredrick W. Sternfeld, *Music in Shakespearean Tragedy* (London: Routledge, 1963); and Peter J. Seng *Vocal Songs In the Plays of Shakespeare: A Critical History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967). In the twenty-first century, Ross Duffin, *Shakespeare's Songbook* (New York: Norton, 2004) and David Lindley, *Shakespeare and Music* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006) are essentials. To our knowledge there are only two book-length studies of popular song in the work of playwrights contemporary with Shakespeare. These are as follows: Raphael Seligmann, 'The Functions of Song in the Plays of Thomas Middleton' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Brandeis University, 1997); and Andrew J. Walker, 'Popular Songs and Broadside Ballads in the English Drama' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 1934). Other notable works include Linda Phyllis Austern, *Music in English Children's Drama of the Later Renaissance* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992); William R. Bowden, *The English Dramatic Lyric* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951); Elizabeth Ketterer, "'Govern'd by Stops, Aw'd by Dividing Notes": The Functions of Music in the Extent Repertory of the Admiral's Men 1594-1621' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Birmingham, 2009); and Tiffany Stern, 'Songs and Masques', in *Documents of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 120-73.

CHALLENGES

A more comprehensive view of song in the drama is hindered principally by the size of the task. We currently possess close to seven hundred plays written between the opening of the public theatres and their closing in 1642. Researching and considering every snippet of song in this mass of texts is impossible to do in the time allotted. Early on it was thus decided that the project would attempt to study approximately one hundred ‘song-rich’ plays within twenty years of 1600. There is a particular abundance of popular song references in plays written around the turn of the seventeenth century; this richness was determined as a sensible mid point for the study. The next challenge was determining which plays to read. As stated, the intention was to analyse song in one hundred of the most ‘musical’ plays in this period, yet it appeared impossible to ascertain the number of song events (full songs, song fragments or other references to song) contained in each play without actually perusing them. This problem was solved, luckily early on, with the discovery of an unpublished PhD dissertation by A. J. Walker entitled ‘Popular Songs and Broadside Ballads in the English Drama’ submitted in 1934. Half of the dissertation consists of a large index listing every song event found by Walker in his perusal of perhaps three hundred plays. Much of this information (over a thousand entries) was then imported into a bespoke database, constructed by us, enabling various quantifications including, firstly, the number of song references present in each play.² From here, a list was compiled of plays that appeared to be essential reading. Close to one hundred plays were eventually studied for this

² Both database and digital notes were constructed using customizable ‘out of the box’ software. For the database the author uses Filemaker Pro 11; for the digital notation system the author uses Notetaker 3.0 by Aquaminds. See <<http://www.filemaker.co.uk>> and <<http://www.aquaminds.com>> respectively.

dissertation.³ Song events in ninety of them were catalogued using a digital notation system in which each song event and reference to song culture was recorded, researched and categorized. As each play was analysed, its corresponding card in the database was updated and expanded. With the mounting data it soon became possible to make more sophisticated calculations. These facilitated the tracking of trends including the degree of song use within the drama over time, song use by genre, by song type, theatre type, character type, etc. As the research progressed still further, the digital notes and database used in conjunction facilitated the detection of complex patterns of usage. It became possible, for example, to plot every instance in the ninety plays where characters use song to persuade or seduce, and then to analyse these instances according to sex, social class, and effectiveness.⁴ The flexibility of the system also allows for the addition of more plays beyond this exercise, and thus the continual refinement of hypotheses as the author's career progresses. Most importantly, all of the information collected during this project is readily transferrable to a more professional and comprehensive peer-reviewed, peer contributed online resource designed to serve actors, directors, editors, writers, academics, students, and enthusiasts interested the songs of the English Renaissance and what they were doing in the drama.

³ Along with their entries in the bibliography, a full list of plays consulted for this project has been supplied in a convenient table form. See Appendix.

⁴ As will be seen, many plays analysed for the dissertation are not discussed in the final draft. This is due partly to the fact that many plays, although containing on average more songs than most, do not contain song events that inform the salient discussion in this dissertation. Additionally, it is clearly impractical to bring into detailed discussion all the instances of song events relevant to particular points. As in any study, examples tend to focus on a few exemplary specimens with additional evidence mentioned in the notes.

Popular Song and Drama Database

Records 3 8 / 662 Found (Unsorted) New Record Delete Record Find Sort Q Knight

Layout: Plays View As: Preview Aa Edit Layout

POPULAR SONG AND RENAISSANCE DRAMA

1607? *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* Beaumont, Francis Read? Yes Study Text Earliest Extant

Genre: Comedy Earliest Publication Date: 1613 Registered: Not Registered

Performance Data

Performers	Performer Type	Evidence of Perf.
Queen's Revels (Anne)	Children	Some
Performance Space	Space Type	Earliest Known Perf.
Blackfriars	Playhouse	Unknown

Notes

Q1 not registered;

Middling singers here are Venturewell and Luce his daughter.

Low singers are Merrythought, of course, and Jasper, his son.

In order not to taint the data, I have equated Merrythought's singing to others of his class and to those of a higher class (such as Venturewell) as 3 entries each for a total of six.

The 'Seducing Singers' here are, of course, Jasper and Luce. Although it should be remembered that they 'seduce' themselves by singing their seductive song together. Luce is sung to sleep and Jasper is brought to a murderous rage.

Popular Music References: General Data Info.

BR	BTR	BCR	CM	D	Missing Songs/Tunes	Ballad Plot / Ballad Characters
Total Possible	Total Possible	Total Possible	Total Possible	Total Possible		
Likely	Likely	Likely	Likely	Likely		
39	14	3	1	6	1	

Total Possible References: 48 Total Possible Ballad/Tune Refs: 39

Data Source: Faber: Final

Singers and Singing Total Singers M 3 F 1

No. of Singers: By Class	Singing Between Classes	Seducing Singers	M	F
Supernatural M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	By Higher To Lower <input type="checkbox"/>	Solitary Songs	M 1	F 1
Gentry/Elite M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	By Lower To Higher 4	Songs by Prof. Musicians	M <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>
Middling M 1 F 1	By High To High <input type="checkbox"/>	Prophetic Songs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low M 2 F <input type="checkbox"/>	By Low To Low 4	Total Named, Speaking Male Characters	21	
Alleg.: Vice M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	From Alleg. to Alleg <input type="checkbox"/>	Total Named, Speaking Female Characters	5	
Alleg.: Virt. M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	From SuperN to SuperN <input type="checkbox"/>	Ratio	4.2	
Choral Singing General <input type="checkbox"/>	From SuperN to Human <input type="checkbox"/>			
	From Human to SuperN <input type="checkbox"/>			

100% Browse

The Popular Song and Renaissance Drama database created by the author for the project. The database currently contains pages for 662 extant plays.

The screenshot shows a digital document titled "Dissertation Play Notes" with a page number of 59. The document is about John Marston's *Antonio's Revenge* (1600?). The table of contents includes sections for Bibliography, History, Character List, Synopsis, General Notes, Song, and From the Play. The "From the Play" section is expanded to show a detailed entry for "1.3.29-30: Monsieur Mingo".

▼ Bibliography

- John Marston, *Antonio's Revenge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978; repr. 2006)

► History

► Character List

► Synopsis

► General Notes

▼ Song

- 1.2.36-7: Music hired for newlyweds
- 1.3.29-30: Monsieur Mingo

▼ From the Play

- [A group of courtiers, including the clown/courtier, Balurdo are walking in the morning with Antonio. He is about to be married. This conversation is part of some banter between the gentlemen as Antonio, it appears, is of a melancholy humour (and Balurdo has learned a couple of new words 'retort' and 'obtuse' which is uses indiscriminately).]

Galeazo Young Prince, look sprightly; fie, a bridegroom sad!

Balurdo In truth, if he were retort and obtuse, no question he would be merry; but, and please my Genius, I will be most retort and obtuse ere night. I'll tell you what I'll bear soon at night in my shield for my device.

Galeazo What, good Balurdo?

Balurdo O, do me right; sir Geoffrey Balurdo—Sir, Sir, as long as ye live, Sir.

Galeazo What, good Sir Geoffrey Balurdo?

Balurdo Marry, forsooth, I'll carry for my device my grandfather's great ston-horse flinging up his head and jerking out his left leg; the word, *Wighy Purl*. As I am a true knight, will't not be most retort and obtuse, ha?

▼ Faber

- This appears to be merely a reminder of the song Balurdo quoted when he was 'knighted' after the singing contest in *Antonio and Mellida*. See my notes. Here, Balurdo, is simply correcting Galeazo. He is saying, "do me right" and call me by my title'. Of course, he is doing it in a clownish way.
- Balurdo may also refer offhandedly to this ballad again at 1.3.66.

► 1.3.88. SD: Missing Song

► 2.2.23-4: Proverbs termed 'songs'

► 2.3.133: Missing song

► 3.4.29-30: 'to the tune of "My Mistress Nutriche's beauty"'

► 3.4.32-39: 'My mistress' eye doth oil my joints'

► 3.4.46. SD: Missing Song.

► 4.3.153: 'Why then, O wight,'

► 5.4.33: Missing Song

► 5.6.69 SD (end) Missing Song

The custom notation system created for the project. The document offers a variety of search options as well as a customizable indexing system. Each of the play pages contains entries for all instances of and references to song and song culture as they exist in their respective acts and scenes. The context of each scene is also provided. References to the same source song occurring in different plays can be linked internally facilitating speedy comparisons.

TERMINOLOGY

The majority of songs examined in this dissertation are very much of the popular kind, in that they circulated most prominently via the mouths, ears, memories and print culture of ordinary people. At various points, however, the discussion includes examples that might not be described as specifically ‘popular song’. ‘Tell Me Dearest’, composed for Beaumont’s *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, and ‘The Dark is my Delight’ in Heywood’s *The Dutch Courtesan*, for example, belong to a genre of art song that became fashionable among the educated classes between the late 1590s and perhaps 1630. Exemplified by the lute airs of John Dowland, Thomas Campion and others, these songs were arranged in parts and thus required musical literacy, and arguably formal training, to perform. They are decidedly unlike the cheap, monodic, broadside ballads found on the walls of taverns and in the whistling of the carman and the nursemaid. However, to view the songs of Dowland and the rest as not ‘popular’, while certainly accurate in the larger sense, risks misunderstanding. The songbooks were, in fact, enormously popular with wealthier Londoners, who possessed both the funds and the education to make use of them. John Dowland’s *First Booke of Songes and Ayers*, for example, went through five editions between 1597 and 1613 and perhaps five thousand copies; references to and quotations from his songs occur in at least ten early modern plays.⁵ It is certainly true that song of this kind gains prominence with the success of the

⁵ Dowland published three books of songs during the early seventeenth century along with his famous *Lachrimae* (a collection of dance music in five parts), and other collections. ‘The only edition [of Dowland] of which the actual number of printed is known’, writes Diane Poulton (p. 68), ‘is *The Second Booke [of Songes and Ayres, (1600)]* [...] We find that 1,000 copies, plus some overs, were run off the press. Even if [the publisher] had somewhat overestimated the market for this volume he must have had some figures to go on from the sales of the *First Booke*, and it is unlikely that there would have been any great disproportion between the numbers printed of *The Second Booke* and the volumes that preceded it and those that came

boy companies, who were trained musicians, and with the rise of the more exclusive indoor playhouses in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Yet playwrights imported many of these ‘elite’ songs in the same fashion as they imported ballad⁶ references, and full performances of what appear to be original lute songs were clearly undertaken in the amphitheatres.⁷ Further, both ballads and art songs, as we shall see, are used in serenades – and both to equal effect. And while popular song is often a marker of social class, it is not always so. Delineations between broadly popular song and song which was popular in particular circles are thus a complicated business and while distinctions can be teased out from the drama, this exercise leans *towards* popular song and leaves boundaries and genre trajectories largely for a subsequent endeavour.

immediately after. Had there been any serious falling-off in sales it is unlikely the printer would have risked another edition of *The First Booke* in 1613’. For the discussion of Dowland’s life and works, see Diana Poulton, *John Dowland*, 2nd edn (London: Faber and Faber, 1982). For the plays containing the song references, see Poulton, p. 68.

⁶ The word ‘ballad’ will be used mostly in the dissertation to refer to ‘broadside ballads’, the short songs printed on single broadsheets as described in Chapter 1. However, the narrative ballads of the Robin Hood tradition will also be mentioned periodically. These, as we shall see, are much longer works, some surpassing one thousand lines. Ultimately, all ballads are decedents of the oral tradition (also discussed in Chapter 1) in which nonliterate people fashioned simple strophic songs that told stories. For a detailed discussion of the ballad tradition, see David Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk* (East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1997), esp. Ch. 1.

⁷ A reference to Dowland’s ‘Sorrow, sorrow stay’ from his *Second Booke* occurs, for example, in Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker’s *The Patient Man and The Honest Whore* (see Ch. 3), which ‘was probably first performed at the Fortune theatre’; Valerius, among his various allusions to popular ballads also sings lines from Thomas Campion’s ‘Now let her change and spare not’ in Thomas Heywood’s *The Rape of Lucrece*. See Paul Mulholland, ‘Introduction’, in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, ed. by Paul Mulholland, in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and others (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), p. 280; *The Rape of Lucrece*, in *Thomas Heywood*, ed. by Wilson Verity (London T. Fisher Unwin, 1903), pp. 327-427, II.1.92-7; Thomas Campion, *The Third and Fourth Booke of Ayres* (London: Thomas Snodham, 1617), sig. A3^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 28 March 2013]. There are a number of examples of what seem to be original lute songs in Shakespeare including Feste’s ‘O Mistress Mine’ in *Twelfth Night* and ‘It Was a Lover and His Lass’ performed by the pages in *As You Like It*. See II.3.26-39 and V.3.12-43 respectively. The latter song is printed in Thomas Morley’s *First Book of Ayres* (London: William Barley, 1600), sig. B4^v-C^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 28 March 2013]. Although we cannot be absolutely sure of the lute accompaniment, both these songs would have been performed before the Globe audience.

Throughout the dissertation differentiation is made between ‘elite’ Londoners and those of ‘lower social status’ and it is helpful to provide here some explanation as to the intended meaning of the terms. It is clear that the early modern English were extremely concerned with social status. In Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, for example, William Harrison divides the ‘people in the Commonwealth’ into four basic categories, each of which he treats with considerable detail.⁸ Yet most of these boundaries are necessarily unstable for various reasons. The rise of mercantilism in England during the early modern period, for example, created the opportunity for people of lower social status to attain levels of wealth, cultural sophistication and political power previously exclusive to the landed gentry. Indeed we find a dramatization of the phenomenon in Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* in which the cunning and fortunate Simon Eyre ascends London society to engage his ‘betters’ in exclusive social spaces. Yet, even when he is made Lord Mayor, Eyre consistently demonstrates his affinity with and loyalty to his fellow shoemakers. Thus, even though he has clearly risen in status, it is difficult to label him genuinely ‘elite’ because of the ‘lower class’ constitution he continues to exude. Clearly, then, it is impossible to construct completely incontrovertible definitions beyond extremes (Queen Elizabeth I is a member of the elite; a landless day-labourer is not). Nevertheless, early modern people spent

⁸ At the top of Harrison’s social strata are ‘gentlemen’, including, in order, the king, the prince, dukes, marquesses, earls, viscounts, and barons: and these are called gentlemen of the greater sort, or [...] lords and noblemen: and next unto them be knights, esquiers, and last of all they that are simplie called gentlemen’; next come ‘citizens or burgesses’ which refers to city officials, judges and wealthy free men such as merchants; third are ‘yeomen’, free men in possession of a certain amount of land; and finally ‘artificers or labourers’, ‘day-labourers, poor husbandmen, and some retailers (which have no free land) copyholders, and all artificers, as tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, brickmakers, masons, etc.’ at the bottom. For the full discussion, see William Harrison, ‘Of Degrees of People, in the Commonwealth of England’, in Raphael Holinshed, *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles* (London: Henry Denham, 1587), pp. 156-65, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 2 June 2013].

significant energy fashioning rules for proper behaviour, including musical decorum, predicated by conceptions of class. In order to examine evidence of songs and singing portrayed in the drama, it is thus necessary to account for this with at least a basic model of class boundaries. In this dissertation then, using wealth and influence as a guide, we designate free people with some suggested connection to significant wealth through profession, possessions or title (such as princes, gentlemen, merchants, landowners and their children) as ‘elites’. Phrases such as ‘the lower orders’ or ‘those of lower social status’ will generally refer to artisans, tinkers, labourers, servants, musicians, chapmen and their offspring. By and large, the playwrights assign to these two overlapping groups relatively clear sets of behaviours when it comes to songs and singing. Analysis of these tendencies and their wider implications is clearly not as straightforward as one might desire. Yet this basic delineation of social class facilitates insights that, as we shall see, are worth the difficulties.

THE DISSERTATION

Much of this study engages in textual rather than musicological analysis. This is not to say the music is treated as unimportant. Yet the majority of the play between song information and dramatic action appears to occur when the semantic messages conveyed by song lyrics are considered in light of other events and utterances in the playwright’s fictive world. Moreover, in some cases tunes for songs are lost and thus it is ultimately impossible in such instances to determine to what extent music may have conveyed extra meaning. Yet even when we do have a tune it often appears that the meaning conveyed is essentially an affirmation of what the text set to it already communicates; a mournful tune often accompanies mournful subject matter. Moreover,

it can be difficult to determine, as shall be seen with Hamlet's reference to the song 'Jephthah, Judge of Israel', whether a character sings the lyrics or speaks them. Of course, there are instances in the drama where the music of a song is clearly influencing play action, such as in Act III of Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (see Chapter 3); where relevant, these events are analysed accordingly.

The opening chapter of the dissertation addresses the problem of individual subjectivity when analysing the operation of song, and especially the significance of song references, in the drama. These references are often quite small, appearing frequently in the same manner as proverbs and biblical allusions. Before teasing out significance and patterns of significance, one must first establish to a legitimate degree the capacity of early modern theatregoers to appreciate song snippets as they flew by in a whirl of dialogue. For this we turn to recent advances in cognitive science, along with contemporary historical evidence, and argue that ordinary early modern audience members were particularly suited to the task. There is every reason to assume complex significations and/or ironies created through a snippet of song sung or spoken at a particular moment in dramatic action would have been as significant to audience members in the time of Elizabeth as they often are to us in the modern age, indeed probably more so.

Chapter 2 moves to illuminate some prominent characters who figure in song lore whose reputations and narratives were commonplaces in Elizabethan/Jacobean popular culture and thus popular with playwrights. Some, such as Robin Hood, are still known to us; others have all but vanished. From there, the dissertation will broaden its focus to consider some salient trends that have emerged through investigations governed by songs and their operation rather than by the tendencies of any one

playwright. Chapter 3 will examine song's power to persuade as represented in dramatic space. While classical ideas of music's power still permeated the Elizabethan/Jacobean worldview, song, on the stage, consistently underachieves, suggesting that playwrights enjoyed opposing metaphysical ideas about music with phenomenological observations of song in the real world. Chapter 4 takes this notion further by examining representations of song performance in relation to decorum as represented on the stage. Traditionally, modern scholars turn to the courtesy books and various other contemporary writings in their assertions that any performance of music by those of elite status that is not strictly private would have been viewed by the play audience as fundamentally improper. Here we attempt to show that, on the stage at least, this was not always the case. Indeed there is evidence to suggest the current view of music's relation to decorum in the early modern period needs broadening to consider elite performances that, although exclusive, were hardly private and yet clearly an accepted practice. Finally, in Chapter 5 the dissertation narrows its focus to consider a trend in song usage appearing in the late 1590s where a notable proportion of plays incorporated song narratives exalting ordinary citizens. Again, playwrights seem to have a shrewd appreciation for song's function in real cultures rather than imagined ones, and here they use song's relationship to cultural identity to advantage as they attempt to promote audience loyalty during an especially competitive time. The research as a whole suggests that Elizabethan/Jacobean playwrights drew more from evident phenomena in their representations of song in the fictive world than they did from traditional, metaphysical notions of song's place in the cosmos. Indeed some of the most provocative moments in the drama occur when the two bodies of knowledge seem in conflict.

1 SONG AS SIGNIFIER

In Act II.3 of *Othello*, Iago invokes two songs in his effort to lure Cassio to the wine he hopes will inflame the captain's brawling nature. His first begins 'And let me the cannikin clink, clink' and it seems, by all measurement, an innocent celebration of conviviality. Iago's second song appears to be of similar temper. Following a cry of: 'O sweet England!' he sings,

King Stephen was and a worthy peer,
 His breeches cost him but a crown;
 He held them sixpence all too dear,
 With that he called the tailor lown.
 He was a wight of high renown,
 And thou art but of low degree;
 'Tis pride that pulls the country down;
 Then take thy auld cloak about thee.¹

Benign as this stanza may seem to us, many in the contemporary audience probably recognized within it a sinister variation. Iago's 'song' is actually a fragment from a popular Scottish ballad variously titled 'Bell My Wife', 'The Auld Cloak', and 'Take Thine Auld Cloak About Thee'.² The corresponding passage reads:

King Harry was a very good K[ing;]

¹ Shakespeare, *Othello*, II.3.76-83.

² Thomas Percy, *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript. Ballads and Romances*, ed. by John W. Hales, 2 vols (London: N. Trübner, 1868), II, pp. 320-4. Duffin (p. 250) marks this version from Percy's MS as the earliest known (ca. 1643).

I trow his hose cost but a Crowne;
 he thought them 12^d over too dear,
 therefore he call'd the tailor Clowne.
 he was a King & wore the Crowne,
 & thouse but of a low degree;
 its pride that putts this country downe;
 man! put thye old Cloake about thee!³

Reading 'The Auld Cloak' in its entirety one finds an appeal for order at the grassroots level. Bell lobbies her husband (successfully) to abandon seditious factions at court and tend to duties at home. This background becomes significant upon realization that Iago has apparently changed the name of the king in 'The Auld Cloak' from Harry to Stephen. The reign of Stephen of Blois (1135-54 – the only 'King Stephen' in English history) was 'notorious as a time of strife and anarchy' during the early modern period.⁴ In Holinshed (1577), for example, one reads,

The kingdome...divided into two severall factions, was by all similitudes like to come to utter ruine: for the people kindled in hatred one against another, sought nothing els but revenge on both sides, and styll the lande was spoyled and wasted by the men of warre which lodged in the Castels and Fortresses, and would often issue out to harry and spoyle the countryes about.⁵

Holinshed continually identifies the underlying cause of the conflict: duplicity, particularly on the part of Stephen, whose eventual demise, he argues, is divine

³ Percy, p. 324.

⁴ Rosalind King, "'Then Murder's Out of Tune": The Music and Structure of Othello', *Shakespeare Survey*, 39 (1987), 149-58.

⁵ Raphael Holinshed, 'King Stephen', in *The Firste [Last] Volume of the Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande... 1571* (London: John Hunne, 1577), p. 377, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 04 December 2012].

punishment ‘for his perjurie committed in taking upon him the crowne, contrarie to his oth [of allegiance] made unto the empress [Maud] and hir children’.⁶ One can thus imagine the sense of foreboding Iago’s ‘king-switch’ might induce in audience members familiar with the ballad; Stephen’s association with treachery and chaos clearly resonates with Iago’s emerging nature.⁷

This kind of referential use of popular song is not specific to Shakespeare. In Act II.1 of Francis Beaumont’s *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (ca. 1607), a citizen/grocer and his wife look on as the merchant Venturewell frantically searches for his daughter Luce, who has fled into the greenwood with her lover Jasper in order to avoid her arranged marriage to foppish Humphrey. Here, Venturewell approaches Jasper’s father Merrythought who mocks his plight with song:

Enter VENTUREWELL

CITIZEN Here’s Luce’s father come now.

OLD MERRYTHOUGHT [*Sings*]

As you came from Walsingham,

From that holy land,

There met you not with my true love

⁶ Holinshed, p. 368. Dekker, in his *The Dead Term*, refers to the Stephen years as ‘a flaming combustion of discord’. Samuel Daniel describes them as a period ‘wherein we are to have no other representations, but of revoltes, beseiging of Castles, surprizings, recoverings, loosings againe, with great spoyles, and destruction’. See Thomas Dekker, *The Dead Tearme* (London: W. Jaggard, 1608), sig. D1^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 12 March 2010]; and Samuel Daniel, *The First Part of the Historie of England* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1612), pp. 202-38 (esp. p. 202), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 12 March 2010].

⁷ The King Stephen link to sedition appears to have been a favourite of Shakespeare’s. He uses it again in *The Tempest* as Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban approach Prospero’s cave with murderous intent. Upon seeing fine, aristocratic garments hung outside, which they will shortly put ‘about themselves’, Trinculo declares, ‘O King Stephano, O peer, O worthy Stephano! Look what a wardrobe is here for thee’. See *The Tempest*, IV.1.220-5.

By the way as you came?

VENTUREWELL Oh, Master Merrythought, my daughter's gone!
This mirth becomes you not, my daughter's gone.⁸

Merrythought borrows lines from a contemporary ballad known as 'Walsingham', printed first perhaps in the late 1580s.⁹ It was clearly very popular, as evidenced by many subsequent printings and numerous adaptations of the 'Walsingham' tune by Elizabethan composers including John Bull, William Byrd and others.¹⁰ Merrythought is one of the most musical characters in the early modern corpus, communicating mostly through song rather than speech, and his importation of 'Walsingham' here resembles dozens of other similar utterances in *The Knight*. Yet this particular reference appears more sophisticated than most, for there seems a distinct relationship between present action and both the words of Merrythought's chosen stanza and 'Walsingham's' main theme. Its verses collectively describe a man abandoned, his lover flown to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham – possibly the most famous pilgrimage site in

⁸ Francis Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ed. by Michael Hattaway, 2nd edn (London: A & C Black, 2002), II, lns. 472-8.

⁹ The earliest extant printing exists in Thomas Deloney's collection entitled the *Garland of Good Will*. The editors of the Percy Society edition believed the first *Garland of Goodwill* to have been published 'about the year 1586'. Duffin (p. 423) believes *The Garland's* date to be ca. 1592. While the earliest extant edition is dated 1631, Thomas Nash mentions the collection in his *Have With You to Saffron-Walden* (1596). There also appears to have been a surge of interest in Deloney's collection in the last quarter of the seventeenth century and beyond. See Thomas Deloney, *The Garland of Good Will*, ed. by J.H. Dixon, in *English Poetry and Ballads and Popular Literature of the Middle Ages*, 31 vols (London: T. Richards, 1840-1852), XXX, pp. 1-151 (p. vi); and Thomas Nash, *Have With You to Saffron-Walden* (London: John Danter, 1596), sig. N3^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 22 January 2013].

¹⁰ Peter J. Seng, *Vocal Songs In the Plays of Shakespeare: A Critical History* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 136.

England before its destruction by Henry VIII.¹¹ ‘She hath left me here alone’, the speaker laments, ‘all alone as unknown: | Who sometime loved me as her life, | and called me her own. [...] Love is a careless child | and forgets promise past, | [...] and in faith never fast’.¹² Familiarity with the entire ballad illuminates Merrythought’s insensitivity to a much greater degree: not only does his singing seem inappropriate, his choice of material seems almost hostile.

Merrythought’s reference also appears to connect Luce to Ophelia, who quotes ‘Walsingham’ early in her mad scene. Alison Chapman argues that Ophelia’s reference, beginning, ‘How should I your true love know | From another one?– | By his cockle hat and staff, | And his sandal shoon’, may have evoked in female audience members lament for a bygone era when pilgrimages offered a means for women to travel independently and thus avoid the drudgery of servitude through wedlock.¹³ Keeping in mind that both Ophelia and Luce flee patriarchal pressures (Ophelia’s flight being psychological), does one find then in Merrythought’s reference connection to the earlier *Hamlet*?¹⁴

¹¹ The destruction of the shrine occurred in 1538. For discussions of the Walsingham Priory see Joseph Clayton, ‘Walsingham Priory’, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols (New York: Robert Appleton, 1912), XV, in *New Advent* <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15543a.htm>> [accessed 4 December 2012]; and Alison A. Chapman, ‘Ophelia’s “Old Lauds”’: Madness and Hagiography in *Hamlet*, *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, 20 (2007), 111-36.

¹² This excerpt comes from Duffin’s conflation of two versions both ca. 1600, the first being Folger Library MS V.a.399 (ca. 1600) and the second being Huntington Library MS HM 198. For the complete version, see Duffin, p. 423. The earliest version of the song available for viewing online exists in the 1678 edition of Thomas Deloney’s *The Garland of Good-Will* (London: J. Wright, 1678), sig. G5^v-7^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 4 December 2012]. The 1631 printing available on *EEBO* lists ‘As I Came from Walsingham’ in its table of contents; however the corresponding pages are missing.

¹³ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, IV.5.27-30; and Chapman, pp. 125-8.

¹⁴ *Hamlet*, evidently, was immensely popular upon and after its debut around 1599. There are numerous printings of the play between its first performance and the closing of the theatres in 1642. References to it in other plays are thus not unexpected. Antony Scoloker’s statement in his *Passionate Mans Pilgrimage* that ‘like Friendly Shake-speares Tragedies... it should please

‘Walsingham’ is also in play in the first act of William Rowley’s *A Match at Midnight* (1633). Here the Welshman Randall, on the road to London in search of a rich widow, sings, ‘Did her not see her true Loves, | As her came from London, | Oh, if her saw not her fine prave Loves, | Randall is quite undon’, clearly paraphrasing the stanza evoked by Merrythought above.¹⁵ Considering Rowley’s utilisation in light of the others, one might then perceive a convention in the drama of connecting references to ‘Walsingham’ with women who have, in some way, slipped patriarchal constraints through madness, flight or bereavement.¹⁶

THE SPECTRE OF SUBJECTIVITY

This kind of analysis can be very compelling and can add welcome colour to heavily trodden passages. Yet it brings with it two central problems. The first is the elusive and fluid nature of the evidence. Hundreds of sixteenth and seventeenth-century songs survive, yet thousands circulated. What seems a ‘source’ may indeed be original; or it may be the fifth of eight known versions, three of which are lost.¹⁷ Many ballads originate in the oral tradition and thus were subject to frequent alteration before (and indeed after) fossilization in manuscript and/or print. And of course the evolution may

all, like Prince Hamlet’ also suggests *Hamlet*’s popularity. See Antony Scoloker, *Passionate Mans Pilgrimage* (London: William Cotton, 1604), sig. A2^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 4 December 2012]. See also Jeremy Lopez, *Theatrical Convention and Audience Response in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 16; Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare’s London*, 3rd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 150; G.R. Hibbard, ‘Introduction’, in *Hamlet*, ed. by G. R. Hibbard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 14; and Alfred Harbage, *Shakespeare’s Audience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), pp. 49-50.

¹⁵ See William Rowley, *A Match at Midnight*, ed. by Stephan Blase Young (London: Garland Publishing, 1980), II.2.12-5.

¹⁶ Later in the play, Randall switches his attention to Moll Bloodhound yet another young woman threatened with forced marriage.

¹⁷ Instances of registered-but-lost ballads are common. There also exist extant ballads that are not registered.

not end there; beyond the inherent instability of MS and print culture, many songs were probably sung from the page and memorized by illiterates and thus returned to the fluid space of orality before landing yet again, recycled, upon the page. ‘Walsingham’ is an apt example. While many have attributed the song to Sir Walter Raleigh, there is suggestion he may have transcribed it from an older version or perhaps from memory, which may not have been accurate.¹⁸

It is often impossible, then, to be certain of precisely to which song a character refers. How then to approach these references responsibly? Protracted study of song use throughout the canon reveals that, more often than not, the meanings and messages playwrights construct using song do not require exactitude to appreciate them. One needs, for example, only a basic familiarity with ‘Walsingham’s speakers, events and themes (a lonely man who searches for his lover, a woman who has fled/escaped to a place of pilgrimage), to appreciate its use in *Hamlet*, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* and *A Match at Midnight*. Moreover, despite the continual cross-pollinating relationship between oral and literate culture, many of the most popular songs utilized by playwrights have proven remarkably stable over time. There are, of course, numerous exceptions: titles, plots and characters are appropriated, ‘response songs’ are published,

¹⁸ Claude Simpson writes, ‘The ballad which has given the tune its name exists in several forms. A version beginning, “As yo^w cam from that holly land, of Wallsyngham,” found in Huntington Library MS HM 198, I, iv, has been partially printed in [*The Pepys Ballads*, ed. Hyder E. Rollins (1929-32)] II, 22. Variant forms of this text appear in the Percy Folio MS (ed. Hales and Furnivall, III, 471) and in Deloney’s *Garland of Good Will*, 1631 (in *Works*, ed. Man, p. 365). Mann thought the ballad to be from Deloney’s pen, except for the first stanza, which he considered traditional. A contemporary transcript in Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 85, fol. 123 (printed in *Elizabethan Lyrics*, ed. Norman Ault, 3rd edn, 1949, pp. 282-284) is subscribed “Sir W. R.” Agnes M. C. Latham in her *Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh*, 1951, p. 121, accepts the ascription and dates the poem c. 1592, contemporaneous with the last books of Raleigh’s *Cynthia*. Claude M. Simpson, *The British Broadside Ballad and its Music* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1966), p. 742. Duffin (p. 423) traces the Walsingham tune to 1591 yet curiously avoids the possible Raleigh connection acknowledged by Simpson and others.

new versions of popular songs are created reflecting current political trends/crises etc. Yet, many popular songs incorporated into drama appear to have been circulating in print already for many years and remain textually stable decades afterwards. The songs in *The Garland of Goodwill*, for example, many of which appear frequently in the drama, remain almost unchanged between Robert Bird's printing dated 1631 and that of George Conyers, four editions and almost fifty years later.¹⁹ This abundance of well-known songs in the plays suggests further that such works were picked partly for their stability. This seems only prudent; playwrights in any age tend to use imported material stable enough to resonate 'as intended' in the bulk of their audience. Despite, then, the often vexing vagaries of the genre, if one can legitimately connect a reference in drama to an extant song popular near the time of its host play's creation or early performance, the ironies and other messages suggested through its intersection with dramatic circumstances are, in all probability, worthy of attention.

Yet what of Iago's king-switch and other, more exact, semiotic equations? Instances like these highlight a second problem: the referential potential of song. How may we begin to estimate the degree to which theatregoers in the English Renaissance appreciated the implications of song excerpts or allusions? The feeling of foreboding Iago's king-switch appears to engender, for example, is contingent upon an audience member's ability to recognize, and then synthesise, a sizable amount of diverse information in a very short space of time. Iago's imported stanza, for example, is not the first but the seventh in its source ballad. The portion he changes does not appear particularly memorable compared, for example, to the refrain, which is repeated eight

¹⁹ See Francis Oscar Mann, 'The Garland of Good Will', in *The Works of Thomas Deloney* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), pp. 295-380. In his printing of *The Garland*, Mann includes textual variations from all five editions.

times. Stephen of Blois reigned over four hundred years before *Othello*'s performance. Contemporary audience members, of whom many were hardly educated and barely literate,²⁰ would thus require not only an intimacy with the original ballad, but also a reasonable knowledge of English history. They would then need to have perceived a sense of Iago's emerging character in order to possess even a chance of assembling all the connections. Additionally, audience members would have to perform this amalgamation and subsequent analysis while engaged with the flood of stimuli and nuance that was new, live drama in Elizabethan/Jacobean London. In the face of all this, then, one must wonder how many in the audience would have really 'gotten it' as 'King Stephen was and a worldly peer' rang from the stage.

The semiotic potential of imported song in drama is, not surprisingly, a contentious matter. Dianne Dugaw terms song references as 'critical instances' where songs, or allusions to them, 'beam multiple [...] meanings drawn from the rich [...] song culture of the time'.²¹ Songs 'implicat[e] intertexts which draw into the play other texts, authors and contexts' and 'establish [...] the playwright, characters, players, and audience as a "company" engaged in shared discourse'.²² Mark Booth, on the other hand, suggests that song texts are inherently unstable, especially in the face of substitute lyrics.²³ 'Even well-known words', Booth writes,

grown as it seems organically into their musical phrasing, so that they will mutter insistently at the back of one's vacant mind, are remarkably elusive of attention if we

²⁰ Education and literacy levels in the playgoing audience will be discussed later in this chapter.

²¹ Dugaw makes these claims in with regard to song references in John Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. For the entire discussion, see Dianne Dugaw, *'Deep Play' – John Gay and the Invention of Modernity* (London: Associated University Press, 2001), p. 169.

²² Dugaw, p. 169.

²³ As with Dugaw, Booth uses Gay's *Beggar's Opera* for his examples.

are giving any attention to other words presented to the same music [...] [C]omparative examination of two texts as one is heard and the other is to be summoned by memory, however officious and automatic that memory may be in the idle mind, is not easy.²⁴

Ultimately, Booth asserts, '[i]t is only speculative to argue how things worked in the minds of the Londoners' in the eighteenth century.²⁵ One can safely extend Booth's argument to include anyone in any century. As much as the literary critic might want to side with Dugaw, the further we consider the issue, the more prudent Booth's argument appears. If such referential flags were indeed fashioned by playwrights, how may one gauge their *general* effectiveness? If one can show an 'obvious' relationship between a reference in drama and a 'source' song – and, from there, some event or issue – what then of connections that appear to be more obscure? Often there is no way of knowing if references to song lyrics were even sung by characters. Would spoken text, then, be enough to induce recall? As we shall see, many references to ballads comprise no more than a few words, yet they often seem to signify external (i.e., non-song and/or non-dramatic) associations that, in turn, appear to inform dramatic action. How can we gauge whether these or any such devices operated with any degree of success without, as Booth suggests, being privy to early modern minds?

COGNITION AND CULTURE

The question of the semiotic potential of song in Elizabethan/Jacobean drama, then, begs settlement before one can legitimately get on with business. To this end, we offer evidence from two spheres. The first is the field of Music Cognition. There is a growing

²⁴ Mark Booth, *The Experience of Songs* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 120.

²⁵ Booth, p. 121.

body of neuropsychological evidence demonstrating song to be by nature a superb, multilevel, multimodal signifier.²⁶ The ability of song, especially that which is familiar, to induce both schematic and episodic associations (i.e., memories of systems and events) is unmatched by any other mental system of recall. This is true for all human brains in all cultures everywhere. The second is the sphere of English culture and its particularly oral and musical proclivities during the period. There is clear evidence demonstrating the English of the Renaissance to be fundamentally more engaged with music production than we are presently. Added to this is the targeted and protracted cultivation of mnemonic skills at every social level. Through these two bodies of evidence, one finds strong suggestion of a contemporary audience uniquely conditioned to appreciate within their drama a uniquely memorable species of popular culture: song.

1.1 THE NEUROPSYCHOLOGY OF SONG

The majority of human beings beyond adolescence have experienced vivid memories evoked through an encounter with song. Always there is some associative link; song, instantly and/or eventually draws title, lyrics or life events out of the subconscious abyss. Attending these specific, ‘episodic’, memories may be broader, schematic ones such as a sense of genre (‘This is German lieder...’), socio-political context (‘This was popular during the war...’), and/or distinct emotional timbres or ‘flavours’ (‘When I hear this song, I am sixteen again...’). This induced recollection can also occur when

²⁶ Mode: ‘A particular form, manner, or variety in which some quality, phenomenon, or condition occurs or is manifested’. This word is use here to describe song’s multi-dimensional signing potential. Song can simultaneously signal multiple referents via its words, melody, tempo, genre, orchestration etc. See ‘mode, n.’, *OED* <www.oed.com> [accessed 23 January 2013].

encountering references to song. A snatch of familiar melody, for example, can bring a title to mind in a kind of involuntary ‘Name That Tune’.²⁷ Psychological events such as these may seem a natural part of the human condition. However, for those interested in precisely what happens when human beings encounter song – or song references in drama – the quest must move beyond anecdotal legitimacy. To do so, one must necessarily begin with the human brain.

Music’s effect upon human beings has generated speculation in every civilized century. Plato’s remarks on moods induced by musical modes are perhaps the most famous classical example.²⁸ Today, numerous branches of empirical inquiry contribute to a field now broadly termed ‘Music Cognition’.²⁹ It seems as if every experiment, journal article, or book connected with cognitive science (and especially those grounded in neurology) contains a caution to the reader that the field is in its nascence.

Nevertheless, a surge of popular texts in the last few years demonstrates the science to have reached something of a watershed. This is due in large part to breakthroughs in the ability to monitor the activity of neurons, the specialized cells constituting the brain.

Neurons are responsible for the electrochemical transmission of information (i.e., all

²⁷ *Name That Tune* was the title of a television game show which aired in the United States from 1953-59 and again from 1974-81 with *The \$100,000 Name That Tune* airing from 1984-5. The central goal of the game was for contestants to name songs after listening to the notes of their melodies (played by in-house musicians); the contestant who could name the song in the fewest notes was declared the winner.

²⁸ For the original discussion, see: Plato, *The Republic*, trans. by Tom Griffith, ed. by G.R.F. Ferrari, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 88-9 (III.398c-e).

²⁹ For the present discussion, we draw evidence primarily from psychological and neurological studies, which themselves are grounded predominantly in phenomenological observation and/or mechanical monitoring of brain activity. Other fields contributing to Music Cognition include anthropology and ethnomusicology. Chs. 1-4 (esp. Chs. 1 & 4) in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* offer a concise introduction to these, plus extensive bibliographies for further reading. See *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology*, ed. by Susan Hallam, Ian Cross and Michael Thaut (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 1-44.

brain function) and are comparable in a general way to the ones and zeroes at the basis of computer function.³⁰ For decades, scientists have monitored the firing of neurons by measuring corresponding electrical activity upon the surface of the scalp using an electroencephalogram. An EEG can measure the timing of neural firings with formidable accuracy. Its spatial resolution, however, is limited, thus hampering determination of precisely *where* neural activity is taking place. In the last fifteen years, the advance of functional resonance magnetic imaging (fMRI) technology – a method of measuring blood flow through the magnetic qualities of haemoglobin – has alleviated this shortcoming to the point where increased brain activity can now be located to within a couple of millimetres. The combination of these tools (EEG for *when* and fMRI for *where*) has thus endowed scientists with a significantly finer observational resolution than was available only a few years ago and thus facilitates far more confident hypotheses regarding relationships between brain function and cognitive experience. One benefit of this observational upgrade is an increased ability for scholars in many disciplines, including the humanities, to confirm a variety of assumptions heretofore problematized by inherent subjectivity. One can move beyond mere assertion, for example, that the mind reflexively searches the memory when encountering music. Now, one can observe music inducing neural activity in the part of the brain responsible for making sense out of empirical stimuli (frontal lobes) and the parts of the brain responsible for, among other things, the storage of our memories (the

³⁰ For a concise description of the process through which neurons transmit information, see Steven Mithen, *The Singing Neanderthals* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 2005), p. 28. See also Daniel Levitin, *This Is Your Brain on Music* (London: Atlantic Books, 2007), pp. 84-93.

hippocampus and regions in the interior of the temporal lobe)³¹ and through such observation legitimately conclude that what some of us may consciously perceive to be occurring some of the time when we listen to music, actually occurs in all of us, automatically, all of the time.

SONG IS SPECIAL

Turning, then, to the referential potential of song in drama, it is compelling that numerous psychological and neuropsychological studies demonstrate song to be superbly suited for precisely the kind of associative operation suggested by Iago's king-switch. Song naturally fashions strong, and often robust encodings upon the neural network. Song is also extremely resilient in the mind over time. Song information, and other associations encoded along with it, are also particularly resistant to overwriting and other more physiological threats such as age, damage and disease. Finally, the componential yet 'linked' storage of song information, and the non-song information associated with it, makes recognition and recall easier and more robust compared to other kinds of information packages such as stories, instructions, lectures or lists.

ENCODING

What happens when the brain first encounters song in the world? A discussion of Music Cognition, or cognition of any kind, must first acknowledge reality for human beings as necessarily a neurological constitution. As Daniel Levitin writes,

³¹ Levitin, p. 91.

We have to reject the intuitively appealing idea that the brain is storing an accurate and strictly isomorphic representation of the world. To some degree, it is storing perceptual distortions, illusions, and extracting relationships among elements. It is computing reality for us.³²

A hierarchy of importance governs our neural computations of the world. If this were not true, we would never *notice* anything. This hierarchy is determined partly by memories, which are commonly divided into the following, often overlapping, categories: short-term memory, ‘the window of time within which the present moment of perception and thought are grasped’,³³ long-term memory, what we normally refer to when speaking of memory i.e., stored information drawn forward into conscious awareness upon need; episodic memory, which refers to specific events/information; and semantic memory, conceptual schemas created as a result of the grouping of related episodic memories and/or other schemas. We recognize, for example, the opening notes of Mozart’s ‘Eine Kleine Nachtmusik’ as they are ‘chunked’ together in short-term memory and then related to episodic, long-term memory (past listenings). Simultaneously, we understand the unfolding piece of music as ‘classical’ because of its relation to schemas, also stored in long-term memory.

Integral also to understanding hierarchical cognition are the concepts of neural association and emotional arousal. ‘Human memory is fundamentally *associative*’ writes Brun Dubuc; everything we remember is in some way linked to everything else.³⁴

³² Levitin, p. 115.

³³ This is generally thought to be, on average, between four and eight seconds. See Bob Snyder, ‘Memory for Music’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 107.

³⁴ Brun Dubuc, ‘Memory and Learning’, in *The Brain From Top To Bottom*, <www.thebrain.mcgill.ca> [accessed 25 January 2013], paragraph 2. The website is sponsored

The more associations (affiliated memories) we have with a particular memory, the easier it is to recall – since there are many other memories that can cue it.³⁵ All memories are also associated with a level of arousal (a trait directly connected to survival instinct).³⁶ The more emotional magnitude attached to particular memories, the stronger their encoding upon the neural network and, thus, the easier they are to recall.³⁷ Indeed, if something has proved important before, our brains will implicitly tune our attention accordingly.³⁸ The upshot of all this is that, whether in the field or in the theatre, the brain treats *everything* it initially encounters as referential; it automatically, continuously, and with great speed, searches its memories to determine relationships between present phenomena and past ‘ranked’ experience.³⁹

EMOTION

In the flood of stimuli sorted and prioritized by the brain from moment to moment, song with which we are familiar ranks as special. The primary reason for this is the comparatively high emotional value it always carries. In all the scientific studies of music and emotion read thus far, there is a general consensus that music induces

by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research: Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction.

³⁵ Snyder, p. 108.

³⁶ R.J. Dolan, ‘Emotion, Cognition, and Behavior’, *Science*, 298 (2002), 1191-4 (p. 1191).

³⁷ See G. H. Bower, ‘Mood and Memory’, *American Psychologist*, 2 (1981), 129-48; Matthew D. Schulkind, ‘Music, Emotion, and Autobiographical Memory: They’re Playing Your Song’, *Memory and Cognition*, 6 (1999), 948-55; Séverine Samson, Delphine Dellacherie and Hervé Patel, ‘Emotional Power of Music in Patients with Memory Disorders’, *The Neurosciences and Music III – Disorders and Plasticity, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1169 (2009), 245-55; and Dolan 1191-94 for various related discussions.

³⁸ Dolan, p. 1191.

³⁹ For discussion and a neurological examination of the brain sifting through memory in the effort to recognize music in particular, see Isabelle Peretz, Nathalie Gosselin, Pascal Belin, Robert J. Zatorre, Jane Plailly and Barbara Tillmann, ‘Music Lexical Networks: The Cortical Organization of Music Recognition’, *The Neurosciences and Music III – Disorders and Plasticity, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1169 (2009), 256-65.

significant emotional effects upon all healthy human beings. This consensus comes, not just from anecdotal evidence, but also from neuroimaging studies demonstrating music to induce neural firings within the limbic and paralimbic areas of the brain, the acknowledged core structures of emotion processing.⁴⁰ Augmenting these are recent experiments demonstrating that music familiar to, and preferred by, subjects induces the release of dopamine (a chemical linked directly to the pleasures of, among other things, eating and sex) in parts of the brain associated with reward processing.⁴¹ But there is more to song's significance in the brain than a chemical sugar coating. Unlike food or narcotics, engagement with music can be a profound social experience even when the listener is isolated. This tendency stems at least partially from music's power to induce in human brains a reaction known as 'mental state attribution' or 'theory of mind'. Stephan Koelsch defines this as 'the attempt to figure out the intentions, desires, and beliefs of the individuals who actually created the music'.⁴² In a recent study, Koelsch demonstrated that listening to music automatically engages specific areas of the brain 'dedicated to mental state attribution'.⁴³ 'Moreover', he writes, '[the data] showed that the meaning of music may be derived in part from the understanding that every note reflects an intentional act [...] representing a communication between the creator and the

⁴⁰ Anne J. Blood and Robert J. Zatorre, 'Intensely Pleasurable Responses to Music Correlate with Activity in Brain Regions Implicated in Reward and Emotion', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 98 (2001), 11818-23.

⁴¹ See Blood and Zatorre, 11818-11823; S. Brown, M. Martinez and L. Parsons, 'Passive Music Listening Spontaneously Engages Limbic and Paralimbic Systems', *NeuroReport*, 15 (2004), 2033-2037; and V. Menon and D. Levitin, 'The Rewards of Music Listening: Response and Physiological Connectivity of the Mesolimbic System', *NeuroImage*, 28 (2005), 175-84.

⁴² Stefan Koelsch, 'A Neuroscientific Perspective on Music Therapy', *The Neurosciences and Music III – Disorders and Plasticity, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1169 (2009), 374-82.

⁴³ Koelsch lists these as the anterior frontomedian cortex, temporal poles, and the superior temporal sulcus. See p. 381.

perceiver of the music'.⁴⁴ Theory of mind behaviour becomes even more pronounced with the addition of words. With song, the listener encounters a truly semantic 'voice' and subsequently creates from it a kind of surrogate Speaker. It is no wonder, then, so many of us find ourselves enthralled by certain songs; our brains, at some level, are engaged in an interactive social act within the most intimate and exclusive of social spaces: the impregnable, un-'hackable' mind.

In 2009, Emmanuel Bigand, Yannick Gérard, and Paul Molin conducted an experiment that demonstrated familiar song 'jumping out' at the listener in the midst of unfamiliar, even jumbled, material.⁴⁵ It is easy, now, to understand why. Evidently, we notice song that we know, and song that we like, in a crowd of stimuli because our brains have gilded it with decidedly personal memories of pleasure (or perhaps displeasure) and social interaction. With song, then, we do not merely recognise a familiar sound such as tyres on gravel, it is as if we perceive a familiar voice from a memorable discussion. From here, it is easy to transfer this model to those in the Globe engaging with a new play. If we understand 'popular song' to refer primarily to song that is well-known by a large portion of the population, it appears abundantly clear that a smattering of it within unfamiliar play dialogue would 'jump out' at audience members in precisely the same way it does today from the din of our modern movies, restaurants and shopping environments: it is an old friend (or enemy) calling to us from the crowd.

⁴⁴ Koelsch, p. 382.

⁴⁵ Emmanuel Bigand, Yannick Gérard, and Paul Molin, 'The Contribution of Local Features to Familiarity Judgments in Music', *The Neurosciences and Music III – Disorders and Plasticity, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1169 (2009), 234-44 (pp. 242-3).

REPETITION

Song's decidedly repetitive nature also contributes substantially to its special status in the brain. Anyone immersed in a song culture (a waitress in a jazz bar, for example) will inevitably hear popular specimens over and over, and accordingly retain them better than if he or she had heard them only once. The repeating patterns of music, lyrics and other structures within the song, further enhance memorability. Repetition in one's exterior environment is however only half the equation; the brain also generates repetition internally.⁴⁶ One well-known aspect of this propensity is a condition known as 'earworms' or 'stuck song syndrome' where snippets of song play back incessantly in the mind despite the subject's desire to the contrary. Research on earworms is presently scant, yet they are a recognized neurological commonplace.⁴⁷ Flowing from discussions of repetition is the concept of entrainment. Any observant stroll through a nightclub or a campus finds humans synchronizing movements to music. As with encoding, science confirms that humans engage in many of these toe-tapping, head-nodding, stride-matching activities without conscious awareness.⁴⁸ There is, however, more to these sensory-motor reactions than corporeal accompaniment to groove or melody. Koelsch observes that musical activity, even simply listening to music, always automatically

⁴⁶ Mathew Schulkind, in a recent study of music and its relation to memory, suggests that 'the "special" power of music as mnemonic device may be that it fosters excessive rehearsal' in the mind. See Matthew D. Schulkind, 'Is Memory for Music Special?', *The Neurosciences and Music III – Disorders and Plasticity, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1169 (2009), 216-24 (p. 221).

⁴⁷ Earworms are more commonly reported by musicians and those afflicted with obsessive-compulsive disorder, yet they are certainly not exclusive to these groups. The only explanation for their occurrence at present is that the neural circuits representing a song in the brain somehow get stuck in 'playback mode'. See Levitin, p. 155.

⁴⁸ Donald A. Hodges, 'Bodily Responses to Music', in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 121-30 (p. 126).

engages action-related processes in the brain.⁴⁹ One such process is perception-action mediation involving the firing of special mirror neurons. As mentioned earlier, human brains are composed of billions of neurons, cells whose different combinations of connections are responsible for brain function. In his overview of physiological responses to music, Koelsch offers several fMRI-based studies showing particular groups of neurons associated with musical performance firing even when the subject is at rest.⁵⁰ In other words, if one has physically participated with music in the past (singing along, for example), the brain automatically conducts a form of rehearsal as the music plays again. Thus, unlike a story, list or lecture, which one may hear at best a handful of times, humans experience popular song, especially favourites, in a climate of continual reinforcement generated both outside and inside the mind.

STORAGE

Another contributor to song's special neurological status is its particular resilience to deterioration. Numerous records exist of people suffering from Alzheimer's disease, Epilepsy, Dementia or physical lesions to the brain who, while seriously disabled, have nevertheless retained memories of music and sometimes even musical skills.⁵¹ This appears to be due to song's inherently componential nature and the way its components are stored. There is growing consensus within the field of Music Cognition that words

⁴⁹ For the full discussion, see Koelsch 374-381. Cf. Gottfried Schlaug, 'Music, Musicians, and Brain Plasticity', in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 197-207 (p. 204).

⁵⁰ Koelsch, pp. 379-381.

⁵¹ See Séverine Samson, Delphine Dellacherie and Hervé Patel 245-255; Amélie Racette and Isabelle Peretz, 'To Sing or Not to Sing', *Memory and Cognition*, 35 (2007), 242-53 (p. 243); and Levitin, p. 127.

and music are encoded and stored in relatively separate neural networks.⁵² Yet, various studies have also shown that, at the level of encoding, the brain creates ‘tight’, ‘bidirectional’ neural links between song components, through which an encounter with one component will often automatically ‘fire’ another, inducing recall.⁵³ It has also been shown that neither melody nor lyric need be in its ‘original’ form in order for the listener to recall the original association.⁵⁴

Beyond rhizomatic, separate-but-linked components, each ‘encouraging’ the recollection of the other, the particular stability of song in memory is also due to the often-highly structured nature of its main ingredients: poetry and music. A 2007 study by Barbara Tillman and W. Jay Dowling demonstrates the surface details of poetry to be more resilient in the memory than that of prose.⁵⁵ This suggests that, for poetry, the brain makes a point of giving extra value to the encodings of surface structural details such as syntax, rhyme and rhythm because, unlike in prose, such features are more

⁵² Racette and Peretz, p. 242; There have been some recent studies suggesting that the neural resources that extract and use long term memories in the brain’s moment by moment, ‘online’ functioning are more singular. Thus simultaneous recollection of verbatim lyrics and their corresponding musical setting can be disrupted if one or both components present complications in themselves. See Evelina Fedorenko, Aniruddh Patel and Edward Gibson, ‘Structural Integration in Language and Music: Evidence for a Shared System’, *Memory and Cognition*, 37.1 (2009), 1-9.

⁵³ This link has been shown to form as quickly as upon the first hearing of a song. See Isabelle Peretz, Monique Radeau and Martin Arguin, ‘Two-way Interactions Between Music and Language: Evidence from Priming Recognition of Tune and Lyrics in Familiar Songs’, *Memory and Cognition*, 32 (2004), 142-52 (p. 143).

⁵⁴ In 1990, for example, Robert Crowder et al. demonstrated that the spoken text of lyrics paired with hummed melodies aided significantly in the recognition of those melodies. See Robert G. Crowder, Mary Louise Serafine and Bruno Repp, ‘Physical Interactions and Association by Contiguity in Memory for the Words and Melodies of Songs’, *Memory and Cognition*, 18 (1990), 469-476. By ‘original’ we mean the only form the subject has ever heard before the experiment.

⁵⁵ In some cases verbatim recall of poetry has been shown to *improve* over time. See Barbara Tillman and W. Jay Dowling, ‘Memory for Prose Decreases but not for Poetry’, *Memory and Cognition*, 35.4 (2007), 628-639.

integral to overall meaning.⁵⁶ Not surprisingly, Tillman et al. repeatedly link these ‘memorable’ aspects of poetry to parallels in music. Both are, for instance, fundamentally rhythmic, ‘strongly organized and structured over time’.⁵⁷ One could argue further that prosody in poetry and harmonic relationships in (most) music are often utilized to create patterns of tension and release, which themselves can be memorable. Rhyme and its utilization in closure seem congruent with the various cadences found in music. Lastly, citing the work of David Rubin (discussed below), Tillman et al. suggests that setting poetry to music may even further enhance its resilience and stability in the memory.⁵⁸ Indeed, it is difficult to argue against the sense of this in light of the facts: a relationship between memorable patterns of words with memorable patterns of music is clearly a mutually re-enforcing one.⁵⁹

Scientific observation, then, offers a rhizomatic model of song’s presence and life in the mind, in which principal encoded components are quite separate and stable, yet their strong, tight connections facilitate chains of re-encoding that can be ‘lit up’ through the stimulation of one component or another. Song, then, emerges once again as unique from other things humans might remember in that its componential nature is inherently self-preserving.

⁵⁶ Tillman and Dowling, p. 636.

⁵⁷ Tillman and Dowling, p. 637.

⁵⁸ Tillman and Dowling, p. 638.

⁵⁹ A common ballad formula is an apt example: four lines alternating between four and three syllables rhyming abcb set in $\frac{3}{4}$ time with a half cadence at the end of the second line and a full one at the end of the fourth line, where the rhyme completes.

RECALL

Lastly, the question remains as to the semiotic potential of a familiar song or fragment once it has been recognized. If one accepts that the tight, bidirectional connections between song components in the brain facilitate recollection, what can science say about the power of this recollection? Here again, song's componential nature distinguishes it from other memories, this time through its promotion of specificity – especially when it comes to lyrics. Song's particular structure leads the brain to draw from storage not just the gist of its subject matter, but its text verbatim.

In the mid 1980s, Ira Hyman and David Rubin conducted an experiment in which subjects were given lyric fragments from 25 songs by The Beatles and asked to write down as much of the complete lyrics as possible.⁶⁰ Perhaps the most telling aspect of the study was not how much students could remember but the nature of the memories induced by the fragments. Of the lines recalled, the vast majority were recalled verbatim. Particularly fascinating, however, were the instances when the recall was erroneous. Almost all of the subjects' mistakes bore clear resemblance to the true lyrics in their prosody, meter, rhyme and semantics. For example, in their attempt to recall the line, 'Rocky Raccoon checked into his room', three subjects remembered it as 'Rocky Raccoon *stepped* into his room'; two more remembered the line as '*walked* into his room'; while another remembered it as '*went up* to his room'. The overwhelming percentage of 'mistakes' such as these led the researchers to conclude that the multiple constraints of the song form itself – its metre, rhyme scheme, rhythm, subject matter etc., contribute enormously to recollection accuracy. The authors write,

⁶⁰ Ira E. Hyman Jr. and David C. Rubin, 'Memorabeatlia: A Naturalistic Study of Long-term Memory', *Memory and Cognition*, 18 (1990), 205-214.

[M]any sets of words can mean “save one’s soul.” Fewer can be found that do so in three syllables (one is down to “revival,” “survival,” “salvation,” “redemption,” “save one’s soul,” and perhaps a few others). Only two can be found that also provide a weak rhyme with Bible (“revival” and “survival”). Thus, each new variable cuts down the number of words that can fit at any given point, and finding the last word of the last line of “Rocky Raccoon” becomes a much easier task.⁶¹

Unlike our conception of a story or the contents of a neighbour’s house, song’s simple, componential and highly structured nature limits the kinds of memories that can be associated with it to a significant degree, thus making its information far easier for the brain to recall with accuracy when cued; there are simply fewer memories from which to choose.

But what of ‘non-song’ associations such as those Iago and Merrythought’s song references seem to evoke? It is one thing to argue that a fragment of an old song might recall other fragments; it is another to say such fragments would conjure a terrible king or a long-gone pilgrimage site favoured by women. Key to this question is the brain’s core associative function. Isabelle Peretz writes, ‘...two events that are experienced in close temporal proximity become connected in memory so that each acts as a recognition cue for the other’.⁶² This obviously suggests that not merely song components but *any* events or information could be linked by tight, bidirectional connections, so long as they share some kind of association. Clearly then song lyrics, for example, could link with a particular social event for which we have ascribed emotional significance such as a wedding or a war. Aniruddh Patel writes,

⁶¹ Hyman Jr. and Rubin, p. 213.

⁶² Peretz, Radeau and Arguin, p. 143.

If a particular piece or style of music is heard during an important episode in one's life, that music can take on a special, personal meaning via the memories it evokes.

Typically, these sorts of associations revolve around songs (which have a verbal narrative element), but there are also documented cases of instrumental music being a powerful vehicle for 'taking one back in time,' in other words, leading to vivid recall of what one was thinking and feeling in a particular point in life.⁶³

Patel's description reflects a neuropsychological commonplace supported by decades of empirical evidence showing music and/or song frequently inducing recollection of 'non-song' episodic memories.⁶⁴ Moreover, recall of 'non song' memories extends also to more schematic varieties. A powerful example of this kind of association is the leitmotif, 'a musical figure used in association with a particular character, situation, or idea, permitting the composer to use music to bring something non-musical to mind'.⁶⁵ The 'Tristan Chord' in Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde* (1865) and John Williams' minor second figure from the 1975 Steven Spielberg thriller, *Jaws*, are well-known leitmotifs. For cultural insiders familiar with *Tristan*, the feeling induced by the 'Tristan' chord is some measure of inescapable, tragic doom; for those familiar with the iconic Spielberg film, the feeling is of imminent, terrible danger. From here it is a small step to assume popular song capable of inducing similar reactions. It is also reasonable to conclude that song's power in this regard would be, on average, higher than that of

⁶³ Aniruddh D. Patel, *Music, Language, and the Brain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 324.

⁶⁴ See, for example, Hyman Jr. and Rubin, pp. 205-14; Peretz, Radeau and Arguin, pp. 142-52; Peretz, Gosselin, Belin, Zatorre, Plailly and Tillmann, p. 256-65. Cf. See Patrik J. Juslin, 'Emotional Responses to Music', in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 131-40 (p. 137) for discussion (within the context of music and its relation to human emotion) and for a list of other key studies.

⁶⁵ Patel, p. 322.

music alone, due to the semantic content of its lyrics. Empirical evidence, indeed, points in this direction. The brain has been shown, for example, to recognize familiar lyrics faster and more easily than familiar music.⁶⁶ One reason for this is that melodies, by their nature, often take more time to reveal themselves than a familiar group of words. Another is that the words of a song often link to fewer options in the brain than the music to which they are often set. Peretz explains:

[A] single melody typically carries many different lyrics, whereas a single text line is rarely set to different melodic lines. The memory consequences of this particular organization are that a melody will be a poor index for a specific text, whereas song lyrics should be quite diagnostic of a specific tune.⁶⁷

The presence, of *both* familiar words and familiar music, i.e., a portion of popular song, would surely then enhance the possibility of other associated memories ‘lighting up’, since each component would re-enforce and enhance the recognition of the other. Of course the depth and breadth of the recall depends upon just how familiar the song actually is to the subject and how much emotional valence he/she has attached to it. If both these factors are reasonably high, however, it is evident that song fragments can retrieve both song and non-song information with some degree of specificity – especially if the cueing stimuli are song lyrics.

⁶⁶ The data shows familiar words to be recognizable in the space of two syllables and familiar music requiring on average six notes to facilitate familiar tune recognition. See Peretz, Radeau and Arguin, pp. 151-2. The authors cite additional articles supporting this observation.

⁶⁷ Peretz, Radeau and Arguin, p. 143. This conclusion is clearly complicated in light of genres such as hymns in which memorized religious texts are often set to multiple tunes.

CONCLUSION

From a neuropsychological perspective, the discovery of familiar song embedded in drama is, for the human brain, easy, automatic business. In the deluge of words and action, familiar song lights up to the brain as a past acquaintance in a crowd of strangers. In that recognition, the individual's relationship with the song is brought to mind. The more emotional valence one has given it, the more times one has heard it and performed it, the more emotional 'non-song' memories connected to it, the richer the recollection when the song – especially the lyrics – reappears. As we have seen, this operation happens almost instantly and is, essentially, beyond our control; and when it happens, the recollections can be very accurate. There is no evidence to suggest early modern brains were in any way appreciably different than our own; thus they would have experienced the same neurological reactions to song that are now scientifically demonstrable. As will be seen in the next section, there is a sizable body of evidence suggesting that the songs the playwrights incorporated into their drama were enormously popular. Consequently, one must conclude that the neuropsychological effects of familiar song cited here must have occurred in many early modern theatregoers with a high degree of strength. If, then, there was complex semiotic significance to a song emanating from the Globe stage, one can say with certainty that there would have been a sizable complement of people in the audience whose brains would have fathomed every gram of it.

1.2 EARLY MODERN MUSIC AND MEMORISATION

We have suggested that song, by nature, is superbly suited for sophisticated referential operation in early modern drama because of its unique relationship with the human

brain. With this, we offer the notion that early modern playgoing brains were particularly conditioned to appreciate song references and their implications. This claim is grounded firstly in the high level of musical training and activity distinct to early modern English society, and secondly in the decidedly ‘oral’, componential nature of information storage and transmission cultivated by that society at every level. Together, these factors fostered a particularly ‘musical’ audience possessing precisely the mnemonic training necessary to appreciate semiotic song references to the fullest degree.

MUSIC AND SONG IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

As with the modern West, early modern England was a culture of avid music listeners; however, it was also fundamentally one of music *makers*. Both Tudors and Stuarts employed large numbers of musicians in both the mainly choral Chapel Royal and the more instrumental King’s Musicke.⁶⁸ Moreover, the royal family, especially the Tudors, were musicians themselves.⁶⁹ Both Henry VIII and his daughter Elizabeth’s musical proclivities influenced the culture of the court and the orbiting London elite, manifesting in widespread cultivation of musical skills as well as a robust network of

⁶⁸ For a concise overview, see Walter L. Woodfill, *Musicians in English Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), Chs. 7 & 8. Total numbers of musicians employed during Elizabeth’s reign, for example, could exceed eighty. For detailed lists of musicians as well as records of instrument, gifts and appointments during Elizabeth’s reign, see Andrew Ashbee, *Records of English Court Music*, 9 vols (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1992), VI, pp. 1-75.

⁶⁹ Henry VIII, for example, was proficient on the lute, the virginals and the organ as well as a keen singer, sightreader and composer. See E. W. Ives, ‘Henry VIII (1491-1547)’, in *DNB* <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 10 December 2012], paragraph eight of ‘The Royal Magnificence’. See also John Milsom, ‘Henry VIII’, in *The Oxford Companion to Music* <www.oxfordmusiconline.com> [accessed 10 December 2012]. Elizabeth’s musical abilities, while less celebrated than her father’s, are also well known. See Patrick Collinson, ‘Elizabeth I (1533-1603)’, in *DNB* <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 10 December 2012], end of paragraph three of ‘Education’. See also, David Scott, ‘Elizabeth I, Queen of England’, in *Grove Music Online* <www.oxfordmusiconline.com> [accessed December 10, 2012].

musical patronage. In elite and well-to-do families, musical training was common and often began at a young age. Lessons were given typically in the home by servants hired for their musical abilities or by private (sometimes famous) tutors. Education in music continued for young men at the Inns of Court where, along with dancing, it was included in the cultivation of ‘polish’, the aggregate of social skills necessary for smooth mobility within elite circles.⁷⁰ While no ‘Noble or Gentleman’, writes Henry Peacham (1622), ‘should (save his private recreation at leasurable houres) proove a Master in the same’, he should at the least be able ‘to sing your part sure, and at the first sight, withall, to play the same upon your Violl, or the exercise of the Lute, privately to your selfe’⁷¹ – tall orders for anyone in any age.⁷² Wealthy daughters, too, were encouraged to cultivate musical skills, for they suggested a cultured, sophisticated upbringing particularly attractive, parents felt, to wealthy young men.

Among the lower orders, musical engagement appears perhaps more vibrant still. This is mainly because the only way for most to experience entertainment of any

⁷⁰ This subject is treated in more detail in Chapter 4.

⁷¹ Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (London: John Legat, 1622), pp. 98-100, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 10 December 2012]. Thomas Morley in *A Plaine and Easy Introduction to Practicall Musicke* also expresses the view that a gentleman should be able to, at the least, sight-sing. See *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (London: Peter Short, 1597), p. 1, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 10 December 2012]. The subject of music education in a discussion of elite attitudes towards public performance will be taken up in more detail in Ch. 4.

⁷² Peacham also expresses in *The Compleat Gentleman* a prevailing view among elite men that lack of musical cultivation betrayed latent philistinism. See Peacham, pp. 96-104. Baldassare Castiglione’s *The Courtier*, perhaps the most popular conduct book of the English Renaissance, offers similar sentiments. See, for example, *The Book of the Courtier*, ed. by Daniel Javitch (New York: Norton, 2002), p. 56. See also John Case’s *The Praise of Musicke* (1586) where he writes (in the voice of Nature), ‘If I made any one which cannot brook or fancy Musicke, surely I errered and made a monster.’ Case continues like this for many more lines. See *The Praise of Musicke* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1586), p. 46, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 10 December 2012].

kind, other than on special occasions, was to produce it themselves.⁷³ Music, especially singing due to its inherently economical nature, was one of the chief means. In his introductory chapter entitled ‘The Ringing Island’, Christopher Marsh writes,

If we abandon the tendency to conflate musicality and musical literacy (two very different entities) then we must conclude that levels of aptitude and accomplishment in early modern England were impressively high.⁷⁴

Bernard Capp agrees, noting particularly the ubiquity of song:

Song was an important part of social and working life [...] ballads were often sung ‘for recreation of the common people at Christmas dinners and brideales, and in taverns and alehouses and such other places of base resort’. We hear of medieval women singing the deeds of Hereward the Wake as they danced, and medieval ploughmen singing ‘a gest of Robin Hood’ as they trudged home [...] Ballads were indeed ‘sung to the wheel, and sung to the pail’ (the spinning-wheel and the milkmaid’s pail), and sung by servants, blacksmiths and cobblers.⁷⁵

The drama also reflects ubiquitous, permeating song. In scene 13 of Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* (1599), the foreman Hodge and the younger shoemakers sing ‘Hey down a-down down derry’ (a typical ballad refrain) as they work. Mistress Quickly hums a similar refrain as she feigns working in Act 1.4 of *The Merry Wives of*

⁷³ Peter Burke’s overview of the transmission of popular culture in early modern Europe is also useful here as it shows the various musical forms, including song, operating in the mix of other forms of entertainment. See Peter Burke, ‘The Transmission of Popular Culture, in *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 3rd edn (Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 133-162.

⁷⁴ Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 4.

⁷⁵ Bernard Capp, ‘Popular Literature’, in *Popular Culture in Seventeenth Century England*, ed. by Barry Reay (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1985), p. 204.

Windsor.⁷⁶ In Act II.3 of *Twelfth Night* Feste, the drunken Sir Toby and Sir Andrew Augecheek, attempt to sing a well-known ‘catch’, or round, ‘Hold Thy Peace’. Malvolio’s subsequent exclamation, ‘Do ye make an alehouse of my lady’s house?’, reflects the popularity of part-songs and rounds in the thousands of alehouses dotting the landscape.⁷⁷ The incessantly musical Merrythought declares in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* that he would prefer a woman who sang a catch ‘in her travail’ i.e., while giving birth.⁷⁸

THE BROADSIDE BALLAD

Another testament to the popularity of songs and singing is the phenomenon of the early modern broadside ballad, easily the most popular and ubiquitous art form of the early modern period. Printed on cheap paper and sold for a penny in the bookstalls and in the street, their verses offered an endless array of topics, characters and narratives including songs imported from the oral tradition, stories from classical mythology, contemporary politics and even a kind of tabloid mythology of monstrous births, executions and other horrors. ‘An Excellent Ballad Entituled the Wandring Prince of Troy...to the Tune of Queen Dido’; ‘A Sorrowfull Sonet, made by M. George Mannington, at Cambridge Castle’ (an execution or ‘goodnight’ ballad); and ‘A Lamentable Ditty Composed

⁷⁶ Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* ed. by R.L. Smallwood and Stanley Wells, 2nd edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), Sc. 13.1-30; and Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 1.4.36.

⁷⁷ Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II.3.50-62 and II.3.77. Barry Reay writes, ‘The great centres of plebeian recreation in the seventeenth century were the alehouses, about 50,000 in all in mid-century or one for every one hundred inhabitants’. See ‘Introduction’, *Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. by Barry Reay (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1985), p. 15.

⁷⁸ Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, II ln. 442.

Upon the Death of Robert Lord Devereux, Late Earle of Essex', are three examples.⁷⁹ As these titles suggest, music was rarely included on the sheet, but rather the name of a popular tune to which the new lyrics were to be sung headed the ballad. Again, the pervasiveness of ballads and their culture cannot be overestimated. There were literally thousands of different songs, and printed sheets numbered in the millions.⁸⁰ Vendors sang broadside ballads in the streets; citizens, artisans, and labourers sang them in the alehouses, inns, fields, workshops and private homes; and, of course, they were sung on the stage. Fragments of ballads appear in the lines of hundreds of dramatic characters throughout the corpus.⁸¹

Music, and especially popular song, permeated English society during the Renaissance from the groundlings to the galleries and beyond. Yet, the necessity of corporal transmission shaped a large percentage of early modern people into the equivalent of amateur performers, a condition that fosters a deeper and more comprehensive relationship with music than listening alone. With very few exceptions, the listener does not experience a particular piece of music to the same degree as does the performer; the listener may understand it; the listener may love it; the performer

⁷⁹ Anon., 'An Excellent Ballad Entituled the Wandring Prince of Troy' (London: John Wright, 1630?), in *EBBA* <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 11 December 2012]; Anon., 'A Sorrowfull Sonet, Made by M. George Mannington, at Cambridge Castle' (ca. 1576), in *A Handefull of Pleasant Delites* ed. by Clement Robinson (London: Richard Jones, 1584), sig. C-C2^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 11 December 2012]; Anon., 'A Lamentable Ditty Composed Upon the Death of Robert Lord Devereux, Late Earl of Essex', in *EBBA* <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 12 December 2012].

⁸⁰ See Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 11; Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 408. See also Rosemary O'Day, *Education and Society 1500-1800* (London: Longman, 1981), pp. 9-24.

⁸¹ Shakespeare alone imports over one hundred and forty popular songs in his thirty-seven plays; Francis Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* offers a total of forty-eight possible references to popular song. While fourteen have been positively identified, italics, indentations and typical verse forms strongly suggest the others to be song references.

must *engender* it, *become* it, in much the same way as Olivier ‘becomes’ Hamlet. For a large number of early modern theatregoers, then, the perception of a song, or song reference in the lines of a dramatic character was not merely recognition of something heard in passing, but an identification with a locus of physical, mental and emotional production. Unlike the vast majority of modern theatregoers, a ballad reference would have induced recall of not just *a* song but also *my* song, a song that *I* have *done*. When we read Iago’s king-switch or Merrythought’s ‘Walsingham’ reference we must consider their implications as engendered within a world of the intimately, corporally, psychically familiar, a world in which the songs to which they refer have not just been heard by most but *known*.

EARLY MODERN DISCOURSE FROM BOTTOM TO TOP

Song, especially its fragments, matches perfectly with the particular ways human beings in early modern England were conditioned to communicate. At the lower, semi-literate levels of society, song plays an integral role in the traditional communication systems of a still-predominantly oral culture. It also fits perfectly within more educated speech communities, whose discourse was profoundly shaped by years of formal training in rhetoric. A brief overview illuminates the referential use and interpretation of song fragments in drama to be one of the more predictable early modern discursive behaviours.

ORDINARY LONDONERS

In early modern England, speech communities at mid and lower social levels still relied predominantly on oral forms of communication. The precise nature of oral and literate

communication, and the roles of these in human dynamics, have been topics of contention perhaps since the invention of writing.⁸² Nevertheless, scholars agree for the most part as to the general features of ‘orality’, and it is only the basics that concern us here. Oral communication can thus be defined as the verbal systems of human groups that do not use writing. Such systems include, for example, poetry, songs, proverbs, and adages. Of, course one can find these in literature, but such constructions ultimately originate from communities in which interlocutors depend exclusively upon human biology for the transmission and storage of information. Interestingly, students of Music Cognition will mark the chunky, componential, ‘rhapsodical’ nature of these forms.⁸³ Even up to 1700, there existed a substantial section of the population who continued to employ traditional ‘oral’ forms of communication passed down to them from their

⁸² Plato’s discussion of oral versus literate communication through the voice of Socrates in *Phaedrus* is a fascinating and enlightening classical discussion. See Plato, *Phaedrus, Ion, Gorgias, and Symposium, with Passages from the Republic and Laws*, trans. by Lane Cooper (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), pp. 65-8. Notable modern studies include: Harold A. Innis, *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951); Marshal McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962); Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Routledge, 1982); Ruth Finnegan, *Literacy and Orality* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988); and Fox (see note 80 above) among others.

⁸³ By ‘rhapsodical’ we refer to Walter Ong’s definition laid out in his *Rhetoric, Romance and Technology* where he writes:

Oral composition is essentially ‘rhapsody’ (Greek rhapsodia), that is, a stitching together, in the original meaning of this term as applied by the Greeks to their epic song...The epic singer is not a memorizer in our post-Gutenberg sense of the word, but a skilled collector. He...preserves the essential meaning of stories. But he has no fixed text to reproduce... Instead, he possesses an armory consisting of formulas or metrically malleable phrases (together with near-formulas or ‘formulaic’ expressions), and of themes or situations – the banquet, the messenger, the demand for surrender, the challenge, the invitation, the boast, the departure, the arrival, recognition, and so on...Formula and theme are the stuff which the epic singer rhapsodizes or ‘stitches’ into his oral epic fabric...

See Walter J. Ong, ‘Oral Residue in Tudor Prose Style’, in *Rhetoric, Romance and Technology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), pp. 34-35.

ancestors. The days of the week, how to milk a cow, the way to the next town, legends and histories all were set in rhythmic, prosodic, versified and often musical systems to aid in their memorability and thus their preservation.⁸⁴ Of course, it is difficult to determine whether or not a song or an old saw originated somewhere beyond the author of a written or printed page. Yet, when one reads John Fitzherbert advising his prospective purchaser not only ‘to get a copy of this present booke and to rede it frome the begynnyng to the endynge’ but also for the ‘yonge gentylman accordynge to the season of the yere | rede to his servauntes what chapter he wyll’,⁸⁵ one can perceive, as Fox puts it, ‘a dynamic process of reciprocal interaction and mutual infusion.’⁸⁶ In other words, we find oral constructions and systems, under the amplified power of cheap printing, disseminating back through the literate into the largely oral communities

⁸⁴ ‘A plaine Country Fellowe’ writes, John Earle in 1628, always has ‘some thriftie Hobnaye Proverbes to Clout his discourse’. John Stevens in 1615 describes the ‘plaine cuntrye Bride’, ‘graced’ at her wedding with ‘all the good ornaments’ including not only ‘guilt rases of ginger Rosemary and Ribbands’, but also ‘the severall tunes of ballades & songs besides halfe a douzen tales and proverbs, with as many tales & riddles’. We can find manifold examples of this kind of orality recorded, for example, in the numerous popular treatises on husbandry assembled by writers such as John Fitzherbert (1530), who include for the reader’s convenience ‘olde sayinges’ such as ‘he that hath bothe shepe | swyne & bees | slepe he wake he | he may thryue’. Close to a century later, Gervase Markham likewise offers ‘ancient addages’ such as, ‘Rye will drownd in the Hopper’ along with maxims still familiar today such as ‘many hands make light worke’ and ‘haste ever brings waste’. See John Earle, *Micro-cosmographie, or, A Peece of the World Discovered in Essayes and Characters* (London: William Stansby, 1628), sig. F5^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 15 March 2010]; John Stephens, *Essayes and Characters, Ironicall, and Instructiue The Second Impression* (London: E. Alde, 1615), p. 357, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 12 December 2012]; John Fitzherbert, *Here Begynneth a Newe Tracte or Treatyse Moost P[ro]fytable for All Husba[n]dmen* (London: Peter Treuerys, 1530), p. 37^r, in *EEBO*; and Gervase Markham, *Markhams Farwell to Husbandry* (London: John Beale and Augustine Mathews, 1620), pp. 23, 93, 85, and 102, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 12 December 2012] respectively.

⁸⁵ Fitzherbert, p. 47^v.

⁸⁶ Fox, p. 410. A similar example can be found in 1.2 of Jonson’s *The Case is Altered*, in which the groom Peter Onion tells Antonio Balladino, pageant poet to the city of Milan, that he will employ a friend to read to him the book (presumably full of versified text including, in light of the poet’s name, ‘ballads’) Antonio offers. See Jonson, *The Case is Altered* 1, 1.1.64-6.

of labourers and their families who continued to collect, store and transmit these versified, prosaic, rhapsodical verbal systems among themselves, as they had for millennia.

ELITES

Ironically, wealthy, literate Englishmen like Fitzherbert and his imagined patron were far more proficient in the use of oral-based communication systems than their menials. From the beginning of the sixteenth century, the humanist philosophy of educators like Desiderius Erasmus and John Colet at St. Paul's had gradually spread through the grammar schools of England to the point where by the 1560s the basic curriculum was virtually standardized.⁸⁷ One result of this was that every educated early modern theatregoer was necessarily a product of rigorous training in Latin, a fundamental component of which was the art of classical rhetoric. Naturally, rhetorical training in the early modern period was meshed often with writing skills. Yet the study of rhetoric in Renaissance England was principally designed to empower the mind for verbal combat in decidedly oral arenas such as the royal court, the law courts, parliamentary debate, diplomatic and business negotiations etc. What is significant about this fact in relation to our purposes is that classical rhetoric in Elizabethan grammar schools (and later at university for those who continued) involved formal training in the use of many of the same verbal forms found in traditional oral communication. Both types of discourse are

⁸⁷ Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 265; Thomas O. Slone, 'Schoolbooks and Rhetoric: Erasmus's "Copia"', *Rhetorica*, 6.2 (1991), 113-4; T.W. Baldwin, *Shakespeare's Small Latine and Less Greeke* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1944), pp. 77-9.

grounded in the collection, memorization and arrangement of pithy chunks of information, the only real difference being the level of sophistication and proficiency.

This difference, however, is profound. The following excerpt from Brian Vickers' *In Defence of Rhetoric*, describing the gruelling nature of Elizabethan grammar school Latin, illuminates:

The amount of repetition required is frightening. School hours were from 6 a.m. till 9, then breakfast; 9.15 till 11, then lunch; 1 till 5, then supper; 6 till 7, for pure repetition; for thirty-six weeks a year, and for four to six years. First thing in the morning pupils were tested on the facts they had been given to learn the previous day. Then some new work was introduced, to be studied until lunchtime; that afternoon it would be repeated, and a little bit more added. All would be rehearsed in the evening, tested next day, and so on. Fridays and Saturdays the whole week's work was reviewed and repeated. [...] This remorseless process of repetition and memorization testifies to the determination of the Renaissance educator to leave nothing to chance. [...] Since eloquence was the greatest human acquirement, and rhetoric the key to all literature, schoolboys were thoroughly drilled in every stage of the art. In their reading as in their own writing they were taught to observe the larger process of rhetoric (the five parts of an oration, the three styles, how to write using a 'formularly' system) and--most important in some educationalists' eyes--to know the name, definition, and use of a large number of figures of speech.⁸⁸

As the excerpt suggests, students were required to collect, memorize, and assemble varieties of verbal forms for later use in composition and in examinations, all of which were oral. As their schooling progressed, students were encouraged to fashion custom-written collections of the verbal fragments they found particularly pertinent or useful. These 'commonplace books', were assembled and cultivated by virtually every student

⁸⁸ Vickers, pp. 257-8.

in England during the latter part of the sixteenth century⁸⁹ and remained a penchant of educated Englishmen, especially those trained at the universities and at the Inns of Court.⁹⁰ The collection and usage of adages, proverbs and other compact, pithy verbal constructions was indeed the height of fashion in the English Renaissance. ‘This period’, writes Adam Fox,

...witnessed the golden age of proverbial expression in European intellectual life. [...] [I]n an age of expanding formal education and the rapidly emerging technology of print, sententious wisdom assumed the status of a didactic tool and a literary genre to a degree which it has enjoyed neither before nor since [...] In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England there were some 12,000 proverbs and proverbial phrases in regular use, many times more than the number currently circulating.⁹¹

Facilitating the fashion were innumerable published collections of printed commonplaces including Erasmus’ enormously popular *Adages*, containing over four thousand morsels of proverbial wisdom.⁹² In courts, dining halls, letters and journals, deft wielding of these ultimately oral forms was a mark of sophistication and rhetorical strength. Ong in his essay ‘Oral Residue in Tudor Prose Style’ writes,

⁸⁹ Vickers, p. 259; Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 43.

⁹⁰ See Fox, pp. 123-6; and O’Day, pp. 158-60.

⁹¹ Fox, pp. 112-13.

⁹² See Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. by Craig R. Thompson, 86 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974-2003), XXXI-V (*Adages*, 1982). Numerous contemporary vernacular translations, in various forms, also exist. See for example, Richard Taverner, *Proverbes or Adagies, Gathered Oute of the Chiliades of Erasmus by Rycharde Tauerner, with Newe Addicions as Well of Latin Proverbes as Englyshe* (London: Richarde Kele, 1552), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 12 December 2012]; and *Adagia in Latine and English Containing Five Hundred Proverbs*, trans. by Bartholomew Robertson (London: Bernard Alsop, 1621), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 12 December 2012].

The new typographic medium offered previously unheard of opportunities to the impulse of the orally oriented performer to have as much as possible on hand so that he would be prepared to extemporize in absolutely any eventuality. Sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century printed collections of commonplace material are so utterly countless that no one has ever attempted even a preliminary survey. They were the last flash of activity *from the orally oriented mind*.⁹³

One finds then in the English of the Renaissance a culture cultivating, and in some spheres inculcating, the memorization of salient chunks of words. For the lower orders, the practice was merely the continuance of a necessary tradition. In more educated Elizabethan spheres, ‘oral’ tendencies were formally augmented to an exponential degree through the supercharging of rhetorical skills for use in various oral and literate arenas in which such skills were likewise essential to success. Thus the early modern playgoing audience emerges as not just a distinctly musical group, but also one filled with avid memorisers, whose mnemonic skills were greatly enhanced through cultural propensity and, in many cases, formidable professional training.

SONG IN DRAMA

Human beings, their systems and tools – and especially their arts – exist in a synergy contingent upon human desire. Our ontology is surely modulated by our creations, yet what we make ultimately begins with what we need. If one is to consider any component of early modern drama, it is first essential to understand that London playwrights offered products that were necessarily shaped by both implicit and explicit pressures of their audiences’ nature. When Antony Scoloker writes in 1604 that his

⁹³ Ong, p. 47. Italics mine.

Passionate Mans Pilgrimage, ‘like Friendly Shake-speares Tragedies... should please all’, one understands ‘pleasing all’ is achievable only *in light* of all.⁹⁴ Discussion will undoubtedly continue regarding the social composition of the Globe audience and the level of education attained by members of its various subgroups, yet one trait is universally salient: *everyone* was importing and memorizing special turns of phrase into their speech and all were doing so at a level that surpasses the vast majority of people today. Thus, one expects playwrights to have fashioned entertainment for *these* people, plays that reflect audiences’ linguistic tastes and tendencies. And of course one finds evidence of this in abundance. Shakespeare’s works, for example, ‘have been calculated to contain 4,684 proverbs and proverbial allusions’.⁹⁵ While such quantification has, to the best of our knowledge, not been applied to any of his contemporaries, a few moments in any Admiral’s play suggests a profusion of similar scale. And it is among this mass of imported, memorable material that we find songs and their fragments, often in substantial number.

Perhaps the salient entertainment of early modern drama is wit. Like memory, wit is fundamentally associative. With a pun, for example, the target word in light of its context induces brains to recall other applicable meanings. Encounter with a proverb finds essentially the same cognitive process: ‘many hands make light work’, prompts our brains to make the metonymic connection between hands and helpers whilst simultaneously connecting the prosodic, rhythmic phrase to the larger, more awkward concept: employing many people will make a hard task easier. To understand the expression ‘murder will out’, we must again think associatively, using our memories of

⁹⁴ Scoloker, sig. A2^r.

⁹⁵ Fox, p. 132.

language and life experience to synthesise the referred meaning: a murder by its nature does not stay secret for long. This metaphoric economy of language, in combination with the attraction of rhythm, prosody (and often irony), this semiotic *play*, is what makes wit so entertaining. And it is thus no surprise whatsoever to find a host of ballad references operating in drama in similar referentially playful ways. As we have seen, from a neurological standpoint, song fragments make excellent references by nature; their sources were immensely popular; and their audience was composed of people comprehensively trained to recognize and appreciate them. The question, then, is not how we can be sure ballad fragments were used semiotically, but why the playwrights would *not* fashion these, perhaps the best semiotic devices of all, within a speech community arguably enthralled by just such things.

CONCLUSION

When we find reference to popular song in an early modern play we often stand midstream in a discourse of sorts that began in the mind of a poet. This individual versified a well-known story, or perhaps one of his own making, and set it to a popular tune. His creation was then certainly disseminated orally, and probably also through its publication in broadside form, or perhaps as part of a larger collection. And for whatever reason, the song caught on. Because of its popularity, a playwright chose to incorporate some, or all of the song into his work. The playwright may have already have had the ballad in his commonplace book, or perhaps the song was so popular that the playwright already knew it by heart and it just came to mind. The playwright probably also incorporated the song in a way that would impart some kind of extra significance, for then not only would patrons recognize it, they would also discover an

extra level of entertainment, extra value in the irony, the foreshadowing, the pathos, the *wit* that its deft placement would have engendered.

When we find reference to a popular song in early modern drama we find fossilized the very split second of time in which a large number in the galleries as well as in the yard recognized and appreciated some or all of its implications in the light of the dramatic moment. This appreciation occurred because early modern brains were naturally and artificially tuned to recognise song fragments and subsequently recall the sources from which they came. In fact, many of these talented memorizers knew this particular song already, intimately, because they had heard and performed it many times. Indeed, for more educated members of the Globe audience, it is also possible that they had incorporated some or all of this popular song into their own commonplace book, to be remembered and quoted in the same way as they would the multitude of popular sayings they had been collecting and memorizing since childhood. Thus, for all of these mnemonically gifted, musically inclined cultural insiders, distinguishing the nuances of pathos or cruelty implicated by Merrythought's reference to 'Walsingham' or the latent malevolence in Iago's king-switch as he sang 'The Auld Cloak' from the Globe stage, would surely have been not merely possible, but habitual.

2 THE POPULAR PANTHEON

With issues of subjectivity addressed, the discussion now moves to the song culture with which the early modern audience was so familiar. Popular song characters and their narratives attained a level of cultural familiarity in early modern England rivalling those of classical myth. Icons such as Robin Hood, and to a lesser extent ‘Lady Greensleeves’, are still with us presently. Yet, there remains a host of other characters whose adventures and reputations are effectively lost to us. This chapter, then, attempts to bring some of these back into the light.

MARY AMBREE

Popular song’s fictive celebrities appear most commonly in the drama through the phenomenon of character association: when dramatic characters associate themselves or other characters with those from song. In Jonson’s *A Tale of a Tub*, Turf’s description of his soon-to-be wedded daughter in her marital weeds upon his ‘best vore- horse’ labels her ‘a Mary Ambry i’ the business’.¹ Of Mary Ambry, Thomas Percy writes,

In the year 1584, the Spaniards, under the command of Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, began to gain great advantages in Flaunders and Bramant, by recovering many strong holds and cities from the Hollanders, as Ghent (called then by the English Gaunt), Antwerp, Mechlin, &c. [...] Some attempt made, with the assistance of English volunteers to retrieve the former of these places probably gave occasion to this ballad.²

¹ Jonson, *A Tale of a Tub*, VI, 1.4.22.

² Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, 2 vols (London: J.M. Dent, 1912), II, p. 65.

Neither Percy nor we can find a contemporary account of Mary Ambree beyond the ballad, which indeed describes her martial exploits at Ghent during the Dutch Revolt.³ While the original song was probably written shortly after the siege,⁴ the earliest extant copy dates to 1660 and is entitled, ‘The Valorous Acts Performed at Gaunt, by the Brave Bonny Lasse Mary Ambree’ etc.⁵ Numerous subsequent printings along with widespread references in the drama suggest an enduring popularity.⁶ ‘By the Restoration era’ Dugaw writes, ‘she became a conventional staple of commercial

³ Dianne Dugaw traces the influence of the Mary Ambree song in *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry, 1650-1850*, Cambridge Studies in Eighteenth-Century English Literature and Thought, 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), passim (esp. pp. 15-65).

⁴ Rollins writes ‘If an earthquake frightened London one day, the next morning saw the publication of at least one ballad mournfully describing that calamity and exhorting England to repent before another quake arrived’. Later in the same article, Rollins discusses the practice of ballad printers cornering current news or ‘scooping’ their competitors. See Hyder Rollins, ‘The Blackletter Broadside Ballad’, *PMLA*, 34.2 (1919), 258-339 (pp. 269 and 294). In a later article, Rollins identifies perhaps the earliest reference to the Mary Ambree ballad occurring in an anonymous college play entitled *The First Part of the Returne from Parnassus* (ca. 1599). See Rollins ‘William Elderton, Elizabethan Actor and Ballad-Writer’, *Studies in Philology*, 17.2 (1920), 199-245 (p. 236).

⁵ See ‘The Valorous Acts Performed at Gaunt, by the Brave Bonny Lasse Mary Ambree’ (London: William Gibertson, 1660-1665), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 15 December 2012]. There also appears to be an earlier version of this ballad registered in 1629. See *AI* #2803. Rollins argues ‘The Various Acts Performed at Gaunt’ etc. was ‘almost certainly’ written by the famous ballad writer William Elderton (d. in or before 1592). See Rollins, ‘William Elderton’, pp. 230 and 235-6.

⁶ Printings of the Mary Ambree ballad suggest a popularity into the eighteenth century. See for example ‘The Valorous Acts performed at GAUNT, / [by] the brave Bonny Lass Mary Ambree’ (London: J. Wright, J. Clarke, W. Thackeray, & T. Passenger, 1681-4), in *EBBA* <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 15 December 2012]. Mary Ambree references occur in numerous early modern plays including Jonson, *Epicoene*, III, IV.2.101; Dekker, *Satiromastix* (ca. 1601) in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. by Fredson Bowers, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953-61), I, pp. 299-395, III.1.232; John Marston, *Antonio and Mellida* (ca. 1599), ed. by Reavley Gair (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), I.1.105; Thomas Heywood, *The Fair Maid of the West* (1602), in *The Fair Maid of the West: Parts I and II*, ed. by Robert K. Turner Jr., Regents Renaissance Drama Series (London: Edward Arnold, 1968), II.3.1-15; Robert Armin, *Two Maids of More-Clacke* (1609), sig. D3^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 15 December 2012]; Beaumont and Fletcher’s *The Scornful Lady*, v.4.98; and Henry Glapthorne *Wit in a Constable* (London: Francis Constable, 1640), sig. E3^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 15 December 2012].

streetsongs, a regularized motif.⁷ The third and fourth stanzas of the 1660 printing impart the general tone:

When brave Sergeant Major was slain in the fight,
Which was her own true Love, her joy and delight
She swore unrevenged his blood should not be,
Was not this a brave bonny Lasse, mary Ambree.

She clothed herselfe from the top to the toe,
With Buffe of the bravest most seemly to show;
A fair shirt of Male over that slipped she'
Was not this a brave bonny Lasse, mary Ambree.⁸

Tuft's label then is clear: upon his best horse his daughter will seem 'a brave bonny Lasse' i.e., noble and grand. This seems, however, only the first level of signification. A common trait of song character association is a wit similar to malapropisms, which seems to emerge not from the 'minds' of dramatic characters but from the underlying voice of the playwright; the entertainment is often ironic. This reference in Jonson is typical in its 'unintended' exposure of Turf's rusticity. Reading the ballad in its entirety finds Mary Ambree slaughtering men by the multitude, the bulk of them seeking 'To beate downe her Castle walles'.⁹ Later in the ballad she shuns an offer of marriage by the Prince of Parma, saving herself for a proper Englishman. The killing and the

⁷ Dugaw, p. 15.

⁸ Anon., 'The Valorous Acts' etc. (1660-65).

⁹ Anon., 'The Valorous Acts' etc., stanza 11. The portrayal of the vagina as something 'there to be stormed or occupied' is, of course, a theme prevalent in early modern terms denoting the sex organs. There are dozens of examples including 'fort', 'gate', 'cellar' and of course 'castle'. See Barry Reay, *Popular Cultures in England 1550-1750* (Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman, 1998), p. 19.

shunning evidently fostered a trend within the drama where the label ‘Mary Ambree’ appears as an epithet identifying a virago, cross-dresser and general resister of patriarchal authority. There are numerous examples, such as in Nathan Field’s *Amends For Ladies* (1611) where Grace Seldom, a proper citizen wife, insults the cross-dressing Moll Cutpurse:

MISTRESS SELDOM D’ye hear, you Sword-and-target (to speak in your own key),
 Mary Ambree, Long Meg,
 Thou that in thyself, methinks, alone
 Look’st like a rogue and whore under a hedge;
 Bawd, take your letter with you, and begone.¹⁰

In his joy at the marriage of his daughter then, Tuft, thinking she will resemble a regal paragon of loyalty simultaneously labels her, unintentionally it appears, a bawdy, wilful, masculine abomination – the Elizabethan ‘wife from hell’.

ARTHUR OF BRADLEY

Reviewing references to Mary Ambree in Jonson and others can leave the impression that song character association is a device engendered in play culture. Yet there is much to suggest it is the mimesis of popular behaviour. In *Bartholomew Fair*, Justice Adam Overdo, ‘resolved...to spare spy money’, dons a disguise in order to better observe the ‘yearly enormities’ committed at the fair.¹¹ As he enters Ursula’s makeshift tavern and

¹⁰ See Nathan Field, *Amends for Ladies*, in *Nero and Other Plays*, ed. by Wilson Verity and others (London: Vizetelly and Company, 1882), pp. 413-488, II.1.45-9. For other examples, see note 6 above.

¹¹ Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, IV, II.1.30-1.

calls for ale, she turns to Mooncalf and quips, ‘What new roarer is this?’ to which her tapster responds,

MOONCALF. O Lord! do you not know him, mistress? ’Tis mad Arthur of Bradley,
that makes the orations. Brave master, old Arthur of Bradley, how do you do?
Welcome to the Fair! When shall we hear you again, to handle your matters, with
your back again’ a booth, ha? I ha’ been one o’ your little disciples, i’ my days!¹²

Editors have long linked Overdo’s nickname to a ballad recounting the wedding of the probably-fictitious ‘Arthur of Bradley’ yet none have adequately explained what precisely is at play.¹³ What is the joke? Helen Ostovich provides the most responsible gloss in her 1997 edition where she connects Overdo’s ‘foolish’ disguise to the ballad hero’s wedding clothes.¹⁴ The justice’s flamboyant dress, however, is in fact only the beginning of another sophisticated Jonsonian importation.

The earliest extant evidence of an ‘Arthur of Bradley’ song is an untitled ballad whose first lines read, ‘Al you that desire to merry be | Come listen unto me’ and whose

¹² Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, II.2.101-5.

¹³ Explanations of the reference range from none to curiously erroneous. Michael Jamieson (1966), for example, echoes Maurice Hussey (1964) in his assertion that Arthur of Bradley was ‘a figure in ballads who assumed the disguise of a madman’. It appears that the only place Arthur of Bradley is described as ‘mad’ is in Jonson. For Jamieson’s note, see *Ben Jonson: Three Comedies* ed. by Michael Jamieson (Middlesex: Penguin, 1966), p. 483; For Hussey, see *Bartholomew Fair* ed. by Maurice Hussey (London: Ernest Benn, 1964), p. 131.

¹⁴ The complete note reads, ‘The clown-hero of a sixteenth century song, “A Merry Wedding; or, O Brave Arthur of Bradley” in Joseph Ritson, *Robin Hood* (London: William Pickering, 1832) 2.210-16. The ballad describes Arthur’s country wedding and the antics of his rustic guests; the refrain, “O fine Arthur of Bradley”, refers to his wedding clothes, as does the ‘brave’ of the title. The connection to Overdo seems to lie in the heavily trimmed coat, perhaps the livery of a fool, and the provincial diction. The ballad hero did not make orations; Jonson’s source for this trait may have been a contemporary clown’s act’. *Bartholomew Fair*, ed. by Helen Ostovich, in *Ben Jonson: Four Comedies* (London: Addison Wesley Longman, 1997), p. 583.

refrain reads, ‘O brave Arthur of Bradley’.¹⁵ Although it is contained in a collection dated 1656, references in the drama and elsewhere make it clear that this ballad, or something very much like it, was popular since at least the late 1570s.¹⁶ ‘The Wedding

¹⁵ See ‘A Song’ in John Phillips, *Sportive Wit the Muses Merriment* (London: Nathaniel Brook, 1656), pp. 81-87, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 15 March 2013]. The term ‘A Song’ is a title given to many songs in many collections regardless of the actual work they introduce. Phillips’s collection, for example, contains twenty-three compositions entitled “A Song.”

¹⁶ As we shall see, there is reference in F. Merbury’s *A Contract of Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom* (1579) that clearly links to the first stanza and refrain of the 1656 printing. See Francis Merbury, *A Contract of Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom*, ed. John S. Farmer (London: T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1909), p. 25^{r-v}.

‘The Wedding of Arthur o’ Bradley’ as J.W. Ebsworth titles it in *The Roxburghe Ballads* (VII, p. 314), appears to be the antecedent of a number of other Arthur of Bradley ballads printed in the latter half of the seventeenth century including ‘A Merry Wedding, Or O Brave Arthur of Bradley’, ‘The Ballad of Arthur of Bradley’, and ‘Arthur o’ Bradley’. This is probably the main reason for past confusion surrounding Jonson’s usage. Herford and Simpson (X, p. 188) for example, write quite correctly that ‘Arthur of Bradley’ is ‘the hero of an old song’. However, they also write that ‘The Ballad on the Wedding of Arthur of Bradley’ was ‘first printed in *Wits Merriment*, 1656, pp. 81-7, and again in *An Antidote Against Melancholy*, 1661, p. 16’. This is a fundamental error, for while the songs in these collections are of the same character and both recount Arthur’s wedding, they are, in fact, two different songs. Perhaps more interesting is Caroll Storrs Alden’s note linking Jonson’s reference to the variously titled Arthur of Bradley ballad beginning ‘Saw you not Pierce the piper’ (ca. 1660). Her note is indebted to Ebsworth’s discussion of Arthur of Bradley ballads in *The Roxburghe Ballads* and both editors’ attentions to ‘Saw you not Pierce the piper’ are understandable, since there are numerous printings of it in various forms dating from the middle of the seventeenth century forward. However, ‘Saw you not Pierce the piper’, while supplying ample descriptions of Arthur’s wedding feast and its merriments, does not contain stanzas recounting Arthur’s wooing of his bride and the negotiations of the dowry as the 1656 song (henceforth termed ‘The Wedding of Arthur ‘o Bradley’) does. In these key stanzas, the reader gets a sense of Arthur’s personality, which we argue below is essential to understanding Jonson’s usage. For the other Arthur of Bradley ballads, see ‘A Merry Wedding Or, O Brave Arthur of Bradley’ (ca. 1670), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 16 December 2012]; ‘The Ballad of Arthur of Bradley’ in N.D., *An Antidote Against Melancholy Made Up in Pills. Compounded of Witty Ballads, Jovial Songs, and Merry Catches* (London: n.p., 1661), pp. 16-19, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 16 December 2012]; and ‘Arthur o’ Bradley’ (ca. 1700) in J.W. Ebsworth, ed., *The Roxburghe Ballads*, 9 vols (Hertford: The Ballad Society, 1880), VII, p. 320. For Herford and Simpson’s note, see C.H. Herford, Percy Simpson and Evelyn Simpson, ‘Play Commentary; Masque Commentary, in *Ben Jonson*, ed. by C.H. Herford, Percy Simpson and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), X, p. 188. For Caroll Storrs Alden’s discussion, see Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, ed. by Carroll Storrs Alden, Yale Studies in English Series, 25 (New York: Henry Holt, 1904), pp. 170-1. For J.W. Ebsworth’s discussion of Arthur of Bradley ballads, see ‘Arthur o’ Bradley’ in *Choyce Drollery: Songs and Sonnets*, ed. J.W. Ebsworth (Boston,

of Arthur o' Bradley', as it will be termed henceforth, recounts the courting, dowry negotiations and subsequent celebrations surrounding a lively country wedding, the star of which is an arrogant young rustic. The song entertains through its fantasy of conviviality and culinary extravagance coupled with a good-natured mocking of Arthur's behaviour. Here are the first two stanzas:

All you that desire to merry be,
 Come listen unto me,
 And a story I shall tell,
 Which of a Wedding befell,
 Between Arthur of Bradley
 And Winifred of Madly.
 As Arthur upon a day
 Met Winifred on the way,
 He took her by the hand,
 Desiring her to stand,
 Saying I must to thee recite
 A matter of weight,
 Of Love, that conquers Kings,
 In grieved hearts so rings,
 And if thou do'st love thy Mother,
 Love him that can love no other
 Which is oh brave Arthur, &c.

For in the month of May,
 Maidens they will say,
 A May-pole we must have,

Your helping hand we crave.
 And when it is set in the earth,
 The maids bring Sully-bubs forth;
 Not one will touch a sup,
 Till I begin a cup.
 For I am the end of all
 Of them, both great and small.
 Then tell me yea, or nay,
 For I can no longer stay.

With oh brave Arthur, &c.¹⁷

Key to appreciating the references in Jonson and elsewhere is Arthur's boastful personality. His initial supplications are, as with many ballad characters, charmingly puerile. Yet near the end of stanza two, Arthur's May Day fantasy and appended indifference to Winifred's answer suggest a boastful, misplaced self-importance that comically manifests itself as he negotiates terms with his future mother-in-law. 'I tell you Dame', he declares,

I can have as good as thee;
 For when death my father did call,
 He then did leave me all
 His barrels and his brooms,
 And a dozen of woden spoones,
 Dishes six or seven,
 Besides an old spade, even
 A brasse pot and whimble,
 A pack-needle and thimble,

¹⁷ See Anon., 'A Song', pp. 81-2.

A pudding prick and reele,
 And my mothers own sitting wheele;
 And also there fell to my lot
 A goodly mustard pot.¹⁸

By the end of this stanza the boasting has progressed from the unseemly to the ridiculous as Arthur's vanity ironically betrays his poverty both of material wealth and indeed of decorum. And as we read later of the opulent wedding feast¹⁹ (sponsored, it appears, by the community) presided over by the bumptious groom dressed 'neat and fine', finding himself 'at that time | Sufficient in every thing, | To wait upon a King',²⁰ one finds in Arthur of Bradley the quintessential ostentatious nobody, a Petruchio without pedigree.

At some point beyond Arthur of Bradley's appearance in song, his name and reputation were incorporated into contemporary discourse as an expression of scorn. In 1639 (and again in 1646), the Lincoln schoolmaster John Clarke²¹ published a book of Latin proverbs and their English equivalents featuring a section entitled 'Derisio', i.e., 'for the purposes of derision'. Under this heading, Clarke lists 'Hey, Brave Arthur of Bradley' to the left of 'Omnia præclara dicis' which translates roughly into 'say to things excellent/noble/splendid', in other words: 'here is what to say when deriding ostentation'.²² Close to forty years later in John Eachard's *Some Opinions of Mr. Hobbs*

¹⁸ Anon., 'A Song', lns. 65-78.

¹⁹ Dishes include a pudding, mutton, veal, porridge, beef, snipes, chickens, mustard, custard, rabbits, cake, a 'drake', and of course wine for 'every man'. See Anon., 'A Song', lns. 146-70.

²⁰ Anon., 'A Song', lns. 130-3.

²¹ See Edward A. Malone, 'Clarke, John (b. in or before 1596, d. 1658)', in *DNB* <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 20 December 2012].

²² See John Clarke, *Paroemiologia Anglo-Latina in Usum Scholarum Concinnata. Or Proverbs English, and Latine* (London: Robert Mylbourne, 1639), p. 85, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 20 December 2012]. Clarke probably mimics

Considered in a Second Dialogue Between Philautus and Timothy one finds a speaker, after boasting about himself at length, declaring,

O brave *Arthur of Bradley*! now they are meer Asses that think any of this ostentation; it being only to vex and confound my Back-biters. Oh how the Raskals do pine and fret, when I let go the great consciousness of my own worth upon my self!²³

The epithet then was evidently used during the period to deride ostentation, and not merely of dress but also of speech and behaviour.

Evidence in the drama demonstrates this use of ‘Arthur of Bradley’ to have been in vogue long before the seventeenth century. Idleness references it as he makes his third entrance in Merbury’s morality play *The Contract of Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom* (ca. 1579). Idleness has donned various disguises in his efforts to thwart Wit’s plans to marry Dame Wisdom. Predictably, things have not gone as planned and here he enters as a cozened, penniless beggar lamenting his fate:

IDLENESS	This is aworld to see how fortune chaungeth This shalbe his luck which like me raingeth and raingeth for the honour of artrebradle this age wold make me swere madly. ²⁴
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Erasmus who links *omnia praeclara dicis* to the Latin en, ‘See that!’ used in ‘mockingly expressed admiration’. See Desiderius Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Adages), ed. by John N. Grant and Betty I. Knott, 86 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), XXXVI, p. 417.

²³ John Eachard, *Some Opinions of Mr. Hobbs Considered in a Second Dialogue Between Philautus and Timothy by the Same Author* (London: Walter Kettilby, 1673), p. 219, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 20 December 2012].

²⁴ Merbury, *A Contract of Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom*, 25^{r-v}.

The sequence and rhyming of the words ‘atrebradle’ and ‘madly’, and of course the line ‘for the honour of Atrebradle’, seem clear echoes of the first stanza of ‘The Wedding of Arthur ‘o Bradley’ and its refrain. And with this reference, and our knowledge of Arthur’s reputation, there emerges a locus of humour, for Idleness has spent much of his previous stage time boasting of his formidable power, yet now he stands impoverished, bereft of the finery that probably graced his previous disguises, ‘Honest Recreation’ and ‘Due Disport’. In his swearing ‘for the honour of artebradle’, then, Idleness dryly mocks his conspicuous *absence* of sartorial ostentation. Lines such as ‘Now I am a bold beggar – I tell you, the stoutest of all my kin’ and ‘If I ever be a gentleman the pottage shall be my badge!’, which shortly follow, cement the point: Idleness, bereft of his façade, resembles Arthur of Bradley bereft of his: a foolish, boasting beggar.

A similar usage of ‘Arthur of Bradley’ appears in Dekker and Middleton’s *The Patient Man and The Honest Whore* (1604). Here, Bellafront, the reformed courtesan (who is pretending to be mad), invokes Arthur in her reaction to the news she will marry her earliest customer Matteo, a gallant:

BELLAFRONT Look, fine man – Nay? I know you all by your noses; he was mad for me once, and I was mad for him once, and he was mad for her once, and were you never mad? Yes, I warrant. Is not your name Matteo?

MATTEO Yes lamb.

BELLAFRONT Lamb! Baa! Am I a lamb? There you lie: I am mutton. I had a fine jewel once, a very fine jewel, and that naughty man stole it away from me, fine jewel, a very fine jewel.

DUKE What jewell pretty maid?

BELLAFRONT Maid, nay, that's a lie. – O, 'twas a golden jewel, hark, 'twas called a maidenhead, and that naughty man had it, had you not, leerer?

MATTEO Out, you mad ass, away!

DUKE Had he thy maiden-head?

He shall make thee amends, and marry thee.

BELLAFRONT Shall he? [*Singing*] 'O, Brave Arthur of Bradly then, shall he!'²⁵

Bellafront, like the mad Ophelia, routinely imports song into her speech; this sort of outburst is not unexpected. One might link her allusion to excitement over a grand wedding, yet cultural insiders probably perceived rather an irony akin to that found in Merbury, for there is a clear similarity between the self-important, arrogant Arthur and the haughty Matteo, *de facto* leader of the gallants who regularly visited Bellafront when she was a courtesan.²⁶ As with Idleness, fate has exposed the strutting Matteo's poverty – in this case, his spiritual poverty. Bellafront's exclamation is thus to a large degree a mocking of this exposure and the resulting 'just' marriage: *this* 'Arthur of Bradley', she seems to declare, will be marrying the whore whose virginity he took, the 'Winifred of Madly' he justly deserves.

Returning then to *Bartholomew Fair*, Justice Overdo's nickname emerges as a sophisticated appropriation of what seems to be an established 'Arthur of Bradley' convention. Ursula's description of him as a 'roarer' marks Overdo's disguise as comically splendid, but there is evidently far more to the joke than sartorial ostentation;

²⁵ Middleton and Dekker, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, Sc. 15.432-49.

²⁶ Matteo is of course something of a stereotype himself. Comedies of this period often have 'roaring' gallants who attempt to sober lovesick heroes; Mercutio is the most famous example; Sir Francis Ilford in George Wilkins' *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage* (London: George Vincent, 1607) and the two gallants Lipsalve and Gudgeon in Middleton and Dekker's *The Family of Love* (London: John Helmes, 1608) are three others. One can observe Matteo's haughtiness in Sc. 6.

clearly boastful speech is also integral to Jonson's Arthur of Bradley/Overdo construction. While Arthur did not give 'orations' per se, as Overdo does, it is easy to perceive the playwright linking the justice's preaching at the fair to the silly boasting of Arthur: both characters are ultimately trumpeting their own worth from beneath an ostentatious facade, and both Overdo and Arthur, like Idleness and Matteo, are in their own way a little beggarly underneath.

There is one last component essential to appreciating Arthur of Bradley's incorporation into *Bartholomew Fair*. While Overdo appears to carry the label 'brave', as Arthur does, his persona is also christened 'mad' and 'old' Arthur of Bradley, adjectives which prove both fitting and revealing.²⁷ Arthur, Idleness and Matteo are all youthful and all exude selfishness and intemperance. Overdo, however, is clearly an older man and, regardless of his inward nature, he offers to his fair-going audience 'orations' promoting humility and restraint. 'Thirst not after that frothy liquor, ale,' he cries, 'thirst not after it, youth, thirst not after it [...] Neither do thou lust after that tawny weed, tobacco [...] whose complexion is like the Indian's that vents it!²⁸ The 'real' Arthur of Bradley would never shout such things. And this is the telling top note of Jonson's joke. Overdo's nickname is not Overdo's invention; it is the fair's. The locals have identified Overdo's persona – an old man dressed as a flamboyant groom 'roaring' moralizations – as a contradiction, an 'old,' 'mad' version of an iconic ballad character familiar to everyone (except, perhaps, to Overdo himself) and they have labelled him accordingly. There is the sense then that Jonson portrays the nicknaming of Overdo as a

²⁷ It is possible that Jonson's use of 'mad' may refer to 'carried away by or filled with enthusiasm or desire; wildly excited; infatuated'. However, it is probable Jonson uses the term to mean 'insane, crazy; mentally unbalanced or deranged'. See 'mad, adj.', defs. 3a and 4a respectively, *OED* <www.oed.com> [accessed 12 March 2013].

²⁸ Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, II.6.9-19.

natural behaviour of the ‘street’ speech community upon which he has brought his audience to gaze.

THE FRIAR AND THE NUN

There are a number of instances in the drama where playwrights introduce song character associations in subtler and more sophisticated ways beyond simply the voicing of a famous name. Compelling examples of this can be found in the various evocations of the popular song icons ‘The Friar and the Nun’. Petruchio quotes lines from a song probably known as ‘The Friar and the Nun’ as he and Kate commence their mock wedding feast in Act IV.2 of *The Taming of the Shrew*.²⁹ As servants enter with supper, Petruchio sings, seemingly to himself, ‘It was the friar of orders grey | As he forth walked on his way’. Although the particular version he quotes is lost, current evidence suggests that its primogenitor was ‘composed and written down at Cambridge towards the end of the fifteenth century’³⁰. Entitled ‘Inducus Inducas | in temptacionibus’,³¹ the first lines read, ‘Ther was a frier of order gray | *Inducas* | which loved a Nunne full meny a day’. The song is a scurrilous parody of the sung liturgy and features a friar seducing a nun under the pretence of administering a singing lesson. For his labour, the friar ‘begets a christenyd sowle’ as well as receiving continued sexual favours. A descendent of this song appears to have been incorporated into traditional wedding

²⁹ Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, IV.1.116-7.

³⁰ See P.J. Croft, ‘The “Friar of Order Gray” and the Nun’, *Review of English Studies*, 32.125 (1981), 1-16. The manuscript (ca. 1490) is currently held at Cambridge University Library (Add. MS 7350, Box 2).

³¹ This title, which is also the song’s refrain, is a corruption of ‘Et ne no inducas in tentaionem’ (‘And lead us not into temptation’) from The Lords’ Prayer. Here it reads ‘Lead us, Lead us *into* temptation’.

celebrations in the early sixteenth century.³² Nicholas Udall refers to the custom in his translation of Erasmus's *Apophthegms* (1542):

There was in Campania a toune called Fescenium, the first inhabitauntes wherof issued from the Atheniens (as Servis reporteth.) In this toune was first invented the joylitee of mynstrelsie and syngyng merie songes and rymes for makyng laughter and sporte at marryages, even like as is nowe used to syng songes of the Frere and the Nunne, with other sembleable merie jestes, at weddynges, and other feastynges.³³

It is easy to imagine how 'The Friar and the Nun' found a regular place at the wedding feast, since beyond the high instances of prenuptial pregnancies during the period, there seems a naughty-but-harmless fun in the implication that bride and groom represent friar and nun, now free to pursue heretofore forbidden sexual relations – from which they surely have abstained until now.³⁴ Petruchio's choice of song then, as he sits down with his shrewish wife to a meal he will not allow her to taste, emerges as comically appropriate. Indeed there is a double irony: 'after this wedding feast' his reference seems to suggest, '*this* friar will not be seducing *this* nun anytime soon', and yet this 'non-feast' is an integral part of bending this shrewish 'nun' to his will.³⁵

³² Another 'Friar and Nun' song using the 'inducas, inducas' motif was written and published by Rychard Kele in 1545. Although it does not link verbally to the Cambridge MS or any drama, its subject matter is fundamentally the same. See, Rychard Kele, *Christmas Carolles Newly Inprynted* (London: Rychard Kele, 1545), pp.18-9, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 20 December 2012].

³³ Desiderius Erasmus, *Apophthegmes*, trans. by Nicholas Udall (London: Ricardi Grafton, 1542), pp. 244-5, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 20 December 2012].

³⁴ Barry Reay writes: 'Roughly 20 to 25 percent of brides were pregnant when they entered the church in the early modern period, but in some parishes the figure was as high as 30 or even 50 percent'. See Reay, *Popular Cultures*, p. 9.

³⁵ Multiple allusions to 'The Friar and the Nun' occur in the corpus, and the song is singled out by name in Henry Chettle's *Kind Heart's Dream* (1593) and in Jonson's *The Alchemist* (1610) – with clear indication from these writers that its bawdy theme endured. See Henry Chettle, *Kind-harts Dreame* (London: William Wright, 1593?), sig. C2^r, in *EEBO*

Admittedly, one finds reference to lascivious friars and nuns elsewhere in Shakespeare seemingly without nuptial associations,³⁶ and it is certainly true that associations between religious asceticism and sexual repression (and release) have been a cultural commonplace for millennia. Yet, pursuit of ‘The Friar and the Nun’ in the works of other contemporary playwrights finds a disproportionate number of references made in the context of weddings and the anticipated conjugal relations, thus suggesting that, when we find these characters in English drama, we probably find reference to a customary use of the ‘Friar and the Nun’ song existing outside the theatre. Again in *The Honest Whore*, for example, one finds the young (and utterly chaste) lovers Hippolito and Infelice fleeing the machinations of her father, the Duke, and marrying secretly in an asylum run by monks. When the Duke arrives in pursuit, the lovers disguise themselves in the monks’ robes but are shortly identified by the reformed courtesan Bellafront through a mock fortune telling:

BELLAFRONT Let me see: one, two, three, and four. – I’ll begin with the little friar first. [*To Infelice*] Here’s a fine hand indeed, I never saw a friar have such a dainty hand: here’s a hand for a lady, you ha’ good fortune now.

O see, see, what a threat here’s spun;

<<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>>; and Jonson, III, v.1.22. Chettle appears to attribute the line ‘He whipped her with a fox’s tail’ to the ‘Friar and the Nun’ ballad. However, the presence of the ballad title ‘Friar Foxtail’ in his list of ‘lascivious undersongs’ suggests error. Edward Bliss Reed first suggested the ‘Friar and Nun’ connection to Petruchio in his *Christmas Carols Printed in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1932), p. 78.

³⁶ When the countess in II.2 of *All’s Well That Ends Well* asks the clown Lavatch if his answer will ‘serve to fit all questions’, part of his affirmative includes ‘as the nun’s lip to the friar’s mouth’. See Shakespeare, *All’s Well That Ends Well*, II.2.20. For an example of a friar-and-nun reference that may or may not link to the wedding song, see Anthony Munday, *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, in *Five Old Plays*, ed. by Collier, J. Payne (London: William Pickering, 1833), pp. 1-99, IV.2.207-9.

You love a friar better than a nun,
 Yet long you'll love no friar, nor no friar's son.
 [INFELICE] *bows a little*
 The line of life is out, yet I'm afraid
 For all you're holy, you'll not die a maid.³⁷

The allusions here coupled with the surrounding context (as noted, Hippolito and Infelice have just been married) clearly link to the 'Friar and the Nun', its characters and its cultural associations. Moreover, Bellafront's description of Infelice as a 'holy friar' who will 'not die a maid' metaphorically describes the conditions of a typical bride engaging in performance of the bawdy song during the wedding feast: in her disguise, Infelice is 'holy' (chaste) like a friar, yet will shortly engage in sanctified sex and thus avoid 'dying a maid'.

Evidently, knowledge of 'The Friar and the Nun' was widespread enough that a clever playwright could allude to the song more through mimicry of its narrative and metrical structure than through direct references such as quotations or the stamp-like designations noted in Jonson. In the anonymous *Merry Devil of Edmonton* (1602) Two lovers (again) pursue legitimate marriage in the face of hostile parental opposition. In the following scene, Young Mouchensey attempts to enter an abbey in the hopes of eloping with the chaste Milliscent, who has taken refuge inside under the pretence that she will take vows in the morning:

YOUNG [RAYMOND] MOUNCHENSEY Fare you well, I you have done,
 Your daughter sir, shall not be long a Nun!

³⁷ Middleton and Dekker, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, Sc.15.361-70.

NUN. Benedicte

Exit

YOUNG MOUNCHENSEY Doe my goode plumpe wench, if all fall right,
Ile make your sister-hood one lesse by night.³⁸

When Young Mouchensey, dressed as a friar, declares outside of the abbey that Millicent ‘shall not long be a Nun’ many in the audience would probably have linked his remark to the tradition straight away. Yet ‘The Friar and the Nun’ song and its reputation is at play far longer and to a far greater extent. When Mouchensey calls at the abbey door, his metre changes from five feet per line to four. Although the initial lines in this new rhythm suggest a charm or blessing, when direct conversation with the nun begins, one finds strong suggestion of a ballad text:

[NUN] Who’s that which knocks? ha, who’s there? *Answers within.*

YOUNG MOUNCHENSEY Gentle Nun here is a Frier.

NUN A Frier without, now Christ us save *Enter Nun*
Holy man, what wouldst thou have?

Four-foot iambic couplets are a commonplace of Elizabethan balladry,³⁹ though they admittedly are not the most common ballad metre of a quatrain alternating between

³⁸ Anon., *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* (London: Arthur Jonson, 1608), sig. D2^{v-f}, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 15 March 2013].

³⁹ A couple of famous examples are ‘A Sorrowfull Sonet, Made by M. George Mannington, at Cambridge Castle’, the first lines of which read: ‘I Waile in wo, I plunge in pain, | with sorowing sobs, I do complain’; and ‘The Rarest Ballad That Ever Was Seen, Of the Blind Begger’s Daughter of Bednall-Green (London: F. Coles, T. Vere, and W. Gilbertson, ca. 1660), in *EEBO* <www.ebbo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 13 January 2013], the first lines of which read: ‘It was a Blind Begger that long lost his sight, | He had a fair daughter most pleasant and bright’. Percy believed this ballad ‘was written in the reign of Elizabeth’, an assessment that appears likely, for we find reference to the ballad in Cyril Tourneur’s *The World’s Folly* (1605). See Percy, *Reliques*, II, p. 30; and Cyril Tourneur, *The World’s Folly*

lines of four and three feet with an *abcb* rhyme scheme. It is compelling, however, that the meter of the above exchange *do* match those of both ‘Inducas Inducas’ and of Petruchio’s reference: ‘It was the friar of orders grey’ | As he forth walked on his way’, the closest link we have to the Elizabethan ‘Friar and the Nun’ song’s actual lines. Thus, as the conversation between Mouchensey and the Abbess continues, there is a growing sense that before us is a representation of ballad characters in a kind of ‘songspace’: a ‘false friar’ (Mouchensey) attempting through guile to pursue sexual relations with a ‘false nun’ (Milliscent) in a metre that appears to mimic that of the source song, now lost.

But the play of allusion runs still deeper. For on another level, the playwright presents us a young groom who has labelled himself ‘friar’ pursuing sanctified conjugal relations with his bride who has labelled herself ‘nun’. This seems a clear reminder of the kind of tradition described by Udall, where there also would have been the same kind of character association going on. Not only, then, does the playwright offer his audience a mimicry of the source ballad’s narrative space, he simultaneously calls to mind the typical early modern bride and groom and their relationship to ‘The Friar and the Nun’ ballad as it was sung at the wedding feast. Presumably this allusion resonated with the hundreds of ex-‘friars and nuns’, or married men and women, in the play audience.

The above examples, then, in their ubiquitous and often sophisticated incorporation, suggest a conventional practice of importing well-known characters from song lore in order to give dramatic characters extra layers of illustration, for better or

(London: Jeffrey Churton, 1605), sig. C2^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 10 January 2013].

worse. Evidence around the use of ‘Arthur of Bradley’ and ‘The Friar and the Nun’, although not conclusive, suggests that this character association witnessed in the drama was in fact a phenomenon present already in early modern speech communities, where famous song characters and their traits were prevalent. Yet these are perhaps the smallest ‘chunks’ of song culture mined by playwrights. There are also numerous instances where song narratives themselves made it to the stage.

2.1 SONG-BASED DRAMA

The stories told in popular song were often used in the construction of stage plays. Due to their inherently compact nature, song narratives usually appear as chunks within the larger story. In a number of cases, plays following larger, well-known narratives are grounded in a traditional literary source with songs treating the same story slotted in for dramatic convenience or to offer a supplementary moment of entertainment.

Consequently, distinguishing what portion of the dramatic narrative in fact comes from a song can be challenging, yet there are cases where it can be done. Reviewing the results leaves the impression that song narratives were considered of equal status in comparison to other traditional sources. Popular song and its culture was a favourite subject of ridicule for many playwrights and in other literary circles. The antics of Autolycus and the rustics in Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale* are perhaps the most famous example.⁴⁰ ‘A poet should detest a ballad-maker’, Jonson states.⁴¹ Puttenham in *The Art of English Poesy* (1588) declares of ballads, ‘In our courtly maker [poet], we

⁴⁰ Shakespeare, *The Winter’s Tale*, IV.3-IV.4.305.

⁴¹ The remark comes from the notes of poet William Drummond of conversations he had with Jonson. See *Informations to William Drummond of Hawthornden, The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, V, pp. 351-91 (p. 383).

banish them utterly'.⁴² And yet, reviewing the results below, it is clear the colourful plots and moments abundant in popular song were perfectly acceptable assets to those writing for the professional theatre.

THE DOWNFALL AND DEATH OF ROBERT EARL OF HUNTINGTON (1599)

A serious study of the relationship between song and drama in the Robin Hood corpus would easily fill its own monograph. Moreover, it is almost impossible to ascertain in what manner, let alone what order, Robin Hood ballads, plays and games pollinated each other over the centuries. Nevertheless, when considering the influence of Robin Hood on the London public theatre during the age of Jonson, Dekker and the rest, there are a number of observations that can sharpen perceptions. It is helpful to know that the vast majority of Robin Hood broadside ballads, both extant and registered-but-lost, appear in print *after* 1650 and only two before 1624.⁴³ The main literary sources of the Robin Hood tradition in the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods appear to have been two long ballads, both of which were likely *not* sung.⁴⁴ The first of these is *A Gest of Robyn Hode* (1824 lines), which was probably first written around 1450 and brought to mid-sixteenth century readers by printers William Copland and Edward White.⁴⁵ The other

⁴² George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, ed. by Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 173.

⁴³ These are listed in the Stationers' Register. Most scholars, including Rollins, believe 'A Ballett of Wakefield and Agrene' (AI #2829 [1557-58]) is probably an early version of 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield', an extremely popular and enduring Robin Hood ballad. The second is AI #2307 entitled 'A Ballet of Robin Hood' (1562-63).

⁴⁴ Both of these do not feature tune directions in any of their printings. While they may have been sung in times closer to their creation, as the works of Homer probably were, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they appear to have been meant for reading rather than singing.

⁴⁵ For dating *A Gest*, see Stephen Knight and Thomas Ohlgren, *Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales*, (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), p. 81. Copland first publishes *A*

is *Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly* (680 lines), which does not star Robin Hood but whose characters and narrative are so similar to those of the Robin Hood tradition that names could easily be interchanged. Both long ballads were immensely popular and enduring.⁴⁶ Lastly, extant stage plays starring Robin Hood or featuring his character are absent until the 1590s after which there is evidence of at least six plays performed between 1592 and 1601. There is no further evidence of Robin Hood in the drama until the Restoration. It is at best speculative to suggest a reason for this apparent surge of Robin Hood stage drama. Yet, it may link to the widespread dearth and civil unrest associated with this period, a subject which will be treated at length in Chapter 5.

In the plays where Robin is a supporting character, such as Robert Greene's *George a Greene the Pinder of Wakefield* (1592) and the anonymous play, *Look About You* (1599), he seems to be slotted into the action as a kind of celebrity guest, bringing his traditional associations into fun that could have continued without him. In *George a Green*, Robin's first entrance is in IV.2 where he decides to travel to Wakefield and test George's reputed prowess with the long staff. Robin then remains and helps defend

Gest in 1559/60. The earliest extant copy of White's printing is c. 1590. For Copland and his 'successor' White, see *A Mery Geste of Robyn Hooode and of Hys Lyfe*, (London: William Copland, 1560?), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 3 January 2013]; and *A Merry Jest of Robin Hood and of His Life* (London: Edward White, 1590?), in <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 3 January 2013].

⁴⁶ There are perhaps a dozen printings of *A Gest* stretching into the seventeenth century (Knight and Ohlgren, p. 80). *Adam Bell* also dates to at least the early sixteenth century and its multiple printings in the mid sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries demonstrate a popularity easily rivalling *A Geste*. See, for example, printings by Johan Byddel (1536), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 22 January 2013]; William Copland (1565), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 22 January 2013]; James Roberts (1605), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 22 January 2013]; and William Jaggard (1610), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 22 January 2013]. The first entry in the Stationers' Register reads 'Adam Bel &c' (1557-58); See *AI* #10. Characters from the ballad are mentioned in Rowley's *A Match At Midnight* (1622, I.2.20), Jonson's *The Alchemist*, (1610, I.2.46), and Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, I.1.192.

King Richard against staff-wielding shoemakers, a task it seems the stout George might easily have handled by himself. In *Look About You*, Robin comes to the aid of an old hermit (the Duke of Gloucester in disguise), as the latter battles a young gentleman (Prince Richard in disguise). Later in the play, Robin disguises himself as Lady Fauconbridge in order to help her spurn the advances of the shameless Prince Richard.⁴⁷ Again there is the feeling that Robin has been brought in for extra layer of entertainment through familiarity more than for narrative necessity. Of the four plays starring Robin, only Anthony Munday's *The Downfall* and *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington* (1598) survive.⁴⁸ *The Downfall* is arguably the only 'Robin Hood' play of the two, since Robin dies almost immediately in *The Death* and from there the narrative mostly concerns King John's poisonous kingship and his obsession with the bereaved Marian. In all of these plays, and especially in *The Downfall*, the character of Robin Hood is much less bloody and more gentrified than the Robin of the early ballads, evidencing what Knight and Ohlgren describe as a 'general movement [beginning in the mid-sixteenth century] towards making Robin more respectable'.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ See Robert Greene, *George a Greene, the Pinder of Wakefield*, in *The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*, ed. by J. Churton Collins, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), II, pp. 159-217, IV.4.949-1006; and Anon., *A Pleasant Comedie Called Looke About You*, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1913), sigs. H2^v and I3^{r-v} respectively.

⁴⁸ See Anthony Munday, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, in *Five Old Plays*, ed. by J. P. Collier (London: William Pickering, 1833), pp. 1-95; and *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, in *Five Old Plays*, ed. by J. P. Collier (London: William Pickering, 1833), pp. 1-99 (pagination restarts with this second play). A play entitled *A Pastoral Comedy of Robin Hood and Little John* was registered to Edward White 14 May 1594 (and perhaps again in 1640). Henslowe records payments in December 1600 to William Haughton for a play entitled *Robin Hood's Pennyworths*. See *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640 A.D.*, ed. by E. Arber, 5 vols (London: privately printed, 1875-94), II, p. 307; and Phillip Henslowe, *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by R.A. Foakes, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 137-8.

⁴⁹ Knight and Ohlgren, p. 4.

The modern popularity of Shakespeare's sylvan comedy *As You Like It* might foster the expectation of singing foresters in the Robin Hood plays, yet in them we find almost no diegetic music. Yet it is clear most if not all the plays relied strongly upon imported narratives. A passage in Munday's *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington* suggest that indeed these were used exhaustively. Here in IV.2 Sir John Eltham (Little John) pauses the 'rehearsal' of the play to discuss with Sir John Skelton (Friar Tuck) about what he sees as a decided lack of imported narratives in the production:

ELTHAM Methinks, I see no jests of Robin Hood,
 No merry morrices of Friar Tuck,
 No pleasant skippings up and down the wood.
 No hunting songs, no coursing of the buck.
 Pray God this play of our's may have good luck,
 And the king's majesty mislike it not.

To which Skelton replies,

[...]
 [M]erry jests they have been shewn before,
 As how the friar fell into the well
 For the love of Jenny, that fair bonny belle;
 How Greenleaf robb'd the shrieve of Nottingham,
 And other mirthful matter full of game.
 Our play expresses noble Robert's wrong;
 His mild forgetting treacherous injury:
 The abbot's malice, rak'd in cinders long,

Breaks out at last with Robin's Tragedy.⁵⁰

One detects here clear references to *A Gest* and 'The Friar in the Well' among others.⁵¹

The few instances of popular song in the extant Robin plays finds them predominantly utilized in manners recalling 'The Friar and the Nun' in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*. In IV.4 of Greene's *George a Green, the Pinder of Wakefield*, the play narrative closely follows that of 'Robin Hood and The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield', one of the few extant Elizabethan Robin Hood broadsides.⁵² Munday, curiously, after his above sermon touting his play's *lack* of Robin Hood pastiche, also imports the 'Jolly Pinder' narrative into *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*. His use is subtler than Greene's yet it is equally extensive and far more sophisticated. In Act V.1 Prince

⁵⁰ Munday, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, IV.2.137-56.

⁵¹ For a full account of the ballad 'The Friar in the Well' and its variations, see *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, ed. by Francis James Child, 10 vols (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1882-98), IX, p. 100 (#276).

⁵² The passage also contains a number of verbal echoes. The earliest extant printing of 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield' is dated to 1643. However, Knight and Ohlgren cite an entry in the Stationers Register in 1557-59 (See *AI* #2829). Between the Register and verbal and narrative echoes existing elsewhere in the Robin Hood corpus they affirm the story of the Pinder to have 'clearly existed for at least a century when Percy's manuscript (ca. 1643) was compiled' (p. 469). For a detailed account, see 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield: Introduction', in *Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales*, pp. 469-75. Comparisons of different versions, along with another comprehensive discussion, can be found in *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, V, pp. 131-2. It is prudent to note here that editors have long linked Greene's play to a popular romance entitled *The Pinder of Wakefield Being the Merry History of George a Greene* whose narrative closely parallels that of the play. It also contains numerous verbal parallels. The earliest extant printing of the romance dates to 1632. However, the editors of the 1905 Oxford edition of Greene's play offer a transcription of an MS version which they say exhibits 'handwriting [...] of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century'. This MS was located in the library at Scion College whose collection has since been relocated. While the editors argue that the romance is 'undoubtedly' the main source of the play, they do not supply definitive evidence that this is in fact the case. Thus the romance could easily be a prose version of Greene's play. Considering *George a Greene* contains echoes of both the ballad and the romance, we must agree that the ballad is the earliest source on account of its probable date. Indeed, the ballad may have informed the romance and Greene simply had both at hand.

John, disguised as an outlaw, seeks shelter in the greenwood where he confronts Scathlock (a member of Robin's band) and eventually Friar Tuck. Here is the scene:

Enter PRINCE JOHN, solus: in green : bow and arrows

JOHN Why this is somewhat like: now I may sing,
As did the Wakefield Pinder in his note.
*At Michaelmas cometh my covenant out,
My master gives me my fee:
Then, Robin, I'll wear thy Kendall green
And wend to the green wood with thee*
[...]

Enter Scathlock

JOHN Here comes a green coat, (good luck be my guide)
Some sudden shift might help me to provide.
[...]

SCATHLOCK Thou art my fellow, though I know the not.
What is thy name? When wert thou entertain'd?

JOHN My name is Woodnet; and this very day,
My noble master, Earl of Huntington,
Did give me both my fee and livery.
[...]

SCATHLOCK What was the oath given to you by the Friar?

JOHN Who? Friar Tuck?

SCATHLOCK I, I do not play the liar,
For he comes here himself to shrive

Enter Friar Tuck

JOHN Scathlock, farewell; I will away.

SCATHLOCK See you this arrow? it says nay.
Through both your sides shall fly this feather,
If presently you come not hither.
[...]

- JOHN What mean this groom and lozel [good-for-nothing] friar,
So strictly matters to enquire?
I had a sword and buckler here,
You should aby [pay a penalty for] these questions dear.
- FRIAR Say'st thou me so, lad? lend him thine,
For in this bush here lieth mine.
Now I will try this new-come guest;
- SCATHLOCK I am his first man, Friar Tuck,
And if I fail, and have no luck,
Then thou with him shalt have a pluck.
- FRIAR Be it so Scathlock. Hold thee lad,
No better weapons can be had:
The dew doth them a little rust;
But, hear ye, they are tools of trust
- JOHN Gramercy, Friar, for this gift,
And if thou come unto my shrift,
I'll make the call those fellows fools,
That on their foes bestow such tools.⁵³

At the scene's opening, John apparently sings a variation of stanza six of the ballad which reads,

At Michaelmas next my Cov'nant comes out,
when every man gathers his Fee, &c.
Ile take my blew Blade all in my hand,
and plod to the Gréen wood with thee, &c.⁵⁴

⁵³ Munday, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, v.1.1-70.

⁵⁴ Anon., 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield' (London: F. Coles, T. Vere and W. Gilbertson, 1558-64), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 8 January 2013].

Yet both his speaking lines and Scathock's clearly begin in iambic pentameter. As the tension builds towards martial combat, however, the metre changes from five iambs to four.⁵⁵ When the fight is over, John's lines return to their original five. Thus there is the sense that Munday evokes the same kind of 'songspace' found earlier in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* above.⁵⁶ Additionally, the exchange between Tuck, Scathlock and James closely represents the 'Robin Hood meets his match' motif, where Robin 'encounters a stranger, fights a draw and invites him – in one case her – to join the outlaw band'.⁵⁷ This is one of the more common motifs in the genre and indeed forms the basic plot of 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield'. John also, like the Pinder he quotes, demonstrates a martial prowess that both surprises and impresses his combatants and ultimately earns him an invitation to join Robin's band. Yet for those familiar with the song the whole scene is something of an ironic re-enactment, for while Munday's character sings the Pinder's song and then inadvertently plays the Pinder's role, John is Robin Hood's enemy whereas the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield is his peer, a compatriot.

It seems clear that the Robin Hood narrative offered a wealth of material from which playwrights like Munday could fashion stage narratives. As we have seen, Munday's appears to be one of the final efforts to capitalise on what was by 1599 something of a tired horse. Despite making claims of a new direction, his incorporation

⁵⁵ As with most ballads, the majority of those featuring Robin Hood are set in alternating lines of four and three iambs. However, as with 'The Friar and the Nun', a number of Robin Hood ballads are set entirely in iambic tetrametre. See, for example 'The Noble Fisher-man, or, Robin Hoods Preferment' (London: F. Coles, 1658), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 8 January 2013]; and 'Robin Hood and the Beggar' (London: Francis Grove, 1660), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 8 January 2013].

⁵⁶ See Ch. 2, pp. 66-70.

⁵⁷ 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield' is one of five extant Robin Hood ballads featuring this motif. See Knight and Ohlgren, p. 453.

of ‘The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield’ suggests that, like his fellow dramatists, he understood the entertainment value of a familiar narrative amidst an untested one. This does not seem quite the case in the next example where salient portions of a ballad narrative telling a traditional story are folded into a stage version of the same classic.

THE PLEASANT COMODIE OF PATIENT GRISSILL (CA. 1599)

By the time Henslowe paid a printer forty shillings to refrain from publishing a version of his upcoming play *Patient Grissill*, in 1599, the Griselda story had been popular in Europe for at least two and a half centuries.⁵⁸ The earliest extant version is in Boccaccio’s *Decameron* (ca. 1350) although Petrarch, in his translation of Boccaccio’s *Griselda*, suggests the story was circulating still earlier.⁵⁹ The earliest and by far the most popular English version is Chaucer’s ‘Clerk’s Tale’ in *The Canterbury Tales* (ca. 1390). Comparison of the three works makes clear Chaucer’s debt to both writers,

⁵⁸ There are many entries in Henslowe’s diaries pertaining to the play by Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle and William Haughton. For the payment to the printer, see p. 130 (18 March 1599). Beyond Boccaccio and Petrarch in Italy and, of course Chaucer’s verse, Henry Wheatley’s introduction to the Villon Society’s edition of a popular seventeenth-century translation of Boccaccio’s *Griselda* (1885) offers evidence of the tale’s popularity in both France and Germany between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. *The Catalogue of English and American Chap-books and Broadside Ballads in Harvard College Library* lists ‘five Swedish chap-books, containing the tale of Griselda’. See ‘Introduction’, *The History of Patient Grisel. 1619*, ed. by Henry B. Wheatley (London: The Villon Society, 1885). p. vi; and *Catalogue of English and American Chap-books and Broadside Ballads in Harvard College Library*, ed. by William Coolidge Lane (Cambridge, Mass.: The Harvard College Library, 1905), p. xi. (ent. #330) respectively.

⁵⁹ In a letter to Boccaccio ca. 1373, he writes, ‘[The *Griselda* story] had always pleased me after hearing it many years earlier, and I gathered it had pleased you to the point that you considered it not unworthy of your vernacular style, and of the end of your work, where the art of rhetoric tells us to put whatever is more powerful’. Francesco Petrarch, *Letters of Old Age*, trans. by Aldo Bernardo, Saul Levin, and Reta A. Bernardo 2 vols (Baltimore; London: John Hopkins University Press, 1992), II, p. 656.

especially Petrarch.⁶⁰ The Stationer's Register contains entries for a number of Griselda stories in various forms. The earliest are two ballads and two 'histories' dating from the mid 1560s, all of which are now lost. The 'histories' may be chapbooks perhaps containing the kinds of *Decameron* translations we find in numerous editions from the seventeenth century.⁶¹ However, the editors of the Malone society reprint of John Phillip's morality play, *Patient and Meeke Grissill* (ca. 1566) argue compellingly that the 1565-6 and 1568-9 'historie' entries probably refer to the undated play quarto, which lists the same publisher, Thomas Colwell (fl. 1561-75) on its title page.⁶² In the thirty years between the morality play and the Admiral's Men's comedy, the Griselda tale appears to have remained in circulation. Petruchio, for example, refers to it in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* (1591) as he assures future father-in-law Baptista, 'For patience [Kate] will prove a second Grissel'.⁶³ By far the most popular ballad version of the Griselda story printed in the seventeenth century went under the titles of 'An Excellent Ballad of Patient Grissel' and 'An Excellent ballad of a Noble Marquess and Patient Grissel'. This version of the Griselda story, probably written by

⁶⁰ Curiously, there appears to be sporadic confusion as to whether Petrarch or Boccaccio penned the earliest extant version of the Griselda story. This may be due to similarities in Chaucer's variations from Boccaccio clearly linking to the Petrarchan version. The issue is quickly clarified in Petrarch's letter to Boccaccio where he lauds the latter for producing a tale 'which so pleased me and engrossed me that, among so many cares, it nearly made me forget myself and want to commit it to memory so that I might repeat it to myself not without pleasure whenever I wished, and to retell it, whenever the occasion arose, to my friends, chatting, as we do.' Petrarch, pp. 655-6.

⁶¹ See for example Owyn Rogers' entry in 1565-6 'for his lycence for pryntinge of a ballett intituled the sonnge of pacyente GRESSELL unto her make [mate?] [...] iiiiij^d'; and Thomas Colwell 'for his lycence for printing of an history of meke and paycent Gressell.....iiiiij^d' in *Transcript of the Registers, 1554-1640*, I, pp. 132b and 139 respectively. For the seventeenth-century chapbooks, see for example Anon., *The Antient, True, and Admirable History of Patient Grisel* (London: William Luggier, 1619), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 24 April 2013]. Other printings of this text appear in 1663, 1682, and 1690.

⁶² See John Phillip, *The Commodity of Patient and Meeke Grissill*, ed. by R.B. McKerrow and W.W. Greg, Malone Society Reprints (London: Chiswick Press, 1909), sig. A1^r.

⁶³ Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, II.1.284.

Thomas Deloney, was printed numerous times in virtually the same form throughout the late sixteenth, seventeenth and into the mid-eighteenth centuries.⁶⁴ The earliest extant version of this ballad is featured in Deloney's *Garland of Goodwill*, a collection that predates the Admiral's *Griselda* play by a number of years. Intriguingly, while much of the Admiral's play closely follows Boccaccio's narrative, close reading of all the extant *Griselda* stories available in England before 1599 demonstrates the Deloney ballad to have been used as well.

The *Griselda* story is of a young Marquess whose nobles, seeking the security of an heir, sue him to marry. He agrees, on the condition that they accept without reservation his chosen bride. This turns out to be the lowborn *Griselda* in whom Gualtieri has 'perceived [...] noble qualities [...] beneath her ragged and rustic attire'.⁶⁵ Shortly after their marriage, the marquess subjects *Griselda* to a number of trials in order to test her 'patience' (her obedience and loyalty), tests which quickly turn inhumanly cruel. Citing widespread disapproval at her low birth, the Marquess arranges for their two children to be removed from *Griselda*'s care, the implication being that they will be murdered. *Griselda* endures the atrocity with a superhuman, arguably perverse, 'patience':

⁶⁴ See for example, Thomas Deloney, 'A Most Pleasant Ballad of Patient Grissell To the Tune of The Brides Good Morrow' (London: n.p., 1600), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 9 January 2013]; Thomas Deloney, 'An Excellent Ballad of Patient Grissel. To the Tune of, The Bride's Good-Morrow' (London: H. Gossen, 1624?) in *EBBA* <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 9 January 2013]; and 'An Excellent Ballad of the Noble Marquess and Patient Grissel To the Tune of, The Bride's Goodmorrow' (Newcastle: John White?, 1730-69), in *EBBA* <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 9 January 2013].

⁶⁵ Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. by G.H. McWilliam, 2nd edn (London: Penguin Books, 1995), p. 787.

Griselda, recalling what she had been told, concluded that he [a servant of the Marquess] had been instructed to murder her child. So she quickly picked it up from its cradle, kissed it, gave it her blessing, and albeit she felt that her heart was about to break, placed the child in the arms of the servant without any trace of emotion, saying: ‘There: do exactly as your lord, who is my lord too, has instructed you. But do not leave her to be devoured by the beasts and the birds, unless that is what he has ordered you to do.’⁶⁶

The children are, unbeknownst to Griselda, taken to another city to be raised by the Marquess’s relatives. Eventually Gualtieri, under the same pretence of quelling civil unrest due to her low birth, banishes Griselda from his court and arranges for their marriage to be annulled. The Marquess gives orders for her to be publicly stripped of her fine clothes and escorted back to her father’s house. Again, Griselda responds with patience. A short time later, the Marquess announces his plans to remarry. For the celebrations, he summons Griselda and asks her to oversee preparations, including those of the new (thirteen year-old) bride, who has arrived with her brother. Of course, Griselda patiently agrees. The climax of the story occurs just before the wedding ceremony where the Marquess, ‘having summoned [Griselda] to his table, before all the people present’ smiles and asks her, ‘What do you think of our new bride?’ to which she responds,

‘My lord [...] I think very well of her. And if, as I believe, her wisdom matches her beauty, I have no doubt whatever that your life with her will bring you greater happiness than any gentleman on earth has ever known. But with all my heart I beg you not to inflict those same wounds upon her that you imposed upon her predecessor’.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Boccaccio, p. 788.

⁶⁷ Boccaccio, p. 793 (quotation marks in text).

This is, of course, Griselda's final test of patience, and she has passed. The Marquess then restores to Griselda her title and her children (his new 'bride' and her companion, raised in secret) explaining to her and to all the court his reasons for treating her so terribly:

'[F]or those who considered me a cruel and bestial tyrant [...] Know whatever I have done was done of set purpose, for I wished to show you how to be a wife, to teach these people how to choose and keep a wife, and to guarantee my own peace and quiet for as long as we were living beneath the same roof. When I came to take a wife, I was greatly afraid that this peace would be denied me, and in order to prove otherwise I tormented and provoked you in the ways you have seen.'⁶⁸

Petrarch and Chaucer essentially reproduce all the key events in sequence that we find in Boccaccio. Phillips and the Admiral's dramatists insert extra characters and, in the case of the latter, extra subplots to round out their respective narratives, yet a rough excision of these extra elements exposes the Boccaccio narrative largely intact. Interestingly, while the Phillips morality play looks clearly back to its prose and verse predecessors, there appears to be little evidence of its influencing the Admiral's offering.

The influence of Deloney's ballad upon the new play is, however, both subtly and immediately apparent. In Boccaccio, Petrarch, Chaucer, and in Phillips to a substantial degree, the story opens with a description of Piedmont and of the Marquess 'in the prime of youth and beauty, and no less noble in manners than in blood' who

⁶⁸ Boccaccio, pp. 793-4.

enjoys hunting and hawking with little concern for issues of marriage and succession.⁶⁹ In all these narratives we witness the suit of the nobles, the deal struck and a date set, and the passage of time until, on the day of the supposed wedding, Marquess Gualtieri ventures forth with his entourage to the house of Griselda and proposes marriage, to the surprise of everyone, including Griselda. The opening of the Deloney ballad, however, is quite different:

A Noble Marquess as he did ride a hunting,
 hard by the River side,
 A proper Maiden at she did sit a spinning,
 his gentle eyes had spide.
 Most fair & lovely, & of comely grace was she,
 although in simple attire:
 She sang full sweet, with pleasant voyce melodiously,
 which set the Lords heart on fire.
 [...]
 The Noble Marquess in his heart felt such flame
 which set his senses at strife;
 Quoth he, fair Maiden, shew me soon what is thy name
 I mean to take thee to my wife.⁷⁰

In the ballad, then, the story begins with the Marquess hunting in the woods. There is no exposition recounting who he is or the deal he cuts with his nobles. Instead, the reader is

⁶⁹ Petrarch, p. 657.

⁷⁰ Thomas Deloney, 'Of Patient Grissel and a Noble Marquesse', in *The Garland of Good-will* (London: Robert Bird, 1631), sig. E3^r-E3^v, in *EEBO* <www.eebo.chakwyck.com> [accessed 9 January 2013].

brought to the marriage in, it appears, the shortest possible time.⁷¹ The opening of the Admiral's play features similar condensation:

Enter the MARQUESSE, PAVIA, MARIO, LEPIDO, and huntsmen: all like Hunters. A noyse of hornes within.

MARQUESSE Looke you so strang my hearts, to see our limbes
 Thus suited in a Hunters livery?
 Oh tis a lovely habite, when greene youth
 Like to the flowry blossome of the spring,
 Conformes his outward habite to his minde,
 [...]

PAVIA When you were woo'd by us to choose a wife,
 This day you vowed to wed: but now I see,
 Your promises turne all to mockerie.⁷²

As with the ballad (and unlike the other versions) the play's narrative begins with the Marquess 'hunting' on his wedding day, approaching Griselda's house (which we learn later is by a 'spring') where he plans to propose. And although we get to meet 'Grissill' and her family briefly before the Marquess arrives, the parallel between the above opening scene and that conjured in the ballad's first lines, 'A Noble Marquess as he did ride a hunting / hard by the river side', is plain.

⁷¹ The 'love at first sight' motif depicted here in Deloney strongly resembles that of King Cophetua in the popular ballad 'A Song of a Beggar and a King', the earliest extant printing of which is in Richard Jonson, *A Grownne Garland of Goulden Roses* (London: n.p., 1612), sig. D4^r-6^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>>. Yet it is clear the ballad was popular much earlier as it is cited numerous times in Shakespeare's early plays. See for example *The Second Part of King Henry IV*, v.3.83; *Love's Labours Lost*, I.2.90-101 and IV.1.61-9; and *Romeo and Juliet*, II.1.14.

⁷² Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle and William Haughton, *The Pleasant Comædie of Patient Grissill*, in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. by Fredson Bowers, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953-61), I, pp. 213-98, I.1.1-21.

The most overt plot feature shared exclusively by the Admiral's play and the ballad is the timing around the birth of the children. In all the other narratives, Griselda gives birth first to a daughter and then to a son years later.⁷³ Both children are taken successively as they arrive. In the ballad and in the Admiral's play, Griselda/Grissill gives birth to twins, both of whom are taken from her shortly thereafter.

The last notable parallel between the ballad and the Admiral's play has to do with the Marquess's motivations for torturing Griselda. In the other narratives, emphasis is placed on the Marquess's psychological state. Shortly after the birth of the daughter, Boccaccio writes, 'Gualtieri was seized with the strange desire to test Griselda's patience, by subjecting her to constant provocation and making her life unbearable';⁷⁴ Petrarch writes that Gualtieri 'as it happens to people, after the baby had been weaned, was seized by a strange craving'; Chaucer writes,

Ther fil, as it bifaleth tymes mo,
Whan that this child had souked but a throwe,
This markys in his herte longeth so
To tempte his wife, hir sadness for to knowe,
This merveillous desire his wyf t'assaye;
Nedelees, God woot, he thougte hire for t'affraye.⁷⁵

⁷³ In Petrarch and Chaucer the time in between children is specified as four years. See Petrarch, p.662; Geoffrey Chaucer 'The Clerk's Tale' in *The Canterbury Tales, The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by Larry D. Benson and F.N. Robinson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), p. 145 (lms. 610-11). In Boccaccio and Philips it is clear the children are born years apart but it is never stated precisely how many.

⁷⁴ Boccaccio, p. 787.

⁷⁵ Chaucer, p. 143 (lms. 449-55).

All these narratives highlight the Marquess's neuroses as the chief cause of trouble, and while he repeatedly tells Griselda that his chief reasons for taking the children and divorcing her is to quell courtly and civil dissatisfaction with her low birth and its implications on his succession, all three writers demonstrate repeatedly that this is not the reality of things. Again in Chaucer we read,

Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun
 Publiced was the bountee of hir name,
 But eek beside in many a regioun,
 Of oon seide wel, another syde the same;
 So spradde of hire heighe bountee the fame
 That men and wommen, as wel yonge as olde,
 Goon to Saluce upon hire to beiholde.

Thus Walter lowely – nay, but roially –
 Wedded with fortunat honestetee,
 In Goddes pees lyveth ful esily
 At hoom, and outward grace ynough had he;
 And for he saugh that under low degree
 Was ofte vertu hid, the peple hym heelde
 A prudent man, and that is seyn ful seeld.⁷⁶

In the Phillips morality play it is the Vice, Politicke Persuasion, who continuously hounds the Marquess to test Grisel. While this character certainly represents the idea of a 'bad councillor', it is clear that he mainly represents the Marquess's psychology, his

⁷⁶ Chaucer, p. 142 (lns. 414-427).

‘internal demons’; and while the nobility is not overjoyed with her low birth they never speak ill of her, even when prompted:

POLITICKE PERSUASION In her ther is no sot of noble sanguinnite,
 Therefore unfitly that her seed should rule or have dignitie.
 REASON Content thy mynd thy talk is vaine, thou seekst to heap up strif,
 I can not chuse but needs commend, hir good and honest lyfe,
 Above all spoused Dames, which byde within this towne
 She best deserves the price of prayse, and Helme of rich
 renowne.⁷⁷

This conversation continues for some lines; the Vice gets nowhere. It is only when he works on the Marquess himself that he finds purchase. At the end of the play the Marquess’s neuroses seems reinforced when he, in justifying his actions (as he does in all the narratives at this point), says only ‘And this which I have done, I promise thee I, / Was done for this cause, thy Pacience to trye’, which could be translated into, ‘I did it because I felt like it’. Corresponding sections of the ballad narrative, however, are significantly different. Here, the civil and courtly anger surrounding Griselda’s low birth is *true*:

Many envied her therefore,
 Because she was of parents poore,
 and twixt her Lord & she great strife did raise:
 Some said this and some said that,
 Some did call her beggars brat,

⁷⁷ John Phillip, *The Commodity of Patient and Meeke Grissill*, sig. E1^v.

and to her Lord they would her oft dispraise.

O noble Marques (qd. they) why do you wrong
 thus basely for to wed:
 That might have gotten an honourable Lady
 into your Princely bed:
 Who will not now your noble issue still deride
 which shall be hereafter borne,
 That are of bloud to base by their mothers side,
 the which will bring them in scorne:
 Put her therefore quiet away,
 Take you to a Lady gay,
 whereby your Linage may renowned be.
 Thus every day they seeme to prate,
 That malic'd Grissels good estate,
 who took al this most mild and patiently.⁷⁸

Thus the Marquess seeks explicitly ‘to prove her patient heart | therby her foes to disgrace’.⁷⁹ He reiterates this in his justification speech at the end of the ballad:

And you that envy her estate,
 Whom I have made my loving mate,
 now blush for shame, and honour vertuous life,
 The Chronicles of lasting fame,
 Shall evermore extoll the name
 of patient Grissel, my most constant wife.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Deloney, sig. E3^v-E4^r.

⁷⁹ Deloney, sig. E4^r.

⁸⁰ Deloney, sig. F2^v.

In the Admiral's play, although the Marquess speaks of dissent, as he does in the other narratives, it is never quite clear whether the surrounding nobility and population truly disapprove of Griselda until his final justification speech where he declares,

MARQUESS Lords looke not strange,
 These two are they, at whose births envies tongue,
 Darted envenome'd stings, these are the fruite
 Of this most vertuous tree, that multitude,
 That many headed beastes, nipt their sweet hearts,
 With wrongs, with bitter wrongs, al you have wrong'd her,
 My selfe have done most wrong, for I did try
 To breake the temper of true constansie:
 But these whom all thought murdered are alive,
 My Grissill lives, and in the booke of Fame,
 All worldes in golde shall register her name.⁸¹

This passage arguably resembles the political climate described in the ballad more than it does any other narrative, and the last lines, 'My Grissil lives, and in the booke of Fame, | All worlds in gold shall register her name' seem a clear echo of the last three lines of the ballad.

It seems clear then that the Admiral's playwrights turned to Deloney's ballad as they stitched together their new narrative. Yet, one has to wonder why they would choose to do so when they clearly also had Boccaccio to hand. Perhaps the ballad offered convenient condensations. Excising the Marquess' history and deal-making at the beginning of the play, and combining the birthdates of Grissil's children leaves

⁸¹ Dekker, v.2.198-208.

more space for action, an important consideration when one has limited space as on a broadside and limited time as on the stage. Switching the root cause of Griselda's cruel trials away from the Marquess seems also a prudent thing to do for both ballad and play, in light of the censor. Lastly it may also have been that a large portion of the Admiral's audience, due to their lack of education, was familiar with the Grissil narrative only through song and that the authors sought to satisfy this group of patrons who would expect to encounter in the stage version, salient 'ballad facts'.

THE BLIND BEGGAR OF BEDNAL GREEN (1600)

The last example is a play for which a ballad narrative and its characters have been interwoven with a second, apparently original, narrative. In his book entitled *The Baron's War* (1871), William Blaauw writing of the Battle of Evesham (3 August 1265) and the gruesome death of the rebel Simon de Montfort connects the fate of Simon's third son, Guy, with a popular sixteenth century ballad:

The narrow escape of Guy from sharing the fate of his father and brother at Evesham has been noticed, and the circumstance, as vaguely transmitted by the tradition of three centuries, seems to have given rise to the fine old ballad of "the Beggar of Bethnal Green," the noble father of "pretty Bessee." The rescue of "young Montfort, of courage so free," from the heaps of slain after a battle is effected by a fair lady:—

"Who seeing young Montfort there gasping to die,
She saved his life through charitie."⁸²

Blaauw's 'vague transmission' remark alludes to the fantastical narrative and historical inaccuracies connected to Guy in 'The Rarest Ballad that Was Ever Seen, of the Blind

⁸² William Henry Blaauw, *The Barons' War* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1871), p. 338.

Beggars Daughter of Bednal-Green' which was first written probably around 1585 and appears to have been another enormously popular song.⁸³ Bishop Percy, editing his MS version of the ballad, was so irritated by its variance with history that he substituted many of the original stanzas with those of his own.⁸⁴ Percy's irritation comes generally from the fact that instead of fighting in Evesham on the side of his father Simon against King Henry III and his son, Edward, Earl of Lancaster, the Montfort of the ballad sings of being wounded in France under the banner of someone altogether different:

When first our King his Fame did advance,
And fought for his title in delicate France
In many places great perils past he,
But then was not born my pretty Bessee.

⁸³ The earliest extant copy of 'The Blind Beggars Daughter of Bednal-Green' is in Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript (ca. 1643). There is substantial evidence, however, to suggest the ballad to have been written far earlier. The ballad's tune, for example, is called for in the ballad 'The Valorous Acts Performed at Gaunt, by the Brave Bonny Lasse Mary Ambre' which, as has been demonstrated above, was probably written around 1585 to capitalize on the news of the Spanish siege of Ghent in 1584. Indeed, the versification and general prosody of the two ballads are so similar they seem products of the same mind. There are dozens of extant printings dated into the eighteenth century. The earliest direct reference to the Blind Beggar ballad beyond, as we will argue, the play of Chettle and Day (ca. 1600), is a reference in Cyril Tourneur's *The World's Folly* (1605) where he writes of a down-on-his-luck, uncultured young gull 'who after hee had spit on his fingers and wiped them on his patched breeches after dinner, instead of grace; fell to sing the ballad of the blinde Beggar'. There are two entries in the Stationer's Register the earliest of which is 14 December 1624 (See *AI* #210 and #211). Pepys writes of a dinner party he attended at a house which was said to have been 'built by the Blind Beggar of Bednall Green, so much talked of and sang in ballads'. See *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, ed. by J.W. Hales and F.J. Furnivall, 2 vols (London: N. Trübner, 1867), II, pp. 279-89; Cyril Tourneur, *The World's Folly*, sig. C^v-C2^t; and Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. by Henry B. Wheatley (London: George Bell & Sons, 1893), entry for Friday, 26 June 1663, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, online edn <<http://www.pepysdiary.com/archive/1663/06/26/>> [accessed 10 January 2013].

⁸⁴ Percy writes, '[T]he concluding stanzas, which contain the old Beggar's discovery of himself, are not however given from any of these, being very different from those of the vulgar ballad. Nor yet does the Editor offer them as genuine, but as a modern attempt to remove the absurdities and inconsistencies, which so remarkably prevailed in this part of the song, as it stood before: whereas, by the alteration of a few lines, the story is rendered much more affecting, and is reconciled to probability and true history'. *Reliques*, II, p. 31.

And those Wars went over to fight,
 Many a brave Duke, a Lord, and a Knight
 And with them young Monford of courage so free
 But then was not born my pretty Bessee.

And there did young Montford with a blow o'th face
 Lose both his eyes in a very short space,
 His life also had been gone with his flight,
 Had not a young woman come forth i'th night,

Amongst the slain men her fancy did move,
 To search and to seek for her own true love,
 Who seeing young Montford there gasping to die
 She saved his life through her charity.⁸⁵

Although early modern chroniclers record Guy as being wounded on the battlefield and subsequently taken to London (as a prisoner who eventually escaped), the ballad portrays Montfort in the service not of his father but instead of Henry VI over a century and a half later.⁸⁶ Absurd indeed, yet compelling when we discover the same historical

⁸⁵ Anon., 'The Rarest Ballad that Was Ever Seen, of the Blind Beggars Daughter of Bednal-Green', stanzas 55-8.

⁸⁶ Percy mistakenly believed the Blind Beggar's true identity to be Simon de Montfort's oldest son, Henry, who was killed (and dismembered) along with his father at Evesham. The Blind Beggar is more probably a younger son, Guy, whose fate at Evesham more closely resembles that which the Blind Beggar describes. From Hollinshed:

There were wounded & taken, besides the other that were slaine at that battell of Euesham, Guie de Montfort, the earle of Leicesters sonne, the lords Iohn Fitz Iohn, Henrie de Hastings, Humfrie de Bohun the yoonger, Iohn de Uescie, Peter de Montfort the yoonger, and Nicholas de Segraue with others.

Blaauw cites the monk William de Nangis (ca. 1300) in his description of Guy falling 'nearly lifeless among the heaps of the dead and dying, where he lay until picked up by the enemy and

absurdity, as well as other key elements of the Blind Beggar ballad appearing in an Admiral's play performed around 1600 entitled *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*.

As with the Blind Beggar ballad, our oldest extant copy of The Admiral's play is dated closer to the Restoration.⁸⁷ However, Henslowe's payment for the play, in full, to Henry Chettle and John Day on 26 May 1600 demonstrates the play's performance near the turn of the century.⁸⁸ The performance of two sequels shortly after this date, along with the revival of another 'Blind Beggar' play by George Chapman during this time, testifies to the original's popularity.⁸⁹ Key similarities render the play's debt to the ballad unmistakable. As stated, the Montfort (Mumford) in the play, as in the ballad,

imprisoned'. There also exists a chapbook, first printed perhaps in 1657, which follows the ballad rather closely. In it, 'Monford' is portrayed as blinded and left for dead on the battlefield to be discovered by his wife and taken, eventually, back to London. The evidence, then, supports Blaauw: the Beggar is Guy. See Raphael Holinshed, *The Third Volume of Chronicles* (London: Henry Denham, 1586), p. 270, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 11 January 2013]; Blaauw, 278; Anon., *The History of the Blind Beggar of Bednal-Green* (London: Charles Dennisson, 1686), sig. A2^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 11 January 2013]. The Stationers Register records another similarly titled 'history' entered 14 September 1657. See *A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers: from 1640-1708 A.D.* 3 vols (London: privately printed, 1913), II, p. 145. For other early modern accounts of Guy's fate at and after the Battle of Lews, see John Stow, *The Chronicles of England* (London: Ralph Newberie, 1580), p. 287, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 11 January 2013]; and J. R. Maddicott, 'Montfort, Guy de (c.1244–1291/2)', *DNB* <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 11 January 2013].

⁸⁷ Henry Chettle and John Day, *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green* (London: R. Pollard and Thomas Dring, 1659), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 24 March 2013].

⁸⁸ Henslowe, p. 135.

⁸⁹ In January of 1600, Henslowe's diary records an advance of forty shillings to William Haughton and John Day for 'the second parte of the blinde begger of Bednall Greene' (p. 163). Between February and April the diary records a number of advances to John Day, William Haughton and Samuel Rowley (pp. 166-8) and finally ten shillings to John Day 'at the apoyntment of the company after the playing of the 2 pt of strowd' (p. 168). Advances for the third play begin to John Day and Samuel Rowley in late May of 1601 (p. 170). Advances to Chettle, Haughton and Day for the third *Blind Beggar/Tom Strowd* are recorded in 18 July 1601 (p. 177). Costume payments are recorded for 27 August 1601. Henslowe's diary (p. 169) also makes clear that the first revival of George Chapman's play *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* was performed in the middle of May 1601. Chapman's Roman play bears no resemblance to that of Chettle and Day beyond its 'Blind Beggar' title and the presence of a character disguised as a beggar.

does not fight for his father in the thirteenth century. Instead he fights in France for King Henry VI. As with the real Guy de Montfort, Mumford in the play is branded a traitor, and while he is also wounded on the battlefield, it is only his reputation that suffers, for he is the victim of a plot. Mumford also returns to England disgraced, although he returns disguised rather than a prisoner who will escape into hiding. The two other main similarities between ballad and play are a simpler matter. In the ballad, Montford's daughter 'Pretty Besse' is the focus of much of the narrative and is named in the majority of the refrains. Here for example are the opening two stanzas:

It was a blind begger that long lost his sight,
 He had a faire daughter most pleasant and bright,
 And many a gallant brave Suitor had she,
 For none was so comely as pretty Bessee,

 And though she was of favour most fair,
 Yet seeing she was but a begger his heir,
 Of ancient house keepers despised was she,
 Whose Sons came as Suitors to pretty Bessee.⁹⁰

Mumford's daughter in the Admiral's play is also named Besse, and she also lives with him for a time in his hut in Bednal-green under albeit entirely different circumstances.⁹¹

Lastly, both ballads contain similar scenes in which the beggar 'drops angels' to settle

⁹⁰ Anon., 'The Rarest Ballad that Was Ever Seen [...]', stanzas 1-2.

⁹¹ Anon., 'The Rarest Ballad that Was Ever Seen [...]', stanza 18. In the ballad, 'prettie Besse' moves from her home on Bednal Green to work in a tavern in a neighbouring town. In the play Elizabeth ('Bess') Momford is the ward of a corrupt noble Sir Robert Westford who is part of the plot to discredit Momford. Upon Momford's banishment, Sir Robert throws out Bess and seizes Momford's lands which had been entrusted to him on her behalf in the event that her father was killed in France. See Chettle and Day, *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*, sig. B3^v-B4^r.

dispute around the marriage of his daughter. In the ballad ‘prettie Besse’ entertains four suitors three of whom shun her once she tells them of her father the ‘silly blind Beggar of Bednal Green’.⁹² The remaining suitor is indeed the highest born, a knight, who declares,

[...] Hap better or worse,
I weigh not true love by the weight of the purse,
And beauty is beauty in every degree,
Then welcome to me my pretty Besse.⁹³

The knight’s kinsmen however protest vehemently and attempt to force the knight to give up his bride. A chase ensues leading eventually to Bednal Green where the knight and his newfound family make a stand:

But Rescue came presently over the plain,
Or else the Knight for his Love there had been slain
The fray being ended then straight he did see,
His kinsman come railing for pretty Bessee

Then speak the blind begger although I be poor,
Raile not against my child at mine own doore,
Though she be not deckt with Velvet and Pearle,
Yet will I drop angels with thee for my Girl.⁹⁴

⁹² Anon., ‘The Rarest Ballad that Was Ever Seen [...]’, stanzas 11-18.

⁹³ Anon., ‘The Rarest Ballad that Was Ever Seen [...]’, stanza 21.

⁹⁴ Stanzas 25-6.

‘Dropping angels’ is a simple betting game where each contestant throws ready cash into a pile an ‘angel’ (a type of coin) at a time. The contestant willing to ‘drop’ the most money keeps the pot.⁹⁵

With that an angel he cast on the ground,
and dropped in angels full three thousand pound
and oftentimes it proved most plain,
For the Gentlemans one the begger dropt twain

So as the place whereas he did sit,
With gold was covered every whit,
The Gentleman having dropt all his store.
Said, Begger hold, for I have no more!⁹⁶

This scene is essentially identically in the Admiral’s play except that the suitor is a Norfolk Yeoman’s prodigal son, Tom Strowd, who has only recently fallen in love with Besse. Strowd’s father is the ‘kin’ who ‘rails’ against her. Here for comparison is the beginning of the scene:

OLD STROWD How? mary with a Beggar? Mix the blood of *Strowds* with a tatter?

Either cast her off, or I will cast off thee.

TOM STROWD Now we shall have a coyl with ye; and ye were not my father I’d
knock your pate, so wo’d I.

⁹⁵ The term is not listed in the *OED*. Beyond the play and the ballad, angel dropping is mentioned in Thomas Rawlins’ play *Tunbridge-Wells* (1678) and in stanza 61 and 32 of Child #109B & C respectively, ‘The Ballad of Tom Potts’ (variously titled). See Thomas Rawlins, *Tunbridge-Wells, or, A Day’s Courtship* (London: Henry Rogers, 1678), p. 14, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 11 January 2013]; and *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, IV (1886), pp. 449 and 453.

⁹⁶ Stanzas 29-30.

OLD STROWD How's that? Do and thou dare.

MOMFORD *Strowd*, though she be Daughter to a poor Blind-man that long hath liv'd on good mens charity, do not disdain her. Be her birth as it may, the portion I'll give her, deserves as good a Husband as your Son.

TOM STROWD Bate me an ace of that qd. *Bolton*, yet I would I had her as naked as my nayl.

OLD STROWD As good a portion as my Son? proud Beggar,
'Tis not your Clapdish and your patch'd Gown can do't.

MOMFORD However poor, good Sir digrace me not.

Old Strowd Tis my disgrace to be out-worded by a Beggar!
But and thou be'st such a well-monied man
As thou dost brag, dar'st drop old Angels with me?
And he that out-drops other, take up all?⁹⁷

As with the Knight's kinsman in the ballad, Old Strowd loses the game and his money, and while Momford gives the pot to Young Strowd 'towards his marriage' he bestows Bess not on the Norfolk Yeoman but upon his ever-loyal friend in battle and in exile, Captain Westford, son of Momford's (now vanquished) enemy, Sir Robert Westford. As much as this is a twist of the ballad narrative, Captain Westford's reaction to the news seems to recall the chivalry of the ballad's knight:

CAPTAIN WESTFORD For *Momford's* sake, whose honor'd deeds
Are writ up with the blood of the proud *French*,
Were she the meanest and deformed'st Creature
That treads upon the bosome of the earth,
Westford wo'd take, love, live and marry her.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Chettle and Day, *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*, sig. K^r.

⁹⁸ Chettle and Day, *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*, sig. K2^r.

Beyond the similarities outlined above, ‘The Rarest Ballad that Was Ever Seen, of the Blind Beggars Daughter of Bednal-Green’ and *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green* follow very different narrative paths and it is quite possible the ballad is not its only source. Yet unlike the plays of Greene, Munday and Dekker, *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green* is more permeated with the history and spirit of the song rather than augmented by it; the ballad is more at heart than at hand.

CONCLUSION

‘Dramatists, early and late’, writes Hyder Rollins in 1919, did not hesitate ‘to rifle ballads for plots and suggestions’. His claim of their abundance is hardly a surprise, yet many are hardly as ‘familiar’ to the modern reader as he claims and delineating their presence, influence and function in the plays is often a vexing business.⁹⁹ When they are brought to light, it is clear they offered playwrights a great deal. Many of their stories and scenes make for vibrant drama and their compact nature, as evidenced in *Patient Grissill*, offer playwrights imaginative, and indeed convenient, ways of dramatizing traditional literature. Nevertheless, one wonders how many of the Admiral’s audience were familiar with Boccaccio, Petrarch or Chaucer and if, in fact, it was the popularity of the Griselda ballad which first enticed Dekker et al. to bring the story to the stage. Indeed, all of the song narratives examined here appear to have been classics in their time, each remaining popular through the Elizabethan, Jacobean, Caroline periods and beyond. The overall impression is of playwrights, quite understandably, choosing proven favourites for their stage productions. The

⁹⁹ Rollins, ‘The Black-Letter Broadside Ballad’, p. 334.

conversation between Eltham and Skelton in Munday's *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington* is telling: at the end of what seems a glut of Robin Hood plays, Eltham still questions his 'playwright's decision in shying away from well-known Robin Hood stories. Skelton's response arguing the merits of keeping clear of over-done stories, followed eventually by Munday's extensive treatment of perhaps the period's most popular Robin Hood broadside suggests an ambivalence, as if Munday is secretly concerned that a *complete* neglect of familiar narratives like 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield' may ultimately diminish his play's appeal. Lastly, the degree of sophistication with which the dramatists use song narratives is demonstrably wide-ranging, from 'guest appearances' of song celebrities to the incorporation of well-known song spaces arranged in ways generating multiple implications. Song narratives, then, emerge as less a locus of writerly condescension and more as simply a source well used.

3 THE POWER OF SONG

The ability of song to communicate emotion to, and to elicit empathy from, theatre audiences is obvious in our modern experience, and it is thus unsurprising to find Early Modern playwrights utilizing it in their own works to similar effect. This chapter, however, examines song's power as represented in the fictive world. Much of the following evidence features characters resembling what W.H. Auden describes as 'impromptu' singers, i.e., those who are not called upon by others to sing. However, using Auden's definitions of 'impromptu' and 'called-for' songs is problematic, for he argues that a character who sings called-for songs 'ceases to be himself and becomes a performer; the audience is not interested in him but in the quality of his singing' (p. 511). As we shall see, there are many instances beyond Shakespeare where the boundaries of Auden's 'impromptu' and 'called-for' song are blurred to the point where one begins to question the usefulness of the terms. Characters throughout the drama often sing what seem to us as called-for 'numbers' largely designed to showcase singing talent, yet at the same time their song is often directed towards other characters in the play world and it is clear the song's performance affects them – *as characters*. Conversely, some of Bellafront's 'impromptu' songs in *The Honest Whore* are lengthy enough to show off a beautiful voice, if she/he possessed such. Thus the actor playing her could easily perform for us while simultaneously representing the courtesan singing to herself contemplatively. Auden's classifications fall short, then, because singing is always in some way a social act; the singer always performs for an audience of some kind. Thus, 'impromptu' song is never really spontaneous: as with us, the character, even in complete privacy, always calls for and audits his/her own song. And when

called to sing by others, there is always, to some degree, an interlocutor within the play world, whether it is a duet partner or Duke Orsino and his courtiers; the singing character, regardless of his status or complexity, always to some degree sings *as character* to that interlocutor. Thus, it is prudent, for this discussion at least, to refer to singing characters as simply that, and to concentrate more on song's operation as the singing character engages with it.

Playwrights often portray singing characters in light of contemporary theories of music and its relation to the cosmos. Yet such representations are more often than not mixed with, and undercut by, the practical experience of songs and singers as they operate in reality. Further, many playwrights seem to perceive that to sing anywhere is to present a psychic transparency. Regardless of the circumstances, we always offer something of our inner nature when we sing. But, of course, we do so at our peril, for there is always the danger of music 'getting away from us', and because song requires our faces and bodies to be instruments, a loss of control can expose human fallibility, 'the truth of us', to our audiences. In the language of classical myth, we might call this music's bestial side: the exposure of our 'inner harmony', our psychic world – uncensored. Early moderns must have encountered this dynamic regularly as they grappled with their bodies and emotions while singing – and observed others doing the same. And it is thus no surprise to find such a dynamic explored and exploited to various effects by the playwrights of the period, a group whose trade is, after all, human nature.

Many modern studies of music in the drama begin with an introduction to contemporary beliefs surrounding music, its power, its place in the cosmos and from there its place in society. Such introductions are normally grounded in writings from

three areas of contemporary literature: classical and medieval authors who identify, illustrate and attempt to explain music's penetrative, transformative power over the emotions;¹ intellectual/academic authors citing examples of this thinking in, and in addition to, their own phenomenological observations;² and lastly, the writings of polemicists, where penetrative, transformative music is again the top issue. Puritan writers, for example, describe music – and often singing specifically – as a dangerous stimulant of the passions and in general a corruptor of 'good minds, mak[ing] them womannish and inclined to all kinde of whordome and mischief'.³ Defenders of music also emphasise music's power to move the emotions, yet these men focus more on music's soothing, restorative power and its ability to 'mould honest manners' and 'stimulate us to the study of wisdom' through its harmonious nature.⁴ Many of these

¹ See the discussion in Ch. 3.2, pp. 126-8.

² See, for example, Francis Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarium* (London: William Lee, 1627), pp. 35-57 (esp. pp. 35-40), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 16 January 2013]. Bacon situates music here within a discussion acoustics. See also Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (London: Henry Crips, 1621), pp. 372-5, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 16 January 2013].

³ Phillip Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses* (London: Robert Jones, 1583), sig. D4^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 13 January 2013]. See also; Mathew Parker, *The Whole Psalter Translated into English Metre* (London: John Daye, 1567), sig. B2^f, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 13 January 2013]; Stephan Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse* (London: Thomas Woodcocke, 1579) (esp. p.11^{r-v}), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 13 January 2013] and William Prynne, *Histriomastix The Player's Scourge* (London: Michael Sparke, 1633) (esp. pp. 274 and 289), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 13 January 2013].

⁴ John Case, *Apologia Musices* (1588), trans. by Dana F. Sutton, in John Case, *Apologia Musices tam Vocalis Quam Instrumentalis et Mixtae: A Hypertext Critical Edition*, University of California, Irvine (7 July 2003) <<http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/music/trans.html>> [accessed 13 January 2013]. See also Charles Butler, *The Principles of Musik* (London: Charles Butler, 1636), pp. 130-1, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 14 January 2013]; John Milton offers the same argument, albeit indirectly, in a number of his works. See, for example 'Prolusions II', in *The Works of John Milton*, ed. by Frank Allen Patterson, 21 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), XII, pp. 149-58 (p. 157); *Comus* ed. by Thomas H. Luxton, The Milton Reading Room, Dartmouth College <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/comus/index.shtml> [accessed 17 January 2013] lns. 230-76; and *Paradise Lost*, ed. by Gordon Teskey (New York: Norton, 2005), XXI, lns. 556-631.

writers also concede to music ‘having an edge on all sides’ with ‘good dispositions lov[ing] hir for hir own sake, [and] the bad for their passions sake’.⁵ ‘[G]enerally’, writes Francis Bacon, ‘*Musick* feedeth that disposition of the *Spirits* which it findeth.’⁶ Bacon’s comment resonates as one observes dramatic characters who sing and those who are affected by song. Interestingly, while a few examples of song in the drama are wonderfully rich in classical associations and mysticism, many others, after all the surrounding rhetoric, prove more sobering than sensational.

3.1 THE FOUNDERING OF ORPHIC POWER

In Act III.1 of Shakespeare’s *Henry VIII*, Katherine of Aragon, sensing the pressure soon to be brought upon her to divorce Henry, instructs one of her ladies to sing a song, the experience of which she hopes will temporarily ease her anxiety.

KATHERINE Take thy lute, wench, my soul grows sad with troubles;
 Sing, and disperse ’em if thou canst: leave working.

Song

Orpheus with his lute made trees
And the mountain tops that freeze,
 Bow themselves, when he did sing.
To his music, plants and flowers
Ever sprung; as sun and showers,
 There had made a lasting spring

⁵ Case, *The Praise of Musicke*, pp. 46-47. The music tutor Thomas Whythorne, ca. 1576, speaking of music, writes, ‘It is more like God gave the same gift unto His angels and ministers before the world began. And as He is the Author and Worker by means of all goodness, so He, giving the same makes it good, though some do misuse it and some beasts do condemn it for evil and naught. See *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, ed. by James M. Osborne (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 183.

⁶ Bacon, p. 38.

Everything that heard him play,
 Even the billows of the sea,
 Hung their heads, and then lay by.
 In sweet music is such art,
 Killing care, and grief of heart,
 Fall asleep, or hearing die.⁷

‘Music’ Auden writes of this scene, ‘cannot, of course, cure grief, as the song claims, but in so far that she is able to attend to it and nothing else, [Katherine] can forget her situation while the music lasts’.⁸ Yet, surely if Katherine does attend her maid’s song, she cannot help but notice that its lyrics, ironically, underline its inefficacy: in the face of her very real, very serious troubles, song will definitely *not* make the mountains bow; it will not still the seas; it will not cause life to burst forth from the ground – and by implication from Katherine’s own womb; and song will certainly change neither a king’s mind nor a queen’s fate.⁹ Just as Katherine herself, Shakespeare seems to suggest here that song can be beautiful and expressive, but in the real world, it carries little true power.

Cynicism towards Orphic power is common to many playwrights. References to Orpheus and the power of song are, of course, ubiquitous in early modern literature. Yet

⁷ Shakespeare, *King Henry VIII*, III.1.1-20. A number of studies of song in the Shakespeare canon suggest these words at least are by Fletcher. See Noble, p. 10 and Christopher Wilson, *Shakespeare and Music* (London: Da Capo Press, 1922), p. 154.

⁸ W.H. Auden, ‘Music and Shakespeare’, in *The Dyer’s Hand and Other Essays* (New York: Random House, 1962), pp. 500-27 (pp. 513-4).

⁹ Cf. Heywood’s *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, in *A Woman Killed with Kindness and Other Domestic Plays*, ed. by Martin Wiggins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 69-128, Sc. 6.4-7 where the melancholy Wendoll, obsessed with Mrs. Frankford exclaims to himself, ‘I’ll drive away this passion with a song. | A song! ha, ha: a song! as if, fond man, Thy eyes could swim with laughter, when thy soul | Lied drenched and drownèd in red tears of blood’.

when wielded by human stage characters, song's power to influence consistently underachieves. This is especially true with serenades. Jacomo in Marston's *What You Will* (1601), for example, pays Phylus the fiddler to sing one of Jacomo's creations under the window of the widow Celia. As Orpheus 'made the stones to daunce' and brought 'Eurydice out of hell with his lute', so will Phylus 'bring Celia's head out of [her] window' with his.¹⁰ But instead of a glove or handkerchief – that Jacomo would be obliged to 'return' – floating down from her sill, Jacomo's serenade is answered with a garland of willow 'floung downe', upon his head. It is a shrewdly coy gesture. Willow was traditionally worn by those in mourning, and its flight from the window suggests Celia has cast off the memory of her husband in light of Jacomo's musical petition, yet the act of returning the garland will force Jacomo to suggest symbolically that Celia continue to mourn.¹¹ John Lyly in his *Mother Bombie* (1589) has the old fathers Stellio and Memphio attempt to match their children through an arranged duet. Both son and daughter are dreadfully simple, however, and thus are as sympathetic to their mutual singing as real rocks and stones as opposed to mythical ones.¹² Jonson offers perhaps the most extreme instance of Orphic failure in *Volpone* where the eponymous character, after failing to seduce Corvino's chaste wife Celia with a *carpe diem* song, continues to call upon music's power as he attempts to rape her.¹³

¹⁰ Marston, *What You Will* (London: Thomas Thorppe, 1607), sig. B^{r-v}, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 17 January 2013].

¹¹ 'To wear the willow', *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, (London: Cassell Limited, 1870; Centenary edn. 1970), p. 1157.

¹² See Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, ed. by Leah Scragg (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), III.3.1-14. It is revealed later that the two are in fact siblings. For Orpheus' power over the natural world, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. by Horace Gregory (New York: Viking Press, 1958), p. 299 (XI.1-2) and elsewhere.

¹³ See Jonson, *Volpone*, III, III.7.154-245.

Several factors appear to fuel what seems, then, to be a convention.¹⁴ Firstly there are the particulars of the classical tale. Orpheus is a supernatural being possessing supernatural musical ability.¹⁵ This in itself seems to inform the proficient wielding of manipulative music at the hands of spirits such as Ariel in *The Tempest*, and various sylvan characters appearing in plays such as Peele's *Wily Beguiled* and of course *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.¹⁶ But more than this, it is the details of the Orpheus story itself that appear to influence song's often humorous rhetorical failure when wielded by humans. It is hard not to imagine an Elizabethan grammar school student finding wry humour in Ovid's description of the hero's end at the hands of the hysterical Maenads:

[The] Maenads came at Orpheus,
 Piercing his flesh with sharpened boughs of laurel
 Tearing his body with blood-streaming hands
 [...]
 [...] Dryads, naiads draped their nakedness
 In black and shook their hair wild for the world to see.
 Scattered in blood, and tossed in bloody grasses,
 Dismembered arm from shoulder, knee from thigh,

¹⁴ For more instances of music's rhetorical failure, see Anon., *Look About You*, ed. by W.W. Greg, Malone Society Reprints (London: Oxford University Press, 1913), sig. H2^v-H3^r; Fletcher's *Monsieur Thomas*, III.3; *The Captain*, IV.4; Fletcher and Massinger's *The Little French Lawyer*, IV.6; Wilson's *Three Ladies of London*, in *Three Renaissance Usury Plays*, ed. by Lloyd Edward Kermode (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), pp. 79-163, Sc. 2.118-38; and many others.

¹⁵ Orpheus is the son of Calliope 'the eldest and most distinguished of the nine muses' and either Oeagrus, the king of Thracia or Apollo. See 'Calliope', *Encyclopedia Mythica Online* <www.pantheon.org> [Accessed 17 January 2013] and 'Orpheus', *Encyclopedia Mythica Online* <www.pantheon.org> [Accessed 17 January 2013].

¹⁶ See George Peele, *Wily Beguiled*, ed. by W.W. Greg, Malone Society Reprints (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), sig. F2^{r-v}; Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, passim; and Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II.2.09-26. In *The Praise of Musicke* (p. 50), Case describes sylvan characters as 'inferior indeed to the gods but better than men' according to 'heathenish poets'.

The poet's body lay, yet by a miracle the River Hebrus
 Caught head and lyre as they dropped and carried them
 Midcurrent down the stream. The lyre twanged sad strains,
 The dead tongue sang; funereally the river banks and reeds
 Echoed their music. Drifting they sang their way
 To open sea.¹⁷

Beyond the humour of a singer whom, even when dismembered, just will not shut up, any boy of grammar school age and above would understand that even supernatural rhetorical skills, musical or otherwise, are scant defence when pursued by enraged females.¹⁸ As childish as such analysis might seem, it does carry with it a prevailing ethos the more serious reader takes away concerning music as a phenomenon in the real world: while music may affect sympathisers, it is of limited power in the face of natural and, more importantly, social realities. As suggested by Queen Katherine's song above, when the wolves really *are* at the door, music counts for little. This sentiment is, in a general sense, reflected in much of the early modern dramatic corpus. We can find no instance when the rhetorical force of a singing human character penetrates unsympathetic ears and 'retunes' a character's inner harmony. It is not that these

¹⁷ Ovid, pp. 299-300 (XI.34-69). Arthur Golding in his famous versified translation from 1565 does not describe Orpheus' severed, floating head as actually singing. His translation reads, 'His harp did yield a mourning sound [as it floated down the river Hebrus]; his lifeless tongue did make | A certain lamentable noise as though it still yet spake'. However, most men from families of reasonable means, such as many of the playwrights, would probably have been intimately familiar with the *Metamorphoses* in its original Latin, from its regular inclusion in the grammar school curriculum. See David Cresey, *Education in Tudor and Stuart England*, Documents of Modern History (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), pp. 70-115 (esp. p. 84).

¹⁸ Clearly, the death of Orpheus at the hands of the Maenads is firstly a vehicle for one of *Metamorphoses*' primary themes: the peril of opposing 'the natural order of things' i.e., sexuality. Upon the death of Eurydice, Orpheus abjures sex with women who and instead chooses to make love to boys. This enrages the Maenads, one of which cries 'Look at the pretty boy who will not have us!' and tosses the first spear 'At Orpheus's singing mouth'. Orpheus is punished for not procreating. See Ovid, trans. by Gregory, p. 299 (XI.8).

fictitious minds are necessarily intractable; song simply does not have the kind of seductive power we find, for instance, in Richard Gloucester as he woos Lady Anne over the coffin of her husband (whom he has recently stabbed to death), in *Richard III*.¹⁹

There are instances in the drama where we appear to find exceptions to the rule but which, upon close scrutiny, turn out to be consistent with it. A good example is Iago's manipulation of Cassio as outlined in Chapter 1. In II.3, song appears to affect Cassio significantly, suppressing his reluctance to drink with its festive charm. Yet one must remember Iago is arguably the most profoundly Satanic figure in the canon and his victim here is demonstrably flawed – an easy target. Shakespeare thus positions music less as a formidable seducer and more as a meter of the lieutenant's weakness.²⁰

Nightingale from Jonson's *Bartholmew Fair* also appears to use his song 'A Caveat against Cutpurses' to lull his audience into a false sense of security while simultaneously inducing them to check their purses – and thereby reveal their location to the cutpurse Edgworth, who is cruising the crowd. Here is the first stanza and refrain:

NIGHTINGALE [Sings] *My masters and friends, and good people draw near,
And look to your purses, for that I do say;*

COKES Ha, ha, this chimes! Good counsel at first dash.

NIGHTINGALE *And though little money in them do you bear,
I cost more to get than to lose in a day.
You oft have been told,
Both the young and the old,
And bidden beware of the cutpurse so bold:
Then if you take heed not, free me from the curse,*

¹⁹ Shakespeare, *Richard III*, I.2.

²⁰ Shakespeare offers numerous, clear associations between Iago and Satan. See I.1.66, II.3.303-4), III.3.477-80, V.2.282 and V.2.364.

*Who both give you warning, for and the cutpurse.
Youth, youth, thou hadst better been starved by thy nurse,
Than live to be hangèd for cutting a purse.*²¹

The 'esquire' Bartholomew Cokes engages the performance with a fool's relish, responding enthusiastically to individual lines and demonstrating to those around him the security of his own purse, which of course is plucked in short order. Clearly, Nightingale's song plays a role in the cozening, but only because Cokes is a manifest idiot. Jonson's implication, like Shakespeare's above, seems more that song seduces only the weakest of minds.

A far deeper and more fascinating contender for exception to the convention of Orphic failure occurs in Francis Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* where Jasper is moved to almost murderous jealousy through his participation in a duet with his lover, Luce. Here, the couple have fled to the woods to elope and have just stopped to rest:

JASPER	Why, then, we'll sing, And try how that will work upon our senses.
LUCE	I'll sing, or say, or any thing but sleep.
JASPER	Come, little mermaid, rob me of my heart With that enchanting voice.

²¹ Jonson, III.5.56-67. At III.5.49, Nightingale states he will sing his lyrics 'To the tune of *Pagington's Pound*'. This refers to the tune 'Packington's Pound', which Simpson (p. 464) tells us was 'the most popular single tune associated with ballads before 1700'. Chappell, (I, p. 259) suggests the tune 'probably took its name from Sir John Packington, commonly called "lusty Packington"', a favourite of Elizabeth I. If there was an original 'Packington's Pound' ballad, it is currently lost and thus we may not compare its subject matter to that of Nighengale's apparently original words. For a discussion of some 'curious' songs set to the tune, see Chappell, I, p. 260.

LUCE You mock me, Jasper.

Song

JASPER *Tell me, dearest, what is love?*

LUCE *'Tis a lightning from above;*
'Tis an arrow, 'tis a fire,
'Tis a boy they call Desire,
'Tis a smile
Doth beguile

JASPER *The poor hearts of men that prove.*
Tell me more, are women true?

LUCE *Some love change, and so do you.*

JASPER *Are they fair, and never kind?*

LUCE *Yes, when men turn with the wind.*

JASPER *Are they froward?*

LUCE *Ever, toward*
Those that love, to love anew.

JASPER Dissemble it no more; I see the god
Of heavy sleep lay on his heavy mace
Upon your eyelids.

LUCE I am very heavy.²²

As Luce sleeps, the song's theme – 'women can be unfaithful just as men can' – indeed works on Jasper's senses, and he begins to unwind psychologically. Shortly, he resolves to wake Luce and 'test' her constancy – at sword point:

JASPER I'll try her, that the world and memory
May sing to aftertimes her constancy.

²² Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, III lns. 24-46.

[*Draws his sword*]

Luce, Luce, awake.

LUCE Why do you fright me, friend,
 With those distempered looks? What makes your sword
 Drawn in your hand! Who hath offended you?
 I prithee, Jasper, sleep; thou art wild with watching.

JASPER Come, make your way to heaven, and bid the world
 (With all the villainies that stick upon it)
 Farewell; you're for another life.²³

In twenty lines, Jasper transforms from contemplating the 'wealth and beauty' of his beloved's mind as she sleeps before him to entertaining this curiously cruel trial.²⁴ Of this scene, Zitner writes:

[W]e are certain that Beaumont is sending up the contrived alienations of bad romantic comedy. Yet he offers no obvious verbal clues; there is not so much as a wink in the rhetoric. Perhaps Beaumont counted on the boy actor's youth to make the point. But the scene comes off as bizarre rather than burlesque.²⁵

There is, in fact, a significant verbal clue to those familiar with popular song. Jasper's lines, 'I'll try her, that the world and memory | May sing in aftertimes to her constancy' seem a clear reference to the Patient Griselda story and probably refer directly to the last lines of the popular ballad 'Of Patient Grissel and a Noble Marquess' which read 'The Chronicles of lasting fame, | Shall evermore extoll the name | of patient Grissel, my

²³ Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, III, lns. 72-79.

²⁴ See Deloney, *The Garland of Good-will*, sig. F4^v. See the *Patient Grissel* discussion in Ch. 2.

²⁵ Sheldon P. Zitner, 'Introduction', in Francis Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ed. by Sheldon P. Zitner, 2nd edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 27.

most constant wife'.²⁶ Beaumont, then, at the least, appears to be targeting bad romantic comic narratives *in song culture*. Indeed this knowledge in hand makes the whole scene seem far less 'bizarre'. One of Beaumont's main tools of ridicule in the *The Knight* is the assembly and play of absurd extremes: Instead of railing, for example, at the ignorance of audience members who in Elizabethan/Jacobean times inserted themselves into the play via hissing, comments or banter with the actors, Beaumont grants the audience their wish – and inserts an audience member into the cast of the play who truly interferes. The humour comes in the resulting chaos as Beaumont's extreme 'plays out'. Likewise with song: instead of having a Sir Toby-like character who imposes his music on others, or an Ophelia character who suggests various ideas (such as the death of Polonius) through song, Beaumont creates Old Merrythought who communicates almost *entirely* through song. As this grotesque version of 'the singing character' parades about the stage, the most basic joke is the absurd disjunction with verisimilitude. Beaumont incorporates the same comic formula with 'Tell Me Dearest'. When the two lovers sing a song together in the potentially magical, Ovidian, sylvan (old fashioned, 'conventional') environment of the woods, Beaumont endows their song with *true* Orphic power and, again, lets the scene play out. The result, as with the rest of the play is, as Zitner notes, entirely bizarre – *that is the joke*. The idea that music, especially that of the solo (probably lute) ayre, the closest early modern style to that portrayed in the Orphic myth, has supernatural, persuasive power was, and is, Beaumont demonstrates, ultimately ridiculous. Playwrights, as we have seen, dramatized the silliness of Orphic power in their drama and Beaumont, in bringing

²⁶ Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, (ed. by Hattaway), III, lns.72-79.

Orphic power to life here in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* ironically not only adheres to the convention, he underlines it.

SIRENS

But what of the ultimate wielder of Orphic power: the courtesan, the woman for whom music is her ‘most powerful allurements’ for whom ‘its exquisite strength [...] can cause a man to forget himself, his world and his senses, and so be led entirely into her embrace.’²⁷ In her article ‘Sing Again Syren’ Linda Austern offers a number of persuasive instances of courtesans whom she argues represent stock examples of the siren figure inhabiting ‘countless works of the Elizabethan and succeeding eras’.²⁸

There are indeed numerous siren-like characters and scenes in early modern drama and it would not be a stretch to call their treatment conventional. Yet such instances in the drama are fewer than might be imagined. Of the 90 very ‘musical’ plays examined for this study, perhaps ten of them include female characters who attempt to use music to induce *any* reaction from anyone.²⁹ If we narrow the survey to include only obvious ‘sirens’ the number reduces to four. These are as follows: the ‘wonton widow’ Lelia in Beaumont and Fletcher’s *The Captain* (ca. 1612), the vengeful Edith in Fletcher and Massinger’s *Rollo, Duke of Normandy* (1617?), the courtesan Franceschina in Marston’s *The Dutch Courtesan* (ca.1605) and the infamous witch Erictho in his

²⁷ See Linda Austern, “‘Sing Again Syren’: The Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature”, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 42.3 (1989), 420-48, (p. 444).

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ This, the widest of nets, includes the fairies in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* who sing Titania to sleep (II.2.9-26), and the nymphs who, with satyrs, perform the same service for the scholar Sophos in Peele’s *Wily Beguiled* (Sc. 12.1290-1333). Compared this to twenty-two plays containing men who use music to persuade.

Sophonisba (ca.1606).³⁰ While there are surely other examples beyond the pool of plays surveyed here, it is compelling that, in every one of the above cases, Orphic power, while clearly alluded to, is also severely complicated and always to a large degree compromised.

LELIA

In *The Captain*, the gentlemen Julio and Angelo are obviously enchanted by Lelia, who behaves like a courtesan and clearly utilizes music to aid in her seductions.

She is described as ‘a cunning wonton widow’: a misguided woman bent on ensnaring a man who will afford her a good life.³¹ This is certainly how she behaves until Act IV.4 where she attempts to seduce her own father. Here, Lelia’s character morphs from the conventional comic character into something bizarre. For the bulk of four acts, she has put off wealthy young men from having sex with her out of wedlock, and now, it appears she runs ‘mad’ with lust, ‘the reverence of a child’ mutates into ‘into the hot affection of a lover’.³² At our most generous, we might view Lelia as a character who has crossed the boundaries of verisimilitude into the realm of myth, moving from someone with whom the audience can identify, to *something*, a misogynistic, allegorical impossibility. Perhaps, then, she meets every criterion of the kind of ‘siren’ one might expect to encounter. Yet what seems a blatant stereotype blurs significantly upon close reading. Beaumont and Fletcher’s ‘siren’,³³ firstly, does not sing. Both of Lelia’s decidedly arachnidian scenes in *The Captain* are augmented with song sung by a ‘boy’

³⁰ In fact, *Sophonisba* did not make the ‘top 90’. It was sought out to augment the examples here.

³¹ Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Captain*, p. 550 (in *Dramatis Personae*) and *passim*.

³² Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Captain*, IV.4.166-7.

³³ Lelia is described in Orphic terms throughout III.1 and labelled a ‘siren’ in III.1.57.

or by others, not by Lelia herself.³⁴ The songs the siren does not sing also do not work. In Act III.4, Lelia's musical seductions are thwarted by male friendship, and in v.2 they convince her father only that he should murder her, a sentence he commutes to merely abduction, imprisonment and eventually a forced marriage to Piso, a foolish gentleman.³⁵ There is no doubt that Beaumont and Fletcher attempt to assemble in Lelia a kind of 'siren for the street'. Yet, the woman Lodovico describes in almost satanic terms at the beginning of the play³⁶ ends up a substandard caricature whose Orphic powers seem as half-baked as the rest of her construction; we are a long way from the sirens of Homer.

EDITH

Similar inconsistencies surround Edith in *Rollo, Duke of Normandy*. In III.4 she invites the prince to her chambers where, with the aid of seductive music, she plans to lull him into complacency so that she may more easily take revenge on him for murdering her father. Like Lelia in *The Captain*, however, Edith is a siren who does not sing, and when she has Rollo in her power, his sorrowful repentance ironically dissuades *her* from completing her task:

EDITH Your tears sir,
 You weep extreamly: — Strengthen me now justice, —
 Why are these sorrowes Sir?

³⁴ Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Captain*, III.4.9-10 and IV.4.83-104. In IV.4, no stage direction is given in the Beaurline/Bowers edition or F1 for who actually sings this last song. Stage directions do suggest that Lelia enters either while the song is ending or just afterwards, thus suggesting the contemporary audience did not observe the singer.

³⁵ Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Captain*, v.1.10-24 and v.5.

³⁶ Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Captain*, I.1.45-56.

ROLLO Thou'lt never love me

If I should tell thee, yet there is no way left

Ever to purchase this blest Paradise,

But swimming thither in these teares.

EDITH [aside]. I stagger!

ROLLO Are they not drops of blood?

EDITH No.

ROLLO They are for blood then,

For guiltless blood, and they must drop my *Edith*,

They must drop till I have drown'd my mischiefes.

EDITH [aside]. If this be true I have no strength to touch him.³⁷

Edith, then, is a siren who does not sing and, in what appears to recall *Richard III*, is herself seduced by her intended victim. Again the siren allusions are overt, yet the practice of musical seduction is significantly, ironically, compromised.

ERICTHO

We come much closer to finding a legitimate siren in Marston's *Sophonisba* where music is clearly a force in the seduction of the lustful Libyan king, Syphax.

Continuously thwarted in his pursuit of Sophonisba (who ultimately commits suicide rather than betray vows made to her husband, Massinissa), Syphax enlists the help of the infamous witch Erictho, whom Marston appears to have appropriated from Book VI of Lucan's *Pharsalia*. The witch promises to conjure a 'charm, which Jove dare not hear twice' to bring Sophonisba to the bed of Syphax. The king must come to her lair 'speak not one word' and not 'admit one light' and there she will 'force | The air to music, and the shades of night | To form sweet sounds, [and] make proud thy raised

³⁷ Fletcher and Massinger, *Rollo, Duke of Normandy*, v.2.68-76.

delight'.³⁸ In this infernal bed trick, diegetic music and song are arguably the charm's key ingredient as the scene plays out:

Infernal music, softly.

ERICTHO Hark, hark! Now rise infernal tones,
 The deep-fetched groans
 Of labouring spirits that attend
 Erictho

ERICTHO (*Within.*) Erictho!

SYPHAX Now crack the trembling earth, and send
 Shrieks that portend
 Affrightment to the gods which hear
 Erictho

ERICTHO (*Within.*) Erictho!

A treble viol, and a bass lute, play softly within the canopy.

SYPHAX Hark. Hark! Now softer melody strikes mute
 Disquiet Nature. O thou power of sound,
 How thou dost melt me! Hark, now even heaven
 Gives up his soul amongst us. Now's the time
 When greedy expectation strains mine eyes
 For their loved object; now, Erictho willed,
 Prepare my appetite for love's strict gripes.
 O you dear founts of pleasure—blood and beauty—
 Raise active Venus, worth fruition
 Of such provoking sweetness. Hark, she comes!

A short song to soft music above.

Now nuptial hymns enforced spirits sing.

Hark, Syphax, hark!

Cantant.

³⁸ See Marston, *Sophonisba*, in *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, ed. by Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), IV.1.174-9.

Now hell and heaven rings
with music spite of Phoebus. Peace!

*Enter ERICTHO in the shape of SOPHONISBA, her face veiled, and hasteth
in the bed of SYPHAX*

She comes!

Fury of blood's impatient! Erictho,
'Bove thunder sit. To thee, egregious soul,
Let all flesh bend. Sophonisba, thy flame
But equal mine, and we'll joy such delight,
That gods shall not admire, but even spite!

*SYPHAX hasteneth within the canopy, as to SOPHONISBA's bed.*³⁹

Our siren here is obviously successful, and music clearly plays a large part in the gulling of Syphax. However, we are reminded of Cassio, and indeed of Bacon's remark, as we note that Syphax is overtly lustful without provocation from anyone. Despite the show and bluster, the music and 'short song' above buttress the gulling of the easiest possible mark: a lustful, evil, desperate character. It is also important to note here that the seduction plays out in almost the furthest realm of Renaissance drama fantasy space. Syphax is a mythical king deep in the bowels of a witch's lair in what is essentially a mythical world, despite the historic underpinnings. It is as 'far away' from reality as Prospero's island or the magical sylvan sphere beyond Shakespeare's Athens. It is a realm where audiences expect to find magical things, a place where sirens and their powers are expected in the same way that dragons are expected. And even here, it seems Orphic powers come up short.

³⁹ Marston, *Sophonisba*, IV.1.191-216.

FRANCESCHINA

In Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605), a whore *does* sing, and her singing does appear to corrupt a man of pure heart. Yet here again one finds something of an illusion, and Orphic power again undermined. At the end of Act I.1, the gallant Freevill invites his modest, preachy, almost-puritan friend, Malheureux to the chambers of Franceschina, the Dutch courtesan. 'The Family of Love', Freevill argues merrily, 'will make thee repent'.⁴⁰ Malheureux is reluctant but eventually agrees declaring, 'Well, I'll go to make her loathe the shame she's in. | The sight of vice augments the hate of sin.'⁴¹ Predictably, Malheureux is quickly seduced and song, as much as Franceschina's beauty, seems a key contributor. Here then is an excerpt:

Enter FRANCESCHINA with her lute

FREEVILL Come, siren, your voice!

FRANCESCHINA Will not you stay in mine bosom tonight, love?

FREEVILL By no means, sweet breast; this gentleman has vowed to see me chastely laid.

FRANCESCHINA He shall have a bed, too, if dat it please him.

FREEVILL Peace! you tender him offence. He is one of a professed abstinence.

Siren, your voice, and away!

[FRANCESCHINA] (*She sings to her lute*)

The dark is my delight
 So 'tis the nightingale's.
 My music's in the night,
 So is the nightingale's
 My body is but little,

⁴⁰ Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, ed. by David Crane (London and New York: A & C Black, 1997), I.1.146-7.

⁴¹ Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, I.1.159-60.

So is the nightingale's.
 I love to sleep 'gainst the prickle,
 So doth the nightingale.

[FREEVILL] Thanks. Buss! [*he and Franceschina kiss*] So. The night grows old;
 good rest.⁴²

As they leave her, Malheureux is clearly enthralled. 'Is she unchaste?' he exclaims,

Can such a one be damned?
 O love and beauty, ye two eldest seeds
 Of the vast chaos, what strong right you have
 Even in things divine, our very souls!⁴³

Austern describes this scene as a typical example of 'the lecherous foreign enchantress whose spells lay in her lute and voice', a 'stock figure on the stage, a magician of no less power than the witch or the rational, masculine Enchanter'.⁴⁴ Yet, when we examine Franceschina's Orphic power in context, it does not appear to rank with the sorcery of Prospero or Faust. Firstly, there is legitimate indication that Malheureux's soul is ripe for the picking. Consider that, just before she sings her song, Franceschina kisses Malheureux; and not only does he let her do so, he then kisses her back – hardly the behaviour one expects from someone of 'professed abstinence'.⁴⁵ Next, consider the nature of her song, for which we possess not only the words but also, in all

⁴² Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, 1.2.108-124.

⁴³ Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, 1.2.129-32.

⁴⁴ Linda Phyllis Austern, "'Art to Enchant'", *Musical Magic and its Practitioners in English Renaissance Drama*, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 115.2 (1990), 191-206 (p. 205).

⁴⁵ See Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, 1.2.85-87, SD.

likelihood, the music. The setting below, discovered by Andrew Sabol in 1960, dates to around 1615 and could easily be the original.⁴⁶

The darke is my de - light, Soe tis the Night - in -

5 gails. My mu - sick's in the nighte, soe is the - Nigh - tin gails. My

10 bo die is but lit - tle, but lit tle but lit - tle Soe is the Nigh tin gails. I

14 loue I loue to sleepe a ga - ste the pri ckle, the pri ckle Soe soe doth the Nigh tin

18 gale, Soe so doth the Nigh tin gail.

‘The Dark Is My Delight’, transcribed from Sabol, p. 230.

⁴⁶ The Setting can be found in BM Add. MS 24465. See Andrew J. Sabol, ‘Two Unpublished Stage Songs for The “Aery of Children”’, *Renaissance News*, 13.3 (1960), 222-232.

Sabol describes it as a ‘gaily lilting vocal line, tinged with an appealing wistfulness’ with a ‘charm’ that ‘does much to dispel any crudeness in the ditty’.⁴⁷ Singing the song confirms Sabol’s assessment and more: Franceschina’s song is a merry ‘toy’ indeed, and its playful tonality makes it very difficult to find its bawdy humour anything other than funny. Why then, does it seem so easily to seduce a man such as Malheureux who has spent many earlier lines professing his stout morality? There are a number of possibilities. The kisses noted suggest that perhaps Malheureux has already succumbed to Franceschina’s charms before her song even starts. At best, then, song’s power here can be compared to that of Erictho’s: a minor goad to an already passionate constitution. It could also be that the song’s decidedly light tone is meant to demonstrate that Malheureux is already so enthralled with Franceschina that even a ditty as childishly bawdy as hers does *not* have the power to ‘sober him up’ with its silliness. Moreover, we must note here that Franceschina also kisses and performs for Frevill, the confessed hedonist; neither her kisses nor her song affect him in any measurable way. Finally, this play was written in 1605. We are in the age of the boy companies for whom satire was their stock and trade. To exclude the stereotype of the ‘puritan’ hypocrite in Marston’s portrayal is to distort what he presents in Malheureux. What then of the power of song if only seduces moralizing hypocrites? Franceschina may well be an exemplary stage siren. Yet is clear that, as with male characters wielding song, our perception of the motif needs reworking to include what appears to be a conventional spectre of instability and underachievement. Orphic power makes regular appearances in the

⁴⁷ Sabol, pp. 231-2.

Elizabethan/Jacobean stage world, but when it comes to persuasion, the convention seems to be one of faltering rather than strength.

3.2 EXPOSING SONG: HARMONY'S TWO SIDES

In early modern drama, song's primary power is to reveal. Throughout the canon there are perhaps a thousand instances of song or parts of song illustrating a character's inner world. Yet within these instances there often runs an anxiety. Song's window to the soul often proves an unruly one, whispering its autonomy through mischievous exposures of characters' 'true harmony'. This tendency is surely fuelled in part by contemporary beliefs surrounding the nature of music and its place the cosmos. As suggested at the opening of this chapter, English society in the Renaissance - and particularly its literary culture - was heavily influenced by classical musical theory, especially the teachings of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and Ptolemy. The Greeks believed that the natural ratios existing within music (octaves, fourths and fifths) were directly related to similar ratios perceived in the empirical universe. To them, music exemplified an underlying mathematics linking all elements in a single, divine, 'harmonious' equation. Thus, the more harmonious the musical instruments, the dancers, the verse, the composition of body and soul, the nearer such phenomena were to the divine. Correlative to this was the belief that music could penetrate and influence, or 'tune' the internal harmony of living beings; music perceived as sad or violent-sounding, for example, was thought to engender sad or violent states in people. In Shakespeare's time, the most popular treatise on the subject of 'harmonious' music was that of Boethius (ca.480 – 524/26), who distilled classical notions of music into three types. The first two, considered

inaudible to the human ear,⁴⁸ he designated *musica mundana*, ‘the numerical relations controlling the movement of the stars and planets, the changing of the seasons, and the elements’ and *musica humana*, ‘which harmonises and unifies the body and soul and their parts’. The third type of music, *musica instrumentalis*, refers to ‘audible music produced by instruments or voices, which exemplifies the same principles of order, especially in the numerical ratios of musical intervals’. The idea of body and soul existing harmoniously with the rest of the divine universe as exemplified by music inspired Christian writers for centuries.⁴⁹

Any person familiar with human beings, and engaged thoughtfully with music, understands that classical concepts of music and its relation to human emotion ultimately derive from practical, empirical experience. Music moves most human beings, changes their emotions; this is evident in all cultures everywhere. Yet it is important to recognise and distinguish our equal familiarity with music’s remarkable expository power. The spectacle of a person expressing personal feelings through music, and especially through song, is probably as old as language. And we pay particular attention to human beings who appear to be emoting honestly through performance. Common to the most successful singers is a proficiency at imposing a personality onto a song, and from there, projecting the mix of personality and music outward in a way that is perceived as ‘honest’. When done well, audience members perceive an image of the performer’s soul where they may glimpse ‘the truth of them’.

⁴⁸ Various discussions regarding the audibility of the music of the spheres have been taken up by numerous authors since antiquity, Plato’s being, arguably, the most famous. See Plato, *The Republic*, p. 340 (X.617b-d).

⁴⁹ For an overview of the classical and medieval thought informing Western music, see J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout and Claude V. Palisca, *History of Western Music* (London: The Folio Society, 2008), pp. 5-37.

These glimpses resonate with our own visceral experiences of love, anger, loss, joy etc.; we linger in both the emotive music and the performer's 'honesty', and through it we entertain the exquisite nature of corresponding memories and the fresh emotions these, in turn, evoke. For whatever reason, we accept from the best singers the sweet, glorious, or terrible 'truths' of the human experience they offer, and we respond, internally, in kind. This experience, this harmonious link, is the experience of anyone who, for whatever reason, gives himself or herself up to a great singer and the emotive moment offered through song. This entirely human, indeed anthropological, reality is surely fundamentally contributive to Renaissance ideas surrounding the nature of music and its experience.

This dynamic of emoting through musical performance exists in inherently unstable conditions. There is always lurking the possibility, the threat, of error during performance. Ironically, the exposure of the singer's internal world can often be more 'honest' when the performance runs into trouble; we need only sing around the piano or the campfire to find examples. In the space of one Christmas carol, a shrewd observer can distinguish leaders from followers, introverts from extroverts, and the truly confident from those merely pretending to be. Exposure of the internal is arguably the most poignant when things go seriously, obviously wrong: when the singer, for whatever reason, loses control of the song. Many will not remember, for example, the complete program when Luciano Pavarotti sang at the Pengrowth Saddledome in Calgary Canada on 16 April 2002. None, however, will ever forget the moment his voice cracked in the dry air, his abrupt exit from the stage, and the caution in his voice

upon his return.⁵⁰ Directly related to this is our change of focus during such events. When a singer labours with a song and is losing the battle, our focus as audience moves from emoting and fantasizing to probing the singer on a more personal level; the performer appears more human, more *like us*; we wonder not what it might be like, for example, to sleep with him or her or ride in the limousine, but now what it *will* be like when this flustered and/or miserable soul leaves the stage, goes home and looks in the mirror. When performance goes awry at a youth recital, our focus changes from enjoying the music, the competition, and the magic of bright young talent, to focussing on the personality exposed through the musical wreck. ‘How has he been raised?’, we wonder; ‘Has her instruction been harsh or loving?’, we seek out the faces: the face of the contestant, the face of the teacher, the face of parent, to see what the unruly, indomitable music has exposed. To engage with music, especially song performance – for it is we who resonate, not some mechanism – is thus something of a social gamble: if we master music, we can offer our audience a stylized, controlled engagement with our inner world, the part of us we wish them to see; but if music, as so often happens, ‘gets away from us’, emancipates itself, our audience then may glimpse truths of us we may *not* want them to see. Some might say it is ‘disharmony’ that is exposed; yet this is not adequate. Music’s innate threat is the *genuine* exposure of our inner world: the tender, insecure, sensual, petulant, *real*, bestiality. The underbelly of harmony, musical and celestial, is in fact indifferent, dirty Nature, the inglorious, plain, fallible human creature. This is song’s sinister, mischievous undertone.

⁵⁰ For a detailed account, see Hobson, Louis B., ‘Toned-down Tenor Still Thrills’, in *Canoe.ca* <http://jam.canoe.ca/Music/Artists/P/Pavarotti_Luciano/ConcertReviews/2004/11/10/708967.html> [accessed 6 February 2013].

In Elizabethan/Jacobean England, where the majority of performers of song were amateurs, this ‘dark side’ of song and singing would have been the common experience of practically everyone. And it is not surprising, then, to find it illustrated throughout the drama. More often than not, of course, characters sing songs that merely illustrate their sentiments. ‘Where the bee sucks, there suck I: | In a cowslip’s bell I lie’, crows Ariel upon news of his release; ‘Golden slumbers kisse your eyes, | Smiles awake you when you rise’ sings Janicola to his grandchildren as he settles them into sleep.⁵¹ Yet, there are numerous examples of the ever-present risk of song’s betrayal: uncontrolled, often embarrassing, exposure.

THE LITTLE FRENCH LAWYER (CA. 1619)

There are various examples that treat this idea of exposure through music to various degrees of sophistication. A simple one occurs in Fletcher and Massinger’s *The Little French Lawyer* where we find the mild, diminutive lawyer, La-writ, singing lines from old chivalric ballads in Act II.3. In this scene, the gallant Dinant is just returning to where he and a friend planned to duel with the young Beaupré and his second, Verdone. Fearing that the more experienced Dinant might kill Beaupré, the young man’s sister sent Dinant on a wild goose chase, leaving his second Cleremont to face the two opponents alone. By chance, lawyer La-writ, who had never fought a duel in his life, was passing by Cleremont as he searched desperately for a second. Again, by pure chance, La-writ managed not only to disarm his opponent, but Cleremont’s as well.

⁵¹ See Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, v.1.88-9; and Dekker et. al., *Patient Grisill*, IV.2.99-100.

Here we find La-writ after his unlikely triumph, comically possessed by what he describes later as his ‘martial part’.⁵²

LA-WRIT *sings within, then Enters.*

DINANT What’s that?

This is a rascally voice, sure it comes this way.

LA-WRIT *He strook so hard, the Bason broke,
And Tarquin heard the sound—*

DINANT What mister thing is this? let me survey it.

LA-WRIT *And then he struck his neck in two.*

DINANT This may be a rascal, but ’tis a mad rascal,
What an Alphabet of faces he puts on?
Hey, how it fences? if this should be the rogue,
As ’tis the likeliest rogue I see this day—

LA-WRIT *Was ever man for Ladies sake? down, down.*

DINANT And what are you, good sir? *down, down, down, down.*

LA-WRIT What’s that to you, good sir? *downe, downe.*

DINANT A pox on you, good sir, *downe, downe, downe,*
You with your Buckram bag, what make you here?
And from whence come you?—I could fight with my shadow
now.

LA-WRIT Thou fierce man, that like sir *Lancelot* dost appear,
I need not tell thee what I am, nor eke what I make here.⁵³

La-writ’s line ‘Was ever a man for a lady’s sake’ misquotes the first line of ‘Guy of Warwicke’ first registered in 1592 and clearly popular during much of the seventeenth century.⁵⁴ Here is the first stanza:

⁵² This is how La-writ describes his frenzy in v.2.3 after being beaten soundly by Judge Vertaigne and Champernell in IV.6.

⁵³ Fletcher and Massinger, *The Little French Lawyer*, II.3.17-34.

Was ever Knight for Ladies sake,
 So tost in love, as I Sir Guy,
 For Philice fair that Lady bright,
 As ever man beheld with mortal eye:
 She gave me leave my self to try,
 The valiant Knight with shield & speare,
 Ere that her love she would grant me,
 Which made me venture fare and neere.⁵⁵

Sixteen stanzas of Herculean adventures follow, replete with various infidels and terrible beasts. Guy's last martial act is the hewing 'a hous | out of a craggy Rock of stone' where he lives 'like a Palmer poor' daily begging food from his beloved Phillis to whom Guy does not reveal himself until the day of his death.⁵⁶ The rest of La-writ's lines come from 'The Noble Acts of Arthur of the Round Table', printed in Thomas Deloney's *The Garland of Good Will* (ca. 1586), a very popular collection, as we have seen. Many songs in *The Garland* offer quasi-historical, legendary subject matter. The song was also printed as a broadside,⁵⁷ and both forms were notably popular during the

⁵⁴ For the ballad's citation in the Register, see *AI* #2118 (1592), #1057 (1625), and #2119 (1675). For the ballad's history, see *PMOT*, I, pp. 171-2; and Simpson, pp. 283-4.

⁵⁵ Anon., 'Guy of Warwicke' (London: John Wright, ca. 1650), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 21 January 2013].

⁵⁶ Anon., 'Guy of Warwicke', passim.

⁵⁷ Entitled 'The Noble Acts Newly Found of Arthur of the Table Round', it was first registered in 1603 and, although attributed to Deloney, it is possible that he imported it from a still earlier source. See *AI* #1951, #2107 and #2915. An extant broadside of the ballad has been dated c. 1620 and there are numerous copies of the ballad dating between 1663 and 1680 printed on the same sheet as another entitled 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield'. See 'The Noble Acts Newly Found, of Arthur of the Table Round' (London: William Jaggard?, 1620?), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013]; and, for example, 'The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield' (London: F. Coles, T. Vere, and J. Wright, 1663-1674), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013].

seventeenth century.⁵⁸ The ballad recounts an epic battle between Sir Lancelot and the dreaded Tarquin. La-writ's first lines 'He strook so hard, the bason broke | And Tarquin heard the sound' come from stanza 12 as Lancelot first approaches the Tarquin's cave:

She brought him to a Rivers side,
And also to a tree:
Whereas a copper Bason hung,
His fellows shields to see.

He stroke so hard the Bason broke,
When the Tarquin heard the sound,
He drove a horse before him straight,
Where on a Knight lay bound.⁵⁹

La-writ's line 'and then he struck his neck in two' comes from the last stanza of the ballad as Lancelot, at last, dispatches Tarquin and frees '[f]rom prison threescore Knights and foure'.

It is clear that the little French lawyer's 'martial part' has run amok, and his ridiculous overconfidence is in fact one of the chief entertainments of the play. La-writ's confidence is out of control, out of balance. His boastful, aggressive behaviour link him to braggart soldiers such as Quintiliano in Chapman's *May Day* or Armado from *Love's Labour's Lost* or even more 'humorous' characters like the irascible Pistol,

⁵⁸ Broadside printings are listed in the previous note. The first of many editions of *The Garland* was probably printed in the late 1580s (see Ch. 1, note 9). Non-dramatic incorporations include a five-stanza parody of the ballad beginning 'When *James* in Scotland first began' with the direction 'To the tune of When Arthur first in Court Began' found in 'R.P.', *Choyce Drollery, Songs & Sonnets* (London: Robert Pollard and John Sweeting, 1656), pp. 70-2, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013].

⁵⁹ Thomas Deloney, 'The Noble Acts of Arthur of the Round Table', in *The Garland of Good Will* (London: Robert Bird, 1631), sig. C6^r-C8^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013].

whose beating at the end of *Henry V* resembles La-writ's eventual fate. Yet, mainly through his singing, Fletcher and Massinger offer the play audience another dimension of La-writ: he is embarrassingly immature and socially backward. La-writ's singing instantaneously brings us into the internal world of the sheltered, 'book-smart', emotionally underdeveloped Elizabethan geek, lacking any practical life experience beyond the law court, the word and the page. This is an innocent, little *boy* lawyer, with a head still awash with romances, knights and dragons. And as he illustrates his heroics with what he believes are appropriate songs, La-writ has no idea how they have mischievously, baldly exposed him.

I THE HONEST WHORE (1604)

Bellafront, in *The Honest Whore*, exhibits a subtler, more ambiguous version of this kind of exposure. A number of scholars have remarked that the songs she sings reflect her moral transformation from brazen courtesan at the beginning of the play, to repentant, reformed sinner at its end.⁶⁰ Perusal of the respective songs finds this overtly apparent, yet her initial cluster, as she banters with her pander Roger, is especially informative. This passage marks Bellafront's first entrance:

Enter ROGER with a stool, cushion, looking-glass, and chafing-dish; those being set down, he pulls out of his pocket a vial with white colour in it, and two boxes, one with white, another red, painting. He places all things in order and candle

⁶⁰ See Gary Taylor, Andrew J. Sabol and others, 'Middleton, Music, and Dance, in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Culture: A Companion to The Collected Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 119-159 (p. 138); Walker, p. 426; and William R. Bowden, *The English Dramatic Lyric* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), p. 161.

by them, *singing with the ends of old ballads as he does it*. At last BELLAFRONT, as he rubs his cheek with the colours, whistles within.

ROGER Anon, forsooth

[...]

Enter BELLAFRONT not full ready, without a gown. She sits down; with her bodkin curls her hair; colours her lips.

BELLAFRONT Where's my ruff and poker, you block-head?

ROGER Your ruff and your poker are engendering together upon the cupboard of the court, or the court-cupboard.

BELLAFRONT Fetch'em. – Is the pox in your hams, you can go no faster?

[She throws an object at him]

Exit

BELLAFRONT I'll catch you, you dog, by and by. Do you grumble?

She sings
Cupid is a god,
As naked as my nail;
I'll whip him with a rod,
If he my true love fail.

[Enter Roger with a ruff and poker]

ROGER There's your ruff. Shall I poke it?

BELLAFRONT Yes, honest Roger – no, stay; prithee, good boy, hold here.

[Roger holds looking-glass and candle]

[She sings]

Down, down, down, down, I fall
Down, and arise I never shall.

ROGER Troth, mistress, then leave the trade if you shall never rise.

BELLAFRONT What trade, Goodman Abram?

ROGER Why, that of down and arise, or the falling trade.⁶¹

⁶¹ Middleton and Dekker, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, Sc. 6.1-42; emphasis mine. Several more song fragments occur just after these.

One is first struck by the fact that the pander Roger's 'ends of old ballads' are not included in the printing, while Bellafront's are. There are a number of reasonable explanations for this, yet the stage directions make one quite clear: Roger's songs are not important enough to list; they are interchangeable. This, in a way, puts Bellafront's songs in a kind of relief: hers, it seems, *are* significant. As Roger plays wittily on Bellafront's snippet 'Down, down, down, down I fall' etc. (in a way that brings the song into a relation with Bellafront's 'falling profession'), we find suggestion that perhaps we too are being coaxed to scrutinize all the songs Bellafront sings in light of her status as a courtesan. The majority of her song snippets, while yet to be linked to a source, offer a relatively clear 'surface message', for they are obviously bawdy in nature and thus suggest they function as William Bowden argues: to augment 'the characterization of [Bellafront] as a courtesan who is perfectly satisfied with her way of life'.⁶² The one allusion for which we do have a source, however, complicates this reading. Gary Taylor and Andrew Sabol point out that Bellafront's snippet 'Down, down, down, down, I fall | Down, and arise I never shall' comes from 'one of John Dowland's most famous melancholy songs', beginning 'Sorrow Stay, Lend True Repentant Teares'.⁶³ Here is the full lyric from Dowland's *Second Booke of Songs or Ayres*:

Sorrow stay, lend true repentant teares,
 To a woefull wretched wight,
 Hence dispaire with thy tormenting feares:
 Doe not, O doe not my heart, poor heart affright,
 Pitty, pittie, pittie, help now or never,
 Mark me not to endlesse paine,

⁶² Bowden, p. 161.

⁶³ See Taylor and Sabol, p. 138.

Alas I am condemned ever,
 No hope, no help, ther doth remaine,
 But downe, downe, downe, downe I fall,
 Downe and arise I never shall.⁶⁴

Taylor and Sabol argue that ‘at least some members of the audience would be familiar with the larger musical and textual context of one of Dowland’s most famous melancholy songs, which clearly establishes that Bellafront is contemplating damnation and repentance’.⁶⁵ It is hard to disagree. Consideration of this reading in light of Bowden’s highlights what seems to be the affect of Dowland’s two lugubrious lines appearing in the midst of all the bawdy song. They are ambiguous in their signification no matter how an actor might choose to play them. Even sarcastically sung, a cultural insider could not help but suspect as Taylor and Sabol do: that the brazen Bellafront may be harbouring some guilt and dread. With the implication of the lines in hand, the whole passage reminds of Ophelia, whose similar snippets of song, as we shall see, percolate through her discourse exposing, it appears, something of her inner world. Of course, one must add that, unlike Ophelia, Bellafront is in possession of her faculties; yet this arguably emphasises the affect. Even though Roger plays on the lines, Bellafront does not seem to consider their ominous implication. They seem to flit in and out of her mind, like a pang of guilt pulsing from the unconscious. Like La-writ, Bellafront’s engagement with song opens her to exposures that are far more personal that she probably intends.

⁶⁴ John Dowland, *The Second Booke of Songs or Ayers* (London: Thomas Morley, 1600), sig. C^v-C2^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 18 January 2013].

⁶⁵ Taylor and Sabol, p. 138.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING (1598)

In Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Benedick and Beatrice argue that love will turn them into emotional weaklings. They imagine these weaklings as singing characters. Although their imagined personae do not connect to one specific song, they do recall archetypal male and female singing characters crystalized enough to be recognised by cultural insiders. And again, the prime feature of these imagined – and in Benedick's case comically realized – archetypes is their embarrassing emotional exposure.

Beginning with Benedick, we find him in I.1.184-29 boasting to his friends that if he ever falls in love, he should be consigned to the naïve, insipid sphere of ballad lore:

DON PEDRO I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

BENEDICK With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord, not with love: prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and hang me up at the door of a brothel house for the sign of blind Cupid.

DON PEDRO Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

BENEDICK If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat, and shoot at me, and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam.

Ross Duffin links Benedick's reference to the 'ballad maker's pen' etc. to 'A Song of a Beggar and a King' contained in Richard Johnston's 1612 ballad collection entitled *A Crowne-Garland of Goulden Roses*.⁶⁶ The song recounts the story of an African king,

⁶⁶ For the entire ballad, see Richard Johnson, *A Crowne-Garland of Goulden Roses* (London: John Wright, 1612), sigs. D4^r-D6^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013].

Cophetua, who rejects love until he spies through his window a beggar with whom he is instantly, perhaps supernaturally, smitten. Even though there is nothing in the text here linking directly to the ballad, Duffin's conjecture seems likely, for the ballad is a favourite of Shakespeare's during this period of his writing, and he often incorporates it into scenes where characters are renouncing love such as in *Love's Labours Lost* or, as with Falstaff's reference to Cophetua in *2 Henry IV*, where characters are about to have *their* love renounced.⁶⁷ Benedick's next reference, 'hang me in a bottle like a cat' etc. recalls the Elizabethan practice of enclosing cats in baskets for use as archery targets, and positions him to be figuratively pierced less by the arrows of cupid and more by those of Adam Bell, hero of the immensely popular 'Robin Hood' ballad 'Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly'.⁶⁸ Afterwards, Benedick suggests, he will wowl pathetically as would a smitten male ballad singer. This is of course just what the audience finds in v.2 where the now lovesick Benedick comically sings the beginning of a ballad entitled 'The God of Love' the first stanza of which reads,

The god of love that sits above
And knows me and knows me,
How sorrowful I do serve,

⁶⁷ See Shakespeare, *The Second Part of King Henry IV*, v.3.83. In v.5, prince Hal, now Henry V famously renounces his old life, along with his friendship with Falstaff. See p. 86, note 71 for the multiple references to the ballad in Shakespeare. In Thomas Deloney's *The Gentle Craft* (1597) 'Cofetua' is referenced in a context precisely matching the ballad story. See Thomas Deloney, *The Gentle Craft*, in *The Works of Thomas Deloney* ed. by Francis Oscar Mann (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 94. Cophetua is also mentioned in Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*, folio version, IV, III.4.41.

⁶⁸ Printed fragments of this ballad go back to the early sixteenth century. It was entered into the Stationer's register at least nine times between 1557 and 1655 and four times between 1582 and 1615. See Hyder *AI* #10, #11 and #2966. It is referenced in Dekker's *Satiriomastix*, IV.3.118, and in Middleton's *The Roaring Girl*, ed. by Coppélia Kahn, in *Thomas Middleton The Collected Works*, gen. eds. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), I.1.119.

Grant my request that at the least
 She show me, she show me
 Some pity when I deserve,
 That every brawl may turn to bliss
 To joy, with all that joyful is;
 Do this, my dear, and bind me
 For ever and ever your own,
 And as you here do find me,
 So let your love be shown
 For till I hear this unity
 I languish in extremity.⁶⁹

The ballad by William Elderton, which appears to have been very popular,⁷⁰ was registered to Alexander Lacey in 1567-8.⁷¹ The speaker is a melancholy man who pleads pathetically to his mistress. As we read Benedick's despair that he 'was not born under a rhyming planet' and 'cannot woo in festival terms',⁷² it is easy to find him comically resembling precisely the character he so caustically conjures in Act I. Amidst the sport of the comedy here, it is easy to forget the 'festival terms' under which Benedick finds himself so inept are the only means of wooing he knows: his turning to them for aid is in itself confirmation of his inexperience. Moreover the genre of song he chooses, a popular ballad rather than a more sophisticated lute ayre, further demonstrates his social deficiencies. Yet, it is the performance of the song that exposes

⁶⁹ Printed in Duffin, p. 174.

⁷⁰ A moralization of the ballad entitled 'The Complaint of a Sinner, Vexed with Paine, Desyring the Joye, that Ever Shall Remayne After W.E. Moralized' by William Birch was registered to Richard Applay in 1562-3 (*AI* #357); Another ballad entitled 'The Answere to the iijth Ballet Made to the Godes o Love' was registered to William Griffith in 1562-3 (*AI* #83); Still another ballad bearing what appears to be an identical title to Birch's work was registered to Thomas Colwell in 1564-5 (*AI* #357).

⁷¹ See *AI* #987.

⁷² Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, v.2.30-1.

him fully. What would surely have been a comically horrendous recitation of ‘The God of Love’ is presented here as a striking demonstration of Benedick’s claims: emotional immaturity is physically coming out of him. The song performance is the ‘proof’, the exposure of his underdeveloped inner harmony represented as only song can do. The decidedly Petrarchan pathos of ‘The God of Love’ still further underlines the ridiculousness of the whole spectacle; there is little more embarrassing than an insecure singer desperately grappling with mediocre lines. The combination of all these factors creates a spectacle of emotional chaos. Certainly love has rendered Benedick emotionally vulnerable, but the song with which he chooses to impart his feelings inadvertently makes everything *worse*, betraying, indeed trumpeting, his embarrassingly awkward internal nature to the ears and gaze of everybody.

Beatrice’s expression of her reluctance to marry through an allusion to popular song is fundamentally akin to Benedick’s. Her reference occurs in a similar discursive space – a light banter with Don Pedro about marriage – just after we learn of Claudio and Hero’s engagement:

DON PEDRO In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

BEATRICE Yea, my lord, I thank it, poor fool it keeps on the windy side of care: my cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUDIO And so she doth, cousin.

BEATRICE Good Lord, for alliance: Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sunburnt. I may sit in a corner and cry ‘Heigh-ho for a husband’.

DON PEDRO Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEATRICE I would rather have one of your father’s getting; hath your grace ne’er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

DON PEDRO Will you have me, lady?

BEATRICE No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days, your grace is too costly to wear every day.⁷³

Beatrice's line 'Heigh-ho for a husband', links to a manuscript ballad contained in John Gamble's *Commonplace Book* (1659), the refrain of which begins 'Oh, oh, oh, for a husband'.⁷⁴ Ross Duffin argues that Beatrice refers either to it or to 'some antecedent'.⁷⁵ As this ballad dates sixty years after the play, the connection may seem a stretch. Yet, there is further evidence strongly suggesting that Duffin here is correct. There is an anonymous ballad from the 1590's entitled 'Watkin's Ale' whose first stanza contains significant verbal echoes of the Gamble MS's corresponding stanza. Both are offered below for consideration:

Stanza 1 from Gamble (1659):

There was a maid this other day
 sighed sore, God wot,
 And she said that wives might sport and play,
 but maidens they might not.
 Full fifteen years have pass'd, she said,
 since I, poor soul, was born.
 Oh, if I chance for to die a maid,
 Apollo is forsworn.⁷⁶

Stanza 1 from 'Watkin's Ale' (c. 1590):

⁷³ Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, II.1.237-50.

⁷⁴ New York Public Library MS Drexel 4257, in Duffin, p. 195.

⁷⁵ Duffin, p. 195.

⁷⁶ Duffin, p. 195.

There was a maid this other day,
 and she would needs go forth to play.
 And as she waked she sighed and said,
 I am afraid to die a mayd.⁷⁷

To consider along with these, is the only extant ballad entitled ‘Hey Ho, for a Husband’. It is in the Pepys collection (c. 1675) and its full title reads, ‘Hey ho, for a Husband. | Or the willing Maid’s wants made known’. While this ballad does not offer the phrase ‘Hey ho, for a husband’ beyond its title, the ballad is, like the Gamble MS and ‘Watkin’s Ale’, about a maid desperate to marry. Here for example is the third stanza:

Tis nown I am a buksome Lass
 As any lives in the Shire,
 If any young man will me imbrace
 For to heighten his desire,
 I will love him still
 He shall have his [fi]ll
 Of joyes which for Lovers are fit,
 For fifteen years of age am I
 And have never a Suitor yet.⁷⁸

Not only do all of these ballads feature young girls desperate for marriage, they all share the same underlying ethos: impatience for a husband leads maids to disaster.⁷⁹ In the

⁷⁷ Anon., ‘Mother Watkins Ale A Warning Wel Wayed, Though Counted a Tale’ (London: n.p., c. 1590) in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 21 January 2013].

⁷⁸ Anon. ‘Hey ho, for a Husband. | Or the Willing Maid’s Wants Made Known (London: F. Coles, T. Vere, J. Wright, and J. Jarrk, 1674-1679), in *EBBA* <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 21 January 2013].

⁷⁹ It is, of course, impossible to determine whether these ballads are all versions of one ‘original’, yet they surely demonstrate a trend of motif: they are clearly of the same ‘stock’.

Gamble manuscript, the speaker ends up marrying an old man who, ‘lay[ing] by her side | [can] nought but sigh and groan’, prompting her exclaim, ‘Twer better to lie alone | Oh! oh! oh! with a husband’.⁸⁰ In ‘Watkin’s Ale’ the speaker’s eagerness leaves her pregnant and abandoned. And, as we have seen, there is overt suggestion in ‘Hey Ho for a Husband’ that the young speaker will suffer the same kind of fate for the same reason. Beyond the verbal echo between the Gamble MS refrain and the ballad title, Gamble and ‘Watkins’ Ale’ also echo ‘There was a maid this other day’ a phrase that, while seeming commonplace in its character, does not in fact appear beyond these two songs in any of the substantial ballad collections available to me. It seems possible then that these three ballads are related to an antecedent featuring some incarnation of the phrase ‘Heigh-Ho, For a Husband’. And it seems probable that the term was associated around the time of *Much Ado About Nothing* with ballad maids whose impatience to marry engenders misery.

Turning back to the play, then, it seems clear that Beatrice, in her use of ‘Heigh-ho for a husband’, expresses her disdain of love in a manner strikingly akin to that of Benedick. Her comment ‘Good Lord, for alliance: Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sunburnt. I may sit in a corner and cry “Heigh-ho for a husband”’ in her conversation with Don Pedro, is tongue-in-cheek, sarcastically characterising herself as the desperate, foolish speaker portrayed in ‘Heigh-ho’-type ballads. Support for this paradigm is found later in George Wilkins’ *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage* (1607), where the Clown delivers hero Scarborough’s message to young Clare, informing her

⁸⁰ Duffin, p. 195.

that, although they have taken vows of marriage before God – an act Clare’s father appeared almost desperate to facilitate, he has in fact formally married someone else:

CLOWN From London am I come, though not with pipe and drum,
 Yet I bring matter, in this poor paper,
 Will make my young mistress, delighting in kisses,
 Do, as all Maidens will, hearing of such an ill,
 As to have lost the thing they wished most,
 A Husband, a Husband, a pretty sweet Husband,
 Cry O, O, O, and alas, and at last ho, ho, ho, as I do.⁸¹

Moreover, with the ‘Heigh-ho’ remark better understood, it appears Shakespeare’s play with the ballad in *Much Ado About Nothing* continues for a few more lines. If we assume that Beatrice refers to the ballad preserved in the Gamble MS, or something similar, her exchange with Don Pedro after the ‘Heigh-ho’ reference is compelling, for it seems to echo its key messages. Immediately after crying ‘Heigh-ho for a husband’, the prince offers to find her one, to which she replies ‘I would rather have one of your father’s getting; hath your grace ne’er a brother like you?’ The suggestion (to anyone familiar with the play) that Beatrice might marry Don Pedro’s villainous brother, Don John, echoes the idea that a hasty coupling might result in a terrible match or worse. In response to Beatrice’s query, as if perhaps he is, in fact, aware of the Gamble MS ballad (in which the maid marries an older man), the older Don Pedro offers himself as a possible husband. To which Beatrice replies ‘No, my lord, unless I might have another

⁸¹ Wilkins, *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage*, sig. C3^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013].

for working-days, your grace is too costly to wear every day'.⁸² Mares glosses these lines: 'Beatrice sidesteps Don Pedro's question: he is too good for her, like Sunday clothes on a working day.'⁸³ While this might seem the message on the surface, it also appears Beatrice here again cites the Gamble MS ballad. Consider the last stanza and refrain:

To be a wedded wife, she said,
 a twelve-month is too long,
 As I have been, poor soul, she said,
 that am both fair and young,
 When other wives may have their will
 that art not like to me.
 I mean to go and try my skill
 and find some remedy.
 Oh! oh! oh! with a husband
 What a life lead I.
 Out upon a husband,
 Such a husband, fie! fie! fie!⁸⁴

There is clear suggestion then that Beatrice's banter echoes the sentiments expressed by the speaker here – that marriage to an older man will necessitate the need 'to find some remedy', 'another' as Beatrice puts it, 'for working days.' This may better explain Mares' reading of Leonato's 'embarrassed' extraction of Beatrice from the conversation a few lines later.⁸⁵ It seems he is familiar with the ballad too, and thus with what

⁸² Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, II.1.249-50.

⁸³ Mares, *Much Ado*, p. 89.

⁸⁴ Duffin, p. 195.

⁸⁵ Mares, *Much Ado*, p. 89.

Beatrice implies – that if married to his host, she would soon cuckold him. Perhaps then the gentlemanly Leonato believes this level of bantering to be approaching the limits of decorum. Ultimately, then, Beatrice, in quoting ‘Heigh-ho for a husband’, conjures herself not only in a weakened social position because of love; she also imagines herself as emotionally weakened to the point that her weakness will be, like the singer of the ballad, and later of course, Benedick, embarrassingly exposed to all.

WILY BEGUILLED (CA. 1602)

In the comedy *Wily Beguiled*, written around the same time as *Much Ado About Nothing*, George Peele seems to bring Benedick and Beatrice’s imagined ballad singers to life in the characters of Will Cricket and Pegge Pudding.⁸⁶ Their names alone identify them as such. Beyond ‘cricket’ denoting ‘A lively or merry person’ during the period, the character’s low social status and seemingly effervescent extempore songs throughout the play make it clear that he is very much a cricket, i.e., a ‘lively little singer of lively little songs’.⁸⁷ As the play moves along, it becomes clear Cricket is not simply a character like La-writ whose references to popular music mark his basic characterization as much as they reflect his mood; Cricket’s speech is so coloured by ballad commonplaces that he comes off as almost allegorical, as if to some degree he

⁸⁶ *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama* dates the play to 1602. W.W. Greg in the Malone Society reprint (1913) writes, ‘[that the play is appreciably older than the first edition [1606] is generally admitted. Echoes of various plays found in the present piece confirm the evidence of an allusion to the expedition to Cadiz (ln. 68) in suggesting a date not long after 1596’. Greg also adds that ‘the Prologue is addressed by the Juggler as “humorous George”, a fact that has suggested the ascription of the play to George Peele’. See *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama*, ed. by A.R. Braummuller and Michael Hattaway, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 430; and Peele, p. vi-vii.

⁸⁷ This sort of allusion is a commonplace. See ‘cricket, n.1.’, def. 2, *OED* <www.oed.com> [accessed 23 January 2013].

represents male ballad characters in general. Consider the following example, in which Cricket prepares to propose marriage to Pegge.

WILL CRICKET But stay, Ile see how I can woo before I goe: they say, Use makes perfectnesse:

Look you now, suppose this were Pegge,

Now I set my cap oth to side on this fashion (do ye see?) then say I,

Sweet hony, bonny, suger candie, Pegge,

Whose face more faire, then Brocke my fathers Cow,

Whose eyes do shine like bacon rine,

Whose lips are blew of azure hew,

Whose crooked nose downe to her chin doth bow

For you know I must begin to commend her beautie.⁸⁸

When the opportunity to propose finally avails itself, we observe the refined version of these, what Benedick might call, ‘festival terms’:

WILL CRICKET Now Ile clap me as close to hir as Jones buttockes of a close stoole, and come over hir with my rowling, rattling, rumbling eloquence.

Sweet Pegge, honny Pegge, fine Pegge, my nutting my sweeting, my Love, my dove, my honnie, my bonnie, my ducke, my deare and my deareling:

Grace me with thy pleasant eyes,

And love without delay:

And cast not with thy crabbed lookes

A proper man awaie.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Peele, sig. C2^r. My source for this play is Malone Society Reprints. The layout is strange and that is reflected here.

⁸⁹ Peele, sig. C4^v.

Cricket's idiomatic speech and extempore verse are a clear send up of the woeful lyrics often found in ballads. These sorts of 'ballad outbursts' occur throughout the action, giving the impression that Cricket has been extracted from the ballad world and inserted into that of the play. Observing Cricket's actions in *Wily Beguiled*, there is also the sense that he, to a large degree, operates in ways similar to ballads in early modern society: through his colourful, rustic, idiomatic and often versified language, Cricket expresses his feelings in a simple, straightforward way; like a libellous ballad, he has a habit of publicizing uncomfortable and embarrassing information; and, also like a ballad, Cricket has a habit of bringing people the news. In the wooing scene, for example, Cricket only uses 'rowling, rambling eloquence' because he believes it 'customary' (i.e. necessary but unfamiliar procedure) to begin a marriage proposal by 'commending' Pegge's beauty.⁹⁰ Yet, once the formalities are over, he tells us,

[...] Then I will tell her plainly, that I am in love with her, over my hight shooes, and then I will tell her that I do nothing of nights but sleepe and thinke on her, and specially of mornings:

And that does make my stomacke so rise, and Ile be sworn, I can turn me three or foure bowles of porredge over in a morning after breakfast.⁹¹

As silly as he may sound, Cricket here describes his feelings simply and directly.⁹²

Later in the play he affirms his straightforward nature to the Clerk:

⁹⁰ Peele, sig. C2^r.

⁹¹ Peele, sig. C2^r.

⁹² Compare to that of Lelia's descriptions of her love at the beginning of Sc. 8, or those of the scholar Sophos in Sc. 12, or those of Romeo in Act I of *Romeo and Juliet*.

I am none of these sneaking fellows that will stand thrumming of Caps, and studying upon a matter, as long as Hunkes with the great head has been about to show his little wit in the second part of his paultrie poetrie: but if I begin with a wooing, Ile end with wedding.⁹³

Cricket's simple directness makes those above his station uncomfortable; this often involves his revealing truths about them they do not wish others to hear. As Gripe the old usurer, for example, drinks with Churms the corrupt lawyer, and Ploddal, a wealthy yeoman, as they negotiate to wed Gripe's daughter Lelia to the Ploddall's doltish son, Cricket embarrassingly reminds the lawyer to be careful he does not drink excessively, for last time,

[...] You were bumbasted, that your lubblierly
Legges would not carrie your lobcocke bodie;
When you made an infusion of your stinking excrements,
In your stalking implements:
O you were plaguy frayd, and fowly raide.⁹⁴

As we encounter again Cricket's 'bubbling verse' kind of speech we find here the suggestion of a libel, the short often derogatory verses routinely posted in public places during the period often by local people seeking to shame those of higher station.⁹⁵

⁹³ Peele, sig. G2^r.

⁹⁴ Peele, sig. C^r.

⁹⁵ For a detailed survey of libels and libellous ballads during the English Renaissance, see *Early Stuart Libels*, ed. by Alastair Bellany and Andrew McRae. Early Modern Literary Studies, Text Series 1 (2005) <<http://www.earlystuartlibels.net/htdocs/index.html>> [accessed 23 January 2013].

Cricket's habit of bringing people 'news' occurs later in this same scene as he remarks to Ploddall and the rest:

WILL CRICKET But Landlord: I can tell you news yfaith,

There is one Sophos, a brave genman, heele wipe your sonne Peters nose, of
Mistress Lelia, I can tell you he loves her well.

GRIPE Nay, I trow:

WILL CRICKET Yes I know, for I am sure I saw them close together at Pub noddie,
in her Closet.

GRIPE But I am sure she loves not him.

WILL CRICKET Nay, I dare take it on my death she loves him. For hees a scholler:
[...]

Landlord, pray ye be not angrie with me, for speaking my conscience.⁹⁶

Near the end of the play, Cricket again provides news to Fortunatus, soldier and friend to Sophos the scholar:

FORTUNATUS What moues my father to these uncouth fits?

WILL CRICKET Faith Sir, hees almost mad: I thinke he cannot tell you:

And therefore, I presuming Sir, that my wit is something better than his, at this
time (do you marke Sir?)

Out of the profound circumnabulation of my supernatural wit Sir (do you
understand?)

Will tel you the whole superfluity of the matter Sir:⁹⁷

This time the news is a synopsis of events as they stand.

⁹⁶ Peele, sig. C^v.

⁹⁷ Peele, sig. I3^v.

Brave Englishman, quoth one,
 Tis I will beg thy life:
 Nay, quoth the second, it is I,
 If I must be thy wife:
 Tis I, the third did say;
 Nay, quoth the fourth, tis I:
 So each one after other said,
 still waiting his reply.

A sweet thing is love,
 It rules both heart and mind;
 There is no comfort in the world
 to women that are kind.¹⁰⁰

Clearly then Pegge is represented through her references similarly to those in the Gamble Manuscript, ‘Watkin’s Ale’ and ‘Heigh-ho for a Husband’: a maid desperate to marry. A short time later, after Cricket has proposed (it appears to be, indeed, later that same day), we find still more evidence, for it seems Pegge harbours fears that she will suffer the same fate as our collective ‘heigh-ho maidens’: abandonment after, perhaps, surrendering a ‘kiss’:

PEGGE Yfaith, yfaith, I cannot tell what to doe
 I love, and I love, and I cannot tell whoe, Out upon this love.
 For wat you what? I have suitors comes huddle, twoes upon twoes, and threes

¹⁰⁰ Stanza 9 and refrain. The ballad was first registered in 1594 and is credited to Thomas Deloney; see *AI* #1816. For the full text, see Thomas Deloney, ‘A most sweet Song of an English Merchant, borne at Chichester’ (London: Francis Coules, 1640), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 18 January 2013].

upon threes, and what thinke you troubles me?

I must chat and kisse with all commers, or else noe bargaine.

Enter WILL CRICKET, and kisses hir.

WILL CRICKET A bargain yfaith : ha my sweet honnie sops how dost thou?

PEGGE Well I thanke you *William*, now I see yare a man of your word.

WILL CRICKET A man of my word quotha? why I nere broke promise in my life
that I kept.

PEGGE No William I know you did not,
But I had thought you had forgotten me.

WILL CRICKET Dost here Pegge? if I ere I forgot thee,
I pray God I may never remember thee.¹⁰¹

Cricket, of course, means that if he ever forgets Pegge, he hopes never to remember her, for the grief of realising his forgetfulness would be too much to bear. His cute turn of phrase, however, also highlights the ‘Heigh-ho’ dynamic here of a maid desperate to marry and the implicit threat that her desperation may lead to her abandonment.

Will Cricket and Pegge Pudding seem very much Benedick and Beatrice’s singing characters realized: they are silly, albeit lovable exemplars from the ballad world possessing countenances clearly inappropriate for someone of elite stature. Indeed, these singing characters, as they are ‘fleshed out’ here in Peele, suggest much about what fuels the anxieties of their betters when it comes to song. Principally, both Cricket and Pegge are emotionally exposed; there is little nuance, little moderation as they express themselves; and in this freedom, exemplified by the songs in which they seem awash, they emerge as ballad culture’s noble savages: perhaps virtuous, certainly vulnerable.

¹⁰¹ Peele, sig. E2^v.

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE (1607)

Our final example is Old Merrythought from Francis Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. The character, in one sense seems the extreme end of Benedick and Beatrice's vision of the exposed singing character. He recalls Peele's Cricket in that not only is he exposed by the songs he sings, he also seems a representation of song as it operates in the real world. Yet, where Cricket comes off as a kind of nostalgic cartoon, Beaumont's characterization of Merrythought seems more of an allegorical grotesque. *The Night of the Burning Pestle*, as has been argued here and elsewhere, is fundamentally a burlesque of the theatre, theatregoing, and the orbiting, permeating popular culture. The play achieves its mockery mostly through its presentation of saturnalian extremes: the world of the stage and the 'real' world are effectively combined; fictive audiences interact with, and indeed direct, fictive players; the prodigal son is replaced by a prodigal father, and so forth. Cavorting through the three interrelated plots of *The Knight* is the character of Old Merrythought, a kind of 'Lord of Misrule, the master of the wassail bowl'.¹⁰² His repeatedly professed purpose in life is the pursuit of 'mirth', which he argues is the key to successful living. 'To what end should any man be sad in this world?', he declares,

Give me a man that when he goes to hanging cries [*sings*]:

Troll the black bowl to me!

and a woman that will sing a catch in her travail. I have seen a man come by my door with a serious face, in a black cloak, without a hat band, carrying his head as if he looked for pins in the street; I have looked out of my window half a year after, and have spied that man's head upon London Bridge.

¹⁰² Michael Hattaway, 'Introduction', in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, p. xx.

[...]

[sings]

'Tis mirth that fills the veins with blood,
 More than wine, or sleep, or food;
 Let each man keep his heart at ease
 No man dies of that disease.
 He that would his body keep
 From diseases, must not weep;
 But whoever laughs and sings,
 Never he his body brings
 Into fevers, gouts, or rheums,
 Or lingeringly his lungs consumes,
 Or meets with aches in the bone,
 Or catarrhs or griping stone;
 But contented lives for aye;
 The more he laughs, the more he may.¹⁰³

As suggested here, Merrythought's preferred medium of expression is song. Indeed, with the possible (and rather complicated) exception of Valerius in Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece*, he is by far the most musical character in the canon.¹⁰⁴ Sixty per cent of Merrythought's lines are lyrics from probably forty different popular songs – so much so that Merrythought's fictive soul seems composed of song itself.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ed. by Hattaway, II, lns. 442-66.

¹⁰⁴ Comparing Valerius to Merrythought is problematic on a couple of levels. The bulk of the former's songs are in fact full 'musical numbers' rather than impromptu utterances. Additionally, many of Valerius's songs were added to subsequent editions of *The Rape of Lucrece* during the seventeenth century.

¹⁰⁵ Some of Merrythought's utterances, in both their metrics and their position in Q1 (1613) suggest that they are something other than his speaking prose. However, it is unclear whether they come from popular song, popular poetry or some other source, or whether they were sung

‘Beaumont’s Merrythought’, writes Zitner, ‘is merely impossible, a fantastic.’¹⁰⁶ As we encounter song references standing in for dialogue again and again, Merrythought does seem to fade to an abstraction. This is hardly unexpected in a play built to scrutinize older literary, dramatic and musical conventions; if *The Knight’s* date of 1607 can be believed, we are more than a decade beyond Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* and perhaps two decades past the popular morality plays stocked full of ‘virtue/vice’ characters.

If one attempts to understand Merrythought as an allegorical character – more as a force rather than strictly a ‘person’ – one must necessarily consider him through his actions including, especially, his speech actions. In such a view, he arguably requires a new name. Many of his actions in the play suggest a different spirit from that which might be conjured by the idea of ‘merry-thought’ or the ‘mirth’ he routinely touts as his ethos. Critics have cited, for example, the cruel nature of his musical mockery of Venturewell near the end of Act II as the merchant frantically searches for his missing daughter:

Enter VENTUREWELL.

CITIZEN Here’s Luce’s father come now.

MERRYTHOUGHT [*Sings*]

As you came from Walsingham,
From that holy land,
There met you not with my true love
By the way as you came?

VENTUREWELL Oh, Master Merrythought, my daughter’s gone!

at all. Hattaway, Zitner and previous editors treat many of these utterances as song, even though their sources are presently lost. Amidst the abundance of identifiable song fragments, it is easy to understand their choices.

¹⁰⁶ Zitner, p. 23.

This mirth becomes you not; my daughter's gone!

MERRYTHOUGHT [*Sings*]

Why, an if she be, what care I?

Or let her come, or go, or tarry.

VENTUREWELL Mock not my misery; it is your son

(Whom I have made my own, when all forsook him)

Has stoln my only joy, my child, away.

MERRYTHOUGHT [*Sings*]

He set her on a milk-white steed,

And himself upon a grey;

He never turned his face again,

But he bore her quite away.

VENTUREWELL Unworthy of the kindness I have shown

To thee and thine! too late I well perceive

Thou art consenting to my daughter's loss.¹⁰⁷

Merrythought presents here three imported songs, all of which comment upon the present action. The first, 'Walsingham' (ca. 1596), as we have seen in Chapter 1, portrays an aged speaker searching for his young lover who has fled towards a popular pilgrimage site. The second reference comprises the last two lines of a song in Robert Jones' *First Book of Songes & Ayres* (1600) in which the speaker laments the departure of a lover for whom he earlier expressed ambivalence.¹⁰⁸ 'He set her on a milk-white steed' etc. probably alludes to a ballad recounting 'The Douglas Tragedy' a very popular ballad in which a father who, with his seven sons, pursues his daughter who has

¹⁰⁷ Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ed. by Hattaway, II, lns. 471-90.

¹⁰⁸ Robert Jones, *The First Booke of Songs & Ayers of Foure Parts* (London: Peter Short, 1600), p. 28, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 30 March 2013].

eloped.¹⁰⁹ All three songs are devoid of humour. ‘The Douglas Tragedy’ for example, ends in the death of all the Douglas children, including the daughter and her lover, leaving Douglas Sr. in bitter mourning. While it may be argued that Merrythought’s songs are used sarcastically and that Venturewell, being the ‘block’ against the lovers, deserves his mocking, these lines by Merrythought hardly embody ‘mirthfulness’ or ‘merry thought’. Equally caustic is his behaviour at the beginning of Act v as we find him out of credit at the local tavern and forced to carry the party home. As he leaves the establishment he declares,

MERRYTHOUGHT Not a stoop, boys? Care, live with cats: I defy thee! My heart is as sound as an oak; and though I want drink to wet my whistle, I can sing.

[Sings]

Come no more there, boys, come no more there;
For we shall never whilst we live come any more there.¹¹⁰

Although it is not completely clear to which song Merrythought ultimately refers, two extant songs probably provide sufficient illumination. The first is ‘A Warning for all good fellows’ (ca. 1615)¹¹¹ the refrain of which reads ‘Oh come no more there boyes, / nor go not thither: / But let them goe as they are / like whores together’; the second is entitled ‘The Seaman’s Frolick’ (ca. 1680)¹¹² and its refrain reads, ‘We’l come no more there brave boys / we’l come no more there; / And we shall never, never while we live,

¹⁰⁹ Of ‘The Douglas Tragedy’ Child writes: ‘more than thirty versions have been published in the Northern languages’. See *English and Scottish Ballads*, II, p. 114.

¹¹⁰ Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ed. by Hattaway, v, lns. 167-72.

¹¹¹ For the full ballad, see Robert Guy, ‘A Warning for All Good Fellows’ (London: T.P. 1615?), in *EBBA* <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 23 January 2013].

¹¹² For the full ballad, see Anon., ‘The Seaman’s Frolick’ (London: M. Coles and others, ca 1680), *EBBA* <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 23 August 2013].

come no more there'. Reading both of these ballads it becomes immediately clear that the antagonist is venereal disease, with 'come no more there' offering multiple meanings. Turning back then to Merrythought's use of the refrain, its implications with regard to Merrythought's view of the tavern and its owners are clearly funny, but they are hardly indicative of 'merry' thoughts. Perhaps most bizarre is Merrythought's reaction to news of his son's death, his first view of the young man's coffin, and then the encounter with his ghost:

BOY Sir, sir, if you know what I have brought you, you would have little list to sing.

MERRYTHOUGHT [*sings*]

*O, the minion round,
Full long I have thee sought,
And now I have thee found
And what hast thou here brought?*

BOY A coffin, sir, and your dead son Jasper in it.

MERRYTHOUGHT Dead? [*sings*]

*Why, farewell he.
Thou wast a bonny boy,
And I did love thee*

Enter JASPER

JASPER Then, I pray you, sir, do so still.

MERRYTHOUGHT Jasper's ghost? [*sings*]

*Thou art welcome from the Stygian lake so soon;
Declare to me what wondrous things in Pluto's court are
done.*

JASPER By my troth, sir, I ne'er came there; 'tis too hot for me, sir.

MERRYTHOUGHT A merry ghost, a very merry ghost!

[*sings*]

And where is your true love? Oh, where is yours?

JASPER Marry, look you, sir.

Heaves up the coffin [and LUCE climbs out]

MERRYTHOUGHT Ah, ha! Art thou good at that, i' faith? [*sings*]

With hey, trixy, terlery-whiskin,

The world it runs on wheels,

When the young man's —

*Up goes the maiden's heels.*¹¹³

Even if we concede that Merrythought is allowed no time to grieve (and that his comment, 'Jasper's ghost', is sarcastic), the whole exchange seems to move from bizarrely mechanical to bizarrely bawdy, especially in light of the fact that Merrythought has just discovered that his son is, surprisingly, alive. There are currently no source songs available to shed more light on the issue; yet even so, one has to wonder what kind of 'merry thought' or 'mirth' fuels bawdy song by a father directed at his future daughter in law after she and her husband have emerged from a coffin.

To these one can add Merrythought's irresponsible indifference to the plight of his wife and son, whose suffering is caused and exacerbated through his continued, stubborn neglect. Near the end of the play, this indifference turns into passive aggression when Merrythought bars his now destitute wife and son from entering the family home, allowing them food and shelter only if they agree to humiliate themselves by singing.¹¹⁴

Merrythought is a spirit of selfishness, mockery, rudeness, escapism, laziness and indifference, wrapped in the garb of mirth and merriment. Indeed his operation in his social sphere mimics in many ways the operation of song itself. Like song, he is a

¹¹³ Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, v, lns. 178-201.

¹¹⁴ Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, I, lns. 351-426 and v, lns. 212-28 respectively.

political free-rider: he does not produce any revenue through his existence, and his existence ultimately requires the labour of others. When Mistress Merrythought flees the house with son Michael and, pointedly, the young man's savings, it is clear that someone must pay, i.e., labour, for the 'merry thoughts' – the song in the household, for such things do not pay for themselves. This idea is repeated symbolically at the end of the play when Merrythought agrees to let wife and son back into the house on the condition that they must first sing. The point is clear: if one wishes 'merry thought' i.e., song, in one's household, one must give to it their labour. Like Merrythought, song is ultimately ephemeral and relatively ineffective politically: it laughs, it mocks, it cries, it howls, but ultimately it *does* very little beyond providing distraction, for better or worse. Moreover it must be noted that, as the play progresses, Merrythought's actions result in his gradual deprivation, until at last he is left with neither money nor material possessions – only song, which is all he claims to need to survive. This is not to say that Merrythought should be viewed *entirely* as an allegorical figure of 'Song', or more accurately, 'Song's Operation In Men and In Society', but that this allegorical element seems the main thrust of his characterization. It is not surprising to learn of the clear debt of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* to Peele's *Wily Beguiled*,¹¹⁵ for Merrythought seems very much a grotesque version of Will Cricket: the male ballad character taken to extreme.

This conception of Merrythought seems perfectly in tune with *The Knight of the Burning Pestle's* underlying ethos: the exposure of absurdity through the presentation of amplified theatrical commonplaces. Instead of fashioning a character whose soul is

¹¹⁵ See Baldwin Maxwell, 'The Knight of the Burning Pestle and Wily Beguiled', *Modern Language Notes*, 35 (1920), 503-04.

immersed in popular song, as Peele does, Beaumont goes exponentially further, offering Merrythought whose soul appears constituted of it. It is telling, then, to find Merrythought and his musical spirit fundamentally indomitable and unpredictable. He is portrayed first and foremost as more a force than a character, a force which is disturbingly mischievous and *out of control*. If we can accept that Merrythought is the singing character drawn in absurdly bold lines we must then accept that, in him, we find Beaumont's representation of what he sees as song's core associations: sloth, selfishness, expression and its other side, exposure. Moreover, the above analysis suggests that Beaumont's ultimate gesture with Merrythought is to set up this allegorical character to reveal its own fallible, and indeed shameful, inner nature: through singing, Merrythought exposes himself – as Song.

3.3 EXTREME EXPOSURES

HAMLET (1600)

There are occasional instances in the drama where song's power is represented as approaching the oracular, as if through the medium of song we are linked not just to the essence of the character, but also to the essence of the cosmos. Such illustrations are probably grounded in classical traditions where oracles act as conduits through which supernatural entities write, speak or sing. In the drama, as often in classical literature, a common theme of musical-oracular encounters is the cryptic-yet-clairvoyant nature of the song as well as the human singer's limited control over the message.

In Thomas Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* (1607) the singing general, Valerius, sings in reaction to the ill humour of Sextus, who has just returned from raping Lucrece:

SCEVOLA Perhaps [Sextus is] not well.

BRUTUS Well, then, let him be ill.

VALERIUS Nay, if he be dying, as I could wish he were, I'll ring out his funeral peal
and this it is.

Come, list and hark;
The bell doth toll.
For some but now
Departing soul.
And was not that
Some ominous fowl,
The bat, the night-
Crow, or screech-owl?
To these I hear
The wild wolf howl
In this black night
That seems to scowl.
All these my black-
Book shall enroll,
For hark ! still, still
The bell doth toll
For some but now
Departing soul.¹¹⁶

Valerius's song foreshadows the suicide of Lucrece in the following scene. Yet its lines contain a special irony, for they highlight the idea that music in nature connects

¹¹⁶ Heywood, *The Rape of Lucrece*, IV.6.98-122. *The Rape of Lucrece* is a curiosity when it comes to song, for many were added to the text through its numerous printings between 1607 and 1638. This song appears to have been inserted sometime between 1630 and 1638. This is clearly beyond the temporal boundaries of this study, yet its acute representation of the trend described here warrants its inclusion.

somehow to the supernatural. Malheureux in Marston's *Dutch Courtesan* calls the music of birdsong 'the breath of heaven', the unadulterated conduit between the ears of men and pure, true Nature.¹¹⁷ Here in *The Rape of Lucrece* Valerius seems to link to Nature's darker side, 'the voice of hell', but it is clearly in tune somehow with 'the truth of things': the 'music' of the owls, bats, crows and wolves indicate that, somehow, these animals perceive someone is dying. And of course Valerius in singing this song unknowingly mimics the same behaviour. Song through Valerius, then, is highlighted here as possessing a choral operation bordering on the oracular.

Foreshadowing song and oracular behaviour appear relatively early in English drama. In Wilson's Morality Play *The Three Ladies of London* (1581) for example, Lady Conscience sings to Fraud, Simony, Usury and Dissimulation (who are attempting to woo her for the first time), 'You do feign, you do flatter, you do lie, you do prate, | You will steal, you will rob, you will kill in your hate', which seems to presage the killing of Hospitality at the hands of Usury near the end of the play.¹¹⁸ Mother Bombie in Lyly's eponymous play (1589) is something of a 'street oracle', offering predictions to pleading suitors in 'doggerel rhymes and obscure verse' which do not appear to have been sung yet still clearly conjure classical, singing antecedents.¹¹⁹

Shakespeare, it appears, is the first to flesh out fully the idea of oracular song in his representation of Ophelia. One cannot help but note the striking resemblance between her mad scene, with its numerous snippets of popular ballads fluttering cryptically in and out of her speech, and the depictions of the Cumaen Sybil in Books III

¹¹⁷ See Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, II.1.67.

¹¹⁸ Wilson, *Three Ladies of London*, Sc. 2.126-7.

¹¹⁹ See Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, passim.

and VI of Virgil's *Aeneid*. 'Repair to Cumae's hill' the prophet-king Helenus instructs Aeneas,

[T]here you will see the prophetess in her frenzy,
 chanting deep in her rocky cavern, charting the Fates,
 committing her vision to words, to signs on leaves.
 Whatever verses the seer writes down on leaves
 she puts in order, sealed in her cave, left behind.
 There they stay, motionless, never slip from sequence.
 But the leaves are light—if the door turns on its hinge,
 the slightest breath of air will scatter them all about
 and she never cares to retrieve them, flitting through her cave,
 or restore them to order, join them as verses with a vision.
 So visitors may depart, deprived of her advice,
 and hate Sibyl's haunts.
 [...]
 Still you must
 approach her oracle, beg the seer with prayers
 to chant her prophecies, all of her own accord,
 unlock her lips and sing with her own voice.¹²⁰

The similarities continue in Book VI when Aeneas confronts the Sibyl in person:

They [the Trojans] had just gained
 the sacred sill when the virgin cries out aloud:
 "Now is the time to ask your fate to speak!
 The god, look, the god!"

¹²⁰ Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. by Robert Fagles (London: Penguin Books, 2006), p. 118 (III.518-37).

So she cries before
 the entrance—suddenly all her features, all
 her color changes, her braided hair flies loose
 and her breast heaves, her heart bursts with frenzy,
 she seems to rise in height, the ring of her voice no longer
 human—the breath, the power of god comes closer, closer.
 “Why so slow, Trojan Aeneas?” she shouts, “so slow
 to pray, to swear your vows? Not until you do
 will the great jaws of our spellbound house gape wide.”

[...]

[Aeneas answering] Apollo, in your name. And Sybil, for you too,
 a magnificent sacred shrine awaits you in our kingdom.
 There I will house your oracles, mystic revelations
 made to our race, and ordain your chosen priests,
 my gracious lady. Just don't commit your words
 to the rustling, scattering leaves—
 sport of the winds that whirl them all away
 Sing them yourself, I beg you!”¹²¹

Like the Sibyl, Ophelia's hair is wild and her bold exclamation ‘Where is the beauteous
 majesty of Denmark’ jumps out as a bellowing voice that is not her own.¹²² Gertrude
 worries that, in her mad state, Ophelia might, like the whirling leaves¹²³ inscribed with
 the Sibyl's portentous song, ‘strew | Dangerous conjectures in ill breeding minds’;

¹²¹ Virgil, pp. 184-5 (VI.55-92).

¹²² Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Edwards, IV.5.21.

¹²³ With the sheer ubiquity of ballads during this period, one cannot help but imagine
 Shakespeare himself witnessing the cheap broadsides blowing in the wind like leaves in much
 the same way as we might watch newsprint blowing through a corridor of skyscrapers.

‘Each toy’ (a word often used to describe song during the period¹²⁴) she worries, ‘seems prologue to some great amiss.’ Here, then is the first portion of the famous passage:

*Enter OPHELIA distracted*¹²⁵

OPHELIA Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

GERTRUDE How now Ophelia?

OPHELIA *She sings*

How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff
And his sandal shoon.

GERTRUDE Alas sweet lady, what imports this song?

OPHELIA Say you? Nay, pray you mark.

He is dead and gone lady, *Song*
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

Oho!

GERTRUDE Nay but Ophelia –

OPHELIA Pray you mark.

White his shrowd as the mountain snow – *Song*

Enter CLAUDIUS

GERTRUDE Alas, look here my lord.

OPHELIA Larded all with sweet flowers,
Which bewept to the grave did not go

¹²⁴ See ‘toy n.’, def. 3b ‘A light, frivolous, or lively tune’, *OED* <www.oed.com> [accessed 07 February 2013].

¹²⁵ Q1 gives the direction: ‘Enter Ofelia playing on a lute, and her haire downe singing.’ See *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmark* (London: Nicholas Ling and John Trundel, 1603), sig. G4^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013].

With true-love showers.

CLAUDIUS How do you, pretty lady?

OPHELIA Well good dild you. They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but not what we may be. God be at your table.¹²⁶

Again conjuring oracular imagery, Gertrude asks, like a frustrated votary, 'What imports this song?' at the singing of Ophelia's first snippet. Her concern is understandable, for 'How should I your true love know | From another one?' etc. mark the beginning of a storm of cryptic song fragments, each of which 'ill breeding minds' might link to the sudden death of Gertrude's first husband, her subsequent marriage to his brother, Hamlet's murder of Polonius, and other secrets only 'God' knows. Clearly Gertrude, at one level, is treating Ophelia as if she has oracular potential, and between the resemblance of this scene to the depictions in *The Aeneid* and other links to Virgil's epic clearly present in this play,¹²⁷ the connection of the two 'oracles' by Shakespeare appears deliberate.

Shakespeare, then, positions Ophelia's song to represent, on one level, a conduit, to the truth of the cosmos by arranging snippets of ballads swirling in the storm of Ophelia's madness to resemble the leaves swirling around Virgil's Sibyl on which are written equally cryptic, 'portentious' songs, i.e., messages from Apollo. Yet it is also interesting to note that, as the songs burst forth from Ophelia, they again mischievously

¹²⁶ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Edwards, IV.4.21-44.

¹²⁷ Hamlet in II.2 remembers one of the players reciting a 'speech' entitled 'Aeneas's tale to Dido', which, in Virgil, contains the first descriptions of the Sibyl; It is also interesting to note that, in that same tale, we also read that Laertes is the name of Ulysses' father. Perhaps not quite related to Virgil specifically, but still relevant: the name 'Opheila', Phillip Edwards reminds us, is of Greek origin. See the Cambridge edition cited above, p. 70.

expose aspects of her nature she would not otherwise wish to be revealed. Consider the song fragments as the mad scene continues:

OPHELIA Pray you, let's have no words of this, but when they ask you what it means, say you this—

Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's day, *Song*
 All in the morning betime,
 And I a maid at your window,
 To be your Valentine.

Then up he rose, and donned his clothes
 And duppered the chamber door;
 Let in the maid, that out the maid
 Never departed more.

CLAUDIUS Pretty Ophelia!

OPHELIA Indeed, la! Without an oath I'll make an end on't.

By Gis, and by Saint Charity,
 Alack, and fie for shame,
 Young men will do't if they come to't—
 By Cock, they are to blame.

Quoth she, 'Before you tumbled me,
 You promised me to wed.'
 So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
 An thou hadst not come to my bed.¹²⁸

The 'truth' comes through Ophelia as it does through the Sibyl: in a versified, musical language of riddles that seem to comment on current events or concerns; but Ophelia's

¹²⁸ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, IV.5.45-66.

verses are not those of a dignified votary of Apollo, they are those of someone who is emotionally immature; they are ballad verses, verses that expose her simple ideas of sexuality, her emotional weakness, and her naiveté, character traits that any high-born woman would endeavour to keep private.

Hamlet's evocation of song also links to the oracular. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have been summoned by Claudius specifically to 'glean | Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus',¹²⁹ i.e., the contents and state of his mind and, as Gertrude suggests, what Hamlet's true thoughts are about 'His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage'.¹³⁰ In a manner which reminds one of a monarch sending servants to retrieve a message from an oracle (as, for example, Leontes does in *The Winter's Tale*), through Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's reports, Claudius hopes to 'sift'¹³¹ the truth from Hamlet's often cryptic, obfuscating language. Hamlet, as his old friends discover, suspects their intentions, and says as much as he bids them a final welcome to Elsinore:

HAMLET You are welcome – but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

GUILDENSTERN In what my lord?

HAMLET I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.¹³²

Of these lines, Edwards writes,

¹²⁹ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II.2.16-17.

¹³⁰ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II.2.57.

¹³¹ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II.2.58.

¹³² Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II.2.344-6.

[I]t is the utter dissimilarity of a hawk and a handsaw which makes Hamlet's point, i.e. 'I am mad only at certain times, at other times I can discriminate as well as a madman.' Even as he pretends confidentially to impart the secret that he is not mad, he confirms that he is raving.¹³³

As Polonius approaches, Hamlet gives ample confirmation that his fluctuating madness is indeed the state of things. Again reminiscent of a mad oracle or soothsayer, he offers to 'prophesy' for his friends, predicting Polonius 'comes to tell me of the players'.¹³⁴ Of course this turns out to be correct. Yet, this little 'prophesy' by Hamlet seems merely Shakespeare giving the audience a prompt to scrutinize the arguably thunderous prophesy Hamlet offers next: as Polonius announces the arrival of the players, Hamlet abruptly interjects to dub the old man 'Jephtha, judge of Israel'. The passage reads as follows:

POLONIUS The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history pastoral

[...] For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

HAMLET O Jephtha, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

POLONIUS What treasure had he my lord?

HAMLET Why –

'One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he lovèd passing well.'

POLONIUS Still on my daughter.

HAMLET Am I not i'th'right, old Jephtha?

POLONIUS If you call me Jephtha, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

HAMLET Nay, that follows not.

¹³³ Edwards, in *Hamlet*, p. 146.

¹³⁴ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II.2.354.

POLONIUS What follows then my lord?

HAMLET Why –

As by lot God wot,

And then, you know –

It came to pass, as most like it was,–

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more, for look where my
abridgment comes.¹³⁵

The reference to Jephthah¹³⁶ and his daughter links this passage to Judges 11.29-40, in which a Hebrew warlord strikes a deal with Jehovah in exchange for victory in battle, Jephthah promises to sacrifice ‘whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of [his] house to meet [him]’ upon his return from the field.¹³⁷ This arrangement, not surprisingly, goes tragically awry: the first thing to greet Jephthah is his only child, a daughter. Upon notice of her father’s folly, the unnamed maiden piously encourages him to obey the will of Jehovah, her only request being that she may ‘go up and down in the mountains and bewail [her] virginity’.¹³⁸ The lyrics Hamlet quotes in the above passage (indicated by quotation marks¹³⁹) are taken from a popular ballad whose earliest source is found in

¹³⁵ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II.2.363-384.

¹³⁶ ‘Jephthah’ is the spelling of the name in the King James Bible.

¹³⁷ Judg. 11:31.

¹³⁸ Judg. 11:37.

¹³⁹ The quotation marks in the New Cambridge edition are absent from the 1604, 1605 and 1611 printings. They are also absent in the First Folio; yet the lines ‘As by lot, God wot / It came to pass, as most like it was’ end with colons that seem to mark them as verses. See Q1604, sig. F3^r in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013]; Q1605, sig. F3^r in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013]; Q1611, sig. F3^r in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013]; and FF, p. 263, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013].

the Shirburn manuscript (ca. 1585-1615) and of which numerous later copies exist.¹⁴⁰

‘The first row’, or stanza, of this ‘pious chanson’ reads:

I read that many yeares ago,
 when Jepha, Judge of Israel
 Had one faire Daughter and no moe,
 whom he beloved passinge well
 And as by lot, God wot
 it came to passe, most like it was,
 Great wares there should be,
 and who should be chiefe but he, but he.¹⁴¹

The ballad then continues to recount the Old Testament story. Clearly, there are numerous parallels between the tale and the fates of Polonius and Ophelia. At the most basic level, both Jephthah’s daughter and Ophelia are needlessly sacrificed, pious innocents, unintended casualties of fathers who foolishly engage mercurial forces far more powerful than themselves. Moreover, if one considers the early modern idea that royalty was the closest thing to God on earth, one finds a neat parallel between political affairs in the house of Denmark and military campaigns depicted in the Bible, for both are, ultimately, the provinces of ‘Gods’. A further echo of the Jephthah story can be found in the death of Polonius himself, for Hamlet, wielding so foolishly the power of life and death, blindly kills the first thing that ‘greet’s’ him from behind his mother’s curtain, someone who turns out to be essentially an innocent (III.4.21-34). One might also argue that Ophelia bows to the will of her ‘God’ – her father and/or king Claudius –

¹⁴⁰ Anon., ‘When *Jepha* Judge of *Israell*, in *The Shirburn Ballads 1585-1616*, ed. by Andrew Clark (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), pp. 175-6 (p. 175).

¹⁴¹ Duffin, p. 227.

and obediently pursues one last engagement with Hamlet, the effects of which arguably drive her eventually, like Jephthah's daughter, to 'bewail' her virginity in the wilderness of madness.

If we take Edwards' opinion and agree that, up to the point of the Jephthah passage, Hamlet has been explaining to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that he is in fact 'but mad north-north-west' – i.e., only a little bit mad, his song, and how he utters it, is compelling. Hamlet's first mention of 'Jephtha judge of Israel, etc.', by its placement in the text as prose, suggests that it is spoken and thus he appears, like the Sibyl with the voice of Apollo, to be restraining the supernatural, musical voice of truth and articulating it in his own way, just as the Sibyl does in her writing of verses on leaves. However, as Hamlet's 'prophesy' continues, the lines of the song could be viewed as rebelliously 'bubbling up', threatening to burst forth as they seem to do with Ophelia. And with 'the first row of the pious chanson will show you more etc.' perhaps, unlike Ophelia, Hamlet is illustrated here as he says: just barely hanging on. David Lindley notes 'no editor seems ever to have suggested that [Hamlet] sing' these lines 'although there is no obvious reason why he should not'.¹⁴² If, in this scene, Shakespeare portrays Hamlet, in one sense, as a mad prophet, as he clearly seems to be doing, the singing of the lines would heighten such an effect, adding a visceral, aural impression of the prince fluctuating in and out of madness. Thus, Hamlet's lines of 'Jephthah, Judge of Israel', if sung, would not only seem to betray 'the truth of things', i.e. the plot, they would also betray the truth of Hamlet – that he *is* in fact a little bit mad.

¹⁴² Lindley, *Shakespeare and Music*, p. 159.

CONCLUSION

Song in Early Modern drama is most often used to illustrate, and frequently the musical illustration is straightforward: a group of tradesmen might sing a song indicative of their mood and associated with their class; a young man in love may sing a love song; a lonely woman may sing about loneliness; and through such scenes, the audience can empathize with the atmosphere or pathos of the moment through engagement with song, a social tool with which we are arguably hardwired to engage. This is the power of song exercised between playwrights and audiences in the real world. And song in drama tends to work...on *us*. Yet in the worlds playwrights build, the power of song can be complicated business. A few artists like Shakespeare occasionally seem to endow it with formidable, mystical power expanding on previous classical associations. Yet the depth and beauty of Shakespeare's image of Ophelia can obscure two prevailing trends spread more widely through the corpus: the failure of Orphic power and music's power to expose a character's true, human nature as he or she engages with it. Song may have been trusted by playwrights to enthrall real audiences. Yet, in the world of the early modern play itself, it can never be.

4 SONG: A QUESTION OF DECORUM

In 1963 Frederick W. Sternfeld argued in *Music in Shakespearean Tragedy* that Ophelia's singing of 'one ditty after another before the Court of Denmark' was 'contrary to all sense of propriety for an Elizabethan gentlewoman – or man, for that matter.'¹ Four years later, Peter Seng took issue. Ophelia, he pointed out, sings only for Gertrude, Horatio, Claudius and Laertes, rather than the full court; her 'performance' would hardly qualify as a 'public recital'.² Close to a half-century later, opinions differ still. Stuart Gillespie writes, 'Ophelia sings before an assortment of courtiers only because she is unhinged; Gertrude would never perform in so public a setting, though she would be sufficiently accomplished to do so'.³ David Lindley notes Seng's objections but ultimately sides with Sternfeld, adding that Ophelia's 'state of undress, and her singing, especially if she does carry a lute', as she does in Q1603, 'associates her both with music's irrational force, and perilously with the prostitute.'⁴ Clearly the relationship between song performance and decorum is integral to perceiving messages and meaning as characters sing in their fictive social spheres. This chapter teases out trends of song performance and propriety in the drama first by examining pertinent

¹ Sternfeld, p. 54.

² Seng, p. 133.

³ Stuart Gillespie, 'Shakespeare and Popular Song', in *Shakespeare and Elizabethan Popular Culture* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), pp. 174-92 (p. 175).

⁴ Lindley, p. 158. See also Amanda Eubanks Winkler, *O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note: Music for Witches, the Melancholic, and the Mad on the Seventeenth-Century English Stage* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), p. 87; Erin Minear, *Reverberating Song in Shakespeare and Milton: Language, Memory, and Musical Representation* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), p. 113; and Jacquelyn A. Fox-Good, 'Ophelia's Mad Songs: Music, Gender, Power', in *Subjects on the World's Stage*, ed. by David G. Allen and Robert A. White (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995), pp. 217-38 (esp. p. 224) for similar assessments.

external literature and then comparing it to performance behaviour evidenced in the canon.

In assessing representations of musical performance on the stage, it is important to be aware of the lens through which we gaze. Consider the rest of Seng's criticism of Sternfeld's assessment of Ophelia which, Seng argues, depends heavily upon the unproven assumption that Baldassarre Castiglione and the other writers of 'conduct' or 'courtesy' books were the exclusive arbiters of taste for Shakespeare and his contemporaries.⁵ This point, I think, is a sobering one, for it highlights the fact that much of the literature through which we glean our impressions of gentle decorum can veer significantly from everyday practice. Castiglione himself, both directly and through surrogates, admits his 'courtier' to be an unachievable exemplar. 'I am content', he writes,

to have erred with Plato, Xenophon, and Marcus Tullius, and just as, according to these authors, there is the Idea of the perfect Republic, the perfect King, and the perfect Orator, so likewise is that of the perfect Courtier.⁶

Similar caveats exist in other courtesy books and as one considers them in concert it is apparent how misleading they can be.⁷ The bulk of courtesy books are, further, overtly

⁵ Seng, p. 133.

⁶ Castiglione, p. 7. At p. 55, the Lord Lodovico Pio declares, 'for I believe it is not possible in all the world to find a vessel large enough to contain all the things you would have be in our Courtier', to which Lewis, Count of Canossi responds 'Wait a little, for there are yet many more to come'. The Count then resumes with 'Gentlemen, you must know that I am not satisfied with our Courtier unless he be also a musician'.

⁷ See, for example Richard Brathwaite, *The English Gentleman* (London: Robert Bostock, 1630), sig. ¶2^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013] where the author suggests that since the volume has grown larger than might befit a gentleman's pocket, one might 'with more trouble beare it: by enlarging your pocket [i.e.

geared toward elite young men interested in successful negotiation of their particular socio-political arena.⁸ While they clearly contain important information, this is hardly enough to glean accurate understanding of the relationship between singing and social class for every character on the English stage. Yet much of today's criticism touching upon this subject is grounded in the courtesy books, and then buttressed with other literature much of which betrays similarly limited viewpoints. Tracts from attackers and defenders of music such as Phillip Stubbes, and William Prynne on the one side, and Oxford scholar John Case as music's champion are often referenced.⁹ The composers Thomas Morley and Thomas Ravenscroft and prominent educators such Richard Mulcaster are also often cited as supporters of music's inclusion in education and of music as a healthful social activity.¹⁰ These authors are, of course, essential to our

one's 'gentlemanly capacity'] to containe it'. Henry Peacham in *The Complete Gentleman* (sig. A3^v), describes the subject of his book as ' [...] the fashioning of Nobilitie after the best presidents' (i.e., exemplars), and its original purpose (in his 'To the Reader') 'for the private use of a Noble young Gentleman'.

⁸ See Peacham's explicit statement of this in note 7 above. See also, for example, William Higford, *The Institution of a Gentleman* (London: William Lee, 1660), A3^{r-v}, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013]. There are, of course, some exceptions. See, for example, Richard Brathwaite, *The English Gentlewoman* (London: Michael Sparke, 1631), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 23 January 2013]. This is not to imply that most conduct manuals have no discussions of decorum for women, only that such discussion counts for a minor portion of a discourse explicitly and implicitly fashioned by male writers for male readers.

⁹ See Stubbes, esp. sig. O3^v-O6^r; William Prynne, *Histriomastix The Players Scourge* (London: Michael Sparke, 1633), esp. pp. 273-290; and Case, *Praise and Apologia*, passim.

¹⁰ See Thomas Ravenscroft, *Pammelia* (London: William Barley, 1609), sig. A2^{r-v}, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]; Ravenscroft's introduction to *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but neglected) Use of Charact'ring the Degrees, by Their Perfection, Imperfection and Diminution in Measurable Musicke* (London: Thomas Adams, 1614), sig. A^r-A3^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]; and Morley's introduction to his *Plaine and Easy Introduction to Musicke*. For Mulcaster, see *Positions* (London: Thomas Clare, 1581), pp. 36-40, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013] and *Elementarie* (London: Thomas Vautroullier, 1582), pp. 25-7, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]. There were some educators, such as Roger Ascham who subscribed to the view that music, while not evil in itself, tended to promote effeminacy in men. See, for example, Roger Ascham, *Toxophilus the Schole of Shootinge* (London: Edward

understanding, yet all of them bring to the reader significant agendas, in many cases couched in severe rhetoric. Indeed, all of these authors and their works are ultimately products of an age when hyperbole was the fashion. ‘And if you would have your daughter whoorish bawdie, and uncleane, and a filthie speaker, and such like,’ Stubbes warns us, ‘bring her up in musick.’¹¹ Stubbes is using every possible rhetorical resource in his arsenal to convince men (with young children, it appears) to change their behaviour. Yet his overt, inflammatory voice in the pool of literature as we find it today is so attractive in its sensational tone that it can skew our perception of the overall discourse. Of course there was a cultural association of music with sexuality – as there is in every culture everywhere, but Stubbes’ polemic is so vehement that we get the impression that it resonated in places that it probably did not. On the other end of the spectrum, Morley’s introduction to his *Plaine and Easy Introduction to Musicke* famously presents the reader with a young gentleman who finds himself shamed at a social function due to his lack of musical knowledge; ‘some whispered to others’ he confesses, ‘demaunding how I was brought up’.¹² This, of course, suggests that musical education was the rule among the gentry. Yet Morley’s first task, Woodfill points out, is to sell his book to the reader, and ironically,

[I]nstead of indicating, as many writers have supposed, that it was hardly possible for a gentleman to live in polite society without consummate musical skill, the passage seems to be an appeal, of a kind known in today’s advertising, to the socially ambitious.

Whytchurch, 1545), pp. 9^r-12^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013].

¹¹ Stubbes, sig. D5^r.

¹² See Morley, *Plaine and Easy*, p. 1.

Morley and other writers could hardly have hoped that their manuals would sell if musical Utopia had already been reached.¹³

Woodfill may be right, yet the presence of the book, and dozens of others like it during the period,¹⁴ is evidence in itself of a market and indeed of market confidence, and thus we are back ultimately to guesswork as to the true prominence of musically skilled elites. Modern critics also bring examples from plays into their discussions to demonstrate what they perceive in contemporary criticism to be evidenced the drama. Yet one cannot help but wonder how much of this evidence has been filtered by already-established expectations, and from there, if we are really receiving a complete, or at least a balanced, picture. Although Austern argues that the influence of Puritanism on ‘gender or any cultural construct in early modern England [...] can neither be overlooked or underestimated’,¹⁵ exploring the dramatic corpus through the biases of the radical church, the university and the schoolhouse without equal representation from far more prevalent spheres – i.e., elite households – and from the plays *en masse* courts a distortion of perceptions: like many of the above early modern authors, we risk bias from the beginning. That said, we should acknowledge that the coterie of playwrights, actors and musician bring to the table *their* agenda as well: the promotion and justification of their own products and the musical performances they contain. It is logical to assume that implicit and explicit messages about music and musical conduct expressed in drama are in part a response to conduct literature and polemic.

Nevertheless, the way characters actually behave with music in the drama, combined

¹³ Woodfill, p. 223.

¹⁴ Woodfill, p. 232.

¹⁵ Linda Phyllis Austern, “‘Alluring the Auditorie to Effeminacie’: Music and the Ideas of the Feminine in Early Modern England”, *Music and Letters*, 74.3 (1993), 343-54 (p. 345).

where we can with more varied historical data, needs to be given more weight if we are to develop more accurate perceptions with regard to the etiquette of singing in all early modern performance spaces. To this end, we will outline some trends in conduct books, polemic literature, etc. and then compare them to trends in the 90 plays. Where possible, this information will be cross-referenced with historical data. The discussion will begin with elite men because much of the writing we have is geared toward this small group and because many characteristic behaviours of women, when it comes to singing, are clearly products of their position in patriarchal society.

4.1 THE CONDUCT BOOKS

Records of musical performances by elite members of English Renaissance society are rare. One reason for this was that few ‘people thought it worthwhile to record even their important activities’.¹⁶ The conduct books and polemical writing from both sides, however, offer a number of suggestions why song performance by elites on stage occurs less frequently than those by the lower orders. Most conduct books and other related literature include music as a key component of a gentle education.¹⁷ Music is generally lauded for its ability to sooth the psyche from everyday pressures, and its perceived relationship to the harmonic nature of the universe was generally considered a vehicle by which the contemplative practitioner could approach the divine.¹⁸ The practicing of

¹⁶ Woodfill, p. 229.

¹⁷ See Castiglione, p. 55; Peacham, pp. 98-9; Elyot, p. 20^v; Higford, p. 77. Of the educators, Mulcaster was an enthusiastic supporter. Ascham worried that ‘certain nice, soft [sweet] music might ‘rather entice [young men] to noughtiness, than stirre them to honestie’ (p. 9^v). John Case in both *The Praise of Musicke*, and *Apologia* offers, and elaborates upon, all the positive arguments circulating during this period.

¹⁸ See Castiglione, p. 56; Elyot, p. 21^{r-v} and 23^{r-v}; Peacham, p. 96; Higford pp. 78-80; and Brathwaite, *Gentleman* p. 229. Music facilitating communion with the divine was one of the

an instrument also facilitated the exercising of physical, mental and rhetorical dexterities.¹⁹ Lastly, and importantly for our analysis of elite performers on the English stage, music's function as a social lubricant is often acknowledged; not only did it act to civilize the minds of men, it was particularly useful in cultivating relations with members of the opposite sex.²⁰

Common cautions regarding music revolve around the elite young man's cultivation of social, economic – and thus political – capital. In many cases, music is positioned as one of a number of recreations that, if abused, will steal precious time away from, as Peacham puts it, 'more weighty employments'.²¹ 'Recreation' writes Braithwaite, 'was at first intended for refreshing the minde, and enabling the body to performe such offices as are requisite to bee performed: so it is not to bee made a Trade or profession, as if we should there set up our rest, and intend nothing else'.²² Another concern was that music might lead to effeminacy. This fear appears to link ultimately to classical discussions of certain modes of music encouraging 'softness' in the character of men.²³ Reading Prynne or Ascham, the impression is of a pronounced, pervading undercurrent of anxiety. In his *Histriomastix*, Prynne connects the word 'effeminate' with 'music' thirty-four times in frothing phrases like 'Effeminate lust-

main arguments of those seeking to preserve music in church service. See, for example, John Reading, *A Sermon Delivered in the Cathedral Church of Canterbury Concerning Church Music* (London: Thomas Newcomb, 1663), esp. p.2., in *EEBO* <<http://0-eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 8 February 2013].

¹⁹ See Mulcaster, *Positions*, pp. 39-40 and *Elementarie*, pp. 25-7.

²⁰ Mulcaster, *Positions*, p. 40; Peacham, p. 98; Castiglione, p. 55 and esp. p. 77-8. Braithwaite, in *The English Gentlewoman*, as we shall see, gears much of his discussion towards a woman interested in attracting a husband or female patron.

²¹ Peacham, p. 98.

²² Braithwaite, pp. 172-3.

²³ See, for example, Plato, *Republic*, p. 88 (III.398e-399a). Ascham (pp. 9^r-10^v) makes this connection particularly clear.

[exiting/provoking/enflaming] Musicke’, or ‘lascivious, amorous, effeminate, voluptuous Musicke.’²⁴ Ascham writes, ‘thus luting and singing take away a manlye stomack’ and is ‘farre more fitte for the womannishnesse of it to dwell in the courte among ladies’.²⁵ Yet when we read Castiglione, Peacham and others, their treatment of music and effeminacy seems more of a response to a minority of detractors than to a common, legitimate concern. In *The Courtier*, for example, the Lord Gaspar declares,

I think that music, along with many other vanities, is indeed well suited to women, and perhaps also to others who have the appearance of men, but not to real men; for the latter ought not to render their minds effeminate and afraid of death.²⁶

To this the Count Lodovico da Canossa (Castiglione’s champion and leader of the discussion) exclaims ‘Say not so’ and launches into two and a half pages of praise for music including the lines:

Where, then, is the soldier who would be ashamed to imitate Achilles, not to speak of many another famous commander that I could cite? Therefore, do not wish to deprive our Courtier of music, which not only makes gentle the soul of man, but often times tames wild beasts; and he who does not take pleasure in it can be sure that his spirit lacks harmony among its parts.²⁷

²⁴ See Prynne passim.

²⁵ See Ascham, p. 10^v.

²⁶ Castiglione, p. 55.

²⁷ Castiglione, p. 56. Elyot implicitly echoes this dynamic on pp. 20^v-21^v of *The Boke Named the Governour*. Peacham does not appear to mention effeminacy. Nor does it surface in Whythorne. Interestingly, after clearly lengthy study of conduct books and other contemporary comments about music, Boyd’s perceptions was that, although ‘people were criticized for what is called the artistic temperment [...] music and musicians seem to have escaped the charge of effeminacy’. See Morrison Comegys Boyd, *Elizabethan Musical Criticism*, 2nd edn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), p. 27.

Brathwaite, interestingly, places music into a list of ‘soft and effeminate’ recreations that includes painting, dice-play and chess. As this list comes directly after one of ‘masculine’ recreations, including hunting, swimming, running, shooting etc., his usage of the adjective ‘effeminate’ suggests a definition more along the lines of ‘passive’, ‘peaceful’ or ‘idle’ rather than ‘un-manly’, ‘submissive’ or ‘epicene’.²⁸ Far more explicit and common, however, are warnings against performing music in the company of social inferiors. Castiglione’s courtier, for example, should only ‘turn to music as to a pastime, and as though forced, and not in the presence of persons of low birth or where there is a crowd.’²⁹ Also interesting, as we shall see when it comes to drama, is the notion that music for Castiglione’s courtier is very much a young man’s game:

[The Courtier] will know his own age, for it is indeed unbecoming and most unsightly for a man of any station, who is old, gray, toothless, and wrinkled, to be seen viola in hand, playing and singing in the company of ladies.³⁰

These older men should play music in truly private spaces only to soothe their cares and perhaps in order to cultivate their appreciation of music in general.³¹ Thomas Elyot is more explicit in his warning against elites singing in public:

[T]he tutors office shal be, to persuade [the young courtier], to have principally in remembraunce his astate, which maketh hym exempt from the lybertie of usynge this science in every tyme and place: that is to say, that it onely serveth for recreation, after tedious or laborious affaires. And to shewe hym, that a gentylman playenge or syngynge

²⁸ Brathwaite, *Gentleman*, p. 167.

²⁹ Castiglione, pp. 76-7.

³⁰ Castiglione, p. 77.

³¹ Castiglione, pp. 77-8.

in a commune adyence, appayreth his estimation: The people forgettynge reverence, whan they beholde him in symilitude of a common servaunt or mynstrel.³²

One hundred years later, Peacham demonstrates this argument's continued currency arguing that elite performances in the presence of inferiors 'eclipse State and Majesty, bringing familiarity, and by consequence contempt with the meanest'.³³

Recreation, social utility, cultivation of civility on the positive side; sloth, loss of dignity, 'effeminacy', on the negative; these are the main themes with regard to music and its socio-political position among elite men that resonate in contemporary literature and thus in today's criticism. 'Even a gentleman would hesitate to play in a barbershop: good manners would not permit him to boast of his accomplishment by playing for the common public', writes Walter Woodfill.³⁴ 'The sweet, deceptive allure of music' argues Austern, 'was continually described in English theoretical literature as feminine or having a feminizing effect, weakening the intellect by leading pure physical pleasure – making one more like a woman'.³⁵ While statements like these have clear evidentiary support, their implicit suggestion – that musical performance for elites was ultimately a cautious business – is, in fact, not evidenced on the Early Modern stage to the degree one might assume.

³² Thomas Elyot, *The Boke Named the Governour* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1537), pp. 22^v-23^f, in *EEBO* <<http://0-eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 8 February 2013].

³³ Peacham, p. 100.

³⁴ Woodfill, p. 203.

³⁵ Austern, 'Alluring', p. 350.

4.2 ELITE SINGING IN DRAMA

Contrary to what one might expect from the literature surveyed so far, instances of men of elite status performing for others are abundant in the ninety plays surveyed for this dissertation. Performance practice within particular elite ‘subgroups’, such as Kings and Dukes, correspond with what we have gleaned from the polemicists and the courtesy books, yet behaviours in the largest group of elites, average young gentlemen, vary considerably from that of their superiors in a number of respects.

Nowhere in our surveyed plays does any noble with the rank of Duke or above sing directly to anyone in a situation where their rank is recognised in fictive space. In the small number of examples of ‘super-elite’ singing, anything one might describe as a ‘performance’ from higher rank to lower is always, in some way, eschewed. In Marston’s *Antonio and Mellida* the deposed Duke of Genoa, Andrugio, appears to sing a (lost) song while in the forest accompanied only by a servant. ‘My soul grows heavy, – Boy, let’s have a song,’ he says sadly, and while the stage directions in Q1 read ‘Cantant’ (they sing), the duke’s line ‘Tis a good boy and, by the troth, well sung’ offers legitimate question as to whether the duke sings here at all.³⁶ Even if the two characters *do* sing together, their position alone in the wilderness affords them arguably a more private space than the Duke’s own bedchambers. ‘Duke’ Cleanthes in Chapman’s *Blind Beggar of Alexandria* performs an entire song in his attempt to woo Samathis, daughter of a rich citizen. However, Cleanthes is a master of disguise and, during this performance, he is in the character of Leon, a usurer, someone more equal in rank to

³⁶ Marston, *The History of Antonio and Mellida* (London: Mathewe Lownes and Thomas Fisher, 1602), sig. E2^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 15 February 2013]; and Marston, *Antonio and Mellida*, ed. by Gair, III.1.105.

those in his audience.³⁷ Edgar, the eventual Earl of Gloucester, in *King Lear*, also sings in mixed company, yet he too is in disguise as a madman; indeed, it could be argued that impromptu singing is a component of his disguise. The elite song/disguise formula appears again in Anthony Munday's *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington* (1599) the first of his two Robin Hood plays, where at the beginning of Act v.1, the usurper king John disguises himself as an outlaw in order to safely pass through Kendall green and avoid Robin's men, on his way to sanctuary in Scotland:

Enter Prince John, solus: in green : bow and arrows

JOHN

Why this is somewhat like: now I may sing,

As did the Wakefield Pinder in his note.

At Michaelmas cometh my covenant out,

My master gives me my fee:

Then, Robin, I'll wear thy Kendall green

*And wend to the green wood with thee.*³⁸

As we have seen in Chapter 2, John's lines come from stanza 8 of a Robin Hood ballad entitled *The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield*. As with Edgar, the suggestion here is that the song is part of the disguise. Thus, it would seem that for 'super elites' the playwrights, while clearly pushing boundaries, keep performances congruent with what we find in the courtesy books and other literature. Yet when we move just down the social scale things become more complicated.

³⁷ See George Chapman, *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, in *The Works of George Chapman*, ed. by Richard Herne Shepherd, 2 vols (London: Chatto & Windus, 1880), II, pp. 1-21 (p. 8). This same song, beginning 'Health, fortune, mirth and wine', is as we shall see performed by the clown/gentleman, Senior Balurdo, in *Antonio and Mellida* III.2.36-7.

³⁸ Munday, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, v.1.253-8.

The sons of high-ranking nobility are generally as reticent as their fathers, yet there is evidence that performing song was more acceptable for younger ‘super-elite’ males. In Peele’s *The Arraignment of Paris* (1581) the son of king Priam sings a long duet with Cene, a shepherd girl.³⁹ In Marston’s *Antonio’s Revenge* (1600), elite men perform with something of a casual disregard for who might be listening. In one instance Antonio asks Galeazzo, son of the Duke of Florence, to sing a song with the courtier Castillo that is a kind of ‘hunts up’⁴⁰ in order to awaken Antonio’s ‘slumbering bride’ on the morning of their marriage.⁴¹ Although they are not in an alehouse, the setting of the song seems to be a not-so-private space in the castle. In a second instance, Antonio (son of the deposed duke of Genoa) and Mellida (daughter of the victorious Piero Sforza, duke of Venice) sing a duet through a dungeon grate, also apparently in some not-so-private space. Perhaps most interesting for our purposes is the scene in the anonymous play, *Look About You* (1599) where Prince Richard, in a manner reminiscent of Cloten in Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*,⁴² writes ‘a ditty’ for Lady Fauconbridge, to be sung under her window by professional musicians as he stands by. Lady Fauconbridge is the wife of wife of the Earl of Gloucester and Richard is portrayed as having an overwhelming desire for her. *Look About You* is one of the

³⁹ George Peele, *The Arraignment of Paris*, in *The Works of George Peele*, ed. by A.H. Bullen, 2 vols (London: John C. Nimmo, 1888), I, pp. 1-73, I.2.55-81. Admittedly, it is not certain whether, in the play, she understands Paris’ true identity.

⁴⁰ A ‘hunts up’ is ‘an aubade for waking lovers’, usually newlyweds. Duffin traces the term to a lost ballad registered 1565-6, and suggests the original song is still older. ‘John Florio’, writes Duffin, ‘in his Italian-English dictionary, *A Worlde of Wordes* (1598), gives *matinata* as “mornings music or hunts up plaid in a morning under ones window,” and Randle Cotgrave, in his *Dictionarie of the French and English Toungues* (1611), gives as a translation of the french word *resveil*, “A Hunts-up, or Morning song for a new-married wife, the day after marriage”’. See Duffin, pp. 205-6.

⁴¹ Marston, *Antonio’s Revenge*, ed. by Reavley Gair (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), I.3.88 SD. The song the young men sing is currently lost.

⁴² Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, II.3.10-27.

Admiral's Men's more elaborate disguise plays and in this scene, the target of Richard's wooing is actually Robert, Earl of Huntington (aka, Robin Hood), disguised as Lady Fauconbridge. The 'lady' asks that Richard's 'musicke be dismiss' pleading, 'Your excellence forgets your Princely worth'.⁴³ The prince does so immediately, yet curiously remains under his lady's window and praises her in what appears to be a very poor sonnet. The scene has provocative implications about 'royal' performance, for the stage directions are unclear as to whether the action takes place in a private garden, or whether the 'royal' (non) performance takes place from the street. As with our kings and dukes, decorum in this scene is aided through disguise with both implicit and explicit messages that the prince here is behaving poorly on a number of levels. Indeed, we seem to find here a clever irony in the notion of a Prince being saved from a musical *faux pas* by the most famous ballad hero in history engaged in perhaps his favourite trick: disguise. In this light, the scene could be partly a joke structured around ideas of music and decorum, with which, the anonymous writer seems to suggest, the (Admiral's) audience is familiar.

GENTLEMEN AND CITIZENS

As we move into the sphere of more ordinary gentlemen and their wealthy 'citizen' counterparts, there is evidence that boundaries implied by the courtesy books and the polemicists are not as rigid as one might assume. Twenty-seven out of the 90 plays examined contain elite male citizens who sing. The vast majority of these men (thirty-six characters in total) are young and many of them perform songs either in the

⁴³ Anon, *Look About You*, sig. H2^v-H3^r.

serenading of a prospective wife, or while socialising with friends in a variety of social spaces from the private to the very public.

Song is almost always portrayed in the drama as a social lubricant and there is suggestion that semi-private performance, i.e., elites performing for elites in exclusive but not quite private spaces, is perfectly acceptable. ‘Buy, gentlemen’ calls the wife of ballad-seller, Simplicity, to two gentle pages in Robert Wilson’s *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London* (1588), ‘buy ballads to make your friends merry’.⁴⁴ ‘You make a right fool of me’ complains the irascible soldier in Fletcher’s *The Captain* (1612) as he is dragged to the ‘gentle’ house of Frederick and his sister, Frank, ‘To lead me up and down to visit women, | And be abused and laugh’d at. Let me starve | If I know what to say’, to which his faithful friend Fabrito, responds, ‘Fy upon thee, coward! | Canst thou not sing?’.⁴⁵ ‘There is no woman in the world’, declares Sir John Loveall in Nathan Field’s *Amends for Ladies*, as he tries to persuade friend Subtle to continue wooing Lady Perfect, Loveall’s wife, ‘can but hold out in the end, if youth, shape, wit, | met in one subject’. ‘If she be witty’, he advises,

Get wit, what shift soe’er you make for it,
Though’t cost you all your land; and then a song

⁴⁴ Robert Wilson, *The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London*, in *A Select Collection of Old English Plays*, ed. by W.C. Hazlitt and Robert Dodsley, 15 vols (London: Reeves and Turner, 1874), VI, pp. 371-502, p. 402. The ‘gentle’ male characters, Wealth and Wit, decline to buy what appears to be either a ballad with Tarlton’s picture on it, or an actual picture of the actor. Wealth declares ‘No: it is too base for Pomp’, his lord, and Wit agrees that his lord, Policy, ‘seldom regards such a trifle’. However, their young, gentle companion, Will interjects, ‘Come on, gaffer, come on; I must be your best chapman: I’ll buy it for [my lord] Pleasure’, to which Simplicity replies ‘Gramercy, good Will’. The suggestion then seems to be that while ballads are inappropriate for official ceremonies (‘Pomp’) or business environments (‘Policy’) they might be sung for ‘Pleasure’ in elite spheres.

⁴⁵ Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Captain*, III.3.50.

Or two is not amiss, although you buy ‘em:
There’s many in the town will furnish you.⁴⁶

In all these examples, then, we find song described as a smoother of social relations – a main function of song in all cultures everywhere.⁴⁷ And with these examples comes a palpable sense of decorum, the boundaries of which become clearer as the evidence increases.

A common trait of wooing elites is to hire singers to represent them in song. The gentleman Subtle from *Amends for Ladies*, for example, eventually does acquire a song to woo Lady Perfect, yet he gets a boy to sing it in her private chamber.⁴⁸ The gentleman, Jacomo, as we have seen in 1.1 of Marston’s *What You Will* (1601) hires Phylus, a professional musician to sing an original ‘ditty’ under the window of Celia; and there is Prince Richard’s employment of musicians, as we have seen. These examples might suggest a correlation with the cautions we find in the conduct books. Yet, reading still further complicates this model. In perhaps a humorous inversion of the ‘hunts up’ convention, the gallant Lipsalve, in *The Family of Love*, sings a cynical song under the window of Maria, just after his friend Gerrardine declares his love for her.⁴⁹ As we have seen, the ‘children’ of the wealthy old men Memphio and Stellio, sing a full duet from their respective front doors, presumably across a public thoroughfare, without

⁴⁶ Field, *Amends for Ladies*, III.1.22-5.

⁴⁷ For a concise introduction to the functions of music in society, see Martin Clayton, ‘The Social and Personal Functions of Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology*, ed. by Susan Hallam, Ian Cross and Michael Thaut (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 35-44. See also Alan P. Merriam, ‘Uses and Functions’, in *The Anthropology of Music* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), pp. 209-27.

⁴⁸ See Field, IV.1.151 SD.

⁴⁹ Anon., *The Familie of Love*, sig. A3^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 15 February 2013]. The play has been attributed to Thomas Middleton, Thomas Dekker and Lording Barry.

a remark from anyone as to the propriety of their performance.⁵⁰ Thomas, the roaring ‘gentle’ youth in Fletcher’s *Monsieur Thomas*, accompanies his hired help clearly without hesitation:

THOMAS [...] are they all abed trow?
 LAUNCELOT I heare no stirring any where, no light
 In any window, ’tis a night for the nonce Sir.
 THOMAS Come strike up then: and say the Merchants daughter,
 We’l beare the burthen: proceed to incision Fidler.

Song.

Enter SERVANT above.

SERVANT Who’s there? what noyse is this? what rogue at these houres?

THOMAS *O what is that to you my foole?*
 O what is that to you,
 Plucke in your face you bawling Asse,
 Or I will break your brow.
 Hey down, down, adown.

A new Ballad, a new, a new.⁵¹

⁵⁰ See Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, III.3.1-14. As noted in Ch. 2, p. 107, the two children turn out to be brother and sister, and of low birth. However, these details are unknown at this point in the play.

⁵¹ Fletcher, *Monsieur Thomas*, III.3.52-63. Although its lyrics are not included, the ballad the fiddler describes as ‘*Mawdlin the Merchants daughter*’, which the stage directions indicate was sung, is particularly apt in light of the action. First entered into the Stationers’ Register on 24 Feb. 1594-5 to Thomas Creed (See *AI* #1707), and surviving in a number of later printings, it depicts a male lover singing to Maudlin outside her window before he leaves her. Maudlin follows her singer to Padua, where he is imprisoned, and the song eventually finds her singing outside his prison walls. Clearly, then, Thomas is picking for his serenade what he feels is appropriate for the occasion. For a discussion of the ballad’s origins and printings, see *The Roxburghe Ballads*, II, pp. 86-95. The *EBBA* contains numerous printings of the ballad dating from around 1635. See, <www.ebba.english.ucsb.edu> [accessed 25 July, 2012].

The singing continues for many more lines, with more performers joining in until gentle Thomas, his servant Launcelot, and Mary's maid are all taking turns – the men from the street, the maid from her mistress' window. It must be said here that one of the plot lines in *Monsieur Thomas* revolves around the fears of old Sebastian, Thomas' father, that his son's time in Paris has turned him into something of a dandy. Sebastian will not leave his fortune to his son, if indeed he has become such a man. The humour of *Monsieur Thomas* is generated through Thomas' negotiation of proving to his father that he is indeed still in possession of his wild spirit, while simultaneously convincing his love, Mary, that he is civilized enough to make a good husband. Thus one might find the serenade scene indicative of this conflict, exemplified perhaps by Thomas' choice of songs to sing (ballads rather than more refined forms such as art songs or the solo lute ayres made popular by Dowland and others) and his choice to sing them along with the hired help. Yet it is compelling that, after the serenade is over, Mary comments only on the fact that she is wise to Thomas' attempts to use music to seduce her. Although her first concern is Thomas' 'wildness', she does not mention that his choice of songs, or his boisterous, very public performance, might be contrary to decorum. Indeed, although she eventually does reject him in this scene, Mary seems charmed by the whole affair.

Examples like these are admittedly uncommon, and many elite singers seem to bring with them various circumstances or attributes that suggest their situations as untypical. Yet, the overall impression is that, when it comes to serenades, the boundaries of decorum are not as solid as the courtesy books and polemic literature might suggest. Serenades seem to be generally considered a private affair between two

people of equal rank, yet instances of particularly rash or forward young men singing from the street are clearly neither entirely unheard of, nor universally discouraged.

DRINKING AND CAROUSING

Beyond serenades, male stage characters of elite status are frequently found in the alehouse; and often they are portrayed as singing there, surrounded in one way or another by their social inferiors. The musical performances here are clearly not akin to a recital, but they certainly count as performances of the most public nature. Indeed they represent the courtesy authors' worst musical nightmare, for this very public performance is done regardless of who may be watching and, in fact, represents an invitation for all classes to mingle together in song. Perhaps, as Woodfill suggests above, a gentleman would hesitate to perform in a barbershop. Yet, there is overwhelming suggestion in the drama that elite men sang in the tavern, among the dregs of society, all the time.

There are a number of good examples in Shakespeare, two of which revolve, not surprisingly, around miscreant knights. Malvolio, in response to the singing and revelry of Sir Toby Belch, Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Feste in Act II.3 of *Twelfth Night*, exclaims,

MALVOLIO My masters are you mad? Or what are you? Have you no wit, manners, nor honesty but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night? Do ye make an alehouse of my lady's house, that ye squeak out your coziers' catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice? Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in

you?⁵²

Malvolio's remarks are meant to be insulting and they clearly point out that Sir Toby and the rest are behaving indecorously. Yet, his remarks 'Do ye make an alehouse out of my lady's house?' and 'Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in you?' suggest that Sir Toby's indecorousness has as much to do with singing drinking songs in the wrong social space as it does with waking up the household. Just before the shunning scene in *The Second Part of Henry IV*, Falstaff sits drinking with the retired justices Shallow and Silence while the two older men recount past adventures. Through these moments Silence, progressively more intoxicated, sings snippets of old ballads, clearly suggesting past carousing in the alehouses of their youth.⁵³ Petruchio, while not quite a miscreant, suggests a similar past when he quotes the popular song of the wedding feast, 'The Friar and the Nun' in *The Taming of the Shrew*.⁵⁴ Beyond Shakespeare, the gallant Ilford, in describing his equally roaring gentleman friend Wentlow to Scarborough, the gentle Yorkshire hero of George Wilkins' *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage* (1607), declares 'this Rogue was son and heire to *Anthony Nowe, Now, and Blind Moone* and he must needs be a scuruy Musition, that hath two Fiddlers to his Fathers.'⁵⁵ 'Anthony Now, Now', writes Francis Oscar Mann, 'appears to have been a ballad singer of some celebrity in Elizabethan London'.⁵⁶ 'Blind Moon' appears

⁵² Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II.3.75-89.

⁵³ Shakespeare, *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth*, v.3.12-84.

⁵⁴ Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, IV.1.116-7.

⁵⁵ Wilkins, sig. A2^v.

⁵⁶ Francis Oscar Mann, *The Works of Thomas Deloney* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. 535. Thomas Deloney animates the character in his *Gentle Craft*. See Thomas Deloney, *The Gentle Craft* in Mann, pp. 137-210 (pp. 204-10).

to have been a famous tavern singer.⁵⁷ Ilford thus describes his friend as a kind of gallant extraordinaire, with ballads and tavern performances literally in his blood. In Fletcher's *The Coxcomb* (ca. 1609), the young gentleman, Ricardo, is waylaid by friends as he prepares to elope with Maria. In Act 1.6, the young men emerge from a tavern where Silvo mocks Ricardo's drunkenness, singing 'Thou'rt over long at thy pot, Tom, Tom'.⁵⁸ The overwhelming impression from all of these instances, then, is that while gentlemen might not perform the equivalent of a 'musical recital' on any stage, the idea of a young gentleman, 'sowing his wild oats', as it were, performing songs for his love under her window or performing bawdy songs in mixed company when carousing, was widely accepted, at least on the Elizabethan/Jacobean stage, as part of a package of adventures with which proper young men typically engage before settling down to more important activities. Of course, roguish knights like Falstaff and Sir Toby are hardly young, but one could certainly argue that they are immature, a point that will be touched on again in the discussion of effeminacy below.

⁵⁷ 'The blind or disabled musician was a well-known figure in early modern England' writes Marsh, who goes on to give evidence from parish burials. See *Music and Society*, p. 110. Phillip Sidney, guiltily confessing his affinity for ballads, writes 'I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas [Chevy Chase] that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet; and yet is it sung but by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style; which, being so evil apparelled in the dust and cobwebs of that uncivil age'. See Phillip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. by Geoffrey Shepherd, 3rd edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 99. Puttenham (pp. 172-3) is not so complementary, speaking of ballads as 'small and popular musics sung by these *cantabanqui* upon benches and barrels' heads, where they have none other audience than boys or country fellows that pass them in the street; or else by blind harpers or such like tavern minstrels that give a fit of mirth for a groat'. In Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* 1.1.1-37, the young gentleman, Freevill, tells the story of his roaring friend, Cocledemoy, who rents a private room in a tavern along with a 'blind harper' to entertain his company. While the harper plays on, Cocledemoy sneaks away, taking the silver dishes with him.

⁵⁸ Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Coxcomb*, 1.6.15-6.

PRIVATE VS. SEMI-PRIVATE OR EXCLUSIVE SPACE

Despite what the courtesy books might lead one to expect, we have yet to locate an exemplary dramatization of an elite male performing as Peacham puts it ‘privately to him selfe’.⁵⁹ Indeed, the critics’ gentlemanly musical ‘best practice’ seems entirely absent from the early modern stage. Yet there are numerous instances in the drama of elite song performances that are clearly neither as public as the ale-house nor as ‘private’ as the chambers of Paris and Helen where Pandarus performs in Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida* (1601). All of these instances, however, are private in the sense that they occur in spaces normally off-limits to ordinary people. Yet, in these exclusive social spaces, it seems perfectly acceptable for elites to perform *for each other*.

That said, it is difficult to discern whether playwrights were at ease depicting elite male performances in the exclusive-yet-public space of the court since there are so few dramatized examples – which may well be suggestive in itself. The only instance discovered during our research occurs in Marston’s *Antonio and Mellida* (1599). The scene is, however, compelling, as it may very well be in itself a comment on elite musical performance and propriety. In Act v.2 the evil duke Piero holds a singing contest between his pages. After the second boy has sung, the gentleman, aptly named Sir Geoffrey Balurdo, interrupts proceedings to enter himself in the competition:

Enter BALURDO.

BALURDO Hold, hold, hold! Are ye blind? Could you not see my voice coming for

⁵⁹ Peacham, p. 100. Benedick from *Much Ado About Nothing* is the only solo elite male we have discovered and his performance is clearly poor, half-hearted, and he is the first to acknowledge it. Clearly this is not soul-reviving ‘private recreation’ described in the courtesy books.

the harp? An I knock not division on the head, take hence the harp, make me a slip, and let me go but for ninepence. [*To Piero*] Sir, mark! [*To Rosaline*] Strike up for Master Balurdo!

[BALURDO] *Sings*

Judgement, gentlemen, judgement! Was't not above line?

I appeal to your mouths that heard my song:

[*Sings*] Do me right and dub me knight, Balurdo.⁶⁰

ROSALINE Kneel down, and I'll dub thee Knight of the Golden Harp.⁶¹

Balurdo clearly does not represent the typical courtier. His is a hybrid character, somewhere between a knight and a fool. Since this is a children's play (Paul's), his class, and therefore the propriety of his singing, is complicated still further as he would simultaneously represent a singing child competing against, ultimately, other singing children. Indeed, one can view the scene as a comment on disguise itself, for not only does Balurdo's hybridity seem to facilitate his singing and competing with those of lower rank, it also seems to allow boundaries of decorum to be pushed still further, to the point of outrageousness; for Balurdo's lines, 'Judgement, gentlemen, judgement!', seem to reach out to the theatre audience, most of whom, if he was indeed a real knight, would have been his social inferiors. Yet at the same time, of course, they are not. In reality, the boy actor playing Sir Balurdo is socially inferior to most audience members.

⁶⁰ This line perhaps echoes Silence's reference in *The Second Part of King Henry IV*, v.3.59-61, 'Do me right, | and dub me Knight, | *Samingo*' which Duffin traces to an English translation of a French chancon *Un jour vis un foulon* by Olando di Lasso. 'The French version', writes Duffin, appeared in a collection of Lasso chansons printed in England by Vautrollier in 1570. The English version survives in Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS Mus. F16-19 [...] copied by 1655-56'. See Duffin, p. 264.

⁶¹ Marston, *Antonio and Mellida*, v.2.26-30.

The more one thinks about it, the more blurred the issue of decorum becomes – and perhaps this is the point. Perhaps what we witness here is a send-up, a deconstruction of musical decorum problematizing notions of social rank, age, privacy and ultimately propriety.

Other exclusive elite singing spaces represented in the drama are substantially smaller than the Venetian court and vary in their circumstances and dynamics. Interestingly, in the plays examined for this study, only in Shakespeare have we found courtiers requested by peers to sing for their entertainment. Examples include Balthasar's performance of 'Sigh No More Ladies' in II.3 of *Much Ado About Nothing*; Amiens' singing of 'Under the Greenwood Tree' and 'Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind' in II.5 and II.7 of *As You Like It*; and Pandarus' 'Love, Love Nothing but Love' in III.1 of *Troilus and Cressida*. A number of scholars have noted that, preceding each performance, each character begs off from singing, a behaviour ultimately linked to the courtesy books.⁶² Yet the performances do happen, and all are positively received. Sternfeld believes that the inclusion of these set pieces evidences a 'deviation' from established custom, a kind of 'experiment'.⁶³ Perhaps this experiment was in response to competition from the rising popularity of the more musical children's companies at this time. However, it also may be that Shakespeare was not pushing boundaries at all, and merely attempting to capitalize on current musical fashion. As we have seen, John Dowland published his *First Booke of Songes or Ayres*, 'the most successful of all

⁶² See, for example, Lindley, *Shakespeare and Music*, pp. 86-7; Sternfeld, 56; Seng does not again appear to agree with Sternfeld (pp. 72-3), yet one wonders, then, how he accounts for the 'social conventions that dictated that gentlemen and aristocrats should not be too forward in exhibiting their musical accomplishments in public' in his discussion of Pandarus' song in *Troilus and Cressida* (p. 175).

⁶³ See Sternfeld p. 56.

Elizabethan music publications',⁶⁴ perhaps a year before the earliest of these plays, marking the beginning of an extremely popular trend of song performance in elite spheres.⁶⁵ It may very well be that through these singing adults, Shakespeare was attempting to flatter and satisfy elites – and aspiring elites – in his audience who were regularly performing for each other in spaces exclusive to their social class. All three scenes in Shakespeare illustrate some of the smaller exclusive spaces where elites perform; two out of the three do not seem quite 'private': Amiens performs for other nobles and their pages outdoors, and Balthazar performs in a (presumably walled) garden for a group of his peers and later at Hero's funeral, another exclusive but not-quite-private event.

Slightly different exclusive performances occur, or are suggested, in other drama. Cleanthes in Chapman's *Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (1597), although he has not been asked, and is disguised, performs a full song for Samathis at a banquet.⁶⁶ In Fletcher's *The Captain* (1612), as we have seen, the gentleman Fabrito plans to lead the irascible Giacomo into the chambers of his gentleman friend Frederick where they will sing songs with Frederick's sister Frank and, presumably her friend Clora.⁶⁷ It is also evidently perfectly acceptable for elite members of the military to sing together, often presumably, in the company of underlings. Iago, of course, in II.3 of *Othello*, performs drinking songs in front of his military peers and their servants; Valerius, albeit feigning madness in Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece* (1607), sings dozens of songs of various types in a number of exclusive spaces and occasionally with those of lesser social

⁶⁴ See David Greer, 'Dowland, John (1563?–1626)', *DNB* <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 30 July 2012].

⁶⁵ See 'Introduction', p. 5 of this dissertation.

⁶⁶ Chapman, pp. 1-21 (p. 9).

⁶⁷ Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Captain*, III.3.

status;⁶⁸ the Roman commanders Petillius, Junius, Decius and Demetrius, who are all quite sane, sing a three-man song in ‘The Tent of Junius’ upon their victory over the Britons in Fletcher’s *Bonduca* (1613).⁶⁹ All of these spaces are certainly exclusive, but they also suggest an idea of musical decorum that includes larger social spaces and larger audiences.

Similar suggestion is found in historical records. While there is no evidence of elite males performing recitals in the presence of the inferior masses, it seems clear elite families and friends in the English Renaissance played instruments and sang together in exclusive spaces. Christopher Marsh and Walter Woodfill offer substantial evidence of music lessons among the gentry,⁷⁰ and both note further evidence of ‘music meetings’ where groups of gentlemen, often accompanied by professional musicians, gathered together socially to perform music.⁷¹ In his book on musical patronage in the English Renaissance, David Price notes similar musical visits between elite families, and although there is little evidence remaining to demonstrate with certainty that elites performed at these particular events, there is every reason to believe, as will be shown in the later discussion of female elite musical performance, that performance here by elite young men did occur.⁷² This, as we have seen, seems to agree with what is suggested in the drama: music performance may indeed be a private matter for some individuals, but there are clearly fewer restrictions on performance, especially for young

⁶⁸ Heywood, *The Rape of Lucrece*, passim (esp. IV.6). An analysis of song in *The Rape of Lucrece* represents, in itself, an enormous project, as songs appear to be appended with successive printings over three decades.

⁶⁹ Beaumont and Fletcher, *Bonduca*, IV.1.1-10.

⁷⁰ Marsh, pp. 198-214; and Woodfill, pp. 225-30.

⁷¹ Marsh, pp. 216-24; and Woodfill, pp. 230-2.

⁷² See David C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 70, 79, 80, 90, and 143.

men, under the proper social circumstances – namely wooing, carousing and other social spaces which are not so much private as they are exclusive to their social class.

Turning back to Castiglione with this information in hand, the following passage is now especially resonant:

Then, as to the time for engaging in these several kinds of music, I think that it must be whenever one finds himself in a familiar and cherished company where there are no pressing concerns; but it is especially appropriate where ladies are present [...] As I have said, I favor shunning the crowd, especially the noble crowd. But the spice of everything must be discretion [...] He [...] will know when the minds of his listeners are disposed to listen and when not; and he will know his own age, for it is indeed unbecoming and most unsightly for a man of any station, who is, old, gray, toothless, and wrinkled, to be seen viola in hand, playing and singing in a company of ladies [...] [T]he words used in singing are for the most part amorous, and in old men love is a ridiculous thing.⁷³

Elite men who perform song in the drama are almost all young. Many of them are in pursuit of love when they sing, or they are in the company of friends. These singers are represented as strong, vibrant characters enjoying music within delineated social boundaries. Of the elite male singers who appear to test and perhaps violate such boundaries, most are associated to some degree with human weakness. The songs and song culture references of roguish gallants such as Ilford and Wentloe link them to sloth, crime and prodigality. Older singers such as Falstaff, Sir Toby and Silence,

⁷³ Castiglione, p. 77.

illustrate a degree of pathos or ‘spent-ness’ through their singing.⁷⁴ Yet it must be remembered that these imperfect men make up a minority of singing elites, and their creators represent them not so much castrated as delinquent or cashiered. With the exception of Silence, all of these singers still have the energy to fight, steal and whore, yet their laziness and excess have blunted them socio-politically, and their association with song, particularly ballads, in the drama is a potent way of suggesting, above all, *squandered time*.

EFFEMINACY

As we have seen, some early modern writers, both friends and enemies of music, have warned against excessive engagement for fear it might over-stimulate the more ‘feminine’ humours. In her article ‘Alluring the Auditorie to Effeminacie: Music and the Idea of the Feminine in Early Modern England’, Linda Phyllis Austern writes that music, like a woman, ‘was often perceived by theoretical writers as a vain sensual delight and enemy to masculine rationality’⁷⁵ The most extreme view, she persuasively argues, was,

that all surrounding music, especially that using artificial, delicate instruments invented for the purpose, potentially invites the physical senses of the listener to useless, base, sensory pleasure and therefore reduces the mind to a simpler, more passive and ultimately more feminine state.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Beyond Falstaff and Sir Toby, see also Quintiliano in Chapman’s *May Day*, in *The Works of George Chapman*, ed. by Richard Herne Shepherd, 2 vols (London: Chatto & Windus, 1880), II, pp. 275-306.

⁷⁵ Austern, ‘Alluring’, p. 347.

⁷⁶ Austern, ‘Alluring’, p. 349.

Yet, as we observe elite men and their engagement with song in the drama, the portrait of ‘effeminate’ and ‘feminizing’ music seems significantly problematized, leading one to question whether the rhetoric of Prynne and others like him have influenced our perceptions more than they should.

The majority of elite males who sing in the drama, or for whom there is suggestion that they have sung willingly in the past, are not represented as feminized under any definition. Usurping Prince John, the perpetually jealous Sir John Loveall and his friend Subtle, Fabrito and his irascible mate Giacomo, ‘Monsieur’ Thomas singing to his love from the street, vengeful Antonio, satanic Iago represent a wide spectrum of heroes and villains who have occasion to sing. All display faults and idiosyncrasies, but to suggest their singing is indicative of innate ‘effeminacy’ is gratuitous. This is not to say that links between music and effeminacy are absent from the drama. David Lindley notes ‘the opposition between the manly world of war and the effeminized world of court is not infrequently characterized in the drama as an opposition of musics’.⁷⁷ His first example is from *Much Ado About Nothing* where Benedick comments of Claudio, ‘I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife, and now he had rather hear the tabor and the pipe’.⁷⁸ Considering overtly courtly singers like Balthazar and Amiens, and the more ‘delicate’ music they perform, associations with effeminacy are understandable. Yet, when these characters *do* sing, the dialogue surrounding their performances is curiously absent of remarks relating to feminizing music – even when there seems ample opportunity. Indeed, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Benedick spends significant energy criticizing the singing of Balthazar: ‘And

⁷⁷ Lindley, p. 47.

⁷⁸ Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, II.3.10-12.

he had been a dog that should have howled thus' he quips, 'they would have hanged him';⁷⁹ yet there is no talk of 'womanish-ness'.

Effeminacy appears equally problematized in 'lesser' singing elite males. The clownish Balurdo; degenerates like Falstaff, Ilford and Wentloe; the old drunken justice Silence; these men appear to bring many of the period's more 'feminine' traits: moral weakness, laziness and an insatiable appetite for the sensual. Yet, with the exception of Silence, these men are hardly passive – and Silence's passivity is a sign of age not femininity. It certainly could be argued that characters such as these exhibit, to some degree, an accentuation of traits linked to more feminine behaviours. Yet effeminacy in such men, many of who appear as apt to brawl as to sing, seems at best a minor component of their total characterization.

Finally, there are those anomalous elite male characters overtly engaged with song for whom the label effeminate seems again problematic. The roman general Valerius in Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece* invokes material from perhaps thirty songs in order to disguise his inner feelings from agents of Tarquin who might accuse him of treason and destroy his plans for rebellion. The songs range in style from imported ballads, to lute ayres to three-man songs and are sung both impromptu and by request in the company of peers as well as with members of the lower classes. If any character in the drama might demonstrate feminization through engagement with music, Valerius, soldier or no, seems a prime candidate. Yet he remains utterly masculine; he, for example, is instrumental in the defeat of the Tarquin and, it appears, directly involved in the butchering of the tyrant and his wife at the end of the play.⁸⁰ One must also consider

⁷⁹ Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, II.3.72-3.

⁸⁰ Heywood, *The Rape of Lucrece*, V.6.

here Merrythought from Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Although he barely qualifies as an 'elite', one could argue that he does represent a member of the thriving middle class since he owns a house, possesses savings for his children, and his eldest son Jasper is evidently socially qualified to marry Luce, daughter of the rich Merchant, Venturewell (whether the father approves or not). Merrythought's family represents those on the social strata who are looking up at the elevation possible through marriage and mercantilism. In a family like Merrythought's, we might indeed find a conduct book, a collection of ballads or Dowland's *First Booke of Songes or Ayers*; in families like Merrythought's we find the targets of polemicists such as Prynne and Stubbes. And in Merrythought, the patriarch, we find a character seemingly constituted with Prynne's 'effeminate, lust-provoking music'. As suggested earlier, Merrythought seems almost an allegory of popular song itself. Yet, curiously, while he certainly possesses attributes such as laziness, prodigality and a delight in the sensual, which someone like Prynne might describe as ultimately 'effeminate', Merrythought also displays other behaviours that cloud the issue significantly. Nowhere in *The Knight*, for example, does he make lascivious advances towards anyone; for all his abuses of his wife, he is true to her – and he has two sons. And Merrythought is hardly passive: he is, in fact, indomitable, refusing to be ruled by anyone and indeed forcing his wife and younger son to 'sing for their supper'; he is, in many ways, the Lord of Misrule and in his world he conquers all. He may be a singing parasite, but he's no Desdemona.

For typical elite men in early modern drama, song's predominant role is that of a social smoother, a facilitator of homosocial relations and marriage, i.e., sanctified heterosexual sex, both keys to success in a predominantly patriarchal socio-political sphere. For a few elite-class men, song is used to illustrate prodigality and immaturity,

yet this seems not to be the unformed, ‘effeminate’ immaturity of a Ganymede. The songs of Falstaff, Balurdo and Merrythought mark them not so much as ‘softe, wommanish, unclean, smooth mouthed [...] transnured into a woman’⁸¹ as Stubbes might say, but as examples of adult, decidedly *male* immaturity: men who want to remain twenty-one years old, singing in taverns and sowing their wild oats, forever. Indeed these colourful examples of ‘overly musical’ elite men resonate more with the following description found near the end of Castiglione’s discussion of music:

At this messier Federico laughed and said: “Consider, signor Morello, that those who are [overly fond of music], even if they are not young, try to appear so. Hence, they dye their hair and shave twice a week: and this for the reason that nature is tacitly telling them that such things are becoming only to the young.”

All the ladies laughed, for each of them understood that these words were aimed at signor Morello; and he seemed a little disconcerted by them.⁸²

Indeed, perhaps we do find some reconciliation between *The Courtier*’s widespread influence and elite male song performance in the drama; here we find suggestion that the immature men linked to song in the drama are, by and large, not echoes of the feminized men alluded to in Prynne, Ascham and others but merely representations of a universal social reality: men who refuse to ‘settle down’. Perhaps then in the singing gentlemen of the drama we witness as Lindley writes, ‘the retreat of *musica mundana*

⁸¹ Stubbes, sig. O5^r.

⁸² Castiglione, pp. 77-8.

into metaphor; still potent, but increasingly detached from the workings of music in the real human world'.⁸³

ELITE WOMEN

Physical barriers, rather than disguise, appear to mediate issues of decorum when it comes to elite female characters who sing. Similarly, where singing females approach the limits of their confines, i.e., when their song becomes less private, the association with rogues we often find attached to miscreant male singers is often replaced with allusions to wantonness. Conduct books and the writings of more puritan polemicists fuel the perception that elite female musical performances were necessarily prescribed to spaces isolated from public view; thus it seems when we witness an elite female character singing on the English stage in any space beyond something akin to Desdemona's bedchamber, we should find, as Sternfeld does with Ophelia, a performance that is on some level indecorous. In many cases, as we shall see, such a reading is probably accurate. However, there is much to suggest this traditional association of elite 'public' singing with impropriety is in need of revision.

There are even fewer examples of 'super-elites' (Queens or Duchesses) singing than there are of males.⁸⁴ This fact in itself may offer suggestion regarding elite singing and propriety; yet, as with the men, it is difficult to be certain. Moving to the gentry and

⁸³ Lindley, p. 49.

⁸⁴ The only example in our ninety plays comes from Act 1.5 of Shakespeare and Fletcher's *The Two Noble Kinsmen* where three queens interrupt the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta to beg revenge for the death of their husbands (and the withholding of their bodies) by the tyrant Creon of Thebes. Even in this instance an overt 'public' performance by elite women appears eschewed. The song is clearly choral in its function and, as Bowden suggests, it may not be sung by the queens at all; they may simply 'in somber black step forward silently' as the song is sung by those around them. See Shakespeare and Fletcher, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, 1.5.1-16 and Bowden, p. 59.

other elite citizens, however, we find numerous, and often elaborate, examples. Here, music is again represented predominantly as an activity of the young. There are many instances of, and references to, music lessons in the surveyed plays, all of which involve young, female students. Probably the most famous occurs in *The Taming of the Shrew* where the young wooer Hortensio manages to sell himself to the rich citizen Baptista as a music tutor for daughters Bianca and Katherine (with varying results).⁸⁵ There are also various instances where music, especially song, is positioned as a group pastime for young elite females. In Act III of *Much Ado About Nothing*, for example, Hero and Ursula, in their private chambers, engage in a conversation they wish Beatrice to ‘overhear’ regarding Benedick’s ‘love’ for her. ‘Why did you so?’ asks Ursula (meaning ‘did you tell Beatrice about Benedick’s feelings’),

URSULA	Doth not the gentleman Deserve as full as fortunate a bed, As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?
HERO	O god of love! I know he doth deserve As much as may be yielded to a man. ⁸⁶

A short time later, in the same private space, this exchange occurs:

⁸⁵ See Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, I.2.125-40, II.1.138-55 and elsewhere. Other references occur in, for example, Fletcher’s *The Chances* where the gentleman Francisco remarks, ‘Antonio’s boy, a rare musician, | He taught my sister on the lute’; In Dekker and Middleton’s *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, there is bawdy reference to a schoolmaster teaching a young woman ‘to play upon the virginals’; In Haughton’s *Englishmen for My Money*, the wealthy Piso charges his servant/clown, Frisco, to find a new tutor, who, among other qualities, must be ‘a good Musician’, to teach Piso’s three daughters. See Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Chances*, IV.3.41-2; Dekker and Middleton, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, Sc. 15.284-5; and William Haughton, *Englishmen for My Money or A Pleasant Comedy Called A Woman Will Have Her Will* (London: W. White, 1616), sig. A4^r, in EEBO <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013] respectively.

⁸⁶ Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, III.1.44-48. Emphasis mine.

HERO Good morrow, coz.

BEATRICE **Good morrow, sweet Hero.**

HERO Why, how now? **Do you speak in the sick tune?**

BEATRICE I am out of all other tune, methinks.

MARGARET Clap's into **Light'o'Love**: that goes without burden: do you sing it and I'll dance it.

BEATRICE Ye **light o'love** with your heels, then if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns.

MARGARET Oh illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

BEATRICE 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin, 'tis time you were ready: by my troth I am exceedingly ill, **heigh ho.**

MARGARET **For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?**⁸⁷

The emphasised lines here refer to a number of different popular songs.⁸⁸ Margaret's suggestion that Beatrice sing, amplifies the general impression here of group of young well-born ladies who not only gossip together but also sing together for fun. In Middleton's *The Widow*, Phillipa, the old justice's young wife, waits with her maid for

⁸⁷ Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, III.4.29-40. Emphasis mine.

⁸⁸ 'Doth the gentleman not deserve' and 'O god of love' etc. refer to a song known as 'O God of Love', a song by William Elderton printed in 1562. Mares writes, 'the song was lost until 1958. A MS. version was then discovered by James M. Osborn in his collection, and published in a modernised version in *The Times*, 17 November 1958, p. 11. It is the song of a sad lover praying for pity from his hard-hearted mistress. The song was very well-known and much imitated. [...] The tune survives in MS versions in several libraries, including in the *Francis Willoughby Lute Book* in the University of Nottingham' (note p. 149). See also Duffin, p. 175; and Rollins, 'William Elderton'. Duffin (p. 18 and pp. 75-9) connects the comment 'Good morrow, sweet Hero' to the famous ballad and tune 'The Bride's Good Morrow'. He also believes that Hero's line 'Do you speak in the sick tune' may refer to a ballad entitled 'Sick Sick' yet the link seems a stretch. See Duffin, pp. 366-9 and *PMOT*, pp. 73-5. 'Light 'o Love' refers to a poem written perhaps by Leonard Gibson around 1570 whose tune has been used in a number of other ballads and as a dance. See Duffin pp. 253-5 and *PMOT* pp. 81-2. The words by Gibson argue that love should not be taken as lightly as it might be. For discussion of 'Heigh-ho for a Husband', see Ch. 3., pp 140-6.

Here, the talk of men is incorporated into the singing, again suggesting that the two activities go hand in hand.

Common to these and many more such examples is the representation of elite women singing from behind some kind of barrier. Often these are implicitly referred to as women sing in contexts of power relations. The songs of Desdemona, Luce in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, and Ophelia, for example, are all in their own way messages of protest in the face of patriarchal constraints. As the elite female song seems to approach or even breach traditional boundaries, one often finds suggestions of lustfulness and prostitution. Among the playwrights, it is Fletcher who seems most keen to toy with this dynamic. In *The Chances*, two Constantina's, one a chaste gentlewoman and one a courtesan, are heard singing by men a number of times during the play, with the prevailing implication being that it is difficult to tell from the singing the gentlewoman from the whore.⁹⁰ In *The Woman's Prize or the Tamer Tamed*, Petruchio's bride Maria, along with cousin Bianca, barricade themselves in their chambers, refusing to come out unless Petruchio agrees to her every whim. As the standoff continues, the women are joined by 'City wives' and 'Country wives' who rally to their cause. In what is clearly a mockery of what a gentleman might normally expect to hear from his bride's chambers, the women sing what seems an original song as Petruchio and his friends listen outside the barrier. Here is the scene:

JAQUES They have got a stick of fiddles, and they firk it
 In wondrous waies, The two Capitanoes,

⁹⁰ Fletcher, *The Chances*, II.2.1-50; and IV.3.1-147. Since the lyrics to each woman's song appear to have been inserted into the 1679 folio, it is unclear precisely what was sung in the early performances.

making an alehouse of [her master's] house', as Malvolio might put it, and it is thus not surprising Petruchio links her to the prostitutes that traditionally inhabited such places.

However, to regard any song performance beyond the strictly private sphere as necessarily indecorous risks distorting what is before us when elite female characters sing on the early modern stage. There is significant historical evidence suggesting exclusive but hardly private social spaces where elite female musical performance was clearly endorsed and indeed expected. The musical proclivities of the Tudors, especially those of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I are well documented and it is clear they encouraged a flourishing of musical skill and literacy at court and in associated circles.⁹³ 'Musical skill', observes Boyd, 'was a mark of cultural refinement' during the time of the Tudors, important enough that Nicholas Watton reported its absence from the education of Anne of Cleves as he scouted prospective wives for Henry VIII:

Frenche, Latyn or other langaige, she hath none, nor yet she canne not synge nor pleye enye instrument, for they take it heere in Germanye for a rebuke and an occasion of lightnesse that great ladyes shuld be lernyd or have eny knowledge in Musicke.⁹⁴

The gentry adopted this desire for musical brides. Elite young men, themselves trained in courtly social skills, including music and dance, sought young ladies whose training could augment an image of erudition and sophistication. Conversely, daughters demonstrating such proclivities represented financial and political alliances through marriage. Evidence of the trend is found firstly in the robust expenditure recorded in

⁹² Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Woman's Prize*, III.4.106.

⁹³ For accounts of this, see Marsh, pp. 198-214; Boyd, pp. 1-20; Woodfill, pp. 220-9; and Price, pp. 1-4 and passim.

⁹⁴ Quoted in Boyd, p. 17.

elite households for the musical education of children, particularly young women. Price notes in the account books of close to a dozen elite families an abundance of payments to professional musicians hired to instruct daughters and wives on the lute, virginals and voice.⁹⁵ These lessons, it seems clear, were hardly whimsical pursuits. Of the Newdigate family of Arbury (ca. 1590), Vivienne Larminie writes,

As the children grew older and spent periods away from home, teachers were engaged for boys and girls wherever they happened to be. The cost was considerable, and in excess of that of the boys' academic tutor.⁹⁶

Contemporary commentary emphasises a primary motivation for such investment when it came to daughters: the attraction of wealthy young suitors. Robert Burton writes in his *Anatomie of Melancholy*, 'To heare a faire young gentlewoman to play upon the Virginalls, Lute, Viall, and sing to it, must need be a great entisement',⁹⁷ and while he frets that singing women 'will make the spectators mad', he admits it is,

[a] thing nevertheless frequently used, and part of a Gentlewomans bringing up, to sing, and dance, and play on the Lute, or some such instrument, before she can say her *Pater noster*, or ten Comandements, 'tis the next way their parents think to get them husbands.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ See Price, Ch. 3 passim. As we have seen, both Marsh and Woodfill offer similar evidence. See esp. Marsh, pp. 198-208. See also the discussion of Elizabethan music teacher Thomas Whythorne below.

⁹⁶ Vivienne Larminie, *Wealth, Kinship and Culture: The Seventeenth-Century Newdigates of Arbury and Their World* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1995), p. 120.

⁹⁷ Burton, *Anatomie*, p. 580-1.

⁹⁸ Burton, *Anatomie*, p. 586.

The Elizabethan music teacher Thomas Whythorne corroborates, if more soberly, Burton's observations in his discussion of a patron competing for his full-time attention:

I do think that she was the more earnest to have me to continue at her house continually, because her eldest daughter had then a suitor and wooer, who should see how willing they were to have their children brought up gentlewoman-like.⁹⁹

It is not surprising then to find numerous references to music lessons found in the surveyed plays. All of them, intriguingly, involve young female students – and the subjects of men and marriage are always in the mix. The underlying ethos of seclusion and privacy apparent in the drama seems to easily fit with historical descriptions of private lessons, engaged parents and private teachers. Yet, there is other evidence of exclusive, but hardly private, performances by elite women and girls, which complicates this equation. 'Musical skills' in the court of Henry VIII, writes Barbara Harris, 'were among the requirements for appointments as the queen's Maids-of-Honour, and ambitious members of the aristocracy paid close attention to their daughter's musical educations'.¹⁰⁰ Yet Harris also notes that these elite ladies 'use[d] their musical skills to contribute to ceremonies and performances at court, which gave their accomplishments public, as well as private, importance.¹⁰¹ At an even higher social level, there is also suggestion of song performances by Elizabeth Blount and Anne Boleyn given for others beyond immediate family members.¹⁰² Mary Tudor is herself documented as performing on the lute and virginals at the age of ten before a group of

⁹⁹ Whythorne, p. 84.

¹⁰⁰ Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women 1450-1550* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 231.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

elite guests.¹⁰³ Considering the musical inclinations of her father and siblings, it is hard to imagine Mary's as the only 'semi-private' performance of this kind.

There is also limited but significant evidence that similar, semi-private musical performances were prevalent among the gentry. Speaking of the future Lord Willoughby d'Ersby, who at the time was ward of Sir William Cecil, David Price notes,

[A]s early as December 1561 both Peregrine and his sister Susan received a gift for playing on some unspecified instrument on Christmas Day. A reference in the following January accounts suggests that this was a lute.¹⁰⁴

One wonders if this paid-for holiday performance was merely for Cecil, or rather for a group of exclusive guests as part of larger celebrations. Similarly, in the dedication of Henry Lichfield's *The First Set of Madrigals of 5. Parts*, the writer speaks of his patron listening contentedly when the composer's music was 'presented by the Instruments and voyces of your own familie'.¹⁰⁵ Price remarks of this scene,

[I]t is difficult to believe that the entertainment of the Crofts and Talbots [other elite families] did not include similar performances. For the family and friends of Gilbert Talbot, 7th Earl of Shrewsbury, such a careful display of musical taste would have been expected.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ According to the contemporary account, Mary for her performance 'was of all folk there greatly praised'. See Boyd, p. 6.

¹⁰⁴ Price, pp. 140-2.

¹⁰⁵ H. Lichfield, *First Set of Madrigals of 5 Parts* (London, 1613), dedicatory epistle. Quoted in Marsh, p. 194.

¹⁰⁶ See Price, p. 109.

In his autobiography ca. 1576, Whythorne speaks of a friend relating a Christmas performance by some of Whythorne's students:

Whereupon he told me that, in one of the Christmas holidays past, he went with a gentleman (a friend of his) to dinner to my gentlewoman's house there. Where, after the dinner was past, they heard my scholars play on the virginals. "Whereupon the gentleman that I went withal demanded who taught them, and answer was made that it was you".¹⁰⁷

As the bulk of students Whythorne mentions in his book are female, it seems probable that some of these performing 'scholars' were young ladies.

The suggestion is, then, that in exclusive but not particularly private or secluded social situations, young women were encouraged to demonstrate their musical talents to friendly audiences. It thus seems hardly a stretch to assume that families took advantage of larger such occasions to showcase the eligibility of their daughters to desirable young men. As we have seen, Price notes numerous occasions when elite families undertook large scale visits to wealthy neighbours, taking along household musicians in a kind of protracted 'cultural exchange'.¹⁰⁸ Such exchanges in any culture are grounded in the forging of allegiances, often through marriage. It is hard to believe in such exclusive, safe, musical environments that eligible children were not given the opportunity to demonstrate their desirable social skills not only to each other but also to parents keen to match for advantage. Indeed, after such significant investment in the cultivation of musical skills, and in light of the social opportunities such skills represented, it seems

¹⁰⁷ See Thomas Whythorne, *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, ed. by James M. Osborne (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 89.

¹⁰⁸ See p. 201 and p. 218 above.

naïve to assume parents would, after all the time and money, leave their daughter's musical performances for potential husbands wholly to chance. On the contrary, it seems only logical for elite parents to arrange exclusive, but hardly private, circumstances where the right people could witness a talented daughter first hand and subsequently extol within the best circles her worthiness as a bride.

The above model, then, clarifies our reading of a number of female song performances represented in the drama – and indeed challenges some traditional interpretations. Moreover it brings into question current conceptions of the role of music in the representation of sirens figures, particularly singing prostitutes. In Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, for example, the gentlewoman Susan Mountford beseeches her uncle to provide financial assistance to her brother, Sir Charles, who is imprisoned. An old family friend, Master Sandy, is present as Old Mountford callously rebuffs his niece. As the old man exits Master Sandy remarks,

I knew you ere you brother sold his land.
Then you were Mistress Sue, tricked up in jewels;
Then you sung well, played sweetly on the Lute;
But now I neither know you nor your suit.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ See Heywood, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, Sc. 9.22-5. Wiggins uses the earliest quarto (1607) here for his edition. In it, Susan's instrument is the 'flute'. However, in Q2 (1617) the line appears to be amended to 'Lute'. Wiggins (p. xxxvii) notes that often printers used Heywood's foul papers for the composition of printings and that the author's handwriting was notoriously difficult to read. Wiggins also offers strong suggestion that, despite documented denials, Heywood oversaw the printings. Considering and the rarity of recorded instances of women playing wind instruments, the fact that both quartos were produced by William Jaggard, and that Heywood was still very much alive and arguably entering his literary prime around 1617, it seems probable that the 'Lute' amendment is authorial.

Master Sandy, we may now understand, speaks of better times, when Susan's brother owned land and was not imprisoned (for murder and debt), and when she was not making the rounds begging – in other words, when Susan and her brother were acting like proper gentlefolk. Indeed his remark 'now I neither know you nor your suit' suggests Susan's song was a sanctioned method of garnering monetary gain (through sanctified marriage) rather than as she does here. In Chapman's *Mother Bombie*, as we have seen, two wealthy citizen fathers arrange for their children to sing a duet together in the hopes that the children might fall in love; in this scene there is no indication that the singing is considered offensive. Rather, with our new model in mind, their arrangement for the two young people to sing 'at' each other from their respective doors – rather than in a more formal, exclusive setting – now seems a further indication/mockery of the old men's ineptness at matchmaking. The most extensive example found thus far occurs in Thomas Middleton's *Women Beware Women* (ca. 1621) where the Duke of Florence holds a large banquet to celebrate his acquisition of Bianca, wife of the young merchant, Leantio, whom he cynically invites to the party. Leantio does go, and there the Duke offers him a captainship that he ruefully accepts, and consequently begins his descent into self-loathing. Bianca, too, grapples with disillusion and guilt as the festivities continue. Occurring simultaneously with this plot line is another involving the matching of a young gentlewoman to a rich but boorish young man. The banquet scene as a whole is a masterful, relentless indictment of a corrupt gentry and all characters offer either direct or ironic comments upon the corruption of marriage and morality for the sake of socio-political advantage. However, from its opening, one cannot help now but suspect that Middleton fashions not a condemnation of a social practice among elites (larger social gatherings in which

potential brides were put on display like singing prostitutes) but more a portrait of mutation: the corruption of a common, perfectly acceptable practice. Consider Guardanio's discussion with the Ward at the opening of the scene:

A banquet prepared. Enter GUARDIANO and WARD

GUARDIANO	Take you especial note of such a gentlewoman. She's here on purpose. I have invited her, Her father, and her uncle to this banquet. Mark her behaviour well; it does concern you; And what her good parts are, as far as time And place can modestly require a knowledge of, Shall be laid open to your understanding. You know I'm both your guardian and your uncle: My care of you is double, ward and nephew, And I'll express it here.	5
WARD	Faith, I should know her Now by her mark among a thousand women. A little, pretty, deft, and tidy thing, you say.	
GUARDIANO	Right. ¹¹⁰	

This seems clearly a representation of a common tradition prevalent among elite families of all cultures where preferred young men and young women are pointed towards each other at exclusive social events. Later as the men eat and drink together, we hear that the Duke has been advised of the matchmaking:

¹¹⁰ Thomas Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, in *Thomas Middleton The Collected Works*, ed. by John Jowett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), pp. 1488-1541, III.2.1-14.

DUKE Who was't told us lately
 Of a match-making rite, a marriage tender?

GUARDIANO This is the gentlewoman.

FABRITIO My lord, my daughter.

DUKE Why, here's some stirring yet.

FABRITIO She's a dear child to me.

DUKE That must needs be; you say she is your daughter.

FABRITIO Nay, my good lord, dear to my purse, I mean,
 Beside my person; I ne'er reckoned that.
 She has the full qualities of a gentlewoman.
 I have brought her up to music, dancing, what not
 That may commend her sex and stir her husband.
 [...]

DUKE [*to Fabritio*] Yea, the voice too, sir?

FABRITIO Ay, and a sweet breast too, my lord, I hope,
 Or I have cast away my money wisely!
 She took her pricksong earlier, my lord,
 Than any of her kindred ever did.
 A rare child, though I say't – but I'd not have
 The baggage hear so much; 'twould make her swell straight;
 And maids of all things must not be puffed up.¹¹¹

The portrait, so far, is clearly a cynical one. Fabritio's daughter Isabella seems valued to him only as an investment. His comments on her precocious 'pricksong' abilities and his allusions to premature pregnancy clearly associate him with the pander. Yet, to label Isabel as wanton or representative of the prostitute seems inaccurate, especially in light of the song she sings:

¹¹¹ Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, III.2.102-27.

ISABELLA (*sings*)

SONG

*What harder chance can fall to woman
Who was born to cleave to some man
Than to bestow her time, youth, beauty,
Life's observance, honour, duty,
On a thing for no use good
But to make physic work, or blood
Force fresh in an old lady's cheek? She that would be
Mother of fools, let her compound with me.*¹¹²

Jowett's notes make clear Isabella's song is a lament for her fate: She is in love with Hippolito, her uncle, yet she must marry Guardiano's Ward, 'a thing for no use good | But to make physic [medicine] work, or blood | Force fresh in an old lady's cheek', i.e., a fool.¹¹³ Isabella's song, then, is in fact a protest against her enthrallment to patriarchy and hardly positions her as a kind of siren – indeed just the opposite. The Ward's reaction to the song supports this reading. Speaking during the performance he remarks,

Here's a tune indeed! Pish, I had rather hear one ballad sung i'th' nose now of the lamentable drowning of fat sheep and oxen, than all these simpering tunes played upon catguts and sung by little kitlings.¹¹⁴

¹¹² The designation 'SONG' and the italics here do not reflect the Oxford edition from which this excerpt is taken. Yet both are present in 8vo 1657 (London: Humphrey Mosely), p. 151, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]) and should be included for our purposes.

¹¹³ Jowett, *Women Beware Women*, p. 1521 (notes to lns. 150-1). In this note, Jowett connects 'physic' to 'medicine, (specifically laxative, which might work better when assisted by laughter).

¹¹⁴ Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, III.2.153-7.

The implication is clear: the Ward may have gentle status, but he, Guardiano, the Duke and the rest are hardly gentlemen in spirit. Considering the Ward's mid-song comments along with Guardiano's and the Duke's, we are again reminded of Bacon's remark 'Musick feedeth that disposition of the *Spirits* which it findeth.'¹¹⁵ Men like these engage the cultivation and performance of music with their own corrupt souls. Thus, what might at first appear to be a criticism of female musical performance emerges as an indictment of human corruption which here taints a social custom that was in all likelihood prevalent among elite families.

With this new perspective, then, we turn back to Ophelia, Sternfeld and Seng, and the propriety of her song. In this case, the famously quoted stage directions in the 'bad' quarto, 'Enter Ofelia playing on a Lute, and her haire downe singing' are compelling indeed.¹¹⁶ Among the many images she may conjure, as she sings on the floor of the court, we find here the distinct echo of the young elite female performing for the delight of all and, perhaps, in the efforts to attract a wealthy young man. And yet the representation of this perfectly proper tradition, like Ophelia, is a 'mad' one. She does not perform at a celebration, but effectively at a funeral; she is not an object of male interest, but that of male abandonment, and her songs, at first the melancholy ayres we might expect, are madly, angrily interrupted and corrupted with lascivious street song. Presaging the Middleton aesthetic, Ophelia, singing seemingly in mad pathetic defiance arguably engendered by patriarchy and a parent looking for advantage, represents the corruption of innocence and trust through the medium of exclusive elite

¹¹⁵ See Ch.1, note 7.

¹¹⁶ Shakespeare, *Hamlet Prince of Denmarke* (London: Nicholas Ling and John Trundle, 1603), sig. G4^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 31 March 2013].

female musical performance that, for better or worse, appears to have been not only proper but commonplace.

If indeed the corruption of the exclusive-yet-public female musical performance is in fact the aesthetic poets such as Heywood, Middleton and Shakespeare intended, perhaps it alters our perception of singing whores. Perhaps singing elites such as Susan, Isabella, and Ophelia did not conjure the prostitute to the degree we might assume and rather it is in singing prostitutes we find corruption of an established musical performance traditionally associated with cultural sophistication, family values and, above all, virginity. After all, is not that what most clients of prostitutes, in any age, are ultimately looking for?

CONCLUSION

Examining many singers in fictive spaces, historicized ones as best we can, and then comparing the evidence to contemporary commentaries about music and decorum, engenders a rather different, and perhaps more balanced, model of elite song performance on the early modern stage. The regulations, customs and anxieties we find expressed in the courtesy books and polemic writings are still clearly evident, yet they seem tempered to a degree by the numerous elites of both genders who complicate their implicitly or explicitly delineated boundaries. Dozens of elite males sing without any suggestion that doing so compromises their power or manliness; and in many cases where song does illustrate depravity, one does not find the passive 'effeminacy' one might expect. Indeed it seems the most songful dramatic characters, such as Merrythought and Valerius, are decidedly stout-hearted. Elite female singers also offer complications to the traditional model, particularly surrounding performance in public

versus private spaces. Evidently, there needs to be added a third dimension of exclusive social space where it seems elite performances by females, especially those of marriageable age, were not only sanctioned but actively encouraged. Overall, there is the sense in the drama – at least when it comes to song performance – that playwrights more often than not engaged in the fuzziness of real-world human dynamics, where the behaviours human beings might prescribe often differ from common practice.

5 SONG: THE BANNER OF EVERYMAN

In our contemporary society, music functions on one level as a social marker, delineating groups by generation, social class and ethnicity among other things. Hip hop artist 50 Cent's song, 'Hustler's Ambition', for example, brings with it direct connections to black urban society, while J.S. Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 is linked, arguably, to the educated white upper middle class. More generally, the rock music of the late 1970s and 1980s is now an anthem of identity to those coming of age during the Cold War, just as is the music of Chuck Berry and Jerry Lee Lewis to those growing up in 1950s America. All these examples can be refined and delineated further, of course, yet the phenomenon is clear: modern humans use music to define themselves, the groups to which they belong, and those individuals and groups they perceive as being different.

This social identification through musical taste was clearly operative in early modern London and the playwrights of the era did not hesitate to make use of it. There are a number of instances in the drama, for example, where popular song is utilized to flatter one social group through the mockery of another. Typically, playwrights arrange characters to demonstrate ignorance and/or social inferiority unknowingly to the audience through the songs they sing or references they make. At a simple level, the audience is entertained through the exposure of foolishness or rusticity. Yet, simultaneously, such belittling positions the audience in a culturally, and often socially superior position. It is easy to imagine, for example, a convivial spirit of superiority pervading the audience at the Blackfriars as Autolycus speaks of 'another ballad, of a fish that appeared upon the coast on Wednesday the fourscore of April forty thousand

fathom above water’, to which the shepherd maid Mopsa exclaims ‘It is true too, think you?’¹ In Chapter 2, we noted Turf the constable in Jonson’s *A Tale of a Tub* unintentionally branding betrothed daughter Audrey a virago as he exclaims that at the wedding she will ride his best horse ‘And prove a Mary Ambry i’ the business’,² an outburst which would surely have demonstrated his rusticity to the amusement of the more affluent Cockpit audience, many of whom would have been in close touch with more current musical trends – or at least have felt they were so. There is a similar sense of group condescension later in the play when the musical Father Rosin ‘and his two boys’ arrive to supply music for the wedding. Clench the farrier requests the song/dance ‘Tom Tiler’ ‘for John Clay’s sake’ (*Clay* is the groom and a tile-setter), to which Medlay, a cooper, then requests ‘the Jolly Joiner, for mine own sake’ and To-Pan the tinker subsequently calling for ‘the Jovial Tinker, for To-Pan’s sake’.³ Here, then, is a palpable, child-like effervescence creating the impression that we the audience are looking mirthfully downward, smirking knowingly at what we are certainly above. It is a subtle but effective device, for as Jonson playfully mocks these colourful-but-ignorant, lower-class specimens flattering themselves with ballads, he simultaneously invites his upper-class audience of ‘auditors’, to chuckle in their own superiority.⁴

¹ Shakespeare, *The Winter’s Tale*, IV.4.263-80.

² Jonson, *A Tale of a Tub*, I.4.22.

³ Jonson, *A Tale of a Tub*, I.4.39-44.

⁴ Cf. Heywood’s *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, Sc. 1.81-92, where Sir Francis Acton describes wedding celebrations taking place in his manor house:

SIR FRANCIS Now gallants, while the town musicians
 Finger their frets within, and the mad lads
 And country lasses, every mother’s child
 With nosegays and bride-laces in their hats,
 Dance all their country measures, rounds, and jigs,
 What shall we do? Hark, they are all on the hoigh,

IN SEARCH OF PLEBEIAN HEROES: 1598-1600

A number of playwrights, however, utilize song and its link to cultural identity to an opposite end: instead of fashioning entertaining moments at the expense of humorously ‘ordinary’ characters, these dramatists use song and song culture to exalt the ordinary citizen both of the stage world and, by implication, the real world beyond. This dynamic appears most prominently in drama produced at the turn of the seventeenth century, where there appears to have been a surge in plays offering overt social levelling fantasies.⁵ Interestingly, all these plays are products of writers orbiting Phillip Henslowe: Munday and Chettle’s *1&2 Robin Hood* (1598), Dekker, Chettle and Haughton’s *Patient Grissil* (1599), Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holliday* (1599), Heywood’s *1&2 Edward IV* (1599, 1600), and Chettle, Haughton, and Day’s *The Blind*

They toil like mill-horses, and turn as round—
Marry, not on the toe. Ay, and they caper,
But without cutting. You shall see tomorrow
The hall floor pecked and dinted like a millstone,
Made with their high shoes: though their skill be small,
Yet they tread heavy where their hobnails fall

Acton’s delineation of class through association with an artform, in this case dance – and by association the music that goes with it, is clear. Indeed, one can detect not only a theme of superiority, but also an underlying anxiety of the encroachment of lower class culture into elite spheres.

⁵ While essentially correct, it must be pointed out here that the ‘social levelling’ occurring in the following plays mainly involves lower-class characters evolving into more powerful versions of themselves or revealing a superior status they had always possessed, rather than manifesting any kind of truly boundary-breaking transformation. Of course, the plotline of the lowborn character rising above his or her station is arguably universal. We find it in the saturnalian themes of Greek and Roman comedy and in the early comedies of the English Renaissance informed by them. See, for example, Plautus, *The Braggart Soldier* (ca. 230 BC), in *Four Comedies*, trans. By Erich Segal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 1-74; and Nicholas Udal, *Ralph Roister Doister* (1566), in *Three Sixteenth-Century Comedies*, ed. by Charles W. Wentworth Jr. (London: Ernest Benn, 1984), pp. 89-214. In both plays, a servant directs his betters and controls much of the action. Social levelling is also a common ballad theme clearly present, for instance, in ‘good-night’ ballads where sin and death are positioned as the ultimate social equalizers. See, for example, ‘A Sorrowful Sonet, made by M. George Mannington, at Cambridge Castle’ discussed later in this chapter.

Beggar of Bednall Green (1600).⁶ All these plays are significantly imbued with popular song and song culture; and all, as we shall see, assert the socio-political value of common citizens.

This cluster of plays probably represents a reaction by the Henslowe writers to current socio-political conditions as well as key events in the world of the public theatres. The 1590s are notable as a period of protracted dearth and civil unrest. Four successive harvest failures from 1594 to 1597, rising taxes supporting foreign wars, rising food prices, falling wages, an influx of discharged soldiers and widespread unemployment, combined with instances of engrossment and general corruption, all contributed to a general feeling of desperation and bitterness in the lower classes toward the London elite and to civic authorities.⁷ Despite efforts to aid the poor and to regulate mercantile behaviours, there is abundant evidence of violent collective action, often headed by the city's apprentices.⁸ Civil unrest appears to have culminated with the trial and execution of five of these young men in the summer of 1596 and a posthumous charge of treason in 1597.⁹ Yet, while the crisis seems to have subsided by 1599,

⁶ As we only have a small number of the plays performed at the Rose and the Theatre at this time, there exists the possibility that the trend discussed here represents some kind of coincidence. However, the combination of contemporary conditions and events at this moment in English history presented below suggest this to be unlikely. It is, of course, also possible that there were many more plays resembling in their sources, style and operation, those of the present discussion.

⁷ Those in power appear to have been genuinely concerned with the developments. See M.J. Power, 'London and the Control of the "Crisis" of the 1590's', *History* 70 (1985), 351-85; Mihoko Suzuki, 'The Apprentice Riots of the 1590s and the Fiction of Thomas Deloney', *English Articles and Papers* (1996), 181-216
<http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/english_articles/1>.

⁸ Some of these apprentice 'revolts' were ironically unilateral actions enforcing government-imposed price caps on foodstuffs and other essentials.

⁹ Suzuki, p. 184.

‘arguments over its causes, its management, and its repercussions’ only ‘fleetingly glimpsed in the playhouses’ before this time, had not.¹⁰

Richard Rowland notes that it was also precisely at this time that the chorographic gaze of London writers became manifestly more rigorous and specialised than it had been in the past. He argues that London only began to ‘stage itself’ with any real specificity with the publishing of John Stow’s *Survey of London* in the summer of 1598 and the performance of Thomas Heywood’s *Edward IV* at the Boar’s Head playhouse near the end of 1599 ‘in which some of the radical implications of Stow’s unprecedented achievement were first explored in theatrical performance’:¹¹

Both the antiquarian and the playwright were opening up new forms of cultural and political awareness by which affiliations within and to the communities in which citizens lived and worked were privileged at the expense of structures and strictures of subjecthood imposed by the crown.¹²

Londoners at this time, it seems, were heavily engaged in the scrutinizing of their particular communities and the identities associated with them. This ‘more fully realized urban existence’¹³ represents a delineation of value by social groups, subgroups and ultimately individuals at the lower end of the social scale in relation to the larger

¹⁰ Richard Rowland, *Thomas Heywood’s Theatre, 1599-1639* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), pp. 37-8).

¹¹ Rowland, p. 24.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Rowland, p. 25.

body of the nation and its regime – a locating of ordinary Londoners’ political ‘selves’.¹⁴

The last years of the sixteenth century are also a period of expansion and diversification for the London theatre companies. Andrew Gurr argues that, upon the granting of a duopoly to the Lord Admiral’s men and the newly formed Lord Chamberlain’s Men in April in 1594, the respective repertoires of the two companies began to diverge.¹⁵ There is general agreement that this specialization intensified with the appearance of new theatres and play companies in the late 1590s and early 1600s, and that repertoires and audiences, to some degree, continued to diverge until the closures of 1642.¹⁶ At their inception, Edward Alleyn brought to The Admiral’s Men plays for which he was renowned, such as Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*, *Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta*, and the company appears to have built their customer base around these traditional favourites. Because we do not have the kind of detailed record for Burbage’s Theatre in the 1590s that we do for Henslowe’s Rose and to some degree the Fortune, it is impossible to state with certainty the extent of this divergence at first. Yet Gurr argues that around the Burbage players there developed a more ‘progressive’ oeuvre while the Henslowe theatres gravitated towards more conservative, ‘citizen’

¹⁴ The precise role of Stow and dramatists like Heywood in these developments is of course debatable, as the hardships of the mid to late 1590s seem to have encouraged civil solidarity, action and pride. Thus their works were probably as much reactions to current social developments as they were pollinators.

¹⁵ See Andrew Gurr, *Shakespeare’s Opposites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 11 and passim. See also Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare’s London*, pp. 177-222.

¹⁶ Along with Gurr, see for example Alfred Harbage, *Shakespeare’s Audience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), pp. 62-3, 88 and 158; and Judith Cook, *The Golden Age of the English Theatre* (London: Simon and Shuster, 1995), p. 171. See also Tom Rutter, *Work and Play on the Shakespearean Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 96.

tastes.¹⁷ The revival of the boy companies beginning in 1599, the collapse of the duopoly around the same time, and the construction of the Globe (1599), the Fortune (1600) and the Red Bull (1601), fostered further competition among theatre companies for market share and appears to have intensified the tuning of generic loyalties – at least on part of the theatre companies. During these dynamic years, the boys of Blackfriars and Paul’s, boasting works of erudition and acerbic contemporary satire (whose cultured, elitist appeal, they hoped, would draw the Inns of Court students and the wealthy), represented one generic pole. At the other were the Henslowe theatres seeking to attract local shopkeepers, artisans and apprentices with old favourites as well as new plays offering elaborate games of disguise, comedies with local settings, and later the decidedly Protestant and political ‘elect nation’ plays.¹⁸ Again, when considering the Admiral’s Men at the end of the sixteenth century, it is impossible to establish the degree to which they differed from their main rivals, The Lord Chamberlain’s Men, due to the small size of the latter’s extant repertoire. Yet it is important to note Gurr’s

¹⁷ Gurr, *Playgoing*, p. 181. Because we have limited access to the repertoire of theatre companies, including that of Shakespeare’s, it is presently impossible to discern a true generic split until around the 1630s. It seems logical to assume, however, that such a dynamic did not manifest overnight. Roslyn Knutson argues persuasively that, at least until the death of Burbage in 1619, both The Admiral’s Men and The Lord Chamberlain’s/King’s Men managed their repertoires in similar ways and were clearly aware of and reactive to each other’s successes. This, of course, does not address the notion that play companies and their theatres probably also worked to distinguish themselves in one way or another, from their competitors. For her discussion see Roslyn Lander Knutson, *The Repertory of Shakespeare’s Company 1594-1613* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991), esp. Chs. 1 & 5.

¹⁸ Judith Doolin Spikes offers the following description: ‘[A] single, unified dramatic action centring in the mortal conflict between the Protestant protagonist and a Catholic antagonist; adjunct episodic material designed to locate the protagonist’s story in the context of universal history [...] an appeal to the audience, often direct, to behold this exemplum of God’s great plan for the English people, and to carry it forward with all dispatch’ (p. 147). For the complete discussion, see Judith Doolin Spikes, ‘The Jacobean History Play and the Myth of the Elect Nation’, *Renaissance Drama*, 8 (1977), 117-49. Our description of the generic divergence here is, clearly, as brief as possible. For a more thorough account, see Gurr, *Opposites*, Ch. 5.

attention to what he argues is the Admiral's uniquely 'positive' response 'from the outset [of the duopoly] to the riches they gained from having a steady location at a licensed playhouse on the fringes of London and daily performances'.¹⁹ This positive response entailed, he argues, a spirit of inventiveness as they worked to maintain the interest of an audience who, unlike that of a touring company, became intimately familiar with the players and their theatre.²⁰ This intimacy must have been mutual, indeed probably more than that, on the part of the Admiral's Men and their writers who, like all enduring entertainers, would have closely monitored customer tastes and reactions not only in general but also from moment to moment during performances. If one assumes then, at the very least, that sometime after 1598 the wealthier of the amphitheatre customers began gravitating towards more expensive and exclusive theatre spaces such as Paul's and especially Blackfriars (home to the Children of the Chapel from at least 1600), it seems probable that those making a living through the Henslowe theatres of the Rose and the new Fortune would be especially concerned at this time with encouraging the loyalty of those who might remain. Thus, they would be more focussed than ever during these years upon the opinions, desires and artistic tastes of those one might call 'Henslowe regulars'.

The last influencing factor is the temporary retirement of Edward Alleyn. After the repression of Pembroke's Men by the Privy Council (and the recruitment of some of their players by the Admiral's Men) in the summer of 1597, Alleyn retired, provoking a substantial change in the repertoire.²¹ There is significant evidence to suggest that with

¹⁹ Gurr, *Opposites*, p. 56.

²⁰ For the full argument, see Gurr, *Opposites*, Ch. 2.

²¹ His reasons seem to have been based on a desire to pursue business interests on a more full-time basis. See Gurr, *Opposites*, pp. 17-20.

his departure went most of the traditional plays for which he, and the Admiral's Men, were renowned. 'Not until Alleyn returned to the Fortune stage in 1600-03', Gurr writes, did the old favourites reappear.²² If it was indeed Henslowe's decision not to run *Tamburlaine*, *Faustus* and the rest without Alleyn, it seems a savvy one, for at such crucial time, it would certainly have been risky offering audience favourites bereft of Alleyn, one of the plays' chief attractions – and the actor many of the Admiral's most loyal customers would have been paying to see.²³

What emerges then is an image of the Henslowe writers sometime in early 1598 facing the task of replacing the works that define their emerging client base, just as competition for customers is becoming especially fierce. One can imagine the pressure to produce works the Henslowe regulars would not just enjoy but take to heart. As we consider plays such as *The Shoemakers' Holiday*, *1 Edward IV* and the others mentioned below, the shrewdness of the Henslowe writers emerges as both overt and impressive. In these works we find ballads and ballad culture used extensively in what Roland terms 'the invocation of the familiar', an incorporation of popular songs and their narratives which, like familiar London landmarks and neighbourhoods, were cultural locations through which much of the Admiral's audience constructed identity and civic pride. As mentioned above, popular songs in early modern London were symbols, indeed often anthems, of 'us', proven avenues of access to Henslowe's primary customers; and like *Tamburlaine*, popular song heroes and their narratives were proven favourites *already* and thus prime sources for plays written to be enduring

²² See Gurr, *Opposites*, pp. 35-6.

²³ It should be noted here that many of these same plays continued to attract 'citizen' audiences upon Alleyn's return and indeed contributed to the reputations of the Fortune and the Red Bull respectively as 'citizen' playhouses up until the closure of the theatres in 1642.

favourites. Of course, the same can be said, to some degree, about the use of popular song anywhere in the canon. The difference is what seems to be a determined, focused mining of ballad culture by playwrights in these few years with what appears to be one basic goal in mind: to encourage the loyalty of an audience who, at precisely this time, were especially concerned with their cultural identity and socio-political value. These then are song-fuelled plays, written for ordinary people who, more than ever, wished to *matter*.

THE SHOEMAKER'S HOLLIDAY (1599)

The plays in this cluster might occupy two basic categories: those whose narratives feature popular songs and elements of song culture, and those incorporating characters and narratives from actual songs. Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, while very musical, is not informed by a particular song narrative. Rather, it features a particular social group known both for their 'gentle' status and their reputation for singing. The overarching message of the play is one of social levelling and its numerous songs and song references, upon examination, seem chosen to support this theme either explicitly or implicitly.

The Shoemaker's Holliday is heavily indebted to a popular chapbook entitled *The Gentle Craft*, written by Thomas Deloney and first registered in 1597.²⁴ A silk-weaver by trade, Deloney, as noted elsewhere, was one of the most popular and prolific

²⁴ The first editions of Deloney's work appear to have been written in two parts, the first in 1597 and the second in 1598. 'All copies of these first editions', write Smallwood and Wells, 'and, we may safely surmise, of other editions before those of 1627 and 1639, have disappeared, read out of existence by the popular audience to which they were directed'. Smallwood and Wells, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, p. 203.

ballad-writers of the age.²⁵ *The Gentle Craft*, along with his various other prose and verse publications of the late 1590s, mark him as kind of proletarian polemicist, a ‘poet of the people’ according to Francis Mann.²⁶ Mihoko Suzuki describes him as ‘the single exception to the silence of the apprentices and the working class during the period’.²⁷ *The Gentle Craft* is a tripartite work exalting the shoemaking profession. By the time of its registration, there were approximately six thousand Londoners working in the leather trade, half of whom were shoemakers. The Leathersellers’ Company and their affiliates had a reputation for solidarity and active participation in the civil disruption described above.²⁸ To this unified, politically active group of citizens, Deloney offers a pedigree, legitimacy through legend, linking them to London and posterity in the same spirit as Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* (1590-6) links its relationship to Elizabeth I. From this and other writings, it seems clear Deloney earnestly fought to advance the citizen cause. Yet *The Gentle Craft* appears less a clarion call and more a savvy act of populist flattery by a professional writer quite naturally capitalizing on the blowing of the wind.²⁹

²⁵ Deloney’s authorship is attributed to scores of ballads published from the 1580s into the 1700s. As we have seen, Deloney’s *Garland of Goodwill* (ca. 1592) contains many ballads utilized by Shakespeare, Jonson and others. *The Gentle Craft*, incidentally, is also considered to be the first ‘citizen novel, or [...] novel of everyday life’. See Thomas Deloney, *The Gentle Craft*, in Dekker and Deloney, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday & The Gentle Craft: the First Part*, ed. by Wilfrid J. Halliday (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), pp. 1-86 (p. 15).

²⁶ See Francis Oscar Mann, *The Works of Thomas Deloney* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), p. ix.

²⁷ Suzuki, p. 185. In her article, Suzuki notes Deloney’s frequent brushes with the authorities during this time including imprisonment along with a group of weavers for his publication of ‘a Book for the Silk Weavers’ along with barely escaping the same for publishing in 1596 the ‘Ballad on the Want of Corn’ which apparently portrayed Elizabeth I speaking with commoners in a quite-uncharacteristically informal manner. See also Mann, p. ix.

²⁸ See Richard Rowland, ‘Introduction’, in *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV*, ed. by Richard Rowland (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 29.

²⁹ After all, the social group to which it panders seemed to need little in the way of political motivation. Indeed, one could well argue that *The Gentle Craft* works brilliantly in the perpetuation of the status quo by promoting pride and ambition *within* its boundaries. Simon Eyre is celebrated for being an exemplary specimen of the book’s target audience. Through

The first two parts of *The Gentle Craft*, ‘The Pleasant History of St. Hugh’ and ‘Crispin and Crispinus’, deal with the patron Saints of shoemakers. Deloney’s third tale of the famous shoemaker Simon Eyre is based loosely upon historical fact.³⁰ All three narratives offer overt, arguably brazen, themes of social levelling. After his martyrdom, for example, St. Hugh’s bones are spirited away and fashioned into shoemaking tools, literally atomising his saintly (and previously princely) essence into the ranks of a group he has dubbed ‘gentle’.³¹ Crispinus, a prince impersonating a shoemaker (to avoid effective assassination by the pagan tyrant Maximus) is pressed into service against invading Persians whose general is, unsurprisingly, the son of a shoemaker.³² Meanwhile, brother Crispin, also disguised as a shoemaker, secretly marries and fathers a child with Maximus’ daughter Ursula who initially despairs at Crispin’s apparent low social status but eventually succumbs ‘as did [king] Cofetua’,³³ to his innate, noble, magnetism. Deloney’s *Simon Eyre* is an entirely Elizabethan fantasy of wealth and elevation. Through intrigue and disguise, shoemaker Eyre secures the cargo of a ship stuck in the Thames. After the deal is struck, he gains a reputation as a rich citizen

him, they are knighted with special value, but nowhere is there any suggestion that shoemakers should actually *be* knighted. As with Munday’s Robin Hood plays, *The Gentle Craft* offers its target readers affirmation rather than transformation.

³⁰ The real Simon Eyre, Stow records, was ‘sometime an Upholster, & then a Draper’ who eventually rose to the position of Sherriff and then Mayor in 1446. The majority of the information contained in the *Survey of London* recounts Eyre’s enlarging of Leadenhall (as a granary and marketplace for foodstuffs) and his rather large charitable legacy. At the time of Deloney and Dekker, Leadenhall had long been a hub for the leather trade. See Stow, *A Suruay of London*, pp. 80, 115, 118, and 437-8. For a concise history of Leadenhall, see ‘Leaden Hall Market’, *City of London* <www.leadenhall-market.co.uk> [accessed 17 September, 2012].

³¹ Deloney, p. 32.

³² Deloney, pp. 51-53.

³³ This probably refers to ‘A Song of a Beggar and a King’ which was circulating at least in 1594 and is contained in Richard Johnston’s 1612 ballad collection entitled *A Crowne-Garland of Goulde[n] Roses* in which the African king Cophetua inexplicably falls in love with a beggar maiden. See Ch. 3. p. 132-3.

possessing far more financial (and therefore social) capital than his humble attire suggests. This allows Eyre to mingle in higher social circles and eventually attain the position of mayor.

THE GENTLE CRAFT AND THE SHOEMAKER'S HOLIDAY

Thomas Dekker draws mainly from the last two books of *The Gentle Craft* in his fashioning of *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. The rise of Simon Eyre serves as a main narrative around which he constructs two others that are clearly grounded in the Crispin and Crispianus story. The ultimate theme of the play is social justice, with scenes and themes of social levelling appearing in abundance. Like Crispianus, Ralph, a journeyman of Eyre's, is pressed into military service abroad, but like so many contemporary Elizabethan soldiers, he is wounded and would have fallen into poverty had it not been for the goodness of his trade fellows. His wife Jane is pursued in his absence by the avaricious gentleman, Master Hammon who is at last seen off by a gang of shoemakers as the couple reunite.³⁴ The second pair of lovers, Rowland Lacy, son of the Earl of Lincoln and Rose Oatley, daughter of the Lord Mayor, Sir Roger Oatley, are also besieged by issues of class. Neither of their fathers favours their marriage and both devise schemes to thwart it: Rose is imprisoned in the country and Rowland Lacy is sent to war in France. Like Crispin in *The Gentle Craft*, Rowland thwarts his father's tyrannical behaviour by disguising himself as a (Dutch) shoemaker, hiding in London in the employment of Simon Eyre. The climax of this storyline occurs at the end of the play when the King quells all arguments of class by divorcing the couple and

³⁴ Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, Sc. 18.92-5.

remarrying them in front of everyone.³⁵ The scene serves as a cap to the same central message noted in other plays here: artisans and citizens may not have the same blood as aristocrats, but in the eyes of royalty, and by association of God, they do possess comparable value. It is, as Smallwood and Wells put it, ‘an assertion of sovereignty’, yet this assertion constitutes, it seems, not so much a ‘denial of class’³⁶ as a declaration of socio-political worth and power within accepted social boundaries. It is also prudent to point out here that of the mentioned six thousand leatherworkers in London, a large portion of them lived and worked very near to the theatre where *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* would have been first performed.³⁷ ‘The tanning operation itself’, writes Richard Rowland, ‘was concentrated in the streets of Southwark surrounding the Rose playhouse; by the end of the century some eighty tanneries were situated in this district alone’.³⁸ Rowland notes further that civil unrest between apprentices and London authorities often began with this social group.³⁹ Clearly then assertions of sovereignty and socio-political value via a play treating shoemakers represent, as does Deloney’s *Gentle Craft*, a shrewd business move.

SONGS IN SUPPORT: THE THREE-MEN SONGS

Dekker stocks *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* with a wide assortment of songs and song references that appear to be either created or imported specifically to support the play’s levelling scenes and messages. Q1 contains two appended ‘three-men’s songs’

³⁵ Dekker, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, Sc. 21.99-115.

³⁶ Smallwood and Wells, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, p. 39.

³⁷ ‘The likelihood is that [*The Shoemaker’s Holiday*] was first performed at the Rose in the late summer of 1599’. Smallwood and Wells, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, p. 9.

³⁸ Rowland, ‘Introduction’, p. 29.

³⁹ Rowland, ‘Introduction’, pp. 29-30.

which were probably performed during the play, even if there is no indication as to their specific place.⁴⁰ Christopher Marsh links ‘three-men’s songs’ to the three-part ‘Freemen’s songs’ in Thomas Ravenscroft’s *Deuteromelia* (1609), suggesting they represent the same song form.⁴¹ Freemen’s songs in *Deuteromelia* are short, strophic, metrically simple and easy to sing, leaving the impression that they were designed to be sung primarily by people with little or no formal training, i.e. most artisans and tradesmen.⁴² No early music survives for either of the three-men’s songs in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, yet both appear to meet the general stylistic requirements suggested in Ravenscroft.⁴³

While one cannot affirm with certainty their place in performance, their presence alone is entirely expected. Singing tradesmen of all kinds are a commonplace of the contemporary literature. ‘Tinkers, tailors, blacksmiths servants, clowns and others’, writes Chappell, ‘are so constantly mentioned as singing music in parts, and by so many writers, as to leave no doubt of the ability of at least many among them to do

⁴⁰ There is general consensus that Q1 was probably printed from Dekker’s manuscript. Yet, considering Dekker’s chronic troubles with debt, the fact that *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* appears to be written solely by him, and the timing of play’s printing – less than a year after its performance (compared to the average of around three years), it is legitimately possible to speculate that Dekker worked the printing deal with his fair copy while a prompt copy, which would probably have had stage directions indicating song placement, was still in use or simply beyond his reach. For Dekker’s money troubles, see John Twyning, ‘Dekker, Thomas (c. 1572–1632)’, *DNB* <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 25 January 2013]; for a discussion of play printing and Dekker’s hastiness, see Gurr, *Opposites*, pp. 109-13 (esp. p. 112).

⁴¹ ‘It is not entirely clear’ writes Marsh, ‘which is the linguistic original and which the corrupted or modified form’. See p. 190.

⁴² See Thomas Ravenscroft, *Deuteromelia* (London: Thomas Adams, 1609), passim, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 1 April 2013]. Ravenscroft also includes in this category songs in four parts which might suggest ‘Freemen’s songs’ to be the original terminology. Also included are songs offering only one part, apparently with the expectation of improvisation to provide others. As with the three-part pieces the metrics are simple, the melodies easy.

⁴³ *PMOT*, I, pp. 277-8 provides a conjectural setting to a tune entitled ‘The Cobbler’s Jigg’ extant versions of which appear to date to at least the 1620s.

so'.⁴⁴ Deloney in *The Gentle Craft* features, not surprisingly, singing shoemakers and includes a song written by their patron saint, St. Hugh, praising them.⁴⁵ More famously, the clown in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* describes the shearers who will be attending the upcoming sheep-sheering festival as 'three-man-songmen all'.⁴⁶ Juniper, the cobbler in Jonson's *The Case is Altered* sings at length at the opening of the play – and indeed, like Orpheus, proves difficult to silence.⁴⁷ Beyond the drama, shoemakers and tailors are often singled out as examples of singing artisans. An ordinance dated 1553, written at the request of what eventually would become the 'Company of Musicians' directs craftsmen, specifically tailors and 'showmakers', to desist from singing 'songs called three men's songs' outside of their own shops, as it deprives professional musicians of a valued revenue source.⁴⁸ John Case (1586) lists tailors and shoemakers first and second as he writes of the 'Mechanical artificers [...] singing in their shoppes'.⁴⁹

The three-men songs, then, wherever they occurred in *The Shoemaker's Holliday*, function firstly as an identifying feature of shoemakers as a social group; Dekker seems thus to include them as much for verisimilitude as for any entertainment

⁴⁴ *PMOT*, I, p. 67.

⁴⁵ See, for example, pp. 31-3.

⁴⁶ Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, IV.3.40.

⁴⁷ Jonson, *The Case is Altered*, I.1.1-22.

⁴⁸ See Woodfill, pp. 14-15 and Marsh, pp. 190-1.

⁴⁹ Case, p. 44. In a letter dated 15 January 1591, Samuel Cox writes of different kinds of people known to sing songs 'in the time of Christmas, beginning to play in the holidays and continuing until twelfth tide, or at the furthest until Ashwednesday'. These he divides into three sorts 'such as were in wages with the king'; 'such as pertained to noblemen, and were ordinary servants in their house'; and the third kind: 'certain artisans in god towns and great parishes, as shoemakers, tailors, and such like, that used to play either in their town-halls, or sometime in churches, to make people merry'. Quoted in E.K. Chambers *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), IV, p. 237. Chappell in *PMOT* (II, p. 402) notes a letter written to James I which speaks of singing tradesmen but identifies shoemakers and tailors specifically.

value. Yet, the three-men songs, especially the second, beginning ‘Cold’s the wind | and wet’s the raine’, emerge as far more significant when considered in light of the Admiral’s audience and the times. Here it is as it appears at the beginning of Q1:

The Second Three-mans

Song.

This is to be sung at the latter end.

Cold’s the wind, and wet’s the raine,
 Saint Hugh be our good speede:
 Ill is the weather that bringeth no gaine,
 Nor helps good hearts in neede.

Trowle the boll, the iolly Nut-browne boll,
 And here, kind mate, to thee:
 Let’s sing a dirge for Saint Hughes soule,
 And downe it merrily.

Downe a downe, hey downe a downe,
 Hey derie derie down a down, *Close with the tenor boy:*
 Ho, well done, to me let come,
 Ring, compasse gentle joy.

Trowle the boll, the Nut-browne boll,
 And here, kind etc. *as often as there be men to drinke.*

At last when all have drunke, this verse.

Cold’s the wind, and wet’s the raine,

Saint Hugh be our good speede:
 Ill is the weather that bringeth no gaine,
 Nor helps good hearts in neede.⁵⁰

This second song is clearly directed at shoemakers as a group and the direction, ‘to be sung at the latter end’ suggests that it may have been performed at the end of the play, where all of London’s shoemakers feast together in celebration.⁵¹ As noted, a sizable portion of *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*’s initial audience were artisans and apprentices, and many of these were probably shoemakers. A three-men’s song in the midst of a dramatized celebration of shoemakers would resonate indeed, for it amounts to a glorified imitation of many audience members’ most famous recreational activity. Indeed, if the song is not Dekker’s and is imported from the popular culture, the audience could have sung along much in the same way as they might later in a tavern

⁵⁰ Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemakers Holiday*, (London: Valentine Sims, 1600), sig. A4^r, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]. Following past editors, what are clearly performance directions have been italicized. ‘*This is to be sung at the latter end*’ is already italicized in Q1.

⁵¹ Smallwood and Wells (p. 80) note that, while the ‘to be sung the latter end’ is ultimately unclear, ‘the latter end’ was regularly used to denote ‘the conclusion, the very end, the final moments (*O.E.D.*) and is so used by Bottom in *M.N.D.* of a song in a play “I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the Duke” (IV.i.18-19)’. Indeed, it seems most appropriate for sometime during or after the final scene of the play, where the King feasts with Simon Eyre and all of London’s shoemakers. The last line of the refrain, ‘Ill is the weather that bringeth no gaine, | Nor helps good hearts in neede’ seems to remind us that the feast is in fulfilment of Eyre’s promise to his fellows that he would feast all shoemakers if ever he became Mayor, as described in the *Gentle Craft*. And, of course it reminds of the real Simon Eyre’s noted legacy of charity including the dedication of Leadenhall for public use, which also occurs at this time in the play (see note 30 above). Of course, as Stern (p. 149 and p. 154) rightly points out, the separateness of the two three-men’s songs from the rest of the text suggests that they were not included in the original performance and that they may have thus been added to the printing by someone unconcerned with their relationship to the rest of the play. Considering, as is shown in this section, that the song appears to have legitimate connections to the play’s characters and the surrounding contemporary political climate, and that the play seems to have been completed perhaps a year before its first printing (see note 40 above) and that Q1 contains the appended songs, linking ‘Cold’s the wind, and wet’s the raine’ to this particular text is less problematic than others could be.

after the play's performance. Most importantly, 'Cold's the wind | wet's the rain' is clearly a song of merry solidarity, calling on the patron saint of 'good hearted' shoemakers in the face of 'Ill weather' that 'bringeth no gaine' (i.e., indifferent Nature), a theme which surely would have reminded audience members of the four terrible harvests, dearth and strife so recently past. Thus, the dynamics of this particular song, sung to this crowd at this particular moment in English history, would have offered a far deeper experience than most contemporary Londoners probably had watching fairies sing 'You Spotted Snakes' in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. 'Cold's the wind | wet's the rain', then, represents something of a minor audience anthem, a rousing musical cheer led by the actors representing stylized versions of the very people surrounding them. It is a musical 'Hurrah for us', pointed not indirectly at any English audience – as is, for example, Henry's speech at Agincourt – but directly at the Admiral's most loyal customers 'now' in 1599.

SONGS IN SUPPORT: BALLAD FRAGMENTS

Not surprisingly, the ballad fragments and references Dekker imports into *The Shoemakers' Holiday* operate often in various ways. Like the three-men songs, many function first as badges of authenticity, invoking the familiar to legitimize the singer as 'one of us'. On a number of occasions, their operation appears to end there, yet when we consider them in concert, we find them all supporting the same kind of 'Hurrah for us' message we find in 'Cold's the wind | wet's the rain' and in the play as a whole.

The first of these ‘ballads’ is a disguise song beginning ‘Der was een bore van Gelderland’⁵² which Rowland Lacy sings as he approaches the stall of Simon Eyre seeking employment (Lacy is disguised as a Dutch shoemaker). Unlike those below, this song is currently without a source and seems composed for the scene – as much for a bit of xenophobic humour as anything else. Unlike Prince John’s disguise song in *I Robin Hood*, Lacy’s disguise works, as evidenced by Firk’s immediate response of ‘Master, for my life, yonder’s a brother of the Gentle Craft! If he bear not Saint Hugh’s bones, I’ll forfeit my bones’.⁵³ Lacy’s song thus marks him as part of a fraternity that transcends national boundaries, identifying him to Firk as, above all, ‘one of us’. The song also acts as an anthem of the disguise, trumpeting to the Admiral’s audience for the first time the blurring of class distinctions. It is a musical expression of the phrase ‘a shoemaker’s son is a prince born’ borrowed directly from *The Gentle Craft* and repeated five times by Simon Eyre in the course of *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*.⁵⁴

A number of the play’s imported ballad references bring with them similar narratives of fraternity and social equality to which the Admiral’s audience would surely have been attuned. Twice in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, characters use the phrase

⁵² Editor’s translation: There was a boor from Gelderland, |Merry they be | He was so drunk he could not stand |pissed they all be | Fill up the cannikin; |Drink, my fine mannikin. Smallwood and Wells note ‘the reputation of the Dutch as heavy drinkers. See *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, p. 106.

⁵³ Dekker, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, Sc. 4.45-6. This seems to echo what we read on B^v of Q1637 of *The Gentle Craft*, ‘Travellers by sea and land, | each country guise to understand’. See *The Gentle Craft*, in Dekker and Deloney, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday & The Gentle Craft: the First Part*, ed. by Halliday, p. 18.

⁵⁴ In *The Gentle Craft* (p. 57). When Crispianus returns from the war in France, he finds his brother’s wife (also a princess) has given birth and all are living with the shoemakers. Crispianus ‘taking the infant in his arms he kissed it, saying: “Now I will say and swear [...] that a shoemaker’s son is a prince born—joining the opinion of Iphicratis; and henceforth shoemakers shall never let their term die.”’ In *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, Simon Eyre repeats the saying ‘Prince I am none, yet am I princely born’ three times and derivatives of it two more. See Sc. 7.49-50, 10.158, 11.17-8, 17.21-2 and 21.35-6.

‘the shaking of the sheets’, a direct reference to a famous ballad entitled ‘The Doleful Dance and Song of Death’. The speaker of ‘The Doleful Dance’ is Death himself, the ultimate social leveller, who brings all to the same end, regardless of status. The ballad appears designed primarily for the entertainment of those of lower social rank, as most of its lines are devoted to the demise of the rich, powerful and prideful. It is easy to imagine the delicious feeling of righteous retribution as ordinary citizens, singing the song, vicariously addressed their betters in the ominous voice of Death himself:⁵⁵

Can you dance the shaking of the Sheets,
 A dance that every one must do?
 Can you trim it up with dainty sweets,
 and every things that 'longs thereto?
 Make ready then your winding sheet,
 And see how ye can bestir your feet,
 For Death is the man that all must meet.

Bring away the Begger and the King,
 and every man in his degree,
 Bring away the old and youngest thing,
 come all to Death and follow me.
 The Courtier with his lofty looks,
 The Lawyer with his learned Books,
 The Banker with his baiting hooks

Marchants, have you made your Mart in France
 in Italy and all about?

⁵⁵ Bruce R. Smith speaks at length to the idea of ‘becoming many subjects by internalizing the sounds and rhythms of those subjects’ voices’ while singing ballads. See *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 168-206 (p. 201).

Know you not that you and I must dance,
 both our heels wrapt in a clout.
 What mean you to make your houses gay,
 And I must take the tenant away,
 And dig for your sake the clods of clay⁵⁶

In *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, the first reference to 'the shaking of the sheets' occurs as the shoemaker Firk is questioned by the Earl of Lincoln and the Lord Mayor Oatley as to the whereabouts of their children; Lacy and Rose Oatley are marrying somewhere in London against the wishes of their fathers. Firk is attempting to stall the search:

OATLEY Sirrah, knowest thou one Hans [Lacy], a shoemaker?

FIRK Hans, shoemaker? O yes—stay, yes, I have him! I tell you what—I speak it in secret—Mistress Rose and he are by this time—no, not so, but shortly are to come over one another with 'Can you dance the shaking of the sheets?' It is that Hans [*Aside*] I'll so gull these diggers.⁵⁷

The second reference comes from Simon Eyre during his grand feast just after the King has joined the festivities:

⁵⁶ See Thomas Hill, 'The Dolefull Dance and Song of Death; Intituled, Dance After my Pipe' (London: F. Coles, T. Vere, and W. Gilbertson, 1664), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]. According to Simpson, the earliest extant version of this ballad is BM MS Add. 15225, fol. 15, (c. 1616). See Simpson, p. 652. 'The Doleful Dance and Song of Death' was first registered in 1568-9 and again in 1624. See *AI* #480 and #2408 respectively. The phrase 'the shaking of the Sheets' is the first line of the ballad, and is incorporated by numerous other playwrights including Heywood (*A Woman Killed with Kindness*, Sc. 1.2-5); Fletcher (*Bonduca*, II.3.24); Middleton (*The Widow*, I.2.189-90); and many others. Dekker uses the phrase 'dance after my pipe' in *Old Fortunatus*, in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. by Fredson Bowers, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953-61), pp. 105-205, II.2.95.

⁵⁷ Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, Sc. 16.79-83.

KING But all this while I do not know your age.

EYRE My liege, I am six-and-fifty year old; yet I can cry ‘hump’ with a sound heart for the honour of Saint Hugh. Mark this old wench, my King. I danced the shaking of the sheets with her six-and-thirty years ago, and yet I hope to get two or three young Lord Mayors ere I die. I am lusty still, Sim Eyre still. Care and cold lodgings brings white hairs. My sweet Majesty, let care vanish. Cast it upon thy nobles. It will make thee look always young, like Apollo, and cry ‘Hump!’ – Prince I am none, yet am I princely born.⁵⁸

In both of these scenes, the references again are used as humorous badges of class: shoemakers, we now understand, sing, and it is thus fitting they use well-known songs euphemistically. Yet both scenes also highlight social levelling: Lincoln and Oatley, through their need for information are confronted by a gate-keeper figure in Firk and engage in a contest of wit, a contest in which the superiors are ‘gulled’. In the second instance, Simon Eyre is arguably at the peak of his social ascent; thus it is at this point where we find his social status the most blurred: he is a shoemaker giving unasked-for advice to a king. It seems ironically fitting, then, that both characters in both ‘levelling’ scenes invoke a song about the ultimate social equalizer. Of course, both Firk and Eyre are referring to sex rather than death in their referring to ‘the shaking of the sheets’, but clearly this is Dekker adding another level of irony: the lovers Lacy and Rose, through their marriages are treating each other as social equals – just as Death does; their consummation will, through a ‘noble dance of *life*’, blur or ‘level’ the class of their offspring. Eyre’s hope ‘to get two or three young Lord Mayors’ through ‘the shaking of the sheets’ seems makes a similar levelling connection.

⁵⁸ Dekker, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, Sc. 21.29-33.

Simon Eyre, also in the assistance of Lacy and Rose, offers a similar song reference in his reference to ‘dainty come down to me’. As the couple worry about whether their secret marriage will be successful, Eyre reassures them, ‘By mine honour, Roland Lacy, none but the king shall wrong thee. Come, fear nothing. Am I not Sim Eyre? Is not Sim Eyre Lord Mayor of London? Fear nothing, Rose, *let them all say what they can, dainty come thou to me*’.⁵⁹ These lines probably come from an anonymous song entitled ‘A new Northern Jigge, called, Daintie come thou to me’ which appears to have been popular around the time of *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*. Here is the refrain:

Cast no care to thy heart,
 from thee I will not flee,
 Let them say what they will,
 Dainty come thou to me.⁶⁰

The song’s main theme, not surprisingly, is loyalty. Further, it is an assertion of loyalty by a speaker of ordinary means confronting imagined temptations brought by increased wealth and/or social elevation. Here, for example, are stanzas two to four:

⁵⁹ Dekker, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* Sc. 17.9-10, my emphasis.

⁶⁰ Anon: ‘A New Northern Iigge, Called, Daintie Come Thou to Me’ (London: Thomas Symcocke, 1619-1629), in *EBBA* <<http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu>> [accessed 25 January 2013]. Symcocke’s broadside is the earliest extant. A ballad titled ‘A Prettye Sonnet of the Disdainefull Sheppeardeesse’ found in the Shirburn MS (1585-1616) seems to be the earliest of many written to the tune ‘Dainty Come Down to Me’. The longer phrase ‘Let them all say what they can. Dainty [...] etc.’ is found in Armin’s *Two Maids of More-Clacke*, printed in 1609 (sig. C4^r). Although editors often link Eyre’s reference to the very popular ballad *tune* (See Parr, p. 80; Smallwood and Wells, p. 175), Eyre’s clear employment of the penultimate line of the refrain as well as ‘Dainty etc.’, strongly suggests that he, in fact, refers to an earlier printing of ‘A New Northern Iigge’ now lost.

Were my state good or ill,
 rich, or in misery,
 Yet would I love thee still,
 proove me and thou shalt see.
 Cast no care, etc.

Were you rich, were you poor,
 were you in miserie,
 I will beg from doore to doore,
 all for to maintaine thee:
 Cast no care, etc.

Were I Lord, were I Knight,
 came I of high degree,
 All my lands should be thine,
 try me and thou shalt see.
 Cast no care etc.⁶¹

Eyre's quote is thus particularly appropriate, for he has just gone from being one of little means to a position of great power, yet he has retained his loyalties and values – his 'old self'. His mention of 'Dainty come down to me' thus brings with it the same transcendent, cross-class narrative that he now physically embodies; that Lacy embodied disguised as a shoemaker; and that both are trying to perpetuate through the cross-class marriage (and presumably the children that will come from it) of Lacy, son of an Earl and Rose, daughter of a citizen. Like 'the Shaking of the Sheets', then, Eyre

⁶¹ Anon., 'A New Northeren Iigge'.

not only incorporates a song appropriate for the situation, he invokes one whose spirit is congruent with the play as a whole.

Firk's quotation of 'I wail in woe', the often-used first line of 'A Sorrowfull Sonet, Made by M. George Mannington, at Cambridge Castle' is a third example of the same dynamic.⁶² After being reprimanded by Simon Eyre for scolding Firk, his wife Margery exclaims, 'Yea, yea, 'tis well. I must be called / rubbish, kitchen stuff, for a sort of knaves' to which the recalcitrant Firk responds, 'Nay dame, you shall not weep and wail in woe for me' and promptly quits his job over the altercation.⁶³ The initial joke is quite straightforward: 'Mannington' is first and foremost sensationally pathetic, and Firk's ballad reference is a sarcastic reply to what he views as overreaction on the part of Margery – yet his resignation is equally over the top. The first lines of the ballad illustrate:

I Waile in wo, I plunge in pain,
 With sorowing sobs, I do complain,
 With wallowing waues I wish to die,
 I languish sore whereas I lie,
 In feare I faint in hope I holde,
 With ruthe I runne, I was too bolde:

⁶² See Clement Robinson, *A Handfull*, sig. G^r. The ballad was registered in 1576 and perhaps earlier. See *AI* #1617 and #440. References to the first line 'I wail in woe, I plunge in pane', in whole or in part, are commonplace in Elizabethan/Jacobean popular literature. See, for example, Jonson, Chapman and Marston, *Eastward Ho*, ed. by R. W. Van Fossen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1979), v.5.1-130; Thomas Heywood, *How a Man May Chuse a Good Wife from a Bad* (London: Mathew Lawe, 1602), sig. E^v, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]. Rollins argues that a reference to 'Mannington' occurs in drama as early as 1578. See Hyder Rollins, 'The Date and Authors and Contents of *A Handfull of Pleasant Delights*', in *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 18.1 (1919), 1-17 (pp. 16-17).

⁶³ Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, Sc. 7.52-56.

As lucklesse lot assigned me,
in dangerous dale of destinie.⁶⁴

‘Mannington’ is an archetypal ‘last good-night’ ballad, which Joy Wiltenburg describes as ‘a first-person farewell from the condemned’.⁶⁵ Murderers are the most common speakers in these narratives in which the ‘wages of crime were not only death, but intense emotional suffering’.⁶⁶ Honest remorse and penitential tears feature commonly as the condemned wallow in the loss of reputation, material possessions, social connections and the impending judgement before God. As with ‘The Shaking of the Sheets’, reading/singing ‘last good-night’ ballads is to engage a powerful levelling fantasy. Regardless of social class, all of the condemned share a common feature in that their execution begins with power and ends with weakness. The terrorising, murderous highwayman, the strutting nobleman, the ‘last good-night’ ballad brings these men before the ordinary reader emotionally naked, utterly exposed. The reader is brought not just to the scaffold but also *into* the heart of these speakers as they weep and whimper in their last moments of terror before they are sent, in most cases, to hell where they will suffer, presumably, every indignity. The reader however, is at the very least *not* going *there* today. Instead, he/she gets to savour everything about the condemned, and then return to an infinitely better place – anywhere else. Through last good night ballads, the ordinary reader is thus always elevated to the position of a ‘have’ while the famous/notorious condemned is lowered to the rank of a ‘have-not’. Perhaps even more

⁶⁴ Robinson, *A Handefull*, sig. G^r.

⁶⁵ Joy Wiltenburg, ‘Ballads and the Emotional Life of Crime’, in *Ballads and Broadsides in Britain, 1500-1800*, ed. by Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), pp. 173-188 (p. 176).

⁶⁶ Wiltenburg, p. 177.

deliciously, the reader may include himself/herself in the agency of the condemnation, the righteous majority of any society that revels as much in the exclusion of the unworthy as it does in the inclusion of compatriots.

As with the rest of the imported ballad references, this reference to ‘Mannington’ occurs in an instant, to be appreciated in barely a moment. Yet when we consider these songs as a group it is clear that, like the three-men songs, all have been appropriated with a clear purpose: to position the Henslowe audience in a superior social position, worthy members of a worthy group, with an implicitly sanctified right to judge and condemn those of weak moral character regardless of rank. *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* is at its heart a social levelling play with characters of all ranks living the fantasy. The songs they sing all support this prevailing theme, each in its own small way leading the Admiral’s audience of 1599 to engage in the same sentiment: ‘We matter’, ‘Hooray for us’.

1 & 2 ROBIN HOOD (1599)

Munday’s Robin Hood plays, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington* and *The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, which Henslowe’s *Diary* suggests were performed in 1599,⁶⁷ are clearly based in the ballad tradition. As we have seen in Chapter 2, songs and plays recounting Robin’s fight for social justice and, ultimately, for social harmony, were popular since at least the middle of the fifteenth century and probably long before.⁶⁸ While it is impossible to be absolutely sure, it is interesting that

⁶⁷ The *Diary* records payments in early and late 1598. See, *Henslowe’s Diary*, ed. by R.A. Foaks, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 86, 88, and 102.

⁶⁸ Knight and Ohlgren, p. 1 note mentions of ‘rhymes of Robyn Hode’ in William Langland’s *Piers Plowman* (ca. 1370).

all Elizabethan/Jacobean plays about or incorporating the Robin Hood narrative that we know of appear on London stages between 1592 and 1600. In this narrow window there is evidence of at least seven, five of which link directly to the Henslowe writers.⁶⁹ There is no evidence of any stage production offering the Robin Hood narrative in any form *after* this period until the Restoration. This suggests, then, that during the crises of the 1590's the Robin Hood narrative became a staple crowd-pleaser and nowhere, it appears, more than at the Rose and the Fortune theatres.

Ironically, Munday's plays although fundamentally the products of popular song culture, have few popular songs in them. Yet, the one ballad to which we have an overt reference, Prince John's quotation from 'Robin Hood and the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield', is instructive in that its operation is similar to that of the songs examined in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. In the first place, it is old and enduring. Knight and Ohlgren are convinced that it existed in the mid-fifteenth century and its repeated extant printings suggest that it occupied a solid place in the popular consciousness.⁷⁰ Secondly, and more importantly, it is a song about social levelling. As we read earlier, Robin offers to make the Pinder part of the band after a trial by combat. However, the Pinder agrees to join only after honouring his contract with his current employer. Thus the

⁶⁹ These are, in order, *George a Green* (1592, *Diary*, p. 20); Peele's *Edward I*, in which Welsh rebels play a Robin Hood-esque disguise game (printed in 1593); a lost play entitled *Robin Hood and Little John* (1594; see p. 74 note 48); Munday's *Downfall and Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington* (1599); the anonymous *Look About You* which, (printed in 1599, although Gurr argues it may be a play by Anthony Wadeson referred to in the *Diary* pp. 31-3 as *The Disguises* which appears to have been staged around 1595 (see Gurr, *Opposites*, pp. 59-72 and p. 218); and Haughton's lost *Robin Hood's Pennyworths* (1600, *Diary*, pp. 137-8).

⁷⁰ The earliest of these extant printings is dated 1659, yet it is clear from King John's quotation the ballad, or something very similar, existed long before. The song was also converted into a chapbook in 1632. See Anon., *The Pinder of Wakefield Being the Merry History of George a Green the Lusty Pinder of the North* (London: E. Blackamoore, 1632), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]. The last portion of the ballad itself can be found on sig. I2^v of this document.

Pinder doubly levels his status with Robin by not only proving his martial equal but also demonstrating his belief that promises are worth more than even the social and pecuniary elevation celebrities such as Robin Hood might offer. If we consider the arguments of Victor Zuckerkandl, that the words of many songs are often ‘not directed to one person or another or by many persons to many others’ but are often rather representations of social groups speaking to themselves; and that a singer’s experience is to some degree transcendent, where he/she enacts a kind of projection, participating ‘in that of which he sings’,⁷¹ – i.e., the voice of the group, to the group – it is not hard to understand how flattering the singing of ‘Robin Hood and the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield’ might be to a singer of ordinary social rank. Clearly many singers (i.e.: ordinary people) would have, to some degree, imagined themselves as the Pinder: fencing to a draw with the legendary Robin Hood, yet loyal to the moral codes of their community, no matter how powerful the temptations; in this declination of social elevation, the singer then, as we have seen in earlier song, engages in a levelling fantasy.

Munday seems cannily aware of this as he incorporates the song into King John’s attempt to enter the forest in *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*. The usurping (and now deposed) John sings it as he ironically demotes himself through disguise and prepares to pass himself off as a member of Robin’s band. With the song in the mix of the play action, the joke becomes exponential in its power to flatter the Admiral’s audience. As John is quickly suspected as an impostor, the implication is not

⁷¹ See Victor Zuckerkandl, *Man the Musician*, trans. by Norbert Guterman, Bollingen Series 44.2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 29. Zuckerkandl’s arguments presented here are echoed and quoted in more modern writings such as Mark Booth, *The Experience of Song* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 18-9 and Bruce Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 175-6.

only that the king is clearly no ‘merry man’, he is not even doing so well as a Pinder, the man with whom many in the audience, through their long engagement with the ballad, would have identified and, moreover, *successfully* pretended to be. In short, John’s ironic singing of the ballad underscores an ultimately flattering suggestion: the king is ‘but a man’, barely good enough to be ‘one of us’ i.e., an audience member.⁷²

THE BLIND BEGGAR OF BEDNALL GREEN (1600)

The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green is one of a number of plays produced near the turn of the sixteenth century whose narrative is based significantly upon a popular song with a social levelling theme. Ten months after the sole entry in Henslowe’s *Diary* for *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, there appears full payment to Henry Chettle and John Day for ‘a booke Called the blynd begger of bednal green’.⁷³ The formula for this play was apparently very successful, as the *Diary* shows payments for two sequels now lost.⁷⁴ The play we do possess features two intersecting narratives: that of Young Strowd, the naïve son of a wealthy Norfolk yeoman, and that of Momford a.k.a. the

⁷² Interestingly, as the scene continues, John does demonstrate, ironically also like the Pinder, that he is a martial match, indeed superior to the outlaws who challenge him. Thus, the message seems to be that while the lower orders may be equal or superior to the nobility in important ways, they can never actually be noble. It is a message of harmony rather than actual equality.

⁷³ The payment of £3 for *The Gentle Craft* is dated 17 July 1599 reads ‘lent unto Samewell Rowley & Thomas dwnnton to bye a Boocke of thomas dikers Called the gentle Craft’. The sole entry *The Blind Beggar* is dated 26 May 1600 and records payment of £5 10s, a more typical amount for an entire play, to Chettle and Day. See *Diary*, pp. 122 and 135 respectively.

⁷⁴ These appear to have been written by Day, William Haughton and Samuel Rowley. The first advance for the first sequel is dated 29 January 1600; the first advance for the second sequel is dated 21 May 1601. See *Diary* pages 163 and 170 respectively. Entries for the second and third of the trilogy offer tantalizing hints as to what elements of the original narrative were retained. Evidence in the *Diary* of the first sequel begins with an entry for ‘the second parte of the blind begger of Bednall Greene’. Yet later on in the *Diary*, both subsequent plays are referred to as either ‘the second part’ or ‘the third part of’ ‘Tom Strowd’, one of the main characters in the first *Blind Beggar*. See, *Diary* pages 163, 166 and 170 for examples.

Blind Beggar and his daughter Elizabeth or ‘Bess’ in their struggle against corrupt political enemies. It is this latter narrative that is of interest, for as we have seen in Chapter 2, its principal source was probably a ballad entitled ‘The Rarest Ballad that Was Ever Seen, of the Blind Beggars Daughter of Bednal-Green’ (ca. 1590): both beggars are secretly soldiers of a noble family whose name is some version of ‘Montfort’; both Montforts have beautiful, virginal daughters named Bessee who entertain suitors; both the play and the ballad feature the same historical inaccuracy: a Montfort fighting in France for Henry VI rather than *against* Henry III centuries earlier – as the real Montfort family did; and lastly, both contain the rare ‘angel-dropping’ scene in which respective Blind Beggars surprise supposed social betters by producing more ready money.⁷⁵ Although Bishop Percy connected the ballad to the famous Simon de Montfort, we have also seen that its narrative more closely resembles that of his third son, Guy de Montfort.

The latent presence of *any* Montfort among the London citizenry that makes his transportation from song culture to the London stage in 1600 is compelling. For if the eponymous character of Chettle and Day’s play is derived from the blind beggar in the ballad, as he appears to be, he thus represents a ‘son’ of Simon de Montfort, patriarch of a family principally associated with ‘The Barons’ Rebellion’ of the late thirteenth century, a period in English history when ordinary people, and in particular the London citizenry, rose up against their government in pursuit of political reform and social justice.⁷⁶ It is hardly surprising, then, to find the Blind Beggar ballad, and a play derived

⁷⁵ Chettle and Day, *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*, sig. K^{r-v}. See Ch. 2 pp. 95-100 for the discussion.

⁷⁶ Simon de Montfort is primarily known for engineering the Provisions of Oxford in 1258 and leading the Barons’ War between 1264-5 against Henry III, when Simon and a number of his

from it, emerging in the late 16th century, just when many ordinary Londoners were organizing against the injustices and inadequacies of their contemporary regime. If ever there was a time for a Montfort to appear among the people and lead the city once again in the name of reform, the 1590s would have seemed a ripe one indeed.

Of course, the character of the Blind Beggar is another of the hybrid class characters so popular on the stage at this time: like Robin Hood, Simon Eyre and the shoemakers, the Blind Beggar projects a low-status appearance yet possesses a ‘gentle’ essence. And again he is a character with which the audience is already familiar through song culture, and one into whom many audience members had probably projected themselves in the past as they sang his narrative. As with the other characters, the Blind beggar also brings with him social levelling messages and wish-fulfilment fantasies for the lower classes. His triumphs in the play are always ultimately over those who are both overtly elite and corrupt; and although he does reveal his true social status at the end of the play, the vast majority of his stage time is spent opposing his ‘betters’ in disguise as the beggar or the beggar’s servant. Moreover, when he does eventually reveal his high status, he in fact reveals himself to be descended from Simon de

sons were killed at the Battle of Evesham. Very simply, corruption, nepotism, the failure of military campaigns, and Henry’s overall weak leadership engendered a crisis between the crown and a large number of wealthy barons including his brother in law, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. Under Simon’s leadership, the barons appointed a 15-member privy council, which supervised Henry’s entire administration and even the royal households. ‘The whole authority of the crown’, writes Maddicott, ‘was virtually placed in commission, its operations to be supervised and its local workings investigated’. Not surprisingly, the system broke down ultimately into civil war. In May 1264, Simon de Montfort won a decisive victory at Lewes in which the king himself was captured. This left the committee of barons effectively running the country, if but for a few months, until Henry’s son Edward (later Edward I) rallied royalist forces at Evesham resulting in the final defeat of the barons, the death of Simon de Montfort and eldest son Henry, and the scattering of the household. For a brief synopsis of the events, see ‘Henry III (1207-72), *BBC History* (2012) <www.bbc.co.uk/history> [accessed 11 October 2012]. See also, J. R. Maddicott, ‘Montfort, Simon de, eighth earl of Leicester (c.1208–1265)’, *DNB* <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 11 Oct 2012]. For a more comprehensive analysis, see Blaauw.

Montfort, with whom ordinary Londoners fought and died battling the status quo. For these reasons, the Blind Beggar represented to the Admiral's audience perhaps the most powerful symbol of themselves: for surely many individuals, in the wake of the civil strife of the late 1590s, would still feel the latent presence the rebel they had once been – and perhaps would conjure again if need be.

EDWARD IV AND THE TANNER OF TAMWORTH (CA. 1599)

The story of John Hobs, the Tanner of Tamworth, dramatized in Thomas Heywood's *The First Part of King Edward IV*, is another narrative derived directly from a well-known ballad.⁷⁷ As with the characters so far discussed, the tanner is yet another

⁷⁷ The story of Elizabeth Shore's relationship with Edward IV and her subsequent fall (the third narrative stream in Heywood's play), may also have a debt to song culture. The evidence however is inconclusive. Her story enters Elizabethan literary discourse through Thomas More's *History of Richard III*, written in 1513 but not published, it seems, until 1541 (and again in 1551) in his *The Historie of Edward the Fifth and Richard the Third*, (London: Thomas Payne, 1541), pp. 107-8, 121, and esp. pp. 128-31, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]. The same narrative is included also in his *Works*, published in 1557 (pp. 54 and esp. 56-7), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 25 January 2013]. The Shore narrative is also versified in Thomas Churchyard's *Shores Wife* in the 1563 edition of William Baldwin's *A Mirror for Magistrates* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1563), pp. 155-63, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 26 January 2013] and later in 1593 in his own *Churchyards Challenge* (London: John Wolfe, 1593), pp. 127-44, in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 26 January 2013] and in Michael Drayton's *Englands Heroical Epistles* (London: N. Ling, 1597), pp. 53^r-60^v), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 26 January 2013]. The earliest ballad recounting her story, Duffin argues (p. 363), dates ca. 1580. This same version is contained in Deloney's *Garland of Goodwill* (ca. 1592, [1678 printing: sig. A7^r-A8^v]). Another ballad entitled 'The wofull lamentation of Mistris Iane Shore a goldsmiths wife [...]' (London: G.P. 1620?) appears to capitalize on the Heywood narrative. Clearly the character of Shore's wife was well known within popular music culture, yet in this bundle of narratives it appears impossible to link *1&2 Edward IV* to a specific source. For a detailed discussion of Heywood's appropriation of the Shore narrative into *1&2 Edward IV*, see Rowland 'Introduction', in *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV*, pp. 41-57. Rosemary Horrocks notes that it was Heywood who changed the name of 'Shore's Wife' to Jane. See 'Shore, Elizabeth [Jane] (d. 1526/7?)', in *DNB*, <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 25 January 2013].

plebeian hero moulded specifically to woo and flatter the Admiral's audience in light of the times.

'KING-COMMONER' MOTIF

The ballad from which the Tanner of Tamworth comes is part of a genre of 'king and commoner' ballads featuring kings and other elites mingling incognito with the masses for the purposes of sport, espionage, self-interest or a combination of these.⁷⁸ The king-commoner narrative appears to be ancient and universal. In *Metamorphoses*, for example, the disguised Jove and Mercury finally gain hospitality in the house of poor-yet-pious Baucis and Philemon after being turned away from 'a thousand' doors.⁷⁹ An angel visits Charlemagne and compels him to dwell in the forest disguised as a thief in the Middle Dutch epic romance *Karel ende Elegast* (13c).⁸⁰ Japanese myth tells of the general Yoshitsune, after losing a campaign against brother Yorimoto, disguising himself as a servant and then as a Mongol warrior.⁸¹ In England, Child notes evidence of king-commoner romances and ballads emerging around 1200, with numerous

⁷⁸ This is a fundamentally different dynamic than characters such as Robin Hood, the Blind Beggar and others who disguise themselves first and foremost as a means of political defense.

⁷⁹ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. by Arthur Golding (1565) ed. by Madeleine Forey (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), p. 257.

⁸⁰ For the epic in Dutch, see *Karel ende Elegast*, trans. by Clement Vermaere (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 1986), passim. Middle Dutch epic romances are often based upon French originals. However *Karel ende Elegast* is one of the exceptions. Indeed, it is thought to be the ancestor of numerous adaptations including the French Chanson de Basin, the German Karlmeinet, Karl und Elegast, the Danish Karl Magnus' Krønike and Norwegian Karlamagnús Saga; see Vermaere, pp. 7&8. For a prose version in English, see Lewis Spence, *Hero Tales and Legends of the Rhine* (London and New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1915), pp. 218-24. Spence titles the story 'Ingelheim: Charlemagne the Robber'.

⁸¹ See Michael Ashkenazi, *Handbook of Japanese Mythology* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003), pp. 97-8.

examples through and beyond the seventeenth century.⁸² ‘In several of the best of these stories,’ he writes,

the monarch is benighted in the forest, and obliged to demand hospitality of the first man he meets. He is at first viewed with suspicion and treated with rudeness, but soon wins favor by his affability and good humor, and is invited to partake of a liberal supper, composed in part of his own venison. In due time the king reveals his true character to his astonished and mortified host, who looks to be punished alike for his familiarity and or deer-stealing, but is pardoned for both, and even handsomely rewarded for his entertainment.⁸³

Child here outlines the essential elements of the narrative: the king in the country, unrecognised, a levelling fantasy beginning in friction and ending in *rapprochement* and the re-establishment of social harmony.

During the 1590s, the king-commoner motif was incorporated into a number of dramatic works, notably *Henry V* where the king, shrouded in the cloak of Erpingham, walks amongst the troops on the eve of battle.⁸⁴ Other echoes can be found in *I Henry IV* and *As You Like It*, yet it is in Thomas Heywood’s *I King Edward IV* where the king-commoner narrative is exploited to the fullest. Here, Heywood moves beyond a

⁸² Some of these include ‘The Tale of Rauf Coilear’ (early 14c), ‘The King and the Barker’ (early 15c?), ‘King Henry II and the Miller of Mansfield (c. 1550). For the complete discussion, see ‘King Edward Fourth and the Tanner of Tamworth’, in *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, IX (1894), pp. 67-87 (#273).

⁸³ For modern discussions of King-commoner ballads see Rochelle Smith, ‘King-commoner Encounters in the Popular Ballad, Elizabethan Drama, and Shakespeare’, *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 50.2 (2010), 301-336 and Anne Barton ‘The King Disguised: Shakespeare’s Henry V and the Comical History’ in *The Triple Bond: Plays, Mainly Shakespearean in Performance*, ed. by Joseph C. Price (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), pp. 92-117.

⁸⁴ Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, IV.1.1-202.

dramatization of motif to actually transport the main characters and narrative of a king-commoner ballad to the stage.

As with the other characters incorporated by playwrights from song culture, the Tanner of Tamworth and his story appear to be both old and popular. The Stationers' Register records what is probably a chapbook entitled *The Story of Kynge Henry the IIIJth and the Tanner of Tamwothe* entered in the fall of 1564.⁸⁵ A ballad entitled 'A mere song of the kinge and the tanner' appears in August 1586. Numerous printings of chapbook and ballad appear into the eighteenth century.⁸⁶ Both chapbook and ballad tell the same story and, with minor alterations, share many stanzas.⁸⁷ For the following examination of Heywood's employment of the Tanner and the king-commoner motif in general, we begin with the 1596 printing of the ballad, for it is the oldest extant version of the story which, among other things, features 'the Tanner of Tamworth' and Edward IV characters specifically.

The main events of the 1596 'Edward the Fourth and the Tanner of Tamworth' narrative run as follows: Edward encounters a rustic tanner while hunting in the forests near Drayton Bassett.⁸⁸ The king asks his accompanying elites to conceal themselves

⁸⁵ The 'boke' was licenced to William Greffeth in 'September or October 1564'. See *A Transcript*, I, p. 116b.

⁸⁶ For examples, see *AI* #1360-62, #1366, #1745, and #2314. There also exist numerous unregistered printings, many of by major ballad printers including John Danter (1596), *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 26 January 2013]; William White (1613), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> and Francis Coles (c. 1660), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 26 January 2013].

⁸⁷ Both works are also clear decedents of an earlier work, 'The King and the Barker' (c. 1550). Yet this story features neither the 'Tanner of Tamworth' nor 'Edward IV' specifically nor does it feature many of the verbal echoes linking Heywood's dramatization to the later ballad. For a discussion of 'The King and the Barker' see *Ancient Popular Poetry: from Authentic Manuscripts and Printed Copies*, ed. by Joseph Ritson and Edmund Goldsmid (Edinburgh, 1884), pp. 65-72.

⁸⁸ Draton Basset is just southwest of Tamworth and perhaps 30km northeast of present-day Birmingham.

while he engages the fellow in hopes of some sport. The tanner is at first gruff and suspicious, identifying the spruce, gregarious Edward approaching him in the middle of a forest as surely a fool and probably a thief, and when the king asks for tidings the tanner is cautiously reticent, noting only that ‘cowhides are deare’. Edward then tells the tanner that he is, in fact, a courtier ‘worne of servise’ and desiring to become his apprentice – a request the tanner immediately refuses, declaring that someone as finely-dressed as Edward is surely a prodigal and would have him shortly out of pocket, if taken on as an employee. The king then comes to his game: would the tanner consider exchanging horses? The tanner is up for the deal yet quick to insist on compensation for what he sees as an inequitable trade: a warhorse for a four-shilling mare named ‘Brocke’ (‘stinking’).⁸⁹ This prompts incredulity from the king until the tanner gives his reasons:

...my mare is gentle and will not kicke
But softlie she will go,

And thy horse is unhappie and unwieldie
[And will never goe in rest:]
But alwaies skipping here and there
And therefore my mare is best.⁹⁰

Here then is an underlining of the theme thus far: through his disguise, the king has entered the sphere of the commoner, which operates largely under values of which he is

⁸⁹ ‘Brock’: ‘A badger: a name, in later times, associated especially with the epithet *stinking*’. The *OED* cites the ‘stinking’ connection beginning in the early sixteenth century. See ‘brock, n.1’, *OED* <www.oed.com> [accessed 23 January 2013].

⁹⁰ Lns. 105-116.

ignorant. In this realm, Edward is treated as ‘but a man’,⁹¹ his horse as ‘but a horse’, valued for its usefulness for work rather than for war or pomp. This levelling theme takes a decided twist, however, as the tanner attempts to claim his prize. Tellingly, he is unable mount his new horse without assistance from the king, and his enormous fart as he strains to negotiate the notably opulent saddle is clear testament to the incongruence of his ‘elevation’. Edward’s horse then bestows a final verdict, quickly throwing the tanner ‘against the roote of an old tree’. The result of the shenanigans is, predictably, the tanner pleading for the return of Brocke, which Edward agrees to do for a fee of twenty pounds – far more than he gave the tanner in the initial bargain. The tanner clearly cannot come up with such a large sum, but appears to give the king everything he has to facilitate the return to normalcy. The king is, mercifully, satisfied. However, just as the tanner prepares to depart, the king summons his nobles from hiding. At first, the tanner believes that Edward is indeed the leader of a band of thieves, but as the nobles bow at Edward’s feet, he realizes his true peril:

But when before the king they came,
They fell downe on their knees,
The tanner had lever⁹² than a thousand pound,
He had beene from their companies.

A coller a coller our king gan call,
Quoth the tanner it will breede sorrow,
For after a coller commeth a halter,
I trow I shall be hangd tomorrow.⁹³

⁹¹ Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, IV.1.97.

⁹² ‘Lever’ = ‘Deliver’: ‘To surrender, give or hand over’. See ‘liver, v.2’, *OED* <www.oed.com> [accessed 23 January 2013].

Of course this is not to be, for Edward has found in the tanner the sport he originally sought and as a reward endows him with a title and a holding worth three hundred pounds a year. Reconciliation – and social delineation – is comically reinforced as the tanner declares ‘The next time thou comes to Tamworth town, | tho shalt have clouting leather for thy shon’, i.e. ‘all the repairing leather you wish for your shoes’. Especially interesting is the last stanza, which reads,

Now God aboue speed well thy Plough,
 And keep us from care and woe,
 Untill everie tanner in his Countrie,
 [Doe ride a hunting so.]⁹⁴

In this prayer, the author acknowledges the fantastical nature of his story and makes clear the sentiments that power it: a blurring of kings and the elements of the natural world, and a plea for the harmony and prosperity that come with the benevolence of both.

Heywood’s appropriation of the Tanner of Tamworth ballad into *I Edward IV* is one of the few instances of dramatized popular song culture that has been rigorously examined in recent years.⁹⁵ Perhaps this is because Heywood’s dramatization is so overt and robust. The Tanner’s complexity is, in fact, one of the play’s main entertainments,

⁹³ Lns. 201-8.

⁹⁴ Lns. 221-4.

⁹⁵ Richard Rowland’s introduction to his edition of the two plays contains the most comprehensive examination. See ‘Introduction’, in *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV*, ed. by Richard Rowland (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) pp. 26-37.

for Heywood relentlessly positions him as an ironic ‘reality version’ of the ballad character. From the bumbling, flatulent rustic of the song, Heywood fashions an Elizabethan Everyman, whose more ‘realistic’ character is overtly designed to resonate with, and relentlessly flatter, the Admiral’s core patrons, many of whom, as we have seen, were either involved or associated with tanning and leather craft.⁹⁶ Exposure of the ‘real tanner’ begins in his first lines:

HOBBS Dudgeon! Dost thou hear? Look well to Brock, my mare; drive Dun and her fair and softly down the hill, and take heed the thorns tear not the horns of my cowhides as thou goest near the hedges. Ha? What sayst thou, knave? Is the bull’s hide down? Why, lay it up again; what care I? I’ll meet thee at the stile, and help to set all straight. And yet, God help, it’s a crooked world, and an unthrifty, for some that have ne’er a shoe had rather go barefoot then buy clout-leather to mend the old, when they can buy no new, for they have time enough to mend all, they sit so long between the cup and the wall. Well, God amend them, God amend them. Let me see, by my executor here, my leather pouch, what I have taken, what I have spent; what I have gained, what I have lost; and what I have laid out. My taking is more than my spending, for here’s store left. I have spent but a groat; a penny for my two jades, a penny to the poor, a penny pot of ale, and a penny cake for my man and me. A dicker of cowhides cost me –

Here enter [2 HUNTSMEN,] the QUEEN and DUCHESS with their riding rods, unpinning their masks; HOBBS goes forward.

S’nails, who comes here? Mistress Ferris, or mistress what-call-ye-her? Put up, John Hobs; money tempts beauty.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Rowland, p. 29.

⁹⁷ Heywood, *The First Part of King Edward the Fourth*, in *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV*, Sc. 11.1-21.

Here, the tanner of the 1596 ballad is quickly identified through ‘Brock, my mare’, ‘cowhides’ ‘what care I’ and other verbal echoes. Yet the tanner’s conversation with his man – and with himself – are stuffed with ironic ‘reality’. The tanner is not, as the ballad depicts, peacefully ambling through the forest ‘past care...whether he lose or win’; he is in fact vigorously engaged with life – *full* of care, looking to his goods and scrutinizing the day’s transactions to the penny. And far from innocently singing in solitude ‘with one so merry a note’, the tanner is barking at an apprentice, pejoratively named Dudgeon (‘wooden handle’, i.e. ‘tool’) – ironically conjuring a kind of master-apprentice relationship all too familiar in any century.⁹⁸ As the Queen and her entourage approach, Heywood caps the introduction with the tanner’s name, entirely missing from the ballad and a further indication that John Hobs is not its rustic caricature: this ‘real’ tanner is a plausible person, politically aware, wily and wise. As the action progresses and Hobs encounters various nobles and eventually Edward in disguise, Heywood relentlessly packs in references to the ballad while continuing to imbue the story with ‘realism’. In Sc. 11.67, for example, Lord Howard tells the tanner point blank that the king is hunting in the area: ‘Sawst not the King?’, he asks.⁹⁹ And indeed the king appears a moment later disguised as a courtier and while the obliviousness of Hobs makes for a quick joke, it also provides an indirectly audience-flattering comment about nobility: without his clothes and title the king appears ‘but a man’, still rich certainly but ultimately mortal and closer in social status to Hobs.

⁹⁸ It is also possible that ‘Dudgeon’ which the *OED* defines as ‘A kind of wood used by turners, esp. for handles of knives, daggers, etc.’ is a reference to the Shoemaking trade and the legend of St. Hugh whose bones, as we have heard, were used to make tool handles for the shoemakers. Additionally to be ‘in dudgeon’ was to be in an ill humour perhaps furthering the pejorative nature of the name (‘ill humoured tool). See ‘dudgeon’, *OED* <www.oed.com> [accessed 23 January 2013].

⁹⁹ Heywood, *The First Part of King Edward IV*, Sc. 11.67.

Hobs's inviting 'Ned, the kings butler' (Edward IV's pseudonym) back to his home seems clearly derived from the Tamworth ballad's 'king-in-disguise' cousins, described in Percy above. Ballads such as 'King Edward and the Shepherd', 'King Edward and the Hermit' and the later 'King Henry II and the Miller of Mansfield' all contain dinner scenes in which the king is treated to a liberal meal and rustic company.¹⁰⁰ Yet instead of exotic fowl, as in 'King Edward and the Shepherd' or illegal venison as in 'King Henry II and the Miller of Mansfield' (fare more fit for a king than a commoner), Hobs offers 'Ned' 'beef and bacon, and perhaps a bagpudding', a meal more akin to the tastes of the Elizabethan journeymen and apprentices sitting in The Theatre.¹⁰¹ The emphasis on drinking games common to these ballads Heywood replaces in *1 Edward IV* with what seems to be a well-known three-man song – apparently (judging by the '&c.' in the stage directions) sung for more than just the single stanza:

Agincourt, Agincourt, know ye not Agincourt?
 Where the English slew and hurt,
 All the French foe-men;
 With our guns and bills brown,
 O, the French were beaten down,

¹⁰⁰ See 'King Edward and the Shepherd' (translation) ed. by George W. Tuma and Diana Hazell, in *Medieval Forum* (San Francisco State University) <<http://www.sfsu.edu/~medieval/romances/kev.html>> [accessed 25 January 2013]; 'King Edward and the Hermit: Introduction', in *Codex Ashmole 61: A Compilation of Popular Middle English Verse*, ed. by George Shuffelton (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 2008), online edn, p. 1

<<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/sgas41int.htm>> [accessed 26 January 2013]; and Anon. 'A Ballad of King Henry II and the Miller of Mansfield' (London: S.I. and E. Alde?, 1588?), in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 26 January 2013] respectively.

¹⁰¹ Heywood, *The First Part of King Edward IV*, Sc. 13.90-1.

Morris pikes and bowmen, etc.¹⁰²

There is no extant source of ‘Agincourt, Agincourt’, although we find it in several collections from the nineteenth century, all of which are based upon a ‘dubious’ printing provided by John Payne Collier.¹⁰³ Regardless of its original content, Rowland sees the main point of this song to be, beyond ‘encapsulat[ing] the levelling fantasy this episode gestures towards’, the establishment of ‘a context against which the action of Part Two [of the play] will be defined’. Yet equally important is that it is simply a three-man song, which, as we have seen, was something of a trademark of leatherworkers; as in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* the main message of the song is simply another demonstration to the Admiral’s audience that Hobs is ‘one of us’.¹⁰⁴

The tanner’s trip to court in the last scene of the play, while not taken directly from the 1596 ballad, is again based upon its cousins. Yet, unlike these, where the commoner is either officially invited to court, as in ‘King Edward and the Miller of Mansfield’, or goes to court to plead for assistance against great personal wrongs, as in ‘King Edward and the Shepherd’,¹⁰⁵ John Hobs goes to court under clearly more Elizabethan circumstances: the pardon of his son, who is soon to be executed for theft. ‘My son’s in the gaol; is he the first has been there?’ the tanner cries to his fellows.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Heywood, *The First Part of King Edward IV*, Sc. 14.99-104 The ‘etc’ (or ‘&c.’) is present in Q1599 and in all subsequent printings. See Thomas Heywood, *The First and Second Partes of King Edward the Fourth* (London: John Oxenbridge, 1599), sig. F4^v. in *EEBO* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>> [accessed 7 February 2013].

¹⁰³ Collier, as Rowland points out (p. 152, note for lns 109-14), is known for questionable scholarship amongst ballad researchers.

¹⁰⁴ There are extended drinking games, for example, in ‘King Edward and the Shepherd’, King Edward and the Hermit’.

¹⁰⁵ In the ballad, the King’s men routinely take the miller’s livestock without payment and a gang of ruffians routinely brutalizes his family.

¹⁰⁶ Heywood, *The First Part of King Edward IV*, Sc. 18.88.

This is surely a reference to the many apprentices imprisoned and/or executed during the recent riots where foodstuffs were often ‘appropriated’ by mobs to ensure sales at fair prices. With this in mind, it is not hard to imagine the actor playing Hobs turning directly to his audience in the delivery of these lines. Moreover, it seems significant that the conversation between Hobs and Howard, a courtier, regarding the possible release of The Tanner’s son begins just after Hobs lobbies his neighbours to donate to the war in France – as well as providing ‘Twenty old angels’, ‘a score of hides’ and ‘twenty nobles more’.¹⁰⁷ Far from a simpleton rustic, then, the tanner is shown here working the system, playing in a game that many audience members would likely know all too well. Thus as the play progresses, we find Hobs emerging as a character similar to the Blind Beggar of Bednal Green and indeed Simon Eyre: an ordinary man on the outside possessing not only hidden wealth but also leadership qualities and staunch patriotism if the cause is right. In other words, Hobs is another projection of the core Admiral’s patrons’ fantasy of themselves: ordinary people who are extraordinary on the inside and, above all, who *matter*.

Heywood’s Tanner of Tamworth is yet another local hero brought to life, another character from song culture with whom everybody in the Admiral’s audience would identify. His story is a part of the contemporary communal fantasy: an ordinary but not-so-ordinary hero who challenges authority in the name of honour and fairness. For Henslowe and his writers, he is an urban Tamburlaine, a favourite their audiences have continuously paid to see now brought into the theatre in the hopes that the

¹⁰⁷ Heywood, *The First Part of King Edward IV*, Sc. 18.101-2.

patronage will continue at a time when pleasing customers was seems to have been especially important.

6 CONCLUSION

Sometime during his revision of *Every Man In His Humour* (Q1600, F1616), Jonson crafted a prologue featuring among other things a concise description of the humours plays coming into fashion in the 1590s. Instead of more mythic, bombastic spectacles staged by some, Jonson presents

[...] deeds and language such as men do use,
And persons such as Comedy would choose
When she would show an image of the times,
And sport with human follies, not with crimes.¹

David Bevington writes of these lines: ‘the best dramatic art, in this view, offers to its audiences a realistic mirror of human society.’² Jonson’s gaze toward human behaviours and identities appears to coincide with the rise of the chorographic gaze and its repercussions in the theatre observed in the preceding chapter. Towards the turn of the seventeenth century, then, we find strong suggestion of a drama responding to – and no doubt contributing to – a society increasingly interested in its working nature both at macrocosmic and microcosmic levels. This might explain, to a degree, the observations made in much of this dissertation regarding dramatic representations of song. The overriding sense at the end of the study is of a mimesis heavily influenced by phenomenological observation. Playwrights of this period appear keenly aware of the referential power of familiar song to place external narratives into the minds of audience

¹ Jonson, *Every Man In His Humour*: Folio Version, Prol., lns. 21-5.

² Bevington, *Every Man In His Humour*: Folio Version, p. 624.

members – just as they surely observed similar potential in the puns and proverbs so fashionable during the period. Fictive song characters also seem to have inhabited conversations and celebrations of everyday life, just as characters and narratives from other mythologies did; thus it is no surprise to find Arthur of Bradley, The Friar and the Nun, and the Tanner of Tamworth accorded the same treatment in the drama as Paris, Dido, Achilles and the rest. In representations of song's power, we find traditional narratives mixing, and often undercut by, practical experiences of song operating in human beings. Song in dramatic space is merry, beautiful, pathetic, and sometimes irritating; but it is rarely mysterious or mythic apart from the wildest dreams. Its true power is not to seduce like Orpheus but to expose the real, reflecting, it seems, what playwrights and audiences surely witnessed in themselves and others, in the world, all the time. As with any society, many early modern people sang as part of their mutual society, and of course there are always prescribed moments and spaces for such things. Yet, while one may glimpse particular ideas of musical decorum in contemporary treatises and other literature, more varied evidence from both inside and outside the drama suggests playwrights are grounding depictions of songs and singers as much in common experience as in the courtesy books. Lastly, communal song performance is a universal consolidator of group identity, and it seems clear that the dramatists seeking to make a living by entertaining their surrounding community understood this phenomenon and capitalized on it, as they did with the other operations of song observed in their culture and its members.

Not surprisingly, the conclusions offered here have engendered still more questions. Is the collision of theoretical concepts and practical experience indicative of a progression? If so, what then is the trajectory? Are there particular authors leading this

progression? What of song usage in the playhouses emerging after 1608 (when the Children of the Chapel are censured and The King's Men gain control of the Blackfriars)? Does it differ from that in the amphitheatres? Examining ninety plays regardless of author has refined perceptions, but it will take a still larger survey to begin tracking usage trends with true legitimacy. Yet, the more one delves into this area of scholarship the more it seems worthy of the effort.

APPENDIX

Below is a table listing by author the plays studied and consulted for the dissertation. For authorship attributions and dates of creation, some of which are of course conjectural, we have used the chronology table in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama* along with the primary sources and scholarly editions engaged in the study.³ Some titles have been shortened to address spacing concerns. Full titles can be found in the bibliography.

Author(s)	Play	Date	Performers
Anon.	<i>Captain T. Stukeley</i>	1596	Admiral's Men
Anon.	<i>Look About You</i>	1599	Admiral's Men
Anon.	<i>The Merry Devil of Edmonton</i>	1602	King's Men
Beaumont, F.	<i>The Knight of the Burning Pestle</i>	1607	Queen's Revels
Beaumont, F. and J. Fletcher	<i>The Coxcomb</i>	1609	Queen's Revels
Beaumont, F. and J. Fletcher	<i>The Captain</i>	1612	King's Men
Beaumont, F. and J. Fletcher	<i>Bonduca</i>	1613	King's Men
Chapman, G.	<i>The Blind Beggar of Alexandria</i>	1596	Admiral's Men
Chapman, G.	<i>An Humorous Day's Mirth</i>	1597	Admiral's Men
Chapman, G.	<i>May Day</i>	1602	Ch. of the Chapel
Dekker, T.	<i>The Shoemaker's Holiday</i>	1599	Admiral's Men
Dekker, T.	<i>Old Fortunatus</i>	1599	Admiral's Men
Dekker, T., H. Chettle and W. Haughton	<i>Patient Grissill</i>	1599	Admiral's Men
Dekker, T., H. Chettle and J. Day	<i>I Blind Beggar</i>	1600	Admiral's Men
Dekker, T. and T. Middleton	<i>I Honest Whore</i>	1604	Prince H.'s Men
Dekker, T. and J. Webster	<i>Northward Ho</i>	1605	Paul's Boys
Dekker, T. and W. Rowley	<i>The Witch of Edmonton</i>	1621	Prince's Men
Field, N.	<i>Amends for Ladies</i>	1611	Lady Elizabeth's Men
Fletcher, J.	<i>Monsieur Thomas</i>	1611	Queen's Revels
Fletcher, J.	<i>The Woman's Prize</i>	1611	King's Men
Fletcher, J.	<i>Prince Rollo of Normandy</i>	1617	King's Men
Fletcher, J.	<i>The Chances</i>	1617	King's Men
Fletcher, J.	<i>The Loyal Subject</i>	1618	King's Men
Fletcher, J.	<i>The Little French Lawyer</i>	1619	King's Men
Fletcher, J. and P. Massinger	<i>The Beggar's Bush</i>	1618	King's Men
Greene, R.	<i>George a Greene</i>	1590	Sussex's Men
Haughton, W.	<i>Englishmen for My Money</i>	1598	Admiral's Men

³ See 'Chronological Table', in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama*, ed. by A.R. Braunmuller and Michael Hattaway, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 419-46.

Heywood, T.	<i>1 Edward IV</i>	1599	Earl of Derby's Men
Heywood, T.	<i>2 Edward IV</i>	1599	Earl of Derby's Men
Heywood, T.	<i>A Woman Killed with Kindness</i>	1602	Admiral's Men
Heywood, T.	<i>1 The Fair Maid of the West</i>	1603	Queen's Men
Heywood, T.	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	1607	Queen's Men
Heywood, T. and W. Rowley	<i>Fortune by Land and Sea</i>	1609	Queen's Men
Jonson, B.	<i>A Tale of a Tub</i>	1596	Admiral's Men
Jonson, B.	<i>The Case is Altered</i>	1597	Unknown
Jonson, B.	<i>Every Man in His Humour</i>	1598	Chamberlain's Men
Jonson, B.	<i>Sejanus</i>	1603	King's Men
Jonson, B.	<i>Volpone</i>	1606	King's Men
Jonson, B.	<i>Bartholmew Fair</i>	1614	Lady Elizabeth's Men
Jonson, B., T. Dekker and J. Marston	<i>Eastward Ho</i>	1605	Queen's Revels
Marlowe, C.	<i>1 Tamburlaine the Great</i>	1587	Admiral's Men
Marlowe, C.	<i>The Jew of Malta</i>	1589	Strange's Men
Marlowe, C.	<i>Doctor Faustus</i>	1592	Admiral's Men
Marston, J.	<i>Antonio and Mellida</i>	1599	Paul's Boys
Marston, J.	<i>Antonio's Revenge</i>	1601	Paul's Boys
Marston, J.	<i>What You Will</i>	1601	Paul's Boys
Marston, J.	<i>The Dutch Courtesan</i>	1605	Queen's Revels
Marston, J.	<i>Sophonisba</i>	1606	Ch. of the Chapel
Merbury, F.	<i>Marriage Between Wit and Wisdom</i>	1579	Unknown
Middleton, T.	<i>The Family of Love</i>	1603	King's Revels
Middleton, T.	<i>The Phoenix</i>	1604	Paul's Boys
Middleton, T.	<i>A Trick to Catch the Old One</i>	1605	Paul's Boys
Middleton, T.	<i>The Widow</i>	1616	King's Men
Middleton, T.	<i>Women Beware Women</i>	1621	Admiral's Men
Munday, A.	<i>The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington</i>	1598	Admiral's Men
Munday, A.	<i>The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington</i>	1598	Admiral's Men
Peele, G.	<i>The Arraignment of Paris</i>	1581	Ch. of the Chapel
Peele, G.	<i>The Battle of Alcazar</i>	1588	Admiral's Men
Peele, G.	<i>Wily Beguiled</i>	1602	Paul's Boys
Phillips, J.	<i>Pacient and Meek Grissill</i>	1565	Unknown
Rowley, W.	<i>A Match at Midnight</i>	1622	Red Bull Company
Shakespeare, W.	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	1590	Queen's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	1591	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	1591	Strange's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Richard III</i>	1591	Strange's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Love's Labours Lost</i>	1594	Strange's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	1595	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	1596	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Richard III</i>	1595	Chamberlain's Men

Shakespeare, W.	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	1596	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	1597	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	1597	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	1597	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Much Ado about Nothing</i>	1598	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>As You Like It</i>	1599	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Henry V</i>	1599	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	1599	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	1601	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	1601	Chamberlain's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	1603	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>All's Well that Ends Well</i>	1602	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Othello</i>	1604	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>King Lear</i>	1605	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	1606	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Macbeth</i>	1606	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Pericles</i>	1607	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	1609	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Cymbeline</i>	1610	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>The Tempest</i>	1611	King's Men
Shakespeare, W.	<i>Henry VIII</i>	1613	King's Men
Shakespeare, W. and J. Fletcher	<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>	1613	King's Men
Taylor, R.	<i>The Hog Hath Lost His Pearl</i>	1613	Apprentices
Wilkins, G.	<i>The Miseries of Enforced Marriage</i>	1607	King's Men
Wilson, R.	<i>The Three Ladies of London</i>	1581	Leicester's Men
Wilson, R.	<i>The Three Lords & Ladies of London</i>	1588	Unknown

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