AN ANNUAL COLLECTION OF INTERDISCIPLINARY ESSAYS BY STUDENTS OF THE MASTER OF STUDIES IN LITERATURE AND ARTS
Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge the MLA Course Directors, Dr Antony Buxton, Dr Yasmin Khan and Dr Cathy Oakes, and the MLA Course Tutors, Professor Barrie Bullen, Dr Sandie Byrne, Dr Markus Daechsel, Dr Giovanni de Grandis, Dr Janet Dickinson, Dr David Grylls, Professor Angus Hawkins, Dr Steve Kershaw, Dr Lynn Robson, Dr Mark Smith and Dr Peter Wyss for academic guidance throughout the MLA Course, and Clare MacPherson for technical assistance in the production of this volume.
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Introduction

Alessia Pannese

‘Vides’ means ‘you see’; *Vides*, however, encourages the reader to transcend the limits of the visual modality, and to venture into a synaesthetic territory, where any or all senses – and any or all disciplines – are called upon to produce meaning. The variety in methodology and subject matter across the articles included in this volume reflects the epistemic value of this interdisciplinary approach.

Part 1 is dominated by the theme of the appropriation of the past in order to fashion the present. The four articles in this section present specific case studies in which historical or mythical traditions have been called upon in order to define or shape identities. In Anna Brunton’s article, this appropriation is discussed in relation to the Worthies of Chillingham castle, a set of Jacobean statues reproducing historical figures of the Christian, Classical, and Old Testament tradition. The paper analyses the symbolism of the Worthies as steeped in Greco-Roman antiquity, shaped by the Medieval and Renaissance fascination with conceit, and closely tied to the virtues typically associated with ideals of kingship, discussing its contribution to the rhetoric of the speeches made to James I throughout his Scottish tour of 1617. Jackie Colburn’s essay shifts the historical focus to the post-interregnum period, and considers the role of the past in relation to the fourth Triumphal Arch, constructed on the occasion of the coronation of Charles II in 1661. By examining the design of the Arch, built like a theatrical stage prop and permeated by classical imagery, the essay explores the ways in which references to classical antecedents served as elements of legitimation for the recently restored monarchy. A different approach to appropriating the past is presented in Catharine O’Shaughnessy’s piece about the culture of collecting in the eighteenth-century, and the history of restoration practices. Through the juxtaposition of two artefacts representing the Greek god Dionysus, the paper examines how changing approaches to conservation – which include additions, de-restoration, and re-restoration – can lead to permanent alterations that reflect the ethos of the period in which they were made. Counterpointing the discussion about appropriation through addition, Paul Brown’s essay presents an instance of appropriation through deletion. Contrasting the representation of King Henry V in Shakespeare’s original play and in subsequent abridged productions, the article explores how the deliberate removal of critical lines and scenes from the original text instrumentalised Shakespeare’s work to suit the patriotic rhetoric of World War I.

The theme of creating meaning through the manipulation of sensory experience takes central stage in Part 2, whose opening essay, by Thomas J. du Plessis, focuses on the complexity of auditory perception. Drawing on lexical and musical evidence from the Earl of Rochester’s Epilogue to *Love in the Dark* and Matthew Locke’s score to *Psyche*, the article discusses the interplay between sound and meaning in terms of its epistemic potential, and as a vehicle for cultural criticism. Transposing the discourse from hearing to sight, Hannah Sothern’s paper explores the work of British photographer Julia Margaret Cameron, and its impact on the visual culture of Victorian times. The discussion identifies links between Cameron’s photographic language and the aesthetics of the Pre-Raphaelites, and examines their implications in terms of the place of photography within the hierarchy of the arts. Contrasting photography’s emphasis on the visual, Muhamet Alijaj’s article on ghost literature questions the informative value of sight – and of the senses at large – shifting the debate to the realm of the supernatural. By comparing Mary Louisa Molesworth’s fictional short story *The Rippling Train* and Ada Goodrich Freer’s non-fictional investigation *The Alleged Haunting of Bellechin House*, the essay explores how late nineteenth-century literature negotiated the difficulties inherent in any attempt to empirically determine reality. The Victorian taste for the supernatural also provides the cultural framework for Brynne Laska’s article on children’s literature and occultism. Through the analysis of E. Nesbit’s novel *The Enchanted Castle* in the
context of Nesbit’s membership in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, the paper examines how the imagination of realities beyond the material world acted not only as a literary creative device but also as an instrument to escape social and political control. Further expanding on the theme of imagination and control, Alessia Pannese’s essay explores parallels between the mind-altering effects of opium consumption, as portrayed in Thomas De Quincey’s *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, and the imaginary architecture of Giovanni Battista Piranesi’s etching series *Carceri d’Invenzione* – imaginary prisons.

The tension between freedom and restraint is echoed in the opening article of Part 3, where Ute Oswald questions the conventional perception of the Victorian asylum as a place of forced confinement, suggesting instead that the institution may also have offered patients opportunities for socialising and exercising agency. Her argument is supported through the combined analysis of Charles Dickens’ article ‘A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree’ and of a magazine illustration of Christmas celebrations at London’s St Luke’s asylum, both of which document the use of institutionalised recreation as part of the treatment of mental illness. The juxtaposition of sacred and profane appears under a different form in Yvonne Farley’s exploration of the Love-feast, a Methodist ritual confining worship and socialising. By comparing a Love-feast hymn by Charles Wesley and a late eighteenth-century satirical print associating the Methodist practice with debauchery and excess, the essay exposes discrepancies between the way in which Evangelical spirituality conceived of itself and the way in which it was received and understood within Christian society at large. The clandestine mapping expeditions of the Himalaya during the nineteenth century offer a different case study for the commingling of sacred and profane. Focusing on the British Indian pundits’ adaptation and use of the Tibetan prayer wheel as a disguise to conceal and store route-mapping data, Robert Stanley’s article discusses the appropriation of a religious artefact for spying purposes, and the ensuing geo-political implications for British India and Tsarist Russia.

The blurring of holy and mundane re-emerges in Julie Whyman’s analysis of the symbolism of the lily in Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s work. Drawing on textual and visual evidence from Reverend Hilderic Friend’s compendium *Flowers and Flower Lore* and from Rossetti’s *The Blessed Damozel*, the essay explores the Victorian understanding of the significance of the lily in the context of ancient mythological associations and subsequent Christian adoption as a symbol of purity and virginity. Further elaborating on the juxtaposition of sacred and profane, George D. Lee’s piece examines the history of the Indian club from its early representations as war weapon in the hands of Hindu deities and Muslim rulers, to its later adoption into British military training, and eventual adaptation as a fitness implement in European and American physical culture. The implications of this transformation are discussed in the context of the understanding of bodily strength as a proxy for spiritual and moral integrity.

The association between bodily and personal traits is boldly challenged in Anne-Noëlle Pinnegar’s essay on the representation of the disabled body. Opening Part 4, whose topics gravitate around the themes of embodiment and power, Pinnegar’s article examines two self-portraits authored by physically deformed but socially successful individuals – an engraving by German e Matthias Buchinger and an autobiographical treatise by British politician William Hay – as case studies epitomising the evolving attitudes to physical disability within eighteenth-century discourse. A different perspective on the relation of the physical body to social success is presented in Emily Sargeant’s analysis of Duchess Georgiana of Devonshire in the context of the Westminster Election of 1784. Focusing on a satirical print by William Dent, portraying the duchess as engaging in a sexual embrace with prospective voters, the essay explores the power dynamics surrounding Georgiana’s involvement in the political sphere, and highlights the duplicitous role of the satirical press as attempting to downplay her legitimacy as a political actor whilst implicitly acknowledging magnifying her political success. The difficulty of reconciling womanhood with power is pushed to the extreme in the case of a female monarch. Drawing on textual evidence from ballads and private correspondence representing Queen Mary I, England’s first
queen regnant, Leah Gilliatt’s piece explores the ways in which Mary’s subjects negotiated the unprecedented challenge of reconciling the perceived vulnerability of the sovereign’s female body natural with the sacred wisdom and authority of her position as God’s anointed. The notion of the female body as vulnerable and needing protection is central to Anna Matei’s analysis of women’s representation in the context of the Indian Mutiny. By contrasting Tenniel’s cartoon ‘The British Lion’s Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger’ and Katherine Bartrum’s diary A Widow’s Reminiscences of the Siege of Lucknow, Matei’s article reflects upon the role of women – real and imagined – in contemporary meaning-making about the Mutiny. Echoing the political overtones surrounding the image of the female body in the rhetoric of the Empire, Olivia Bam’s essay brings the discussion back to domestic policy by focusing on the Victorian preoccupation with appearance. Through a comparative examination of George Eliot’s Adam Bede and Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s Lady Lilith, the article elaborates upon the dual significance of the mirror as implement to gain self-knowledge and emblem of vanity and self-absorption.

The notion of appearance – and of its deceptive and ultimately vain nature – is further developed in Part 5, which opens with Alexandra Abrams’s exploration of the idea of beauty in eighteenth-century England. Drawing from the ‘Letter to the Ladies’, written by a physician in 1770, and purporting to dispense advice and recipes aimed at preserving health and beauty, the essay investigates the preoccupation with appearance as it manifested itself in material culture, and in the efforts deployed – and dangers braved – in its pursuit. A vain pursuit; as vain as life itself, as Hannah Yip’s essay suggests. Bringing together textual and visual evidence from Margaret Cavendish’s poem ‘Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life, and his foolish Ambition’ and Edward Collier’s painting Still Life with a Volume of Wither’s ‘Emblemes’, Yip’s article discusses the notion of the ephemerality of earthly life, and its resonance with the historical context of post-regicide Britain. Moving from the emblematic to the real, Trudie Messent’s paper explores the theme of the brevity of human life through the sixteenth-century figure of Lady Jane Grey, executed at the age of seventeen as a result of her father’s actions. The essay examines Paul Delaroche’s pictorial representation of the moments immediately preceding the execution, and, drawing parallels between Lady Jane Grey and the mythical figure of Iphigeneia, discusses Tudor women and familial politics through the representation of the ‘tragic heroine’. In James Drabble’s article on Sir Thomas Armstrong’s treason sentence, the focus shifts from impending to effected execution. By comparing two records of Armstrong’s death, a low-brow ballad and a refined engraving, Drabble explores the notion of execution as a spectacle, and offers potential interpretations for the different modalities of its representation as they relate to the social class of the intended audience. A final reflection upon death suggests a role for it in the redefinition of life. Contrasting two posthumous representations of John of Gaunt, a Tudor-era commissioned painting and the deathbed speech from Shakespeare’s Richard II, Jessica Fure’s essay examines the role of death in the construction of identities through the blurring of the protean boundaries between history and fiction.

Bracketing death away, and concluding the volume on a playful note, Michael Freeman’s essay traces the history of Victorian Association Football, from its gentlemanly amateur origins to its transformation into a predominantly working-class profession, revealing links between the Football Association Cup, Oxford, and the beginnings of the Department for Continuing Education.

It is hoped that, through this variety of topics and approaches, Vides will not only contribute to the understanding of the specific geographically or temporally remote realities covered in these articles, but also help the reader to ‘see’ – writ large – meaning and significance in contemporary culture: be it glam rock cross-dressing, or the donning of the gown as Oxonians of 2015.
Disce quasi semper victurus

('Learn as if you were going to live for ever')
Attributed to St Edmund of Abingdon
‘A Kind of Silent Rhetoric’: the Significance of the Worthies of Chillingham Castle

Anna Brunton

Abstract

This paper examines the political, cultural, and religious context of the Jacobean statues of the Worthies of Chillingham castle. This is established through an examination of the contemporary political importance of Chillingham. In addition, contrasts between the Jacobean and earlier Elizabethan use of the Worthies in works by Beaumont and Shakespeare are suggested. The many-layered meanings of these Worthies can be elucidated when they are considered both as part of the English fashion for conceit, and as an aspect of Renaissance self-fashioning.

In the Borders region between Scotland and England, in a remote area once known as the Scottish Marches, lies the castle of Chillingham. Surrounded by fields, and on no main route, the ‘tide in the affairs of men’ has passed it by. However, in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries it was a centre of political events. One sign of its importance, which can still be seen today, is the group of six statues of the Nine Worthies, seen in Figure 1 below.

![Figure 1. Composite photograph of the Worthies of Chillingham. Tom Parnell.](https://www.flickr.com/photos/itmpa/8646660946/) Licensed under CCPL.

The presence of these statues, looking down over the inner courtyard, raises several questions: when were the statues put there, and by whom? And what was the significance of the statues in the context of both the culture and the politics of the time? This short paper will attempt to answer these questions.

The ‘set’ of Worthies was made up of a usually consistent set of three Christian Kings, three Classical Worthies, and three Old Testament Worthies. Although very much a medieval concept, the Nine Worthies continued in popularity into the Renaissance: sets of prints of the Worthies had been published in Europe by Burgkmair in 1516, Lucas Van Leyden in 1520, and by Virgil Solis in 1530. Their continued use can be interpreted as part of that Europe-wide fashion for conceit – secret meanings hidden in emblem or

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allegory, often used to symbolise certain moral qualities – that was especially embraced in England in the early modern period.

The symbolism of the Worthies to the contemporary viewer is made clearer using Richard Lloyd’s *A brief discourse of the acts and conquests of the nine worthies*. In Lloyd’s text, a print of each Worthy is accompanied by a verse outlining the virtues associated with each figure. These virtues include strength, courage, good judgement, ability in battle, and in addition to these, the essential attributes of courtly life: wisdom, and, of course, courtesy. It is clear then that in the Renaissance, the Worthies continued to be symbolic of the virtues associated with the aristocracy, and, as will become clear, were often associated with ideals of kingship.

In his poems Lloyd takes great pains to individualise each figure, giving ‘*A Description of the bodily proportions of the Nine worthies*’. For example, Joshua ‘was of good stature’; ‘Hector was indifferent tall’; ‘Judas Machabeus was...bigge of limbes, square and long’ and Arthur was ‘of visage grim and full of haire’. In addition, as in the medieval tradition, each Worthy could be identified by the armorial bearings on the shield. Lloyd outlines ‘what Armes everie one of them gave’. The use of such impresas demonstrates the continuing importance in the English Renaissance of ‘figuring of them with their proper symbols’.

Using this evidence, it is possible that some of the Chillingham Worthies, despite their poor state of preservation, can be tentatively identified.

For example, the side view of the Worthies (Figure 2) seems to show part of the emblem of Charlemagne (fleurs-de-lis).

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Using Burgkmair’s print, the emblem of the second figure in Figure 2 could be based on that of Godfrey of Bouillon (the large cross surrounded by four smaller ones, which is the emblem of the city of Jerusalem itself, signifying the Crusades; (see Figure 3).


Having outlined the allegorical symbolism of the Worthies in general terms, the next question to answer is why they are here at Chillingham? According to the current owner of the Castle, Sir Humphrey Wakefield, the sculptures form part of a series of improvements made to celebrate a visit of James the First. The fact that King James visited this remote place then raises the question as to why he chose this particular castle to visit. The political importance of the castle and its then owner, Ralph Grey, during the time leading up to James’ coronation, can be traced looking at primary sources, including letters. These hint at a troubled time during the final years of Elizabeth’s reign; she had not named an heir, and as a result secret negotiations were taking place between the Scottish court of James, and one of Elizabeth’s courtiers, Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, using various intermediaries. One of these intermediaries was a distant Scottish relation of Ralph Grey, who (somewhat confusingly for our story) was known as ‘The Master of Gray’, James’ ambassador to England since 1584. The political uncertainty of this period is made clear in a letter from Robert Cecil to the Master of Gray, written in 1608, and looking back to these unsettled times. In it he describes Elizabeth’s court as ‘that fountayen, from whence this kingdome was to expect that peace and safetye only’ but which instead ‘ran such a hazard in the declyninge adge of the late Queen’. Cecil goes on to emphasise that he himself could not state his preference for James openly: ‘I durst scarce take hould of any way or meanes, directly or particularly, to express my innocent affections to the highest there, for feare to be suspected here.’ This letter hints at how important the negotiations between James and

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7 Letters and papers relating to Patrick, master of Gray, p. 197.
Cecil must have been in enabling a straightforward transfer of Royal power from Elizabeth to James.

What was the role of Chillingham in this political uncertainty? The answer is that the owner, Ralph Grey, had secretly played host to the Master of Gray several times, during the latter's journeys to and from Scotland to England. There are several contemporary references to this. Ralph Grey's own importance to King James in this role is reflected in the fact that, during James' progress south in 1603, Ralph Grey was one of the first men to be knighted by James:

the 8th of April...after dinner his Hignesse mounted on horseback and took leave of Berwicke, where, near the bridge, he knighted Mr Ralph Gray, a Gentleman of great command and possession near the Borders.

The political importance of Chillingham to James has been established. However, the exact dating of the statues is more problematic as papers from the castle itself have been lost in a fire. There are several reasons to suggest the dating of the statues to James’ one return visit to Scotland in 1617, rather than to his progression south in 1603. If James had stayed at Chillingham in 1603, it would be expected that Sir Ralph Grey would have been knighted there, rather than on the bridge at Berwick; the volumes which describe his progressions, The progresses, processions, and magnificent festivities of king James the first, do not mention the King staying at Chillingham on the journey south in 1603. Instead, there is a reference to James visiting Chillingham in 1617: on 9 May 'the Royal Traveller rode to Chillingham...and there knighted Sir Edmond [Edward] Grey (brother of Sir Ralph) the same afternoon'.

Having established the reason for the presence for the statues and a possible date, another layer of meaning of the Worthies can be gleaned by a brief analysis of their use in the court of Elizabeth (in this case it was the set of matching female Worthies that was used). It could be suggested that these female Worthies were used especially during periods of religious tension. For example, in 1558, when Elizabeth became queen (following on from the Catholic Queen Mary), the final pageant performed during her entry to London depicted 'Debora the judge'. Later, in 1578, when problems included both recusant and non-recusant Catholicism, and what to do with Mary Queen of Scots, the pageants put on for her progression to Norwich used similar imagery. One contains the Old Testament heroines Deborah, Judith and Hester, and each of these Worthies in turn makes a speech outlining how they had overthrown tyrants and threats to Israel. These examples demonstrate how the Old Testament figures protecting the Israelites served as a symbolic allegory of Elizabeth, the Protestant monarch, protecting England from the Catholic threat: the symbolism of the Worthies here takes on a subtle form of anti-Catholic rhetoric. This analogy was especially relevant after the threat of the Spanish Armada had been overcome, when Elizabeth was depicted as Esther in several

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9 Letters and papers relating to Patrick, master of Gray. This volume contains a series of letters between 'Sir Robert Cecyll' [Lord Salisbury] and Patrick Master of Gray, several of which mention the latter staying at Chillingham; see for example p. 202.
The royall daughter of that royall King....
Ester our Queene, whose fame (with triumph crownd)\textsuperscript{17}

However, it seems clear that by the end of Elizabeth's reign the male version of the Nine Worthies were often ridiculed, as is epitomised by Shakespeare's use of the Worthies. That a low character such as Doll Tearsheet can say to Falstaff that he is 'as valorous as Hector of Troy, worth fi
ve of Agamemnon, and ten times better than the Nine Worthies'\textsuperscript{18} demonstrates how knowledge of the Worthies had moved down through the social scale. Another example is the pageant of the Worthies which ends Love's Labour's Lost, which serves as a foil for the disparaging wit of the Royalty present, the Princess, and the King of Navarre. The fact that the pageant is performed by characters such as the clown, the boy, and the pedant (who, it has been suggested, is based on Richard Lloyd himself),\textsuperscript{19} contributes to this satirical impression. It is worth remembering, however, that both these plays, Henry IV and Love's Labour's Lost, deal with the concept of the necessary virtues for kingship.

In contrast to this, in James' reign the use of the male Worthies seems to revert to their more solemn significance. This could be due to the fact that when James became King, he brought with him the fashions and traditions of the Scottish court. Here the use of the Worthies can be traced back to the Scottish ballad, 'Ane Ballet of the Nine Nobles' (1440) which has a verse on each Worthy in turn, but includes the Scottish figure Robert the Brois (Bruce) as the final Worthy.\textsuperscript{20} This Scottish tradition continued into the sixteenth century. In 1508 the court poet Dunbar used the Worthies in a poem of welcome to Sir Barnard Stewart on his arrival at the court of James IV. Sir Barnard is described as 'moste worthi wyse and wight' and is compared to several worthies, including Hector, Arthur and 'Julius'.\textsuperscript{21} Later in the century George Buchanan (later to be James' tutor) wrote a pageant for the marriage of Mary and Darnley, 'Pompa Deorum in Nuptiis Mariae', 'Pompae Equestres' in which 'knights of virtue...all offer allegiance to the couple'.\textsuperscript{22}

How would James have experienced the Worthies in the pageantry of his own time? As stated above, in contrast to the humorous Elizabethan Shakespearian references, the Worthies seem to revert to their more solemn significance in James' reign. One example of this can be seen in The Masque of the Inner Temple and Grayes Inn (Beaumont), performed in 1613 for the marriage of James' daughter Elizabeth to Frederick V, the Elector Palatine. Although the figures in it are not named specifically as Worthies, a

\textsuperscript{15} Summer, p. 51.
\textsuperscript{17} John Lane, An Elegie upon the death of the high and renowned Princesse, our late Soveraigne Elizabeth (London: W. White, 1603) <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2176/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=V176320> [accessed 13 December 2014].
\textsuperscript{22} Sarah Carpenter, 'Performing Diplomacies: The 1560s Court Entertainments of Mary Queen of Scots', The Scottish Historical Review, 82 (October 2003), pp. 194-225 (p. 221).
subsequent description of the event by James Maxwell makes clear this link between the Worthies and Elizabeth (James' daughter); verse 19 of Maxwell’s poem begins,

Come nobles all, come Worthies, Beauties bright  
With your best things adorne Eliza's day.23

In Beaumont’s masque, the description of the costumes of the dancers makes plain how they were to be portrayed as statues coming to life,

attired in cases of gold and silver close to their bodies, faces, hands and feete, nothing seen but gold and silver, as if they had been solid images of mettall.  
Tresses of haire as they had been of mettall imbossed, girdles and small aprons of oaken leaves as if they likewise had been carv'd or molded out of the metal.24

It could be suggested that the Worthies in Beaumont’s masque contribute a similar political and religious rhetoric as was evident in their earlier use as imagery praising Queen Elizabeth. James’ daughter, the daughter of a Protestant King, was marrying into another Protestant state, this time in Europe. The combination of the two could have been seen as a bulwark against Spanish Catholic expansion.

What do these examples contribute to the search for the underlying symbolism of the Worthies for James’ visit to Scotland in 1617? There seem to be several layers of meaning which could be interpolated, both religious and political. Firstly, it is worth noting that the theme of the Worthies seems to have been part of the rhetoric of the speeches made to James throughout his Scottish tour. These speeches, in English, Latin, and Greek, are all preserved in The Muses Welcome to the High and Mightie Prince James, of which there is a beautifully bound copy in the Bodleian.25 For example, in the speech made at Stirling, James is referred to as Augustus Caesar and Alexander; in Perth several of the figures are referenced, including Alexander, Caesar, and two of the three Old Testament Worthies, David and Josia (Joshua); in Paisley (23 July) he is referred to as the Roman Caesar. In addition, in a poem by Sir William Mure the Younger, read at Hamilton (28 July), he is referred to as Caesar, Alexander, and Joshua. The presence of the Worthies at Chillingham could have been a part of the inherent planning of the whole of the 1617 Scottish visit, and Ralph Grey, with his Scottish connections, could have been aware of this.

What could the religious significance of the Worthies have been here? The clue could be in the fact that one of James’ main aims in his visit to Scotland was to impose the five articles, including confirmation by Bishops, on the Scottish Church.26 Perhaps the threat, as perceived by James, was now the recalcitrant Calvinist Kirk.

Another level of meaning can be suggested from the symbolic position of the Worthies as almost heavenly bodies. In Beaumont’s masque the statues appear from behind stage scenery suggesting a cloud, implying their descent from the heavens. It could be suggested that the positioning of the sculptures at Chillingham echoes that suggested in Beaumont’s masque – nearer the heavens than ordinary mortals. On arrival, James could have ascended a staircase to the same level as the Worthies: he would rise to this more heavenly sphere, and would take on the mantle of such virtue, becoming a Tenth

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Worthy in the process. The effect here could have been similar to that seen in the Worthies in the ceiling bosses of Stirling castle, where James spent most of his childhood, where the roundels include an image of King James V (James’ grandfather) amongst several of the Worthies.

This presentation of James’ elevation to the level of the Worthies could also be interpreted on a political level. It would have been a reminder to the viewer of James’ own opinion of the divine right of kings: that kings were literally nearer the heavens. In 1609 James had told parliament that ‘Kings are justly called Gods for that they exercise a manner of resemblance of Divine power upon earth’. This same view is seen in a rhyming couplet he himself wrote:

Kings Walke the Milkye heavenly way
But you by bye paths gad astray.

In addition, the extensive use of the rhetoric of the Worthies during the Scottish visit, signifying the virtues of kingship, could have subtly emphasised how James was still able to rule without a parliament (the last of which had met for only eight weeks in 1614). Indeed, the importance of such imagery to James, in the display of Kingship, can be traced right back to the beginning of his reign. In his accession medal (see Figure 4), which was struck to be distributed at his coronation, James is portrayed in the persona of Julius Caesar, one of the three classical Worthies. Apparently this is the first time an English king had been displayed as a Roman emperor. This reference is emphasised in the inscription, the translation of which reads ‘James I, Caesar Augustus of Britain, Caesar the heir of the Caesars, presents this medal’.

Figure 4. James the First. Accession medal. © Trustees of the British Museum (G3, EM.316).

27 Professor Sally Rush, Glasgow University. E-mail to the author.
28 To see the bosses restored: <http://www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk/home/experience/palaceproject/stirlingheadszoom.htm> [accessed 15 March 2015].
In conclusion, it has been suggested that the statues of the Worthies of Chillingham Castle embody the early modern fashion for hidden allegory or conceit, and as such they can be read on many levels. An examination of the political context suggests that they were created to celebrate a visit of James the First (possibly in 1617), a visit which could have been an acknowledgement of the importance of Chillingham as a centre of negotiations for James’ own successful accession as king of England. Their role could have been part of a welcoming display presenting James as a symbolic Tenth Worthy, with his position nearer to the Worthies suggesting a subtle link to his own view of the elevated position of kings. In addition, the Worthies could have served as an allegory of the Virtues required for kingship, suggesting James’ own belief in his ability to rule without a parliament. The religious context hints at a continuation of one aspect of their use in Elizabeth’s reign, as a symbol of the monarch’s role in preserving the values of the Church of England. The Worthies can also be seen as one element of James’ continued interest in ‘self-fashining’ as a Roman emperor, also alluded to in the verbal rhetoric of the Scottish visit. All these meanings are suggested by the statues’ simple presence as ‘a kind of silent rhetoric’.33

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Theatricality and Restoration: the Re-construction of Royalty

Jackie Colburn

Abstract

The two artefacts under discussion in this article are the fourth Triumphal Arch, constructed in London for the coronation of Charles II in 1661, and the Killigrew Patent, one of two Royal patents drawn up in 1662 to formalize the rights, given to Thomas Killigrew (1612-1683) and William Davenant (1606-1668) exclusively, to build and run theatres in London. I propose to explore the significance of pageantry, spectacle and theatre during and immediately following the Restoration in 1660 and in particular how these artefacts impacted on the manipulation of the perception of restored monarchy.

It took King Charles II about five hours to process from the Tower to Whitehall on the pre-coronation day of 22 April 1661. A spectacular cavalcade embracing declamations, music, song, dance and architecture, with hundreds of pedestrian and mounted figures resplendent in rich clothes. The personae are listed in minute detail by the diarist and writer John Evelyn in his entry for that day,¹ and faithfully represented in a painting by the Dutch artist Dirck Stoop (Figure 1), court painter to the Princess Catherine of Braganza, who came to the English court in 1662. This painting puts the Triumphal Arches into context.

![Figure 1. Dirck Stoop (1615-1686) Coronation Procession of Charles II to Westminster from the Tower of London, 22 April 1661. 1662, oil on canvas. © The Museum of London, UK.](image-url)

The king processes into the centre of the picture, dressed in elaborate, ceremonial robes on a large, grey horse. There is a direct field of view straight to the King, on the only grey, unimpeded by foot followers, clearly prominent he is the subject of most importance. Evelyn describes this joyous occasion:

> This magnificent Traine on horseback, as rich Embroidery, velvet, Cloth of Gold & Silk and Jewells could make them & their pransing Horses, proceeded thro the streetes, stew’d with flowers, houses hung with rich Tapissry … The Fountaines running wine, bells ringing.²

Throughout the proceedings magnificence, pomp and luxury were designed to reflect the innate glory of kingship, situating onlookers in the position of subjects, an audience overawed by the spectacle and lavish excess of Royalty. Stoop has included all four of

² Evelyn, Diary, p. 384.
the triumphal arches, through which Charles passed, marking the jurisdiction, and underlying the importance of the city. The arches were constructed for the occasion by Peter Mills (1598-1670) and Sir Balthazar Gerbier (1592-1663). Mills, an English architect and surveyor, seems to have taken the lead; Gerbier was something of a polymath, a Dutch courtier, diplomat, architectural designer, one-time Master of Ceremonies for Charles I, and contentiously, also a traitor. John Ogilby (1600-1676) publisher, geographer, cartographer, royalist and one-time theatre owner and master of the revels for the Earl of Strafford, was appointed to be the author of the Entertainment and penned the speeches and poetry that were declaimed at each arch. The classical design of the arches owes something to the classical elements in the early Stuart masques of Inigo Jones and Ben Jonson, and looking further back, perhaps also to James I, whose seven coronation arches with classical features contained references to Virgil, and whose accession appeared to herald a new golden age, like that of the Emperor Augustus. Conversely, during the Protectorate some poets had appropriated this Augustan imagery and applied it to Cromwell, the poet Edmund Waller (1606-1687) writes in his Panegyrick (1655):

As the vex'd World to finde repose at last
Itself into Augustus arms did cast:
So England now does with like toyle opprest,
Her weary Head upon your Bosome rest.

At significant moments in the national psyche it seems that there is a need to assert legitimacy by establishing links with classical antecedents. Therefore, it seems fitting that the designs of the four arches constructed in celebration of this unique event, the restoration of monarchy, and for Charles’s coronation should be steeped in classical imagery, as though seeking to root the new regime in classical tradition in order to create a Stuart mythology.

The arches were constructed of wood, like stage props for the performance of the coronation, designed as architectural ephemera, for the occasion not posterity and now only exist as engravings and in John Ogilby’s detailed textual account of the Entertainment. The first arch depicts the routing of Rebellion and Confusion by Monarchy and Loyalty; the second, dedicated to the Navy, represents the sea and all things pertaining to a maritime nation; the third arch based on the Temple of Concord, looks to the restoration of the ‘Golden Age’, with figures representing Peace, Truth and the cardinal virtues and, once again, highlighting the importance of the City; the fourth and final arch represents the Garden of Plenty (see Figure 2).

This two-storied fourth arch contains columns of both Doric and Ionic orders, although Ogilby admits to some inclination to ‘the Modern Architecture’ in the measure of the capitals. Highly decorated with garlands of leaves and fruits, it teems with references to abundance. Above the keyblock over the lower arch a decorated, oval shield is inscribed with the words, ‘Uberitati AUG. Extincto Belli Civilis Incendio’ signifying that Charles

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5 During the 1630s he sold names of Flemish aristocrats, whom Charles I was trying to help, to the Archduchess Isabella.
8 Fortitude, Temperance, Prudence and Justice.
9 Ogilby, John (1600-1676) The Entertainment of his Most Excellent Majestie Charles II in his passage through the city of London to his Coronation. (London, 1662) http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2176, [accessed 30 December 2014], image 83, p. 139.
would bring not only the prosperity and plenty of Augustus, but by ‘extinguishing the flames of civil war’, also the peace. The letters SPQL engraved below the motto are a reference to the letters SPQR which highlighted the role of the senate in Augustus’ rule. Senatus Populusque Londiniensis SPQL, suggests to the cognoscenti that Charles too will accept an active role of Parliament in his rule.\textsuperscript{10}

\textbf{Figure 2. The Fourth Triumphant Arch 1661, designed by Mills and Gerbier}
from: John Ogilby, \textit{The entertainment of His Most Excellent Majestie Charles II the city of London}. This item is reproduced by permission of the Huntington Library, San Merino, California.

Above the left-hand low arch Bacchus, dressed in a panther skin, seated in a chariot drawn by leopards, is crowned with grapes and holding a cup. The painting above, flying on the banner, depicts Silenus, surrounded by ‘Drunken’ satyres in ‘Antick Postures’ in a vineyard.\textsuperscript{11} Above the right-hand low arch Ceres, goddess of agriculture crowned with ears of corn, holding a poppy, signifies harvest and fecundity. Over the south postern, west side, the goddess Flora is garlanded with flowers and holding roses and lilies; opposite, the goddess Pomona garlanded with fruits is holding horticultural tools. The four winds are represented in four niches. The top tier, with its vaulted ceiling and finer

\textsuperscript{10} Jenkinson, Matthew, \textit{Culture and Politics at the Court of Charles II}, (Woodbridge, 2010) p. 60.
\textsuperscript{11} John Ogilby, \textit{The Relation of His Majesties Entertainment Passing Through the City of London to His Coronation} (1661) p. 30. Future references will be to \textit{Relation}. 
ionic columns complete with volutes, is richly garlanded and contains the musicians, ‘on
the two balconies within, are twelve Waits, fix Trumpets and three Drums’. Three urns
are visible on the edge of the skirted roof, brimming with plants and at the pinnacle of
the roof a crowned figure representing Plenty, a palm branch in her right hand a
cornucopia in her left.

As Charles approached the arch a human figure representing Plenty addressed him from
a stage:

Great sir, the star, which, at Your Happy Birth,
Joy’d with his Beams, at Noon, the wondering Earth
Did with auspicious lustre, then presage
The glitt’ring Plenty of this golden Age:

An unequivocal reference to the hope that 1660 would be the new 27 BC, that Charles II
would be the new Caesar Augustus and that this heralded a new ‘golden age’ where both
the arts and trade would flourish. Contrary to the apparent balance of disruption and
unity in the representations on the first three arches, it is telling that the fourth arch
appears to display unalloyed abundance, even over-indulgence. Offering a stark contrast
to Puritan austerity and a prescient view of the Bacchanalian revelry and licentiousness
that would come to exemplify Charles II’s court.

Charles’s return to England had been in some doubt. As late as 3 March 1660 Pepys
notes, ‘that things are in a very doubtful posture’, with rumours abroad that Monck
might assume power or even that ‘my Lord Protector would come in place again.’
Charles needed to, and did, capitalise on the tide of popularity. Many people were keen
to seek an alternative form of rule having been disenchanted by the Republican venture.
And encouraging the mood of celebration was crucial to the effort to suppress anti-
Royalist sentiment voiced, for example, by Milton who expressed his contempt for the
English people, ‘in this noxious humour of returning to bondage.’
The climate of
popular opinion would be critical to the re-establishment of the monarchy. Celebrations
started whilst Charles was still in Breda and from the time of his arrival in England he
stage-managed his progression from Dover to London, ensuring that his formal entry to
the capital coincided with his thirtieth birthday. Evelyn talks of the ‘inexpressible joy’ of
the people at Charles’s return, effected he notes, ‘without one drop of bloud, by that
very army, which rebell’d against him.’ In his wonder of the ‘very army’ returning to
power the son of the king they had decapitated, ‘s’uch a restauration was never seene
in the mention of any history antient or modern … this hapning when to expect or effect
it, was past all humane policy,’ Evelyn is not alone. The positive connotations of a
Royal Procession with all its associated pageantry reminded people of the time prior to
the turmoil of tyranny, parliamentary government, republican commonwealth and
military dictatorship, and from the outset Charles’s reign was in sharp contrast to
Cromwell’s grim puritanism. And for a time the outward pomp disguised the fragility of
the Restoration.

Charles, tall, dark, debonair, affable and extrovert, exuded an air of the unabashed
laxity that had been on display in Louis XIV’s court where he had spent the early part of
his exile. On his return to London, theatres, brothels, taverns and racecourses were re-
opened, music returned to church galleries and the celebration of traditional festivals,
such as Christmas, re-instated. Charles enthusiastically renewed the practice of the
thaumaturgic ‘King’s Touch’, a very public, theatrical expression of the power of the

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12 Ogilby, Relation, p. 31.
13 Ogilby, Relation, p. 31.
15 John Milton, ‘The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth’ (1660) in The Major Works,
16 Evelyn, Diary, 29th May 1660, p. 370.
17 Evelyn, Diary, p. 370.
18 A form of laying on of hands, believed to cure scrofula – the monarch was deemed to have divine powers.
anointed king, which may be seen as legitimizing his position through re-mystifying it. It is telling that after the execution of a king, an eleven-year interregnum, anxiety about foreign powers, religious and political instability at home, one of the first things Charles should do as King\textsuperscript{19} was to grant licenses to two courtiers to re-open theatres. Significant too that his Coronation robes were used as theatrical costume for the character Prince Alvaro, in Davenant’s play \textit{Love and Honour} (1634) in 1661.\textsuperscript{20} Costume and regalia were as important a part of the visual display in the theatre, as they were for the new King processing through the streets of London.

Thomas Killigrew and William Davenant were authorized, initially by draft Royal Warrant on 19 July 1660, to give performances with scenery and music.\textsuperscript{21} On 25 April 1662 Killigrew was granted this definitive patent (Figure 3) empowering him and his heirs to:

\textbf{Figure 3. The Killigrew Patent} - by kind permission and © The Really Useful Theatre Groups Ltd.

'lawfully, quietly, and peaceably frame, erect, new-build, and set up … a Theatre or Playhouse, with necessary tiring and retiring rooms, and other places convenient'\textsuperscript{22} in

\begin{itemize}
  \item [19] Within three months of his return to England.
  \item [22] Text from Killigrew Patent (fig.3).
\end{itemize}
London, in perpetuity. By these patents, rights were also granted to set ticket prices, employ companies, employ women to play the 'women's parts' and to eject all 'scandalous and mutinous' persons. ‘And we do ...declare all other company and companies saving the two companies before mentioned, to be silenced and suppressed.’ The patents effectively created a duopoly of theatrical rights and, as documents, contribute something to the weaving of a Stuart mythology – dated, prior to the King’s signature, as the ‘14th year of our reign’, effectively implying a continuous line of Stuart rule and obliterating the interregnum.

Of the two patents issued only Killigrew's survives, the property of the owners of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, who still exercise their rights under the Patent, which is currently on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Killigrew's company was known as the King's Company with links back to Shakespeare's King's Men, from whom they inherited most of the plays. Born into a distinguished family, Killigrew was a page to Charles I and one of Charles II’s Grooms of the Bedchamber, he spent the Interregnum in exile with the royal household, writing closet drama to amuse Queen Henrietta Maria. Davenant’s company was to be known as The Duke of York's. Davenant, the son of an Oxford innkeeper, playwright and poet also came to enjoy the patronage of the Queen. He was imprisoned between 1650 and 1652 for his Royalist ties. Both men wrote and adapted plays, although Davenant, who had worked with the designer Inigo Jones in the last days of the Caroline Masque extravaganzas, became well known for his innovations in stage technology, including the development of movable scenery. By issuing only two patents to such loyal supporters of the monarchy it ensured, that at least in the early years, the theatre would be loyal to the king.

The Puritan regime closed all theatres and banned dramatic performance on 2 September 1642. Whilst it would be erroneous to assume that all live theatre during this period was restricted to coterie or Royalist theatre, those few producers, Davenant among them, who decided to ignore the ban had to be extremely careful about the choice of material, venue and audience for their ‘illegal’ performances. Therefore there was a hiatus in new writing during the interregnum and consequently a necessary recourse to reading the works of those playwrights who had achieved the distinction of folio publication. The three pre-existing folios included Ben Jonson's Workes (1616), Shakespeare's Comedies, Tragedies and Histories (1623) and Beaumont and Fletcher's Plays (1647). The period of drama immediately following the Restoration in England is significant for its adaptations of existing plays and may be defined as an era concerned with form. Richard Flecknoe writes in 1664, ‘the chief faults of ours, are our huddling too much matter together, and making them too long and intricate... [a] good play she’d be like good stuff, closely and evenly wrought.’ The desire for balance and symmetry, for form and adherence to the classical unities of action, time and place, can be seen as a reflection on the state of the nation emerging from the turmoil of the Civil War, when, in a period of consolidation and recovery from political trauma, stability was an over-riding concern. And 1660 saw not just the Restoration of Monarchy, but also the restoration of Theatre, and like the monarchy, part of the restoration process is to look back and seek to establish unbroken lines of tradition.

The 1661-2 theatre season records show that out of 58 plays performed only 4 were new, 54 were either un-adapted or adapted versions of existing plays. So there appears to be a dichotomy of indulging in a form of cultural conservatism in looking back, and yet simultaneously the renewal of the theatrical past is being adapted and transformed for modern times. The re-construction of royal rule could be seen to be

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23 Davenant’s patent was granted 15 January 1662/3.
24 Text from Patent.
25 The Really Useful Theatres Group Ltd.
26 Victoria and Albert Museum Theatre and Performance Collections.
going through similar processes. Influenced by French theatre and continental spectacle experienced by the Court during their exile, and aiming to entertain the King and an audience of courtiers who were used to this level of production, Killigrew and Davenant opted for continental-style roofed theatres where stages were raked, thrust and framed by a proscenium arch.

Jonson’s close adherence to the classical unities left his performed works unaltered, seventeen works from the Beaumont and Fletcher stable were substantially re-written for Restoration production, but it was Shakespeare’s plays that underwent such radical alteration, and especially in the years preceding the Exclusion Crisis. These adaptations were not always received with universal approbation. Flecknoe accused Davenant of the ‘spoiling and mangling of [Shakespeare’s] Plays.’ Of the three pre-Civil War folios Shakespeare’s plays conformed least to the classical unities, and therefore, as Jonathan Bate suggests, probably required more modernisation.

According to Downes, Pericles was the first Shakespearean revival in 1660, followed closely by Othello making theatre history with the first female player on stage playing Desdemona. The number of female roles increased in most adaptations, and in Davenant’s 1663 version of Macbeth the roles of Lady Macbeth, Lady Macduff and the witches were considerably expanded. Downes writes:

> The Tragedy of Macbeth, alter’d by Sir William Davenant being drest in all its finery, as new cloaths, new scenes, machines, as flying for witches, with all the singing and dancing in it ... it being all excellently performed ... proves still a lasting play.

It was an age where outward spectacle was more important than introspective reflection, which underwent a certain reduction in these adaptations, reflecting a society that has spent years looking in on itself, constantly on watch for the enemy within. The subject matter of Macbeth dealing as it does with regicide, succession and civil war, must in 1663 have seemed agonisingly relevant to Davenant’s audience. The arguments in Macbeth could be seen to externalise the inner conflict of a nation where these ideas and arguments needed airing.

In Davenant’s Macbeth the virtuous Macduffs provide a symmetrical foil for the Macbeths. In a new scene, in rhyming couplets, Lady Macduff, the play’s sympathetic and moral voice, discusses Macbeth’s guilt and the future of the kingdom, telling Macduff:

> Usurpers lives have but a short extent
> Nothing lives long in a strange element

Arguing against usurpation of a title to which he has no claim, Macduff answers:

> What if I shoul’d Assume the sceptre for my Countreys good? Is that an usurpation? can it be Ambition to procure the liberty Of this sad Realm: which does by Treason bleed?

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30 Flecknoe, Sir William Davenant’s voyage to the other world (1668), pp. 8-9.
32 To ensure maximum utilisation of innovative stage technology.
33 Downes. RA pp. 42-3.
35 William Davenant, Macbeth.
Parallels with Cromwell are instantly recognisable: ‘My aim is not to govern, but Protect.’ (p.35) However Macduff resists claiming the crown in order to redress the ‘common ills’, presenting the oppositional viewpoint to the ignoble Macbeth, a Cromwell figure doomed to exemplary punishment. Together with the ‘improved’ language and certain ‘corrections’ in the violation of genres, integration of modern scenic devices and politicisation of the text, Davenant’s play was such a success with contemporary (and later) audiences that for over a century Shakespeare’s original vanished, in favour of this adaptation.

The original grants of patents were due to Royal connections, and initial productions supported hereditary monarchy by eulogising Charles I and/or vilifying Cromwell. However as the political climate changed, so did the adaptations. Charles’s popularity never again reached the heights that it did at his coronation. The late 1670s political crisis and the Exclusion Crisis had a profound effect on theatres, particularly audience attendance. People were more interested in performances in the real-life political arena than going to the theatre, as Aphra Behn wrote: ‘The devil take this cursed plotting age, / ’T has ruined all our plots upon the stage:’ Subjects that had been suppressed were now being addressed, and although feared, civil strife did not recur. The Restoration might be seen as a successful attempt to turn back the clock, to subdue the collective memory, which enabled the crown and the state to find a basis for some sort of progression.

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36 Two examples: all the characters are social equals, and Banquo is killed off-stage.
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**Online Journal Articles**

Dionysus in Marble and on Paper: Looking at the Culture of Collecting and Changing Practices in Conservation

Catharine O’Shaughnessy

Abstract

During the eighteenth-century, many aristocrats collected ancient stone sculptures from Italy and Greece, for installation in their grand residences. The majority of these sculptures were restored (sometimes heavily so). This essay will examine two artefacts representing the Greek god Dionysus. The first is a drawing of a Roman statue by the sculptor Bartolomeo Cavaceppi, after restoration by him for the English collector Lord Lansdowne. The second is a fragment (torso) of that statue, which was de-restored at some unknown point in the last seventy-five years. Both artefacts are informative in regard to the culture of collecting during the eighteenth-century, and to changing approaches to conservation.

In 1734, a group of gentlemen, many of whom had been on ‘the Grand Tour’ formed a society in London, under the Name of the Dilettanti, to socialise and keep alive memories of their travels and shared experiences. In time they financed expeditions to Italy and Greece. During these trips they recorded images of antiquities they visited, which were subsequently published in magnificent folios in Britain. These exquisite drawings and their accompanying descriptions served to promote the arts and influence public taste, both of which were aims of the Society. They also are direct evidence of the Society’s commitment to the study of antiquity. During their travels abroad and while in residence in England, many Dilettanti bought ancient stone sculptures, the majority of which were restored, sometimes heavily so, for their residences. Their houses and celebrated collections gave them recognition and status, and reputations as learned connoisseurs. Some of their collections made their way into British museums. It would be disingenuous not to point out, however, that many works of art were removed and transported under questionable circumstances, which would be considered unethical today.

British politician and Society of Dilettanti member William Petty (1737-1805), the Second Earl of Shelburne, later Marquess of Lansdowne, was a major collector of ancient marble sculptures. One of those sculptures, a statue of Dionysus, will be examined in this essay, along with a drawing of it by the sculptor Bartolomeo Cavaceppi (1717-1799) who heavily restored it before it was bought by Lord Lansdowne. In the 1930s the Lansdowne Dionysus was sold by Lansdowne’s descendants and purchased by the collector Wright S. Ludington (1900-1991) and is now installed, along with the drawing, at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art (SBMA). Examining Cavaceppi’s drawing of the Dionysus statue (after restoration by him) and comparing it with the statue as it appears today, without its restored parts necessarily involves an investigation into the culture of collecting and eighteenth-century restoration practices in Britain.


4 Redford, pp. 10-11.

5 Redford, p. 199.

The Lansdowne Dionysus, shown in Figure 1, is a large fragment of a monumental marble statue dating from circa second-century AD. Two of the attributes of the mostly nude, obviously male torso enable us to identify it as Dionysus: first, the long hair winding down over the shoulders, and second and more importantly, the animal skin arranged loosely over the body. The statue most likely belonged to Emperor Hadrian (76 AD-138 AD) and stood in the gardens of his magnificent villa at Tivoli, outside of Rome. Most probably it was removed from a low-lying boggy area at the villa by Gavin Hamilton, who began excavating there in 1769 and in all removed more than seventy individual works of ancient sculpture.

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In the drawing of Dionysus by Bartolomeo Cavaceppi, shown in Figure 2, he is depicted in a relaxed, contrapposto stance, with his right hip thrust out and right hand raised over his head. He leans on a support in the form of the stem of a tree, which is entwined with grapes and grape leaves. He holds a bunch of grapes in his left hand and wears a wreath of ivy. An animal skin of a feline (or fawn) is draped across his body; the head of the dead animal hangs at waist-height. In Greek mythology Dionysus (known to the Romans as Bacchus) was the youthful god of wine, vegetation, and ecstasy. He was the son of Zeus, born from his thigh after the death of his mother Semele, a Theban princess. Dionysus was ‘the roaring one’, a ‘bull-horned god’, because he often manifested as a bull, rampant with fertility and power. The youngest of the twelve celebrated Olympians, and the God of the Vine, he could be both benevolent and cruel, capable of making men merry as well as mad, and sometimes driving his followers to commit brutal, savage deeds. In the words of Edith Hamilton, ‘He was man’s benefactor and he was man’s destroyer’.

Dionysus was a very popular deity, and most of his followers were women. His female devotées, known as Maenads, are represented in art and literature as women frenzied with wine, who worshipped Dionysus in the mountains, forests and woodlands, where

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9 Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Lansdowne Dionysus. Visitor Information. In the following referenced as SBMA Lansdowne Dionysus. Visitor Information.
they danced and sang and celebrated the wild beauty of the world. However, they would also hunt and capture the wild creatures they encountered and feast on their raw red flesh. When they accompanied Dionysus to Thebes, his mother’s city, to establish his worship there, they wore fawn skins over their robes and waved wands with wreaths of ivy. In Cavaceppi’s drawing of the restored Dionysus, he wears the skin of a feline, and a wreath of ivy.

After its excavation in Italy, the marble torso made its way to the Roman workshop of Bartolomeo Cavaceppi, a sculptor, restorer and art dealer. His workshop became an important stop for British tourists in the latter part of the eighteenth-century. From 1729 to 1733 Cavaceppi apprenticed under the French sculptor Pierre-Etienne Monnot, during which time he entered the Accademia di St. Luca, where he became a prize-winning student. In 1734, Cardinal Albani, the nephew of Pope Clement XI, who was a private collector of antiquities in Rome, designated Cavaceppi as his restorer. Cavaceppi’s association with the cardinal led to many commissions from foreign tourists, especially from British tourists who wished to establish collections at home.

Between the years 1768 and 1772 Cavaceppi published three volumes of engraved images of sculptures he had restored or owned, the Raccolta d’antiche statue, busti, teste cognite; this publication secured his renown. According to Southworth:

Thousands of pieces passed through his [Cavaceppi’s] workshops and the body of his known work is sufficient to allow identification of his characteristic style.

English buyers had a major influence on the development of the business of the restoration of ancient sculptures. ‘Restorers developed skills and techniques to suit the English market and country house interiors’. Furthermore, the majority of the sculptures that entered Britain during the eighteenth century were restored. Collections were formed in several ways. Many collectors bought items themselves when on the Grand Tour. Some bought sculptures through agents acting on their behalf on the antiquities market. The restoration process was a lengthy one and was often managed by an agent, however, even if the collector himself chose the sculptures. The role of the agent was multi-faceted, and involved everything from aesthetic advice to financial and shipping services. Restorers and dealers such as Thomas Jenkins and Gavin Hamilton were directly involved in the excavation of ancient sites, as has been previously noted. Southworth tells us, about the role of the restorer:

Where a substantial portion of the original is missing the restorer has considerable flexibility. Depending on where he stops recreating what he believes to be original, he can either fulfil the intention of the original artist or eventually create what is effectively a new piece. The eighteenth-century restoration of sculpture was a response to the English desire for material to display in sculpture galleries.

12 Hamilton, pp. 56-7.
17 Feifer, p. 92.
18 Feifer, p. 92.
19 Southworth, p. 106.
20 Southworth, pp. 107-108.
He goes on to list major changes that were sometimes made to statues, including new body parts, bases, supports, and attributes such as grapes that would give a clue as to the identity of the figure. Resin and wax were used to fill new joints and mends, which were stained to match the marble. The difference between old and new marble was camouflaged by reworking and polishing the entire surface to either erase or create signs of age, or by staining it with tobacco. According to Howard, collectors were well aware of contemporary restorers’ procedures but they intentionally encouraged and overlooked them because they resulted in pieces they liked. And Cavaceppi was in the upper echelon of restorers, a favourite of collectors and their agents because of his skill as a sculptor and reputation for refined restorations. However, he was not the only restorer of ancient sculptures in eighteenth-century Rome:

Like his confederates, he was, as we have seen, a practitioner of the evils of restoration, but he was considered perhaps the most trustworthy, at least the most pleasing, of restorers, without whose additions the collector would not have the pleasant decoration, an all-important sign of virtù whose ‘antique’ attributes might afford him the opportunity to display his taste and erudition.

It is interesting to note Howard’s use of the word ‘confederates’ in reference to Cavaceppi, as though he were a member of a clandestine group of individuals engaged in perhaps questionable practices. It seems he was a consummate businessman as well as artist, who was supplying his customers’ demands for ‘pleasant decorations’. There appears to have been a tendency for completion, possibly caused by the demand for restored statues by buyers, many of them in England. In their preference for restored statues over fragments, they may have been more interested in statues as they appeared in antiquity, than in ‘broken’ and incomplete ones. For instance, Hamilton's primary motivation for excavating at Hadrian's villa was ‘to find ancient marble suitable for restoring statues, reflecting his activities as a dealer’. According to Jerry Podany, a conservator at the Getty, restoration practices have been in flux since Michelangelo’s time. There has been a constant ‘struggle between the need to preserve the authentic relic—untouched and pure—on one hand and the desire to repair, make whole again, and improve—to restore—on the other’. While Michelangelo expressed respect for the fragmentary condition of statues, many artists of his time ‘saw it as their artistic prerogative to use the ancient material as both a model of inspiration and a source of raw material’.

The majority of classical marbles imported into England from about 1720 until 1800 went to the furnishing of country houses. In order to demonstrate their influence, newly wealthy individuals bought land upon which they built luxurious country houses in the pompous Palladian style. Many filled the grand halls of their houses with collections of ancient sculpture. For the leisure class, owning sculptures and displaying them was a form of self-expression, a declaration of one’s erudition and station, and could also be a form of competition with other collectors. Aristocrats viewed themselves as connoisseurs whose leisure time and pursuits, which included hunting and riding, enhanced their respectability and conferred status. ‘Foreign travel and classical sculpture were the currency of the connoisseur.’

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21 Southworth, pp. 107-108.
23 Feifer, p. 87.
24 Howard, p. 221.
27 Podany, p. 15.
28 Feifer, pp. 92-93.
29 Feifer, p. 94.
30 Feifer, p. 100.
of only two major collections in London. *Lansdowne House*, built in the 1760s and enclosed by a landscaped park, was referred to at the time as 'the country house of London'.\(^{31}\) The German academic Adolf Michaelis, who classified and catalogued thousands of pieces of Greek and Roman sculpture in English private collections, visited *Lansdowne House* in both 1873 and 1877. His pioneering, first-hand study, entitled *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain*, was published in 1882.\(^{32}\) English collectors dominated and inspired commerce in classical antiquities in Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century.\(^{33}\) Michaelis describes English collecting during this period as England's 'Golden Age of Classical Dilettantism':

> In an unintermitting stream the ancient marbles of Rome poured into the palaces of the aristocracy of Great Britain, whose wealth in some cases afforded the means of gratifying a real artistic taste by these possessions, and in others enabled them at any rate to fall into the new fashion of dilettantism, the *furore* for antique art.\(^{34}\)

In the course of his myriad visits to their stately homes to classify and catalogue their collections, Michaelis understandably formed his own impressions of these collectors and their motivations, as well as those of their possible ancestors. What drove their passion for collecting sculpture: the desire to acquire beautiful things, the love of beauty, or something else? One can only speculate.

As it has been discussed, Lord Lansdowne amassed an incredible collection of ancient sculptures. He first visited Rome in 1771 where he purchased the first antique pieces from the dealers Hamilton and Jenkins, and perhaps from Cavacepbi. Over the course of twenty years he added to his collection at *Lansdowne House*, where it remained until its dispersal at auction at Christie’s in the 1930s and the house was sold.\(^{35}\) The outstanding statues that made his collection so renowned came from the excavations done by Hamilton, who became Lansdowne’s principal agent in 1771 and in the subsequent two decades. According to Howard, who has written the definitive biography of the sculptor, Cavacepbi most likely restored the Lansdowne marbles, based on the appearance of the restorations.\(^{36}\) Lansdowne bought the *Dionysus* statue after restoration by Cavacepbi, whose wonderful drawing of it (Figure 2) has been previously discussed. In his book *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain*, Michaelis notes the extensive repairs done to the statue:

> New: the head, right arm lying thereon, and the left arm leaning on the stem of a tree, the stem itself, the lower part of the left leg, and three-quarters of the right leg, on which the body rests.\(^{37}\)

In Cavacepbi’s finely detailed drawing of the restored *Dionysus* statue (located on a wall directly behind it at the SBMA), one is reminded of the deity’s association with both the vine (the grapes) and the hunt (the animal skin). Perhaps the statue’s previous owners were beguiled by its beauty and sensuality as well as its mythological associations. Perhaps they identified with attributes of Hadrian. Of course, Cavacepbi’s restoration of the statue was based on his interpretation of how it may have looked in antiquity. As mentioned above, the Lansdowne collection was dispersed in the 1930s when Lord Lansdowne’s descendants put it up for sale. One of the prized pieces of the collection, the *Lansdowne Herakles*, was bought by the American industrialist, art collector and philanthropist J. Paul Getty in 1951, from a London dealer. It was his most beloved work.

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31 Feifer, p. 100.
33 Howard, p. 30.
35 Howard, p. 89.
36 Howard, p. 93.
37 Michaelis, p. 445. (See also Christie’s Catalogue, entry 108).
of art and served as the inspiration for the Getty Villa, a ‘re-imagined’ ancient Roman
country house, located in Malibu, California, that opened in 1974.38

The collector and philanthropist Wright S. Ludington, who made his fortune in banking
and publishing, also purchased works of sculpture from the Lansdowne collection. For
years one of them, the Lansdowne Dionysus, the subject of this essay, stood outside in
the garden of his estate, Val Verde, near Santa Barbara, California.39 Ludington was one
of the founders of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, which was able to acquire many
objects in his collection of antiquities after it was dispersed in 2009, including the
Lansdowne Dionysus. Independent contractors conserved the sculpture in consultation
with curators and conservators at the Getty Villa, before its installation at the SBMA in
2012.40 It is one of the first works of art a visitor to the museum encounters, as it is
located in a large, open, Roman-inspired atrium just off the lobby.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the inclination to replace missing parts of
ancient sculptures began to abate. In the 1960s and 1970s, conservators and curators
began to remove misrepresentative and often disfiguring additions made to sculptures.41
A very significant project in this new trend in conservation towards de-restoration began
with figures from the pediments of the temple of Athena Aphaia on the Island of Aegina,
which are now located at the Glyptothek in Munich. From 1962 to 1965, Dieter Ohly, the
museum director at the time, who was also the excavator at Aegina, had conservators
remove the nineteenth-century restorations done on the sculptures by the renowned
Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen. The pioneering work by Ohly led to a new
understanding of the figures as well as important technical information regarding
Thorvaldsen’s restoration practices.42 This new trend toward de-restoration influenced
work that was done by the Getty Museum in the mid-1970s on two large marble statues
from the collection of another Dilettanti member, Thomas Hope. Jiri Friel, the first
curator of the Getty Antiquities collections, and his conservator, David Rinne, made the
decision to remove eighteenth-century restorations done to the Statue of Athena and the
Statue of Hygieia. The de-restorations were deemed unsuccessful because they altered
the appearance of the sculptures, and the results were not as enlightening as those
obtained from the Aegina pieces.43 The two statues were successfully re-restored by
Getty Museum conservators in 2008; they are not only important works from antiquity
but also informative in terms of eighteenth and nineteenth-century conservation
practices.44 Podany discusses the drive towards ‘re-restoration’ that has characterised
conservation in the late twentieth and now in the twenty-first century.45 It has followed
from dissatisfaction with the ‘purist’ approach that involved not only removing
restorations from ancient fragments but also adding aspects which detracted from them
and which resulted in the ‘amputated remains of antiquity’.46 Re-restoration is an
acknowledgement that previous modifications to works are permanent and that they
reflect the ethos of the period in which they were done.47 In the case of the Lansdowne
Dionysus, its eighteenth-century restorations were removed sometime during the
seventy-year period it spent in Santa Barbara, before it was acquired by the museum
(although the exact date is not known). Obviously, the statue has not been re-restored.

39 SBMA Lansdowne Dionysus. Visitor Information.
40 Lee, Patricia, Eye on Conservation: The Lansdowne Dionysus, The Santa Barbara Museum of Art Blog
<http://blog sbma.net/2011/01/eye-on-conservation-the-lansdowne-dionysus/> [accessed 16 December
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41 True, Marion, ‘Changing Approaches to Conservation’, in History of Restoration of Ancient Stone Sculptures,
ed. by Janet Burnett Grossman, Jerry Podany and Marion True (Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003),
pp. 1-11 (p. 5).
42 True, pp. 5-6.
43 True, p. 7.
[accessed 20 February 2015].
45 Podany, p. 19.
46 Podany, p. 19.
47 Podany, p. 19.
Philosophies about restoration and conservation can change, sometimes within a short period of time, as we have seen with the statues of Athena and Hygieia at the Getty. In the words of Jerry Podany, "These philosophies are as dynamic as time, and as such must be approached with caution." Although its large torso is all that is left now for the viewer to admire, the *Lansdowne Dionysus* is nonetheless beautiful and compelling. And in its new home at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art it is accessible for the public to enjoy. The drawing by Cavaceppi displayed next to the statue illustrates the tension between presenting the statue as it was when excavated, and the way it may have looked originally in the garden of an ancient Roman villa.

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48 Podany, p. 21.
Catharine O'Shaughnessy

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Stealing Soldiers’ Hearts: Appropriating Henry V and Marching Shakespeare’s Boys off to The Great War

Paul Brown

Abstract

This essay examines a Memorial Stained Glass Window from World War I that depicts Shakespeare’s ‘Henry V at Prayer’ before the battle of Agincourt. Dedicated to fallen brothers from the King Edward VI Boys Grammar School in Stratford-upon-Avon, the window’s legend reads: ‘O God of Battles Steel My Soldiers’ Hearts’ – reflecting a belief that Henry V was a valiant warrior-king who inspired his English soldiers to defeat France in 1415. In the aftermath of World War I, scholars began to question this patriotic portrayal of Henry V seen in ‘abridged’ performances of Shakespeare’s play. By comparing the myths embedded in this war memorial image of Henry with his entire ‘O God of Battles’ prayer, this essay intends to unmask Henry’s character and reveal the dark complexity hidden in one of Shakespeare’s most dangerous kings.

Figure 1. The Boys of King Edward VI School in ‘Henry V’, 1913 Shakespeare Festival, Stratford-upon-Avon. Used by permission, King Edward VI School Archives.

In 1913, boys from King Edward VI School (est. 1295) in Stratford-upon-Avon received a rare invitation to perform Henry V at the town’s Annual Shakespeare Festival. Celebrated Shakespearean actor Frank Benson was proud to include boys from the school where William Shakespeare (1564-1616) had attended.1 Inspired by Benson’s past theatrical presentations of Henry V, the boys rehearsed for months and delivered a production of spectacular pageantry at the Memorial Shakespeare Theatre. The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald lauded their performance, claiming ‘our boys have scored a triumph’.2 A professional movie crew later made a silent film with subtitles of their performance, allowing the boys to see themselves in Henry V at Stratford’s Picture House theatre.3

After playing soldiers on stage and screen, many of this ‘band of brothers’ left for France

3 Pearson, p. 17.
the following year to actually fight in World War One. One hundred and eighty-one ‘Old Boys’ from King Edward VI School eventually served in France, Belgium, Mesopotamia, and Batoum. Thirty-two lost their lives, including seven from the Henry V production. Although Henry V had been considered Shakespeare’s most patriotic English play for over three centuries, disillusioned scholars in post-war Britain began to see Henry V as a darker, more complex anti-war satire. Critics argued that ‘abridged productions’ distorted Shakespeare’s subversive attack on imperialism, military rhetoric, and the dangers of charismatic leaders. People traumatised by horror and loss in the war, however, preferred to hold onto the heroic image of Henry V. This perception is frozen in a war memorial stained glass window – ‘Henry V at Prayer’ (1922) – hanging in the King Edward VI School library. Dedicated to fallen brothers, the window’s legend quotes Henry V’s famous line – ‘O God of Battles, Steel my Soldiers’ Hearts’ (4.1.286) – implying Henry’s prayer inspired his soldiers’ miraculous victory at Agincourt. After briefly exploring how the text of Henry V was ‘appropriated’ and distorted in abridged performances before World War I, we shall see how scholars later discovered a ‘secret play’ hidden within the play. By comparing the mythical ideals frozen in this stained glass window with a close reading of Henry’s ‘O God of Battles’ prayer, this paper intends to shatter his heroic image and reveal Shakespeare’s theme that Henry V conspired to ‘steal’ his soldiers’ hearts so he could ‘steal’ the crown of France.

The King Edward VI School Archives contain a collection of memorabilia from the 1913 Henry V theatre and film productions, including programmes, local newspaper reviews, and photographs of young actors posing in medieval costumes, hair, and make-up similar to photos of Frank Benson’s Edwardian presentation of Henry V. While it is impossible to know the school’s interpretation of the play, archival evidence about their presentation is revealed inside the production’s aged ‘prompt book’ – ‘The Picture Shakespeare, King Henry The Fifth’. This is an abridged version of the play where editors have eliminated lines and sections deemed as inappropriate for British secondary school student productions of this era. Of particular interest are the significant pencilled ‘cuts’ in the text that eliminate lines, speeches, and scenes that might be offensive. Abridging Shakespeare’s plays had been a common theatre practice, and professional actor-managers like Frank Benson notoriously ‘cut’ Shakespeare’s texts to accelerate a play’s running time and to eliminate material they considered too controversial or contradictory to their interpretation.

Henry V reached its greatest popularity at the outbreak of World War One. Since Britain did not have conscription, actors such a Frank Benson performed at recruitment rallies and ‘set all the youth of England on fire’ with Shakespeare’s explosive speeches. He presented special presentations (entitled ‘Shakespeare's War Cry’) in the London and suburban theatres. Benson included the speech ‘O God of Battles, steel my soldiers' hearts’ (Act IV, Sc I) and, of course, the famous St Crispin's Day speech from Henry V (Act IV, Sc III). Benson was not alone in his crusade. After being rejected from military service due to his advanced age of fifty-seven, Benson mounted ‘as many productions of Henry V that he could muster’. While many listeners were swept up in the heightened mood of patriotism and national pride, Benson’s excessive passion was noted at a Boxing Day show, in 1914: ‘his performance throughout was marked by

4 Pearson, p. 17.
7 A theatre ‘prompt book’ is traditionally used by a director and stage manager to record ‘cuts’ in a play’s text. This may contain marginalia with revisions, stage directions and actions, as well as performance notes for the cast.
10 Shakespeare, King Henry V, ed. by Emma Smith, p. 45.
unwonted fervour. Evidently he felt himself not really playing the stage part but delivering a solemn message.\textsuperscript{13}

The war’s horrifying slaughter decreased British interest in \textit{Henry V}’s jingoistic performances as soldiers and citizens began to question propaganda that promised honour and glory for military service. Scholar Gordon Gould had the unique opportunity to understand the disparity between outer surfaces and hidden realities while serving in Britain’s secret ‘War Propaganda Bureau’. At the war’s end, in 1919, Gould published a landmark essay, ‘A New Reading of Henry V’, claiming Shakespeare had been misinterpreted for three centuries.\textsuperscript{14} Gould observed that, instead of being a pro-war play, \textit{Henry V} is subversively ironic, casting its heroic leader as a dangerously charismatic but cruel Machiavellian character:

‘No doubt the irony of \textit{Henry V} was meant to ‘take in’ the groundlings when it was first produced: had it failed to take them in, it would have invited bitter and immediate unpopularity. But Shakespeare can scarcely have intended that the force of preconception should, hundreds of years after his death, still be preventing the careful, the learned, and the sympathetic from seeing what he so definitely put down. The play is ironic.’\textsuperscript{15}

Gould argues that the practice of ‘appropriation’ – cutting or taking away critical lines and scenes from \textit{Henry V} productions – served to distort and mislead audiences away from appreciating Shakespeare’s powerful anti-war play.\textsuperscript{16} The consequence of this ‘appropriation’ or theft\textsuperscript{17} is reflected in Constance Benson’s memory of Frank Benson’s performance at the Shaftesbury Theatre, in London: ‘The stirring words of ”Henry V” to his troops before Agincourt made so deep an impression on the audience, that some three hundred (we were told) before our short season was over, had given in their names for enlistment.’\textsuperscript{18}

\textbf{Figure 2. Henry Jennings playing ‘Ancient Pistol’.} Used by permission, King Edward VI School Archives.

\textsuperscript{13} J.C. Trewin, \textit{Benson and the Bensonians} (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1960), p. 211. \\
\textsuperscript{15} Gould, p. 42. \\
\textsuperscript{16} Gould, p. 42. \\
In the aftermath of the war, King Edward VI School built a ‘Memorial Library’ near the playground to commemorate the school’s fallen soldiers. At the dedication ceremony, on 12 May 1923, Headmaster Knight read the names of thirty-two fallen ‘Old Boys’ listed on the library’s memorial bronze plaque. Mr and Mrs Howard Jennings presented the stained glass window ‘Henry V at Prayer’, 1922, to commemorate their fallen sons – Henry Jennings, Second-Lieutenant of the 3rd Battalion, The Worcestershire Regiment (30 April 1916), and Herbert Jennings, Lance Corporal, Queen’s Own Cameron Highlanders, (9 September 1918). Henry had played ‘Ancient Pistol’ and Herbert was the ‘Earl of Salisbury’ in the school’s production of *Henry V* before the war.

![Figure 3. Herbert Jennings (standing on left) as the 'Earl of Salisbury'.](image)

**Figure 3. Herbert Jennings (standing on left) as the 'Earl of Salisbury'.**

Used by permission, King Edward VI School Archives.

Speaking at the dedication ceremony, Mr and Mrs Jennings said they chose *Henry V* to honour the work of Shakespeare feeling that ‘the illustrious poet who was educated here had, in his matchless language, depicted that spirit of sacrifice and love country which are so essential today’.

The Jennings parents commissioned Benjamin J. Warren (1878-1954), an artist-teacher from Sparkhill, Birmingham, to create their sons’ memorial stained glass window. Based on a patriotic interpretation of Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, the window also reflects Arthurian influences that characterised the influential Pre-Raphaelite work of Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, both former presidents of the Birmingham Art Gallery and the Birmingham School of Art, where Benjamin Warren studied. The stained glass window measures 25 x 17 inches, and is composed of rectangular shapes. Framing the borders are vibrant English heraldic emblems set against green foliage, conveying the story of English troops encamped in Agincourt woods the night before battle. Henry V’s open blue cloak reveals his identity – his surcoat is emblazoned with his Royal Lancaster coat of arms – two red panels with symbolic golden lions are quartered with two blue panels with golden French ‘fleur-de-lis’, symbolising Henry’s claim to the English and French crowns. Warren uses white glass to draw the viewer’s attention to the window’s

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19 Pearson, p. 68.
22 Albutt, p. 6.
central axis where Henry V’s radiant face appears, seemingly lit from within. Eyes burning, hands clasped in praying fists, he grips his down-turned sword, its handle and cross-guard forming a golden crucifix. Warren has created a scene of spiritual illumination, alluding to Henry’s prayer that led to divinely inspired English victory at Agincourt. The sword’s pummel points up to horizontal white glass that backlights the quote: ‘O GOD OF BATTLES STEEL MY SOLDIERS HEARTS.’

![Image](image1.jpg)

**Figure 4. Benjamin J. Warren (1878-1954), ‘Henry V at Prayer’ (1922).** King Edward VI School Memorial Library. Used by permission, King Edward VI School Archives.

Beneath this are of two armoured knights standing against cobalt sky. Vigilantly holding lances, they look off, seeming to wait for battle. Readers familiar with *Henry V* might assume these two figures are ‘Williams and Bates’ – English soldiers that Henry speaks to in a previous scene. The artist uses a vertical white glass strip to lead the viewer down to another illuminated legend at the bottom of the window:

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IN MEMORY OF H.A. JENNINGS 2ND LT. 3RD WORCESTER REGT &
H.H. JENNINGS LT CRP CAMERON HIGHLANDER
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The window now achieves its maximum impact – for in reading the names of Jennings brothers, we look back up to the knights’ silhouettes and may imagine the two soldiers are Herbert and Henry Jennings – a real band of brothers.24

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24 Pearson, *The Boys of Shakespeare’s School*. Henry Jennings played ‘Pistol’ in the production of *Henry V*. Jennings won many academic prizes in science, debate, and history, as well as honours in Rugby and Cricket, earning the ‘Victor Ludorum’ (‘Winner of the Games’ prize) as the school’s best athlete (Pearson, *The Boys of Shakespeare’s School*, p. 41). Herbert Jennings played ‘The Duke of Salisbury’ in *Henry V*. Herbert’s biggest speech reflects the dire predicament of Henry V’s troops before Agincourt – as well as in their own upcoming battles: ‘Gods arm strike with us! ‘Tis a fearful odds./ God bye you, princes all; I’ll to my charge. / If we no more meet till we meet in heaven [...] warriors all, adieu.’ *Henry V*, 4.3.5-10 (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 1995), p. 286.
Critic A.P. Rossiter observes that Shakespeare created memorable Kings that have a ‘constant doubleness’, thus designing enigmatic characters that evoke strong, opposing viewpoints and ambiguous feelings from an audience.25 While the traditional heroic version of Henry V has been captured in the Jennings memorial stained glass window, the full text shows disturbing dimensions of Henry’s cunning and brutality. As stated, abridgments and cuts to Shakespeare’s texts were a common theatre practice before World War I. The King Edward School prompt book contains numerous cuts eliminating Henry’s dark behaviour, best exemplified in the following abridged scene missing from their performance, revealing Henry’s vile threats against the governor of Harfleur if he refuses to surrender:

And the fleshed soldier, rough and hard at heart,
In liberty of bloody hand, shall range
With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass
Your fresh fair virgins and your flowering infants.  

(3.3.11-14)26

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If not, why, in a moment look to see
The blind and bloody soldier with foul hand
Defile the locks of your shrill-shrieking daughters;
Your fathers taken by the silver beards,
And their most reverend heads dash’d to the walls,
Your naked infants spitted upon pikes,

(3.3.33-38)

While editors of this prompt book clearly intended to protect students from shocking material, the cuts eliminated the complex ‘doubleness’ that Shakespeare intended for Henry’s character, leaving audience with a crowd-pleasing but shallow theatrical experience. When actors use Shakespeare’s full text, however, Henry V’s troubling character traits may initially seem unfathomable, yet his darkness reveals resonant shades of meaning. This is evident in the ‘O God of Battles’ prayer, where Henry seems lost and alone. His confusion is motivated by a previous scene where he cloaks himself as a common soldier and walks among his troops, hoping to gauge their readiness for battle. He is threatened when soldiers Williams and Bates voice their suspicions that the king may not have ‘just cause’ to fight for the French crown, and that he will be consequently responsible to God for every soldier’s death.27 Henry’s rhetorical skills fail him and Williams remains unmoved.28

27 Legal Scholar Theodor Meron observes that English knights in the fifteenth-century were influenced by Saint Augustine’s belief that a prince was responsible for the sin of waging an ‘unjust war’ and ‘the duty of obedience preserved the soldier’s innocence’ before God. Theodor Meron, Bloody Constraint: War and Chivalry in Shakespeare (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 160.
28 Pearson, p. 17. Victor Hyatt played ‘Williams’ in the King Edward VI School production of Henry V. A superior athlete, Victor was Captain of the cricket team and winner of Gymnastic Challenge Cup in 1913. He had been in France for just under a month when, on 5 December 1915, a shell exploded near his muddy trench, and he was crushed under sandbags. A letter in the King Edward VI School archives from schoolmate Ronald Newland (who played French King Charles VI in Henry V) comments on Victor’s final moments: ‘It is the greatest sorrow I ever had, for after all he was the greatest friend I ever had. The only possible consolation I can hold out to you is that he suffered no pain and death was practically instantaneous.’
Henry walks off alone and ‘kneels’ to pray: ‘O God of battles, steel my soldiers’ hearts.’ Henry’s words ‘my soldiers’ indicate his sense of ‘possession’ over these men. While this may suggest paternalistic concern for their well-being, the statement also allows us to question whether he actually has the ‘just cause’ to have put these soldiers in this dangerous situation at all. This answer is debatable for audience members who know *Henry IV* (part 2) and remember King Henry IV’s dying advice to his son: ‘Be it thy course to busy giddy minds / With foreign quarrels’ (4.5.213-214).

Astute viewers may thus suspect that Henry is avoiding another rebellion in England with this distracting and unjustified foreign invasion in France. In the King Edward School production of *Henry V*, the dubious and convoluted discussions between Henry and the Prelates over his right in attacking France have been ‘cut’ in the prompt book, further creating suspicion that Henry’s conquest is criminal. Henry’s prayer asking God to ‘give his soldiers courage’ is also confusing. By mischaracterising Williams’ reasoned arguments as irrational and motivated by fear, Henry seems to deceive God in his prayer.

The word ‘steel’ in the text means to ‘stiffen’ or ‘harden’ the body and emotions. As Shakespeare’s plays were designed for performance, however, listeners might initially hear Henry say, ‘steal my soldiers’ hearts’ – meaning ‘to take away’ or ‘snatch’ – before


30 *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2014). ‘Steel’, v, ‘fig. To make hard, unbending, or strong as steel, to render insensible to impression, to make determined or obdurate, to nerve or strengthen.’
the meaning ‘strengthen my soldier’s hearts’ is understood. Given his argument with Williams and Bates, Henry’s prayer to ‘steel’ his ‘soldiers’ hearts’ also means ‘steal’ (take away) their humanity and critical thoughts. Shakespeare slyly has Henry unconsciously use further damning synonyms for ‘stealing’:

 Possess them not with fear. Take from them now
 The sense of reckoning, if th’ opposed numbers
 Pluck their hearts from them.

(4.1.287-289)

Henry’s words ‘possess’, ‘take from’, and ‘pluck’ reveal his family’s compulsion to appropriate, thieve, and usurp. Shakespeare’s use of the word ‘reckoning’ creates multiple meanings. Henry heard Williams use the word ‘reckoning’ earlier – ‘if the cause be not good, the King himself / hath a heavy reckoning to make...’ (4.1.134-135). By echoing Williams’ word, Henry asks God to ‘take from them now / the sense of reckoning,’ i.e. take away soldiers’ judgments, opinions, and arguments that conflict with his mission. Given that Henry’s family has been cursed by dark prophecies, a terrible ‘reckoning’ also means ‘retribution, fate, doom, and punishment.’ As with Shakespeare’s polysemantic use of the word ‘steel’, we realise that the word ‘reckoning’ – or reck’ning – in performance may sound like the word ‘wreck’, i.e. ‘destroy’. This play on words might lead an audience to hear ‘but if the cause be not good, the King hath a heavy wreck-ning to make’ – suggesting Henry might criminally destroy something without right.

The subject of an unjust war reverberates throughout the play and in Henry’s psyche. Guilt-ridden, he continues with his prayer, revealing what haunts him most:

 Not today, O Lord,
 O, not to-day, think not upon the fault
 My father made in compassing the crown!

(4.1.289-291)

Henry V is tormented by the curse caused by Henry IV’s usurpation of the divinely anointed King Richard II. While Henry attempted to absolve himself from his soldiers’ fates on the battlefield, he now suggests he is also not culpable for his father’s crimes either, arguing against the belief that God’s judgement is motivated by ‘the biblical doctrine of inherited guilt.’ After distancing himself from his father, Henry attempts to prove his spiritual affinity to his Holy Father by lauding his own penitent acts of contrition:

 I Richard’s body have interred anew;
 And on it have bestow’d more contrite tears
 Than from it issued forced drops of blood.

(4.1.292-294)

Henry extolls his own piety, missing the irony that his atonement has been earned with money instead of good works:

 Five hundred poor I have in yearly pay,
 Who twice a-day their wither’d hands hold up
 Toward heaven, to pardon blood; and I have built
 Two chantries, where the sad and solemn priests
 Sing still for Richard’s soul.

(4.1.295-299)

His euphemistic words ‘pardon blood’ verbally cover up ‘Richard’s murder’ as he asks God to forgive him for being Henry IV’s son. His prayer reaches a crescendo, then fades as Henry realises he has protested too much, and finishes with exhausted apologies:

    More will I do,
    Though all that I can do is nothing worth,
    Since that my penitence comes after all,
    Imploring pardon.

    (4.1.299-302)

Henry realises it may be too late to ‘reckon’ with his father’s crimes. Yet his surrender may be a sly negotiation with God, hinting that a gift of divine protection in battle will allow Henry to atone for King Richard in the future.

The memorial window, 'Henry V at Prayer', portrays a patriotic hero, frozen in stained glass from a simpler time. After the war, audiences who had suffered through years of loss and propaganda were ready for a darker truth, and a new trend in Shakespeare productions began to include entire texts in performance. By stealing back this arsenal of actions and words, actors are able to explore the full range of Henry’s charm, cruelty, poetry, and troubling duality, allowing interpretations that celebrate or condemn acts of war, and leave some audiences to cheer, others uncertain, and many horrified by their attraction and revulsion of Shakespeare’s contradictory and charismatic king.

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‘Sounding of the Voice’: Interpreting the Earl of Rochester’s Epilogue to *Love in the Dark* through an Analysis of Matthew Locke’s Musical Score to *Psyche*

Thomas J. du Plessis

Abstract

This article explores the Earl of Rochester’s Epilogue to *Love in the Dark* through the music drama *Psyche* by Thomas Shadwell set to music by Matthew Locke. Rochester’s text and Locke’s score are explored within the wider context of rivalry between the Duke’s Company and the King’s Company. A musical analysis of Locke’s score will reveal a conflict between music, libretto and speech that lies at the heart of Rochester’s criticism of *Psyche*.

On 10th May 1675 the first performance of a new play, *Love in the Dark* was recorded by the King’s Company at the Theatre Royal. The playwright was the minor courtier Sir Francis Fane, who dedicated the play to the notorious libertine the Earl of Rochester, boasting that Rochester had helped Fane through ‘partial recommendations and impartial corrections’.¹ Rochester is praised as ‘an Enthusiast in wit’, ‘a Poet and Philosopher by Revelation’ and ‘so great a Luminary’ that ‘if there were a beam of Knowledge, immediately deriv’d from God, upon any Man, since the Creation, there is one upon your self’.² Such hyperbole is a typical address to Rochester, who has often been seen as the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the Restoration theatre, and possibly accountable for the upsurge in libertine plays in the period.³ *Love in the Dark* was the latest play in a fierce rivalry between the King’s Company and the Duke’s Company. In the early 1670s this rivalry had intensified sharply after the Duke’s Company moved to a new location in Dorset Gardens, sandwiched between the house of correction for lewd women and the debtors’ sanctuary of Whitefriars.⁴ The King’s Company mocked the move, which they saw as downmarket and vulnerable to association with the reputed philistinism of ‘city’ audiences.⁵ However the new theatre provided the Duke’s Company with a technological superiority which, armed with the finest restoration theatre composers, including Matthew Locke, Louis Grabu and John Bannister, could produce the most lavish and daring experiments in early music dramas.

Immediately following Fane’s death in 1691, an epilogue to *Love in the Dark* was published for the first time. The play’s dedication and Fane’s subsequent contribution of a masque for Rochester’s re-write of *Valentinian* has constituted the main evidence for Rochester being the author of the epilogue.⁶ The epilogue opens with an attack on the new superficial theatricalities of the Duke’s performances, dismissing such effects as magical incantations (‘charms’). This comparison was pertinent in the fragile context of Restoration politics, when magic had acquired a diminished status as a means of generating legitimate knowledge, due to its association with radical politics and social change.⁷

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² Fane, *Love in the Dark*.
⁶ See Wilmot, *Selected Poems*, p. 97.
The epilogue opens with the declaration:

As charms are nonsense, nonsense seems a charm,
    Which hearers of all judgment does disarm;
For songs and scenes, a double audience bring,
And dogg'rel takes, which two eyed Cyclops sing.
    (lines 1-4)

Rochester asserts that the ‘songs and scenes’ at the Duke’s, which bring in a full house (‘double audience’) are no more than superficial masks to ‘dogg’rel’ and theatrical integrity. Such a statement is a continuation of a long traditional in Augustan satire and criticism descending through Horace, Ben Jonson, Dryden and Pope, who all attack the excessive elaboration of stage business at the expense of verbal art and unity of design. Further investigation into the scene of ‘two eyed Cyclops’ to which Rochester refers also reveals an attack against the incongruities between text and music found in the musical experimentation of the Duke’s Company’s early music dramas.

The epilogue is a direct reference to Psyche, a bold new play by Thomas Shadwell, set to music by Matthew Locke. It refers to the opening dance and song at the beginning of the play’s third act in which monstrous blacksmiths perform a dance and in which Vulcan (‘two-eyed Cyclops’) then sings a solo and leads them in a drinking song. Psyche was an immensely daring and innovative work, heralding the first systematised attempt at a musical and dramatic scheme which subsequently became a characteristic style of English opera. It was a bold new counter-attraction to London’s vogue for French opera and made a significant contribution to the establishment of London as the largest single marketplace for musical performance in early eighteenth-century Europe. It also capitalised upon the legalised performance of music in public following the Restoration and built upon the work done by earlier plays, which had introduced music as a more important element of dramatic performance. Psyche was a financial success for the company, continuing the considerable return of investment to shareholders who had gambled on the move to Dorset Gardens. Shadwell was unapologetic as to its commercial appeal stating openly in the preface that ‘I do not, nor ever did, intend to value myself upon the writing of this Play.’ He further claims to have scribbled it down in five weeks, ignoring its faults since:

Correcting the plays faults would not be worth the pains since there are so many splendid Objects in the Play, and such variety of Diversion, as will not give the Audience leave to mind the Writing.

The ‘variety of Diversion’ clearly made a significant impact. Many years later in his theatrical history Roscius Angelicus of 1708, the theatre prompter John Downes recalled the stunning visual and aural impact of Psyche which ‘came forth in all her ornaments; new Scenes, new Machines, new Cloaths, new French Dances’. Shadwell’s hasty writing did not go unnoticed by Rochester however, whose epilogue drew attention to the aural vulgarities of actors ‘in whose mouth’s nonsense’ appeared due to poor

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10 Gouk, p. 58.
14 Shadwell, Psyche.
delivery and confused speech. Combined with gestures not sufficiently adapted to their dramatic contexts, he announces that ‘of such awkward actors we despair’:

In Comedy their unweigh’d Action mark,
There’s one is such a dear familiar spark,
He yawns, as if he were but half awake;
And fribling for free speaking, does mistake.
(lines 20-23)

Such improvised and clumsy performance (‘unweigh’d Action’) is once again centred on oral delivery. Yawning and stammering (‘fribling’) their lines without elegance (‘free speaking’) is too great an offence for Rochester to be distracted by Shadwell’s desire to ‘entertain the Town with variety of Musick, curious Dancing, splendid Scenes and Machines’. As a thoroughly practical piece of rhetoric, designed to secure approbation from the audience, the epilogue played a role in publicly highlighting a collision in oral delivery, which we can understand in more depth by looking at the play’s musical score.

Given Psyche’s importance in the development of music drama, it is surprising that no attempts have been made to understand Rochester’s epilogue further through the musical score to which it directly refers. Doing so enriches our interpretation of the epilogue as a reaction to the lack of synergy between music and text in Psyche. Music is often used in the play to heighten dramatic effect and the musical episodes are crucially important, since they advance the plot as well as the spoken dialogue. This is one of the great differences between Psyche and later musical dramatic works of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. In later works, considerable care is taken to differentiate between musical text and spoken text, while in Psyche, no such distinction exists, hence music can continue the drama, rather than suspend it for a musical interlude. The score by Matthew Locke was published in a handsome quarto with the proud and defiant title The English Opera; or The vocal musick in Psyche, with the instrumental therein intermix’d. To which is adjoynd the instrumental musick in the Tempest. Figure 1 shows ‘Vulcan’s Song in the Palace of Cupid’ to which Rochester directly refers in the epilogue. It is the moment in which Vulcan interrupts the blacksmiths’ dance with a rousing song.

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17 Price, Henry Purcell and the London Stage, p. 5.
18 The Tempest was a later play for which Locke had composed music.
19 Recommended listening for this track is: Matthew Locke, Psyche, New London Consort, cond. by Philip Pickett (L’Oiseau-Lyre, 444 336-2, 1996).
Figure 1: Matthew Locke, ‘Vulcan’s Song in the Palace of Cupid’, from The English Opera; or The vocal musick in Psyche, with the instrumental therein intermix’d. To which is adjoyned the instrumental musick in the Tempest (London: Ratcliff and Thompson, 1675).

The score is in a triple metre (three beats to each bar), matching the dactylic verse rhythm that follows the opening word of each line. It is sung in a spritely tempo, accompanied by instruments which fill in the musical harmonies according to a ground bass which is given in the score. The setting of words to individual notes is largely left to the singer, whose vocal line must combine Locke’s melody with Shadwell’s verse. The
first verse presents few problems as its structure enables the singer to place the first beat’s emphasis on important words in the verse:

YE bold sons of Earth that attend upon Fire,
make hast to the Palace lest Cupid should stay;
you must not be lazy when love does require;
for Love is impatient, & brooks no delay,
when Cupid you serve you must toil & must sweat,
redouble your blows, and your labour repeat.20

Locke’s score presents a few cases where the music obfuscates the verse. He places a crotchet and two quavers in a descending scale on ‘lazy’, creating an obscure ornamental gesture on a relatively unimportant word, whilst leaving ‘impatient’ in the subsequent line fairly bare and unornamented. Whilst the melodic structure does contain some gestures which match the verse - such as a descending sixth on ‘serve’, matching a kneeling gesture - the verse indicates an incongruence between music and text, suggesting that Locke composed without attention to Shadwell’s verse. Following the briefest of instrumental interludes (‘Retornello’), Vulcan launches into the second verse, in which this lack of synergy is most clearly exposed. The meaning is seriously compromised by the music, when Shadwell’s verse is forced into Locke’s rigid form and ‘inherent heaviness and clumsiness of style.’

In order to make the verse fit with the music, the singer is forced to snatch words and create emphases in awkward, unnatural places within the line, thereby limiting the music’s potential to enhance the drama. The rapidity required to fit the words ‘on, and still’ in the fourth line diminishes their meaning, whilst the next line is ruined by a musical downbeat on ‘his’ and ‘still’, wrenching out these unimportant words to the subordination of the word ‘favourite’. The musical phrasing that worked for the first verse breaks up the second by temporarily resolving the music at ‘blow’ before the sentence is even completed.

These issues reflect a rigidity of musical composition that is all the more perplexing for the fact that they could so easily have been resolved. In spite of Shadwell’s claim that his verses were made with an ear to music and that music was an art of which ‘I cannot but have some little knowledge, having been bred for many years of my Youth to some performance in it’, much of his text does not demonstrate an adaptation to musical requirements. Simply by removing the word ‘still’ from the fourth line of the second verse, or removing the second non-essential ‘must’ from fifth line of the first verse, the clarity of the vocal line would improve significantly. It would have avoided the emphases on non-resonant ‘s’ consonants in ‘still’ and ‘must’, while giving more space to communicate the essential message of the text. The fact that Locke’s music allows for little characterisation of Vulcan through words, is further indication that the text and music were written each with little consideration of the other.

Aside from deliberately trying to counter London’s vogue in French opera, Psyche also served to ameliorate what was later recognised as the chief liability of the genre: the awkward passing from speech into song. Much of the criticism of early music-drama and works written after Psyche was focused on the necessary shift between dialogue and

20 Emphasis added in order to show placing of the heavy first beat of each bar.
21 Dent, p. 120.
22 Emphasis added in order to show placing of the heavy first beat of each bar.
23 Shadwell, Psyche.
lyrics: the shift between ordinary dramatic speech and verse specifically written with music in mind. Yet it is precisely this lack of accommodation for the adjustments required in setting verse to music that led to the obscurity created in Vulcan’s song.

Following an analysis of the musical and textual discrepancies between Locke and Shadwell’s collaboration, Rochester’s epilogue can be read as a further critical engagement with these issues. Immediately after mocking their ‘fribling for free speaking’, Rochester continues his insult on the actors:

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False accent and neglectful Action too
They have both so nigh good, yet neither true,
That both together, like an Ape’s mock face,
By near resembling Man, do Man disgrace.
Through pac’d ill Actors, may perhaps be cur’d,
Half Players like half Wits, can’t be endur’d.
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(lines 24-29)

The crucial element in good performance according to the text is a balance and commingling of acting and oral delivery, including singing. ‘False accent’ is the act of misplacing the rhythmic stress when speaking lines of verse, or the pronunciation of text against the grain of prosody in pursuit of expressive realism, whilst ‘neglectful Action’ is a form of off-stage negligence. The following line (‘They have both so nigh good, yet neither true’) concedes that these two attributes can in fact be virtues of acting style in certain contexts.\(^24\) It might seem from this statement that the obscure emphases and awkward movements caused by the music in Vulcan’s song might instead be regarded as a virtue, yet Rochester’s statement displays a more subtle and complex commentary on stage acting. The passage advocates the necessity of balance: expressive realism must be a conscious decision on the part of the actor. It is not synonymous to an accidental imbalance of textual and musical elements, which results in a crude form of ‘false accent’.

Evidence of Rochester’s flexibility in approach to stage acting, and his divergence from the formality of the King’s Company - in which Love in the Dark was performed, and to whom the epilogue was addressed - can be found in his subsequent coaching of the actress Elizabeth Barry. A few months after the premier of Love in the Dark, Rochester urged Barry to prize expressive realism over formal correctness in gesture and pronunciation. A more experimental application of stress, accent, action and sonority was the focus of her new style and Barry was praised at the time for ‘perfectly changing herself as it were into the Person, not merely by the proper Stress or Sounding of the Voice [i.e. ‘accent’], but feeling really, and being in the humour, the person she represented, was supposed to be in’.\(^25\) Gesture matched sound, voice, action and accent, resulting in resonance and theatrical synergy. Through Barry, Rochester had perfected the mismatch of elements that was the cause of greatest offence in Psyche. The claim that ‘By near resembling Man, do Man disgrace’ is resonant of such a mismatch, resulting not in a correct ‘sounding of the voice’, but a play of confused actors (‘Through pac’d ill’), driven to their state by the concessions forced by Locke’s score.

Vulcan’s song, whilst not indicative of the entire play, provides a specific point of conflict in this early experimentation of music on the stage. Matthew Locke’s musical score enriches our understanding of Rochester’s response to a work which, in spite of its faults, has been argued as having come much closer to pushing England into the

\(^24\) Wilmot, Selected Poems, p. 95.
operatic mainstream than did Purcell’s major stage compositions.\(^{26}\) It also provides the means through which other early music dramas and experiments can be explored. Rochester’s final lines draw together the company rivalry, importance of music and mockery of *Psyche*’s popularity. The ‘merry Citizen’ - common crowd drawn by the Duke’s new location - is in love with the first line of the first musical number in the play (‘Psyche, the Goddess of each Field and Grove’). Though the ‘graver fops’ are condemned to remain in the lesser theatre, the daring experiment and great significance left much for Rochester to envy:

Oh how the merry Citizen's in love
With—
Psyche, the Goddess of each Field and Grove.
He cryes i' faith, methinks 'tis well enough,
But you roar out and cry, 'Tis all damn'd stuff.
So to their house the graver fops repair,
While men of wit find one another here.

(lines 69 - 74)

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A New Form of Expression: Julia Margaret Cameron’s Photographic Illustrations of Alfred Lord Tennyson’s Poetry

Hannah Sothern

Abstract

This article considers how the early British photographer Julia Margaret Cameron used the aesthetic language of the Pre-Raphaelites to illustrate Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King and Other Poems*, and looks at how Tennyson’s poem *The Lady of Shalott* had a vast impact on visual culture of the time. Since the advent of photography, interesting debates have arisen about its place within the hierarchy of the arts in the Victorian era.

Figure 1. Julia Margaret Cameron, *The Parting of Lancelot and Guinevere* (1874). Albumen silver print from glass, 33.2 × 28.8cm. David Hunter McAlpin Fund, 1952. © Metropolitan Museum of Art OASC permissions.
Taking their cue from Ruskin and the developing art of photography, the Pre-Raphaelites can be seen to capture nuances and detail in their paintings. In turn, their art affected photographers who looked for structure and subject matter for this new medium, thus a dialogue was formed between these two forms of art, meaning the traditional approach to making pictures was completely overturned. It is important to consider this connection as it reveals how the two art forms merged and interacted with one another, as well as challenging the narrative we are told about modern art. Pre-Raphaelitism is often perceived as a 'literary' art form, and indeed the movement was greatly influenced by contemporary poets such as Shelley, Keats and Tennyson, in addition to medieval manuscripts and Arthurian legend. Tennyson's poem *The Lady of Shalott*, first published in 1832, was a source of inspiration for virtually all the major figures associated with the Pre-Raphaelites. This article considers how both the poem and the pictures can be read in terms of Victorian attitudes towards women and the act of creativity itself.

Invented in 1839, photography had been in use for just over twenty years when Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879) was given her first camera. Born in India, Cameron remembers news of photography reaching Calcutta; the days of the Talbot-type and autotype, when scientific discoveries were received 'like water to the parched lips of the starved'. She was forty-eight when she began her short eleven-year career, and in the letter that accompanied the gift her daughter said, 'It may amuse you, Mother, to try to photograph during your solitude at Freshwater'. As a woman perhaps, she was not expected to have an impact much further than her glasshouse studio, a converted chicken coop. Yet, Cameron would go on to create images that remain some of the most evocative and powerful in the history of photography. She took up this new medium with enthusiasm and strove to capture beauty in her work, and wrote that the camera, 'added more and more impulse to my deeply seated love of the beautiful, and from the first moment I handled my lens with a tender ardour, and it has become to me as a living thing, with voice and memory and creative vigour'. At the time, photography was not seriously considered an art form. However, her photographs were more than a family album; her aim was to elevate photography to 'high art', and in Cameron's hands, it did indeed become something else. In his essay 'Of Ideas of Truth in Their Connection with Those of Beauty and Relation,' John Ruskin wrote that 'the artist not only places the spectator, but talks to him; makes him a sharer in his own strong feelings and quick thoughts, hurries him away in his own strong enthusiasm; guides him to all that is beautiful; snatches him from all that is base; and leaves him more than delighted'. This seems to be how Cameron's photographs make the viewer feel; swept away into another world of her envisioning.

With the help of David Wilkie Wynfield, who photographed many of the Pre-Raphaelite painters in medieval or oriental costume, Cameron learnt the basic techniques of soft-focus, which later effectively became a signature of her work. Within a year of picking up the camera she became a member of the Photographic Societies of London and Scotland, and had her first exhibition the following year. On the Isle of Wight, Alfred Lord Tennyson was her neighbour, and often brought friends to see the photographer and her work. She took many significant portraits of friends in the Victorian poetry and science circles, such as Browning, Darwin, and Sir John Herschel. At the time photography was a very labour-intensive art that depended on crucial timing. Cameron was sometimes obsessive about her new occupation, with subjects sitting for countless exposures in the blinding light as she laboriously coated, exposed, and processed each

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1 See Waggoner, Diane, and others, *The Pre-Raphaelite Lens* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).
3 In 1839, Louis Daguerre developed an effective method of photography, the daguerreotype. In 1841, Henry Fox Talbot perfected his paper-negative process and called it a calotype; Greek for 'beautiful picture'.
wet plate. The results were unconventional in their intimacy and their particular visual habit of purposely created blur, achieved through long exposures where the subject moved, leaving the lens intentionally out of focus.

Cameron had no interest in establishing a commercial studio, and never made commissioned portraits. She was merely an artist who strove to arrest the splendour that came before her. Her photographs aimed to capture the qualities of innocence, virtue, wisdom, piety and passion that made them modern embodiments of classical, religious, and literary figures. Her artistic goals for photography, informed by the outward appearance and spiritual content of fifteenth-century Italian painting, were original in the medium of photography. She aimed neither for the finished and formalised poses common in studio portraits, nor the elaborate narratives of other ‘high art’ photographers such as H. P. Robinson and O. G. Rejlander. She has more in common with Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s close portraits; her images capture a specific feeling and sentiment, and are full of symbolism and connotations. Her approach was more to the psychological portrayal of her subject, the ‘inner’ as well as ‘outer’ aspects. Like Rossetti, Cameron had the ability to turn a seemingly ‘plain’ woman into a mythical goddess.

In 1874 Cameron’s friendship with Tennyson led him to ask her to make photographic illustrations for a new edition of his *Idylls of the King and Other Poems*, a recasting of the Arthurian legends. Responding that ‘it is immortality to me to be bound up with you’, Cameron willingly accepted the assignment. Costuming family, friends, even serving maids, she made over two hundred exposures to arrive at the handful she wanted for the book. Her photographic illustrations often took on the quality of oil paintings of the same period, including rich details, historical costumes, and intricate props and draperies. It is clear that Cameron saw these photographs as art, comparable to the paintings they imitated. *Elaine ‘the Lily maid of Astolat’* (Figure 2) recalls the emotion and detail of William Holman Hunt’s painting, *The Lady of Shalott*. Yet Cameron chose instead not to illustrate Tennyson’s popular earlier poem but his later, more refined and finished *Lancelot and Elaine*. According to legend, Elaine dies for love of Lancelot, after he champions her and wears her scarf at the tournament only to return to his beloved Guinevere. Here she is seen gazing at the shield she guards for him, while he uses her brother’s plain white shield to disguise his identity. After the heartbroken Elaine dies, her body floats down the river in a boat to Camelot, where Lancelot, Arthur, and even Guinevere come together to recognise the sacrifice she has made for love and to pray for her soul.

In Cameron’s depiction Elaine does not look out towards the viewer. Rather, she turns her gaze sideways, toward the shield of Lancelot and the cover that she has woven for it, on which her hand so lovingly grazes. It is that shield with its various emblems which symbolise Lancelot’s chivalric excellence, explaining Elaine’s infatuation with Arthur’s best knight. Her dreamy stare confirms her romantic hopes. In the companion photograph *Elaine*, the model, May Prinsep, is sitting in almost the same position as before, but significantly Lancelot’s shield is missing. Its absence is conscious: there is a large void in the background of the picture. Like the symbolic ‘nesting bird’ that Elaine embroidered on the shield cover (and Cameron actually scratched or etched onto the negative), Lancelot cannot be confined or contained for long. Once he leaves to return to his beloved queen, Elaine’s girlish fantasy is dashed, and the rejection that she feels is evident in her eyes. Uplifted and cautiously hopeful in the first photo, they are downcast and sad in the second. Elaine’s hand rests limply in her lap – a foreshadowing of her death – and reminiscent of Rossetti’s mournful memorial painting *Beata Beatrix* (c.1864–70).

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Yet unlike Tennyson’s Elaine whose sorrow is mitigated somewhat by the presence of her family, Cameron’s Elaine is completely alone and isolated in her chamber. The shield is a strong presence in the composition of Cameron’s photograph, and Lancelot’s absence is only more keenly felt. Notably, the majority of Cameron’s illustrations for Tennyson’s *Idylls* did not feature noble knights like Lancelot but rather women like Elaine and Vivien,

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who she transformed from mere types into more active participants in the legend. And through such transformations, she reinvented the female characters and ultimately offered her own reading of Tennyson’s text. According to Carol Hanbery MacKay:

Every time Cameron posed her models anew, she rewrote the specific passages of Tennyson’s epic poem [rather than merely complementing them]...Not for her was it so simple as it was for the poet or his Age to blame womankind for the fall of Camelot; instead, Cameron provided her own reading of these women, whose faults and virtues commingle to create an in depth interpretation of the Arthurian legends she illustrated.  

She introduced subtle juxtapositions of illustrations and text into her Arthurian photographic series, and moved like Tennyson’s sequencing between seasons. From its inception, Tennyson followed Cameron’s *Idylls* project closely, appearing almost daily at her studio. Encouraged by his enthusiasm as well as her own, Cameron produced a large body of work within just a few months. Though the publisher Henry S. King chose only to include three of her images, including the one of Elaine, he was to reproduce them not as photographs but rather as small woodcuts in the style of the earlier Moxon Tennyson. Distraught, Cameron pushed him to print an album exclusively of her photographs, in their original full size. He agreed, and in late December 1874, his publishing company released *Illustrations to Tennyson’s Idylls of the King, and Other Poems*, a folio-size edition, including Tennyson’s favourite image of himself known as ‘the Dirty Monk’ as its frontispiece. The titles were written in Cameron’s own handwriting, and the images paired with appropriate lines from Tennyson’s poem. The *Morning Post* (11 January 1875), reviewed her book and called Cameron ‘assuredly the most artistic of all photographers’.  

Her work was praised not only for its technical merit, but also for its imagination, tenderness, and grace. She immediately began work on the second identical volume, though only three images were Arthurian, *Elaine, The Corpse of Elaine in the Palace of King Arthur, and King Arthur Wounded Lying in the Barge*. With these few photographs in her Arthurian series, fifteen in all, Cameron managed not only to define photographic illustration and to introduce a feminist consciousness to the legends, but also to ensure her own artistic reputation. Amongst the boldest and most distinctive of her photographic techniques was the close-up, a shot so close, in fact, that it would cause Cameron’s image to seem out of focus. Cameron described the technique herself in her autobiographical fragment, *Annals of My Glass House*; ‘[...] when focusing and coming to something which, to my eye, was very beautiful, I stopped there instead of screwing on the lens to the more definite focus which all other photographers insist upon’. That is to say, she followed her instinct with her own methods, uninfluenced by the norms of technique utilised by professional photographers. Cameron was thus able to create her own style and continue to pursue reproducing the images of her imagination. William Rossetti wrote, in *Fine Art Chiefly Contemporary* (1867),

> Exceptional in the critical as in the photographic art are those productions which – like the surprising and magnificent pictorial photographs of Mrs. Cameron to be seen at Colnaghi’s – well-nigh recreate a subject; place it in novel, unanticipated lights; aggrandize the fine, suppress or ignore the petty; and transfigure both the subject-matter, and the reproducing process itself, into something almost higher than we know them to be. This is the greatest style of photography [...]

This reveals his appreciation for her photography, agreeing with her aspiration for its higher aim, yet like many Victorian viewers he remains aware of the ‘operator’. He could not help wondering how the photographs were produced, and felt keenly aware of the process and its maker. W. Rossetti appreciated that like criticism, photography contributed by ‘reproducing’ the original object and transforming it to something ‘higher’.

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12 Lupack and Lupack, p. 46.
Cameron was perhaps one of the few who explicitly pursued photography with a seriousness and desire to elevate it to a status alongside the poets and painters she admired. According to most, the place of photography was not on par with painting and sculpture of the Academy. When O. G. Rejlander, known as the father of art photography, attempted to portray genre subjects and allegorical pictures in photographic form, he was criticised for abusing the medium of photography for something it was not meant for. In a feat of technical brilliance he pieced together over thirty negatives to create the combination print titled The Two Ways of Life, which was exhibited in 1857; one of the first occasions where photographs were displayed alongside paintings and sculptures. But many considered Rejlander’s promotion of the medium as art to be an unacceptable encroachment on territory that was not his province. Rejlander gave physical form to his views in The Infant Photography Giving the Painter an Additional Brush (Figure 3). In this unusual, didactic photograph he uses the traditional painterly device of figures symbolising various concepts. Here ‘photography’ is personified as a young, cherubic child resting on a camera and passing a new brush to the older hand of ‘painting’ whose arm reaches through a curtain. Perhaps as a means of personalising his argument, Rejlander can be seen taking this photograph in a reflection in the mirror. Infant Photography was not simply a charming technical exercise; it expressed a view on the interplay of photography and the arts that Rejlander embodied.

Figure 3. Oscar Gustave Rejlander, The Infant Photography Giving the Painter an Additional Brush, (c.1856). Albumen silver, 6 x 7.1 cm. Digital image courtesy of the Getty’s Open Content Program.

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Rejlander’s technique stimulated Henry Peach Robinson, a professional photographer who had been trained as an artist, to produce similar combination prints. The photograph *Fading Away* (1857), though praised, provoked controversy when first exhibited for conveying the family’s anxiety as the consumptive child lies dying. It was also criticised for making such an upsetting subject seem too realistic. Robinson’s work was often compared to the poetic manner of the Pre-Raphaelites, and in 1860 he also depicted Tennyson’s *The Lady of Shalott* as Elaine gazing at Lancelot’s shield. However, unlike these photographers who excelled in ‘tinkering’, Cameron preferred her own intuitive approach.

It is clear that Elaine, the Lily Maid, became a favourite subject of late Victorian and early twentieth-century visual culture. Christine Poulson estimates that Elaine ‘was the source for over eighty works of art in various media between 1860 and 1914’ and possibly many more. She represents the Victorian ideal of femininity; innocent and sheltered, yet it also brings into question ideas of female desire; something that interested the Pre-Raphaelites in works like Hunt’s *The Awakening Conscience* and Rossetti’s poem *Jenny*. In 1856, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood had worked together on illustrations for Tennyson’s Moxon edition of *Idylls*. A hallmark of the Pre-Raphaelite style was a preference for such poetic subjects drawn from literature. Like these artists, Cameron focused on intimate, emotional moments and strove for historical accuracy by carefully researching period costumes and settings, thus demonstrating that photography could equal painting in narrative potential.

![Figures 4 & 5. William Holman Hunt and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, The Lady of Shalott.](image)

Published in *Poems by Alfred Lord Tennyson*, (London: Edward Moxon, 1857). Wood engravings, 9.5 × 8 cm. Used with permission of the Royal Academy of Arts.

By the late nineteenth century, Ruskin claimed to regard photography as a worthless product symptomatic of the soullessness of industrial progress. Cameron’s photographs make no pretence at realism in their attempt to render what Ruskin identified in *The Stones of Venice* as ‘that inner part of the man, or rather that entire and only being of the man’. In 1977, Gernsheim noted that although she was a great photographer Cameron had ‘left no mark’ on the aesthetic history of photography because her work

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19 Lupack and Lupack, p. 144.
was not appreciated by her contemporaries. Yet at the same time eminent photographer Imogen Cunningham commented, ‘I’d like to see portrait photography go right back to Julia Margaret Cameron. I don’t think there’s anyone better’.\textsuperscript{21} Cameron’s photographic portraits are now considered among the finest in the early history of photography, and her work demonstrates the highest aspirations of nineteenth-century photography.\textsuperscript{22} With her subtle use of lighting, complex characterisations, and effective compositions, she reveals a line of descent from Tintoretto through Rembrandt down to her friends and contemporaries, Watts and the Pre-Raphaelites.\textsuperscript{23} Her pictures make an ambitious claim for photography, but the sheer strength of her example has been largely upheld.

With great foresight, Guillaume Apollinaire warned that ‘one can predict the day when, the photograph and the cinema become the only form of publication in use,’ and when that day comes, ‘the poet will have a freedom heretofore unknown’.\textsuperscript{24} The advent of photography with its ability to instantly register the world before it, also allowed art this freedom. It is no surprise then that painting began to move into the sphere of expression and concept, rather than the realism, nostalgia and emphasis on beauty of the Pre-Raphaelites. Yet as Apollinaire went on to say ‘however far one advances on the path of new freedoms, they will only reinforce most of the ancient disciplines and bring out new ones which will not be less demanding than the old’.\textsuperscript{25} Julia Margaret Cameron did much for the history of photography to elevate it to acceptance in the hierarchy of the arts. She has left us with some of the finest records of many notable figures and an alternative view into interpreting the art and literature of the time. The world of art, literature and photography has probably never before, or since, been so inextricably interwoven.

\textsuperscript{22} Weaver, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{23} Weaver, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{25} Apollinaire, p. 229.
The Lady of Shalott
by Alfred Lord Tennyson
1833 edition

Part the First.

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky.
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot.
The yellow-leaved water-lily,
The green-sheathed daffodilly,
Tremble in the water chilly,
Round about Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens shiver,
The sunbeam-showers break and quiver
In the stream that runneth ever
By the island in the river,
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls and four gray towers
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

Underneath the bearded barley,
The reaper, reaping late and early,
Hears her ever chanting cheerily,
Like an angel, singing clearly,
O'er the stream of Camelot.
Piling the sheaves in furrows airy,
Beneath the moon, the reaper weary
Listening whispers, "tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

The little isle is all inrailed
With a rose-fence, and overtrailed
With roses: by the marge unhailed
The shallop flitteth silkensailed,
Skimming down to Camelot.
A pearlgarland winds her head:
She leaneth on a velvet bed,
Full royally apparelèd
The Lady of Shalott.

Part the Second.

No time hath she to sport and play:
A charmèd web she weaves alway.
A curse is on her, if she stay
Her weaving, either night or day,
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be;
Therefore she weaveth steadily,
Therefore no other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

She lives with little joy or fear.
Over the water, running near,
The sheepbell tinkles in her ear.
Before her hangs a mirror clear,
Reflecting towered Camelot.
And, as the mazy web she whirls,
She sees the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market-girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambled pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd lad,
Or long-haired page, in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot.
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue,
The knights come riding, two and two.
She hath no loyal knight and true
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights:
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, came from Camelot.
Or, when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers, lately wed:
"I am half-sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

Part the Third.

A bowshot from her bower-eaves.
He rode between the barley-sheaves:
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Launcelot.
A redcross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden galaxy,
The bridle-bells rang merrily,
As he rode down from Camelot.
And, from his blazoned baldric slung,
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And, as he rode, his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather,
Thick jewelled shone the saddle-leather.
The helmet, and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down from Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over green Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed.
On burnished hooves his warhorse trode.
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coalblack curls, as on he rode,
As he rode down from Camelot.

From the bank, and from the river,
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra, tirra lirra,"
Sang Sir Launcelot.

She left the web: she left the loom:
She made three paces thro' the room:
She saw the waterflower bloom:
She saw the helmet and the plume:
She looked down to Camelot.

Out flew the web, and floated wide,
The mirror cracked from side to side,
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

Part the Fourth.

In the stormy eastwind straining
The pale-yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot:
Outside the isle a shallow boat
Beneath a willow lay afloat,
Below the carven stern she wrote,
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

A cloudwhite crown of pearl she dight.
All raimented in snowy white
That loosely flew, (her zone in sight,
Clasped with one blinding diamond bright,)
Her wide eyes fixed on Camelot,
Though the squally eastwind keenly
Blew, with folded arms serenely
By the water stood the queenly

Lady of Shalott.

With a steady, stony glance—
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Beholding all his own mischance—
Mute, with a glassy countenance—
She looked down to Camelot.

It was the closing of the day,
She loosed the chain, and down she lay,
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

As when to sailors while they roam,
By creeks and outfalls far from home,
Rising and dropping with the foam,
From dying swans wild warblings come,
Blown shoreward; so to Camelot
Still as the boathead wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her chanting her deathsong,
The Lady of Shalott.

A longdrawn carol, mournful, holy,
She chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her eyes were darkened wholly,
And her smooth face sharpened slowly
Turned to towered Camelot:
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the waterside,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By gardenwall and gallery,
A pale, pale corpse she floated by,
Deadcold, between the houses high,
Dead into towered Camelot:
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
To the plankèd wharfage came:
Below the stern they read her name,
"The Lady of Shalott."

They crossed themselves, their stars they blest,
Knight, minstrel, abbot, squire and guest.
There lay a parchment on her breast,
That puzzled more than all the rest,
The wellfed wits at Camelot.

"The web was woven curiously
The charm is broken utterly,
Draw near and fear not – this is I,
The Lady of Shalott."
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Apparitions and Appearances: Ghost Stories and Paranormal Research in the Nineteenth Century in Mary Louisa Molesworth and Ada Goodrich Freer

Muhamet Alijaj

Abstract

Literature on the supernatural became very popular in Victorian society. Ghost stories became widespread and veridical literature and studies on the paranormal arose as well. This essay will deal with an example of fiction, The Rippling Train by Molesworth and a non-fictional investigation, The Alleged Haunting of Bellechin House by Ada Goodrich Freer. The essay will show that while both differ in intent, both represent Victorian angst in terms of the ability to empirically determine reality and its shortcomings as well as attempts to subvert power structures though writing about apparitions.

‘Let’s tell ghost stories then,’ said Gladys. ‘Aren’t you tired of them? One hears nothing else nowadays.’ Thus begins Mary Louisa Molesworth’s The Rippling Train (1887). Ghost stories during the Victorian era were intensely popular thanks in large part to the repeal of the newspaper tax in 1885 which saw many relatively cheap periodical publishing from Tinsley’s Magazine to Dickens’ All the Year Round. Ghost stories featured prominently in them and fuelled the Victorian taste for the supernatural. However, these ghost stories would resemble more the realist fiction of the era than gothic literature, and the later half of the Victorian period saw the rise of collections of true ghost stories. This fascination fuelled the creation of societies like the Society for Psychical Research, which tried to ascertain the true causes of paranormal evidence.¹

Unfortunately, ghost stories have been ignored for the most part by literary scholars. Only now has one begun to witness the rise of serious scholarly study on supernatural fiction. They were often seen not as serious literature, but more as fireside entertainment. However, now many see the ghost story in the Victorian era as containing expressions of Victorian angst. Clare Stewart surmises that the development of the ghost story became ‘an ideal discourse for hidden agendas and deeper levels’ and Freeman adds that they, ‘combined a surface narrative, which seemed to reaffirm conservative notions of order, with a less easily deciphered set of considerations which challenged or criticised the very notions the stories’ closure seemed to endorse.’² For many, the fact that many writers of ghost stories and most mediums were women points to the supernatural as a way for women writers to subvert the patriarchal and parochial discourse that dominated Victorian society; and indeed it is interesting to note the ties of spiritualist circles to early feminist pioneers such as Stanton, Lady Byron, Barbara Leigh-Smith and Elizabeth Blackwell. For many women who felt like ghosts in society, spiritualism offered a different vision of women and what they were capable of accomplishing.³ While it may be true that many women turned to writing ghost stories as a way of subverting male power structures, many also did it simply as a way of generating revenue due to their popularity. Also, there were just as many men writing ghost stories as well. Thus, it would be entirely valid to state that ghost stories provided a platform to challenge moral codes in general.

The nineteenth century and its advance of scientific understanding solidified the Enlightenment’s view of a world operating under natural laws and mechanist principles.

Even before Lyell and Darwin, scientists were beginning to cement the epistemological importance of sight and its problems. This was important as it made objective reality something that could be ascertained and important for pragmatic purposes of science and technology (as shown in the rise of realist novels and detective stories). This speculation into sight and its objective validity concerning apparitions was the subject of two studies: John Ferriar’s *Essay Towards a Theory of Apparitions* in 1813 and Samuel Hibbert’s *Sketches of the Philosophy of Apparitions* (1824). Both studies point to the eye not merely as a passive organ but as active to the object being sensed, and which can fool itself due to certain external factors. This explained why sensible people sometimes saw fantastical images such as ghosts. Against this way of epistemological thinking, Ruskin and Carlyle still held that the scientific way of looking at the world was only one way: there was a ‘spiritual sight’ – to use Ruskin’s phrase – of looking at a deeper reality. These two ways of looking at reality come to the forefront when one turns to the ghost stories being written at the time:

in the Victorian ghost story vision reveals itself as a stumbling block in, rather than a foundation for erecting stable epistemological or ideological constructs; the site where nineteenth-century ideas about truth, knowledge, and belief (as well as our historical accounts of theme) are radically complicated.

It is between the spectator and spectre where the dialect takes place. Both artefacts will be presented as challenging both cultural conventions and total endorsement of an empirical epistemological interpretation of reality.

Mary Louisa Molesworth (1839-1921) published *Four Ghost Stories* in 1888. This was a departure from her writing of children’s literature. One story, *The Story of the Rippling Train*, is fictional but disguises itself in its appearance of being a true ghost story. It takes place at a party at a country house owned by the Denholmes. It has already been some days, everyone is tired of dancing and is looking for a different form of entertainment. Gladys Lloyd proposes a ghost story which leads to this interesting dialogue between Mr and Mrs Snowdon. Mrs Snowdon says:

Aren't you tired of them? One hears nothing else nowadays. And they're all "authentic," really vouched for, only you never see the person who saw or heard or felt the ghost. It is always somebody's sister or cousin, or friend's friend,' objected young Mrs. Snowdon, another of the guests at the Quarries. 'I don't know that that is quite a reasonable ground for discrediting them en masse,' said her husband. 'It is natural enough, indeed inevitable, that the principal or principals in such cases should be much more rarely come across than the stories themselves. A hundred people can repeat the story, but the author, or rather hero, of it, can't be in a hundred places at once. You don't disbelieve in any other statement or narrative merely because you have never seen the prime mover in it?

Mrs Snowdon calls into question real ghostly encounters, pointing out that one never hears the event from the person who witnessed it but from someone who heard it from someone. This removes it from authenticity. The husband claims that in itself is not grounds for rejecting all that testimony. The dialogue is an interesting play on empirical veracity and testimony. How is one to say everybody is wrong simply because the eye-witness is not present? To do so would call most accepted facts or reports into question.

It seems that no ghost story is forthcoming when Lady Denholme’s daughter, Nina, asks her mother to get her uncle Paul to tell his ghost story. Lady Denholme gets nervous by this request but Paul enters in soon enough overhearing the last part of their conversation. He gladly agrees to tell it, stating that anyone affected by it has already

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5 Smajic, p. 130.
6 Cox, p. 330.
died. Paul Marischal begins by cryptically referring to a "she" he cared for years ago and is reminded by Nina to relate who "she" was:

A very sweet and attractive girl, named Maud Bertram...You will wonder...why if I admired and liked her so much I did not go further. And I will tell you frankly that I did not because I dared not. I had then no prospect of being able to marry for years to come...I was wise enough and old enough to realize the situation thoroughly, and to be on my guard.

Paul realised that he had no reasonable grounds in even attempting to win her due to his circumstances. He left for Portugal and Maud married, going to India with her husband afterwards. Though Paul says he thought about her every now and then, 'some passing resemblance would call her to mind – once especially when I had asked to look in to see the young wife of one of my cousins in her court-dress, something in her figure and bearing brought back Maud to my memory'.7 Years later while in his brother's study in London and about to begin his work, Paul sees the door open by itself and decides to close it. He then begins to see something like smoke:

But I dismissed the notion almost as soon as it suggested itself... My next idea was a curious one: “It looks like soapy water,” I said to myself; “Can one of the housemaids have been scrubbing...” But—no, I rubbed my eyes and looked again – the soapy water theory gave way. The wavy something kept gliding... gradually assumed a much more substantial appearance. It was --yes, I suddenly became convinced of it, it was ripples of soft silken stuff... And I sat there and gazed.

Here one sees the spectator constantly questioning what he is seeing and reinterpreting the object when a slight period of reflection is given. Paul looks again and again to verify what is happening. The object of his vision begins to take a more solid shape: 'I saw – it came upon me like a flash, that she was no stranger to me, this mysterious visitant! I recognised, unchanged it seemed to me since the day, ten years ago, when I had last seen her, the beautiful features of Maud Bertram.'8 This is the climax of the story: Paul sees a vision of Maud’s profile only but she seems as corporeal as everything else in the room. It seems that the corporeality of the apparition may make it an objective solid.

However, Maud herself seems not to notice that Paul is there: as he is gazing fixedly at her, she is doing the same towards the distance, motionless like a statue. Furthermore, when Paul's brother comes in Paul does not take his eyes off of her but his brother does not see anything at all.9 Herbert tells Paul to take down the date to ascertain its significance. If Maud is still alive, the apparition will have been her doppelgänger.10 Paul later found out that around the time he saw her she had suffered serious burns to half her body and died later from the shock. He is convinced that he only saw half of her face because Maud would only have wanted him to see her when she had been beautiful.11 Yet, that is only half the story: Maud was still alive when the apparition appeared, Paul had a habit of bringing her to mind every now and then when stimulated by external factors, and his brother never saw anything. The reader is left open to the interpretation that Hibbert would have endorsed: Paul, a sane man, had suffered a delusion brought about by outer stimuli causing his mind to conjure the image and Maud's accident at the same time was a coincidence. Molesworth is leaving the reader to ponder whether it was all in Paul Marischal's head. He truly did see something but was it really anything?

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7 Molesworth, p. 330.
8 Molesworth, p. 333.
9 Molesworth, p. 335.
10 Molesworth, p. 337.
11 Molesworth, p. 338.
For Paul there is no question. He believes it was a plea for sympathy. This is proof to him that Maud cared deeply for him. Paul questions whether he should have been so reticent to declare his love for her. Many people overhearing the story believe it a case of Maud’s inner declaration of love. Glady’s asks Lady Denholme if Paul ever married:

‘No,’ said Lady Denholme; but there have been many practical difficulties in the way of his doing so. He has had a most absorbingly busy life and now that he is more at leisure he feels himself too old to form new ties. ‘But,’ persisted Nina, ‘if he had any idea at the time, that Maud cared for him so?’ ‘Ah well,’ Lady Denholme allowed, ‘in that case, in spite of the practical difficulties, things would probably have been different.’

This is how ghost stories were able to provide a way of overcoming societal conventions. Paul has done everything that was asked of him and has always been a reasonable and practical man. However, it has always held him back from attaining his true needs and kept him from telling Maud what he felt for her. Maud’s spirit, subverting the laws of science and Victorian etiquette, gives solace to a man in solitude. If society and obligation kept them apart, they could at least come together in the spiritual realm. Cox writes: ‘In personal terms, ghosts were obvious, though still potent, images of the lost past — past sins, past promises, past attachments, past regrets — and could be used to confront, and exorcise, the demons of guilt and fear.’ Molesworth’s play on the power or fallibility (or both) of sight along with the ability for the immaterial to leave a lasting impression on a rigid society takes the apparition as its “prime mover” – or is it the mind?

Another method by which interest in the paranormal was expressed was by the rise of a more “scientific” enquiry into phenomena. The Society for Psychical Research was formed in 1882 by a number of Cambridge graduates and intellectuals such as Henry Sidgwick, F.W.H. Myers, Edmund Gurney, and Frank Podmore. They wanted to apply the scientific method to phenomena and reach conclusions based on empirical data. One example was a Census on Hallucinations (1894) which sought to use statistics as a tool in explaining mesmerism and hallucinations. So respected was the SPR that it played a serious role in the early psychological conferences of 1889-1896. The goal was to explain paranormal phenomena as either a validation of the survival of consciousness or to find a new way the mind was able to produce it.

Ada Goodrich Freer (1857-1931) was a prominent member of the SPR from 1889-1900 and delivered many lectures at their yearly Proceedings on everything from crystal-gazing to “second sight” enquires made in Scotland. She was also the chief editor of Borderland from 1893-97, an occult magazine created and owned by W.T. Stead, a leading pioneer in “yellow journalism” and an advocate of using journalism and public sentiment to mould political decision making. At the behest of the SPR, Freer along with Colonel Taylor and support from Lord Bute (Vice President of the SPR) took lodgings at Ballechin House owned by the Stuart family in Perthshire in 1896 for a period of months. The purpose was to investigate alleged ghostly phenomena and provide a detailed report. After the investigation was over a scandal arose which played itself out in The Times begun by Mr. J Callendar Ross (1844-1913), a correspondent who spent a short time there. The Steuart family (who owned the house) and their solicitors claimed that they were misled into thinking they were letting it out to Colonel Taylor and his family for fishing and many participants wrote decrying the whole investigation as

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12 Molesworth, p. 338.
13 Molesworth, p. 339.
unsound.

F.W.H. Myers, who himself stayed at Ballechin House, decided to divest the SPR’s responsibility of the whole affair and decided not to publish a report on it citing he found nothing worthy of noting down during his time.

This might have been the end of the “story” but Freer, not willing to back down on her investigation, decided to write a book with Lord Bute: *The Alleged Haunting of B---- House* (1899). The book contains a point by point refutation of the charges made against her and includes her journal entries taken during the time. The book states its veridical content by providing tangible points of reference such as a pictorial layout of the estate. This allows for the “base” of a physical locality. She then turns to letters and diary entries from respected members of society to refute the previous letters that were sent to *The Times* in 1897. What this does is it allows for her to refute criticism, not by appealing to her own viewpoints, but by showing that other authoritative voices do it for her. This presents one with a pretence to impartiality.

One case in point is appearance of a brown crucifix. Freer shows that this happened multiple times: both before her investigation and during it. In Part I of the book Lord Bute relates that he spoke to Father H---- who had slept in the house before the investigation. Father H---- stated to Lord Bute:

> When you mention the brown wooden crucifix, you awaken a new memory in me. I now seem to live some of those hours again, and I recollect that between waking and sleeping there appeared before my eyes- somewhere on the wall – a crucifix, some eighteen inches, I should say long, and, I think, of brown wood. My own crucifix is of black metal, and just the length of this page (seven inches); and though I usually have it in my bag I cannot say for certain that it was in my bag.

This is echoed in part two of the book when Freer cites a letter by a Mr. Q written to Lord Bute. He had taken part in the investigation and claimed that he had a paranormal experience: ‘Suddenly I looked up and above the bed, apparently on the wall, I got just a glimpse (like a flash) of a brown wood crucifix; the wall was quite bare, not a picture, nothing to make it explainable by imperfect light or reflection.’ This is important to Freer for it ties two people, one a priest, to have seen the exact same thing at two different times. To further validate the testimony of Father H----, Freer points out that Sir W. Higgins had examined him and reached the conclusion he could not have hallucinated the crucifix.

This section of the book is Freer’s way of substantiating her work at Ballechin House without saying a word; she had been accused of “seeing” all the important phenomena. Yet, her selection of testimony shows her creating her own narrative. It is in her choice of testimony that she uses as a base to authenticate her experience that is given in the second part of the book. If they were all the products of hallucinations, they were shared by other “respectable” people as well.

The second part of Freer’s book is made up of her journal entries. In contrast to the first part of the book, this section is more reflective of the phenomena she experienced and also contains her own commentary on the journal. She witnesses the apparitions of a nun she claims is called “Ishabel” and a lady in white named “Margaret”. Needless to say, she is the only one to witness these events though others with her claim to hear the
"murmuring of voices." Her first sighting of "Ishabel" provides an interesting insight into Freer's ability to sense spirits as well as her own scepticism of what is being viewed. She sees Ishabel as she is walking outside in the snow:

Her face looked pale. I saw her hands in the fold of her habit. Then she moved on, as it seemed, on a slope too steep for walking. When she came she disappeared – perhaps because there was no snow to show her outline. Beyond the tree she reappeared for a moment, where there was again a white background, close by the burn. Then I saw no more. I waited, and, still in silence, we returned to the avenue.

Interestingly, no one else with her sees anything. However, this does not surprise her for even though the people with her had done parapsychological research because she concludes, 'they are not by temperament likely to experience either subjective phenomena or even thought-transference' (now known as telepathy a word coined by SPR member Myers). Freer does not end her speculation there but even throws in her own brand of scepticism. She had a few nights earlier had an Ouija séance where the name Ishabel was given. Freer took it to refer to a lady in an eighteenth-century portrait but Freer claims the face was different. In fact, Freer even calls into question the validity of the séance itself; in her commentary which contains a letter to Lord Bute, she regards it as possible 'induced phenomena, more particularly those of automatic writing, in which, as in dreams, it is almost always difficult to disentangle the operations of the normal from those of the subconscious personality'. It is interesting to note that Myers of the SPR was an advocate of the 'subliminal consciousness' before Freud had developed his theory. Freer and the SPR believed that most phenomena could be explained as self-produced, though not voluntarily. This scepticism differentiated it from spiritualist and theosophical groups.

Freer, nonetheless, seeks to find a historical source for the weeping nun and goes through a number of family members until reaching the conclusion it must be Miss Isabella S---, sister to Major S-----, who became an ordained nun in 1850 and died in 1880. She cites Burke's Landed Gentry 1886 which also cites an Isabella Margaret as a nun. So, Freer now has two historical sources which 'validate' her vision supported by the séance.

To cite a second instance which shows Freer's determination not to accept every incident as paranormal, she describes another time she saw the nun: 'I could hear no words; the ice was giving, and the burn had begun to murmur. (I tried to persuade myself that the murmur accounted for the voices, but the sounds were entirely distinct, and different quality and amount.)' She contends that the nun and woman in grey are in fact ghosts but the voices are called into question: 'it seems probable that the sounds also were hallucinatory, but were what is called in the vocabulary of the SPR the "collective" hallucination of two persons. This seems to render it highly probable that each hallucination had a cause external to both, although common to both.' She even cites The Times correspondent as admitting that Freer is always ready to admit that an experience is entirely subjective and can be dismissed. Freer is making her account one that is suspicious of her own impressions and trying to be as objective as possible. This is designed to give the "investigation" an aura of scientific integrity. Something had been experienced but there was no certainty it was a case of objective reality, which is quite in tandem with Victorian angst about vision and validity.

18 Freer (Miss X), pp. 89-90.
19 Freer (Miss X), p. 101.
20 Freer (Miss X), p. 102.
21 Freer (Miss X), p. 103.
22 Freer (Miss X), pp. 104-105.
23 Freer (Miss X), p. 111.
Freer’s book is directed against both her detractors who wrote to The Times and to the SPR. Though she defends the SPR’s principles at times, she also points out F.W.H.’s unprofessional demeanour towards her. In fact, the very book begins by a quote from Myers’ letter to The Times on 10 June 1897

I visited B---- representing that Society [S.P.R.] .... And decided that there was no such evidence as could justify us in giving the results of the inquiry a place in our *Proceedings.*

She places this at the very beginning of the book, an odd place to put a quote so dismissive of her entire case! Yet, seen in light of her comprehensive refutation of every detractor, it is a brave and witty way to represent her own belief in her investigation. She acknowledges Myers’ hard work but states that it is he who has ‘alienated the sympathies of many of its (SPR) members, by the extent to which he has introduced into its *Proceedings* the reports of spiritualist phenomena, and the lucubrations of medium.’ She reprints letters by Myers to her and Lord Bute stating, though he has only himself heard noises that he intended to bring to a *Proceeding*, being convinced by eye witness testimony that the house was indeed haunted. Freer does this to counteract his claim in a letter to The Times on June 8 that the SPR neither endorsed the investigation nor ever thought of bringing it forth in its *Proceedings.*

Freer is using her experience of the paranormal in the same way Paul Marischal used Maud: as a method of vindication. This is how Freer’s account subverts convention. She calls The Times (specifically Mr. J. Callendar Ross), the Steuart Family, and the SPR into question by using their own words against them. Her investigation vindicates itself by questioning its findings but a great deal of it is taken up with showing that the scandal against her was without merit. She shows that she did not begin the ghost stories concerning Ballechin. She was not the only one witnessing events but she was the only one with the exception of Lord Bute who tried to methodically question the occurrences. She subverts the establishment by using the book as a defense against all the charges against her. In a way, Freer was using her creative abilities of choosing material to take control of the past. Indeed, if Maud’s doppelgänger could comfort Paul’s subconscious wishes, Ballechin House was Freer’s own particular way of coming to terms with the past. Both examples fuse the familiar and fantastical to call the reader to question whether the eye or mind does the seeing. Doing so, one can see a new way of interpreting convention and reality.

It is important to note that after writing the book, Freer left the SPR, left paranormal research and moved to the Near East, writing folk tales intermittently. The *Alleged Haunting* may have been her way of exorcising her past as she was about to begin a new part of her life; or was she being haunt by the scandal still? Later she moved to New York and donated her personal copy of the book to the British Museum one month before she died in 1931. The significance of this death-bed action is open to interpretation, as was her vision, as was Paul Marischel’s. Maybe it was Freer’s last attempt at subverting the past, or redeeming it?

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24 Freer (Miss X), p. 190.
25 Freer (Miss X), pp. 192-194.
26 Freer (Miss X), p. 195.
27 Campbell and Hall, pp. 166-167.
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Magical Materialism: The Role of Costume in the Rituals of The Hermetic Order of The Golden Dawn and E. Nesbit’s The Enchanted Castle

Brynne Laska

Abstract

The dominance of scientific rationalism and the authority of organised religion in the Victorian era set the preconditions for dissent as the nineteenth century drew to its close. Matters of the fantastic and supernatural were discussed in both literature and in occult groups that imagined realities beyond the physical and known. For writers of fiction and worshippers of the occult, material objects such as costumes could be used as a device to remove restrictions on acceptable belief and experience. *The Enchanted Castle*, a novel written by E. Nesbit, children’s author and initiate of The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, proposes that the physical world hides another, magical dimension in which costume allows the open-minded to explore. Likewise, the Golden Dawn used costume in its rituals to conjure and control esoteric forces, as analysis of a portrait of one of its founders attests to.

Sometimes an element of imaginary play, sometimes a conscious sartorial statement, costumes allow their wearers to rearrange the appearance of time and place, or to defy established perceptions of reality. Children’s fiction abounds with instances of the young donning costumes and thereby challenging their ordinary frames of reference. For instance, E. Nesbit’s novel *The Enchanted Castle* features a group of children whose adoption of costume has extraordinary magical consequences. The costumes become a conduit for the supernatural, and importantly, their magical properties are perceived as real in much the same way as air or water might be. The act of dressing up in costume is not, of course, limited to the spheres of childhood or fiction, as E. Nesbit well knew; the author was initiated into an occult society which often used costume to assist its members in exploring alternative visions of reality. The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn sought to discover, translate and practise the magical and religious traditions of the ancient world, and adepts like Nesbit followed complex rules of dress which were thought to add efficacy to certain magical rituals. The society emerged at the end of the nineteenth century when widespread reaction against austere scientific orthodoxy and narrow religious dogma led many to seek more satisfying explanations to their spiritual and intellectual questions. ¹ At the end of the century, terms associated with occult practice such as ‘psychical’, ‘Hermeticism’, ‘Theosophy’ and ‘mesmerism’, to name a few, entered ‘common parlance in the vocabulary’, ² and not just among artists and the literati. For Golden Dawn adepts during the *fin de siècle*, and for Nesbit’s young characters in *The Enchanted Castle*, the immaterial world beyond the senses was and is real, but it can only be accessed through secret methods. By examining pertinent passages from *The Enchanted Castle* and a portrait of one of the Golden Dawn’s founding members, it will be shown that costume could become an important bridge between the material and immaterial world.

If any distinctive mode of fashion may be considered a costume, Edith Bland – better known today under the pen name of E. Nesbit – had personal experience of the

transformative powers of dressing in costume. Writing to a close friend in 1884, Nesbit announced that she had made the choice to wear comfortable but unfashionable all-wool dresses, explaining that they are ‘deliciously pleasant to wear’.\(^3\) Spurning the late-Victorian trend for women to bind themselves in constrictive undergarments, she embraced her prerogative to wear what pleased her, not what pleased society. Her sartorial decision begins to hint at the powers of costume to make experience beyond society’s orthodoxies and expectations possible. Nesbit’s main characters in The Enchanted Castle are middle-class siblings who are sent to be educated at a boarding school. At every opportunity, however, they abandon the school in favour of off-site adventures. The adults they encounter on these adventures possess such narrow imaginations that one sibling also begins to question his belief in the existence of magic and the supernatural. This prompts his brother to ask: “Do you think there’s nothing in the world but what you’ve seen?”\(^4\) The question could almost be read as an appeal to the audience to consider whether or not there is something more to this world than what we can see or what we are taught. Their sister Kathleen adds: “Perhaps there’s given up being magic because people didn’t believe in it anymore.”\(^5\) Kathleen’s contribution lacks sophistication in its logic, but it is still powerful because it condenses and simplifies a feeling of alienation, of distance from modes of experience that are meaningful but often rejected for their inability to be understood. Shortly after this exchange, the siblings come across a maze in the grounds of a castle. At its centre is a sleeping princess who, readers are later told, is actually a relative of one of the estate workers. The little girl is merely wearing a costume, wishing to deceive the other children. The act of dressing up, however, unleashes a series of magical consequences that for the children, determines that magic can and does exist in the real world.

Gerald, Jimmy, Kathleen and the Princess explore the realms of their imaginations: the Princess entertains the others by making a game of turning bread into beef, and of conjuring treasures into empty rooms. Just as the children begin to suspect that the Princess’ magic is too good to be true, the Princess commands: “...let’s all dress up and you be princes and princesses too.”\(^6\) Costumes, she presumes, will add an air of authenticity to the magical proceedings, so Gerald dons a gold crown and a collar of SS, whilst Kathleen amuses herself by trying on extravagant ornaments. The Princess narrates the costuming process and explains each object’s magical properties: the bracelet forces its wearer to tell the truth, the chain augments its wearer’s strength, and the ring makes one invisible. The children are so enveloped in their imaginative play - in their alternate versions of themselves - that real supernatural powers do seem to be let loose. The ring worn by the Princess (whose real name is Mabel) no longer supports the imaginative pretence of invisibility, it really does make her invisible. Moreover, towards the middle of the novel, the omniscient narrator relates Gerald’s feeling that the magic he is experiencing does not operate in a separate dimension from his own, outside of the natural world, but is merely a hidden force that the open minded can discover.

And he had that extraordinary feeling so difficult to describe, and yet so real and so unforgettable the feeling that he was in another world, that had covered up and hidden the old world as a carpet covers a floor. The carpet was there all right, underneath, but what he walked on was the carpet that covered it and that carpet was drenched in magic...\(^7\)

Imagination opened up the possibility of a magical realm, but costume was the key that allowed Gerald to reveal this hidden layer of reality.

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\(^5\) The Enchanted Castle, p. 5.

\(^6\) The Enchanted Castle, p. 10.

\(^7\) The Enchanted Castle, p. 43.
Peter Keating’s study of the late Victorian novel argues that authors of children’s fiction were rejecting the moralism of their forebears in favour of adventure driven stories in which protagonists ‘play at being cowboys and Indians, pirates, African explorers and jungle animals’.⁸ He offers several possible reasons for this change, such as new interest in the education of children through play and recognition that childhood is a discrete and transitory stage of development. Nesbit’s approach to this trend was different, contends Maggie Ann Bowers, because her characters and their environments are represented realistically despite the magical occurrences that transpire.⁹ JM Barrie created a Neverland for his characters, Lewis Carroll fashioned Wonderland, and Rudyard Kipling’s characters had exotic jungles and cities at their disposal. Conversely, Nesbit’s young characters exist in a world similar to the one enjoyed by Nesbit’s largely middle-class audience. The collision of the real with the magical in Nesbit’s fiction is a deliberate statement. It echoes the ideas emerging from certain occultist groups such as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn that there is more to our world than is commonly acknowledged. For many occultists at the turn of the nineteenth century, the tenor of the age was systematic, narrow, and dogmatic and the occult offered an escape from the unsatisfactory, closed off pathways of rational analysis, materialism or religious orthodoxy. Crucially, however, occult inquiry at the fin de siècle was concerned with discovering secret magical and spiritual forces in the everyday. In The Enchanted Castle, the immaterial world exists alongside the material world. They cannot be disassociated from one another as, the novel suggests, reality and magic are merely two sides to the same coin.¹⁰

Use of costume figured highly in the practices of several fin de siècle occult movements such as spiritualism, Theosophy, Hermeticism, and mesmerism. It could be employed to enhance the dramatic impact of a performance, or it could be used to add resonance and magical efficacy to rituals. The famous spiritualist Helena Blavatsky, for instance, cultivated a distinctive mode of dress which added to the magnetism of her séances.¹¹ The Hermetic strand of occultism did not perform its rituals in public, which meant that costumes occupied a different role, one that sought to amplify the significance of the group’s rituals rather than to captivate an audience. Before examining visual evidence of the Golden Dawn’s costuming conventions, a brief summary of its founding principles will aim to support analysis. The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn had over three hundred members by 1896, and although the majority were drawn from the middle classes, it also attracted prominent academics and writers.¹² Its name suggests regeneration. Indeed, its founding principles were based on new interpretations of ancient texts, particularly those of the ancient Greek mystic and philosopher Hermes Trismegistus.¹³ The group’s ideologies did not pose a challenge to Christianity or to science, but contended that there is but one universal truth, a truth which can only be accessed by unlocking ancient secrets. As mentioned previously, E. Nesbit was a member of the Golden Dawn alongside poet W.B. Yeats and author Bram Stoker. All of these individuals would have worn costume during their initiation rites, and thereafter the costume he or she adopted was dictated by his or her rank within the group’s complex hierarchy. Very little information remains about Nesbit’s specific activity within the structure of the Golden Dawn, especially compared to information surrounding Yeats’ involvement as he was pivotal in interpreting ancient writings and generating a network of esoteric symbols

¹¹ Beaumont, p. 222.
¹² Beckson, p. 325.
to be used in rituals.\textsuperscript{14} One initiate whom Yeats had long standing romantic interest in, Maud Gonne, resigned from the group after just four rites. She dismissed the costumes worn by her fellow-mystics because in her opinion, they were not able to cover the members’ inherent dullness. She writes in her memoir: ‘They looked so incongruous in their cloaks and badges at initiation ceremonies’.\textsuperscript{15} For Gonne, the wearing of costume did not augment the efficacy of the Golden Dawn’s rites, but struck her as a hollow, even self-indulgent practice.

Not all would have agreed with Gonne’s assessment that the Golden Dawn’s costumes were a fanciful escape from dreary middle class experience. Most initiates would have been educated in how the costumes’ specific use of symbol, colour, texture and shape was intended to evoke a more transcendental past, one which accessed experience beyond contemporaneous concepts of reality. Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers, one of the Golden Dawn’s founders, dictated rules surrounding ceremonial costume. His translation of the rare and ancient text \textit{The Key of Solomon the King}\textsuperscript{16} may not hold up to modern standards of translation, but it offers a glimpse of the material he used to inspire Golden Dawn costume. In Chapter VI of this famous \textit{grimoire}, suggestions are made as to which garments and shoes should be worn by practitioners of magic, ranging from what type of cloth or material the costume should be constructed in, to colours of fabric and decorative elements. The following extract provides a sense of the specificity of the instructions:

\begin{quote}
The exterior habiliments which the Master of the Art should wear ought to be of linen, as well as those which he weareth beneath them; and if he hath the means they should be of Silk. If they be of linen the thread of which they are made should have been spun by a young maiden.
\end{quote}

Visual evidence of Golden Dawn members wearing ceremonial costume is challenging to find, perhaps because the exclusivity of the organisation precluded photographic possibilities, or because such artefacts were destroyed by, or kept within, families. There is, however, a striking portrait of Mathers in full costume. It was painted by his wife in 1896 and can be found on display in the National Library of Ireland. It is helpful in demonstrating how costume could, through codes and symbols, attempt to bridge the immaterial with the material world.

The viewer is initially struck by the ancient Egyptian leitmotif; it could be speculated that the headpiece as well as the cross speak to the mythos surrounding the death and resurrection of Osiris (an Egyptian myth then arrogated by Christianity). As mentioned previously, the Golden Dawn did not dispute Christian principles, but wanted to extend notions of spirituality beyond the Church of England’s teachings. This costume was potentially subversive in its mingling of Christian and pagan codes. Looking more closely at Mathers’ headpiece, the viewer observes a five-pointed star which is instantly recognisable as a general symbol of occult belief. Today, the pentacle is popularly associated with witchcraft, but it appears and reappears throughout history in different contexts. To seek the meaning of this costume’s employment of the pentacle, it is useful to turn to Mathers’ translation of \textit{The Key of Solomon the King}. This text clearly suggests that pentacles should be used during prayer and conjuration rites: ‘Let the Master uncover the consecrated Pentacles which he should have made to constrain and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} Beckson, p. 322.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Beckson, p. 326.
\item \textsuperscript{17} \textit{The Key of Solomon the King}, p. 93.
\end{itemize}
command the spirits.’ Here, Mathers’ costume and its pentacle become, if the translation is to be read literally, a link from the material world to the spiritual half of our dimension. The wearer becomes so powerful that he is literally able to bend this spiritual world to his desire, bringing it firmly within his reality.

Figure 1. Moina Mathers, Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers in magical regalia (c. 1895), copy of a portrait.

One fantastical scene in *The Enchanted Castle* sees the young protagonists put on a dramatic performance. They dress up chairs using old clothes and household objects to approximate the appearance of a large theatrical audience. The innocent impulse to transform everyday objects into human facsimiles goes awry, however, as the garments become invested with magic; one of the children happens to be wearing an enchanted ring which grants wishes, and the ring interprets their wish for more audience members in a way that grotesquely interlocks the natural and the supernatural world. The costumed chairs come to life, and because they speak and act like real humans whilst retaining their resemblance to their original component parts, they strike horror in all those who observe them. When the magic dissipates, the creatures’ departure is met

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with relief. Ever careful to inculcate ethical themes in her novels\textsuperscript{21}, Nesbit may have constructed this passage to carry an implicit warning about how one must tread carefully when stepping outside familiar realms of experience, for the Ugly-Wuglies (as they are called) are not depicted as a comical lark, but are perceived by the characters as a monstrous burden. In \textit{The Enchanted Castle}, therefore, alternative realities and their attendant forces can be accessed by all, even though it suggests that such matters should not be meddled with carelessly. It leads one to consider whether the Golden Dawn’s founders held any such reservations about individuals accessing the esoteric mysteries of the world. The fact that all of the Golden Dawn’s beliefs and practices were so closely guarded (even within the cult itself) can lead one to assume that its leaders considered it their duty to be judicious in revealing its mysteries. For those adepts initiated into the ‘Inner’ Order the art of practical magic was finally revealed, but whether or not these select few found success or failure in bending supernatural forces to their will is not known. Herein lies the difference between Nesbit and the Golden Dawn’s evaluation of magic and costume. Nesbit’s novel shows that open-mindedness is all one needs to channel the immaterial from material objects, whereas the Golden Dawn barred those from outside its membership from accessing knowledge on how costume could open up new areas of experience.

There is a curtain, thin as gossamer, clear as glass, strong as iron, that hangs ever between the world of magic and the world that seems to us to be real. And when once people have found one of the little weak spots in that curtain which are marked by magic rings, and amulets, and the like, almost anything may happen.\textsuperscript{22}

The narrator of \textit{The Enchanted Castle} here argues that the partitions put up between the physical and spiritual worlds are artificial and can be removed. A number of \textit{fin de siècle} occult groups like the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn joined this chorus. Occultism at the end of the Victorian era, an age dominated by the intellectual currents of scientific rationalism and strict Anglican orthodoxy, was a popular mode of dissent. Certain individuals wished to bring the material world into greater intimacy with its hidden, immaterial forces. Costumes, by their fundamental ability to reconstitute reality and shift perception, became a way to defy intractable and narrow systems defining experience.

\textsuperscript{21} Geary, p. 226.
\textsuperscript{22} Nesbit, \textit{The Enchanted Castle}, p. 301.
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Visions and Revisions: Addiction and Additions in Thomas De Quincey’s *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* and Giovanni Battista Piranesi’s *Carceri d’Invenzione*

Alessia Pannese

**Abstract**

Thomas De Quincey’s autobiographical account *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* compares opium-induced states of mind with the imaginary architecture of Giovanni Battista Piranesi’s etching series *Carceri d’Invenzione*. Here I examine how this inner-to-outer transposition acts as a locus of convergence of Piranesi’s and De Quincey’s works at a metaphorical level, as well in more subtle and direct ways. Bringing together textual and visual evidence from the original and revised editions of the *Confessions* and the *Carceri*, I discuss ways in which both De Quincey and Piranesi negotiate the themes of freedom and restraint, and suggest parallels with the reality of opium addiction.

In his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, Thomas De Quincey¹ recalls:

Many years ago, when I was looking over Piranesi’s Antiquities of Rome, Mr Coleridge, who was standing by, described to me a set of plates by that artist, called his *Dreams*, and which record the scenery of his own visions during the delirium of a fever. Some of them (I describe only from memory of Mr Coleridge’s account) represented vast Gothic halls: on the floor of which stood all sorts of engines and machinery, wheels, cables, pulleys, levers, catapults, &c. &c. expressive of enormous power put forth and resistance overcome. Creeping along the sides of the walls, you perceived a staircase; and upon it, groping his way upwards, was Piranesi himself: follow the stairs a little further, and you perceive it come to a sudden abrupt termination, without any balustrade, and allowing no step onwards to him who had reached the extremity, except into the depths below. [...] raise your eyes, and behold a second flight of stairs still higher: on which again Piranesi is perceived, but this time standing on the very brink of the abyss. Again elevate your eye, and a still more aerial flight of stairs is beheld [...] and so on, until the unfinished stairs and Piranesi both are lost in the upper gloom of the hall.

– With the same power of endless growth and self-reproduction did my architecture proceed in dreams. In the early stage of my malady, the splendours of my dreams were indeed chiefly architectural: and I beheld such pomp of cities and palaces as was never yet beheld by the waking eye.²

The ’Dreams’ cited in De Quincey’s passage do not exist – at least not under that title. What De Quincey refers to is understood to be a set of plates that Piranesi³ etched in

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¹ Born in 1785 in Manchester into an ‘upwardly mobile middle-class family’ (Faflak, Thomas de Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (Toronto: Broadview, 2009)), Thomas De Quincey idolised Kant (whose *Observations on our feelings of the Beautiful and the Sublime* he translated), Coleridge (whom he met by 1806), and Wordsworth, with whose family he moved in after abruptly leaving Oxford, in 1807, to remain as a tenant in Grasmere’s Dove Cottage starting from 1809 (the friendship eventually soured). Although he intended to achieve recognition as a poet – ‘I have [...] always intended that poems should form the cornerstones of my fame’ (De Quincey’s *Diary*, 26 May 1803, quoted in Morrison and Roberts, *Thomas De Quincey: New Theoretical and Critical Directions* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), p. 1) – De Quincey remains largely known for his publications in periodicals. The *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* first appeared in the *London Magazine* in 1821.


Rome during the late 1740s, and anonymously published in 1745 as *Invenzioni Capric. di Carceri*. The series consists of fourteen plates depicting imaginary prisons – *Carceri* – that Piranesi allegedly conceived during a state of delirium caused by malaria – if not by opium, which was at the time a common ‘remedy’ for malaria. Whatever the origin of Piranesi’s *Prisons*, it seems clear that De Quincey never saw them. His ekphrasis is based on a second-hand account by his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge. De Quincey is not only straightforward about this level of remove (‘Mr Coleridge, who was standing by, described to me a set of plates’), but also cautious and almost apologetic for any resulting inaccuracies (‘I describe only from memory of Mr Coleridge’s account’). Some argue that the levels of remove are actually four, as De Quincey re-creates from memory Coleridge’s *verbal recollection* of his past *visual encounter* with Piranesi’s *etchings* of the prisons. To complicate matters further, some have suggested the possibility that Coleridge himself had never seen the plates. The question of the multiple *mises en abyme* ushers in the other central issue, namely, what – i.e. which plates, if any – had Coleridge seen? Whilst De Quincey’s references to ‘vast Gothic halls’, ‘aerial flight[s] of stairs’, ‘staircases [coming] to a sudden abrupt termination’, human figures ‘standing on the very brink of the abyss’ are readily identifiable in the series *Invenzioni Capric. di Carceri* of 1745, the allusion to ‘all sorts of engines and machinery, wheels, cables, pulleys, levers, catapults [...] expressive of enormous power put forth and resistance overcome’ – all of which are absent from the *Carceri* of 1745 – suggests that Coleridge had seen something else. And it is in this *something else*, I argue, that Piranesi’s and De Quincey’s visions and revisions converge.

Piranesi’s *Carceri* exists indeed in two editions: the first – i.e. the original 1745 edition – consists of fourteen unnumbered plates, and was published by Bouchard in various issues. In 1760, the *Carceri* were completely reworked, and two new plates were added to the series. This second edition, consisting of sixteen numbered (I to XVI) plates, was published by Piranesi himself, and appeared in four (virtually identical) issues between 1761 and 1778. The plates reproduced in Figures 1-4, currently housed in the British Museum (with the exception of the original title-plate in Figure 1, which is housed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art), belong to the 1749 issue of the first edition (plates on left), and to the fourth issue of the second edition (plates on right).

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6 The series is inscribed with a Venetian tradition of capricci (literally ‘caprilli’, imaginary subjects), and was based on an earlier image, the *Carceri Oscuro* (‘dark prison’), plate 2 of Piranesi’s *Prima parte* di Architettura, e Prospettive, 1743. The ‘dark prison’ was then copied by Turner in 1794-1797.
8 What he did see is the *Antiquities*: ‘when I was looking over Piranesi’s Antiquities of Rome’.
9 De Quincey, *Confessions*, IV, XXII, p. 374.
12 Italic denotes levels of remove.
15 De Quincey, *Confessions*, IV, XXII, p. 374.
18 Unlike the first edition, whose frontispiece names only the publisher (Bouchard), the second series bears on the title-plate Piranesi’s name as ‘venezuel architec’ (Figure 1).
20 The acquisition of the series by the British Museum is recorded in Hind, *Giovanni Battista Piranesi: A Critical Study*, p. iii.
In the second edition, Piranesi greatly increased the complexity of the architecture, the contrast between light and shade, and the sharpness of the detail. The strengthened chiaroscuro confers a sombre quality on the space, which is now filled with a tangled web of newly added arches, piers, pontoons, galleries, and ever ascending and indefinitely receding flights of stairs. Crucially, he also introduced those disquieting details – the wheels, cables, pulleys, levers, and catapults – to which Coleridge seems to have alluded, and which are lacking from the 1745 edition.


Take Plate I, for example: in the first edition (Figure 1, left) the foreground is relatively clear, inviting the gaze to dwell on the slab surmounting the barred window, upon which is inscribed the series’ title. In the reworked version (Figure 1, right) the foreground is populated by a newly added walkway projecting onto the now partly obscured slab, by an unspecified wooden structure dominating the upper left wall, and by a sinister spiked wheel lying prominently on the floor.
In the first edition of Plate IV (Figure 2, left) the dominant feature is the lofty arch in the foreground, which opens onto an arcade surmounted by a frieze, suggesting a notion of verticality and vastness. In the second version (Figure 2, right) the addition of seemingly unnecessary ladders, walkways, balustrades, columns, and of a large arched structure perpendicular to the main one, confers on the image a quality of redundancy. The beams (upper left), hook (left wall), chains (on the floor), bollards (on the staircase), spiky protrusions from an unidentified wooden structure (lower right), and, again, an enormous wheel, all point to enigmatic macabre mechanisms.
A similar transformation is found in Plate VII (Figure 3), with their newly added balustrades, ladders, bollards, and various chains, ropes, and racks. In Plate XI (Figure 4), the substitution of the original grid under the vault with an open vista onto receding staircases expands the scene beyond the visible, whilst the addition of a colossal staircase, extra ladders, beams, and pillars, as well as the ubiquitous ropes and chains, signals monumental pointlessness and chilling mystery.


Hence, throughout the revised series, ropes swing from pulleys, nooses hang from walls, crypts, vaults, and rickety gangways lurk in the shadow, outlining new horizontal and vertical planes in seemingly infinite regression, whilst unspecified devices – spiked wheels, pillars, bollards, wooden racks – and an abundance of chains and other shackling instruments clutter the walls and floors evoking images of torture and undefined horror.

Taken together, Piranesi’s revisions seem to gravitate towards two main attractors. The first consists in a combination of notions of extension, expansion, movement, and overall increased possibilities. The addition of ladders, staircases, pontoons, suspended bridges, and aerial walkways – i.e. structures whose nature is that of connecting and affording access to different places – suggests increased opportunity for mobility and exploration. Similarly, the addition of deep perspectives and open vistas onto infinitely receding backgrounds – i.e. elements whose nature is that of cueing the existence of spaces beyond the boundaries of the visible scene – extends and expands the imaginary horizon by increasing awareness of possible hidden alternative realities. Overall, all these features seem to connote ideas of liberation and freedom. The second gravitational cluster consists of a combination of notions of compression, constriction, entrapment, and overall reduced possibilities. The addition of ropes, hooks, and chains – i.e. structures whose nature is that of tying, hanging, and restraining – insinuates deprivation of mobility, and suggests constraint and enslavement. This connotation is further characterised by a sense of uncanny ambiguity conferred on the plates by the various racks, levers, spiked wheels, and other unspecified sharply pointed devices, which imply some kind of punishment, but whose purpose and working are unclear. Nor are the minuscule and featureless human figures climbing endless staircases any more illuminating: they could be damned souls, prisoners, guards, or visitors, as there is no direct evidence of torture being perpetrated on or by anyone. All is suggested, and left to the viewer’s imagination to complete. Hence, Piranesi’s revisions simultaneously monumentalise and demolish, highlight vastness of spaces and possibilities, but crush both into the suffocating clench of claustrophobia and impossibility of escape, accompanied by the terrifying prospect of unspecified torment. There results a perverse combination of freedom and enslavement – and the impossibility of telling them apart.

The dichotomous connotation of Piranesi’s Prisons lurks in De Quincey’s Confessions as well. Opium-induced perceptual distortions are described as expanding space to ‘unutterable infinity’, extending time ‘beyond the limits of any human experience’, and enlarging buildings and landscapes to proportions ‘so vast as the bodily eye is not fitted to receive’.21 These augmented sensory capabilities are accompanied by cognitive and affective enhancement – ‘my brain performed its functions as healthily as ever before […] my feelings of pleasure expanded themselves to all around me’22 – leading to the attainment of a superior state of mind in which ‘the diviner part of [one’s] nature is paramount; that is, the moral affections are in a state of cloudless serenity; and over all is the great light of the majestic intellect’.23 These metaphors of spatial, temporal, and intellectual expansion suggest a notion of opium consumption as liberating, i.e. as enabling the opium-eater to break away from the physical and mental constraints of the ordinary human condition and rise to a superior state of loftier intellectual and moral achievement. Conversely, a series of parallel and opposite metaphors represent opium consumption as enslaving, i.e. as progressively ensnaring the opium-eater into a state of hopeless despondency and ultimate fall. The sense of entrapment is suggested by the reference to ‘knotty problems of alleys, […] enigmatical entries, and […] sphynx’s riddles of streets without thoroughfares’;24 the ensuing despair transpires from the descent into ‘chasms and sunless abysses, depths below depths, from which it seemed hopeless that [one] could ever re-ascend’.25 The dark shadow of claustrophobic doom drives the

21 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 373.
22 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 365.
23 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 357.
24 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 361.
25 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 373.
opium-eater to ‘suicidal despondency’, as he uncovers within himself ‘some horrid alien nature’ replicated two, three, four, or five times, and ‘introduced within what once he thought the inviolable sanctuary of himself’. The duplicitous effect of opium as both liberating and constraining affects body and mind, as the opium-eater ‘lies under the weight of incubus and night-mare […] and […] curses the spells which chain him down from motion […] he is powerless as an infant, and cannot even attempt to rise’, but at the same time ‘loses none of his moral sensibilities or aspirations: he wishes […] to realise what he believes possible […] but his intellectual apprehension of what is possible infinitely outruns his power’. It is unsurprising that Piranesi’s monumental yet labyrinthine interiors, immense yet claustrophobic vastness, and alarming yet mysterious contraptions should resonate with De Quincey’s opium-induced mental geography of hypnagogic visions, dizzying spatiotemporal distortions, alienating doppelgängers, and suicidal despondency. What is surprising is that the parallel between Piranesi’s visual representation and De Quincey’s narrative account seems to extend beyond the metaphorical level, to include more direct correspondences: those between their respective visions, and between their respective revisions.

Like Piranesi’s Carceri, De Quincey’s Confessions have known innumerable editions. After the first publication in the London Magazine in 1821, the Confessions were reprinted in book format in 1822, re-edited (with minor changes) in 1823, and eventually completely reworked in 1856. Between 1821 and 1856, the text doubled in size, and quadrupled the number of (often irrelevant) footnotes. The relatively simple and direct style of the original 1821 version yielded to a more convoluted and artificial prose in the revised 1856 edition. For example, what in 1821 reads ‘I have often been asked, how I first came to be a regular opium-eater’, in 1856 becomes ‘I have often been asked how it was, and through what series of steps, that I became an opium-eater’, the 1821 ‘My father died when I was about seven years old, and left me to the care of four guardians’ swells into ‘My father died when I was in my seventh year, leaving six children, including myself (viz. four sons and two daughters), to the care of four guardians, and of our mother, who was invested with the legal authority of a guardian’;

‘Space […] was amplified to an extent of unutterable infinity’ turns into ‘Space […] was amplified to an extent of unutterable and self-repeating infinity’; ‘streets without obvious outlets or thoroughfares’ into ‘streets without obvious outlets or thoroughfares’. The De Quincey of the revised Confessions proceeds ‘obliquely and convolutedly’, indulges in peculiar idiosyncrasies, inversions of word order, parentheses, detours, and displays a ‘growing inability to keep to the point’. He is ‘riven by self-doubt’, and refuses to ‘come at the heart of the matter’, preferring instead endless digressions and rewriting, thus betraying an underlying ‘over-awareness that no text is final’.

26 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 373.
28 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 372.
29 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 372.
30 Corrections of a Greek passage, and addition of a quotation from Shakespeare’s Sonnets on the title-page.
31 From 45000 to 90000 words.
32 For a detailed analysis of the differences between the 1821 and 1856 editions, see Jack, ‘De Quincey revises his Confessions’.
33 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 372.
35 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXI, p. 296.
36 De Quincey, Selections Grave and Gay, p. 12.
37 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 373.
38 De Quincey, Selections Grave and Gay, p. 252.
39 De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 361.
40 De Quincey, Selections Grave and Gay, p. 204.
A second aspect of the revised Confessions is the evolution of De Quincey’s voice from that of a (in 1821) relatively anonymous thirty-something-year-old, unpublished, opium-experimenting misfit, to that of a (in 1856) seventy-year-old, established author, cult-idol, and chronic opium-addict. This progression is reflected in a shift in focus: opium-induced ‘dreams and dream-scneries’ – more than opium per se – became ‘the true objects – first and last’ of the Confessions. These dreams, however, turn to nightmares whose imaginary material blurs with autobiographical details about an emotionally challenged childhood, marked by solitude and loss. De Quincey’s mother was ‘freezing in excess’, whilst his father, elder brother, and sister all died at an early age. The death of his sister, in particular, is believed to have been determinant in plunging De Quincey in the state of depression that eventually drove him to addiction. The 1856 edition of the Confessions incorporates these painful memories – especially those related to his orpanhood and forced assignment to a ‘perfidiously administered’ guardianship, ‘crushed […] under the fierce pressure of penal and vindictive enforcements’ – into a marked dark turn. As a result, the narrative is dominated by emotionally loaded expressions – e.g. ‘This word “guardian” kindles a fiery thrilling in my nerves’; ‘my somewhat torpid guardian’ – occasionally trespassing into imagery of punishment – be it corporal: ‘thorn in the flesh’, ‘martyrdom’; or psychological: ‘it gave him pleasure that he could reach me in the very recesses of my dreams’. Like a captive in Piranesi’s imaginary prisons, De Quincey’s orphaned self is a hostage to his guard(ian). Both are confronted with a chilling prospect of punishment that looms nearer and grows larger with each chain, rack, wheel, spike, and thorn, be they real objects – as in the Prisons – or imagined metaphors – as in the Confessions. For both, escape is impossible, both outside – the prisons are so vast that there is no ‘outside’ – and inside – the guard(ian) can reach every inner recess.

De Quincey’s literary digressions are the narrative equivalent of Piranesi’s architectural ones: they both draw bridges and connections, expanding space and possibilities. Similarly – but inversely – Piranesi’s disquieting restraining devices are the visual equivalent of De Quincey’s disturbing memories from his emotionally challenging childhood: they both evoke horror and helplessness in the face of punishment and restraint – guards (or guardians) included. Through this mapping of internal states onto external objects, De Quincey follows in a tradition of symbolic imagery which Piranesi himself seems to have adumbrated. Presaging Coleridge’s account of imagination as a ‘Gothic cathedral’, in which one finds oneself alone ‘in a gusty moonlight night of autumn […] in palpable darkness not without a chilly sensation of terror’, Piranesi’s ‘dark mind’ makes one ‘tremble in fear’, as he juxtaposes the experience of ‘Gothic

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44 By 1856, De Quincey had become a ‘de facto popular authority’ on opium use (Milligan, ‘Morpheine-Addicted Doctors, the English Opium-Eater, and Embattled Medical Authority’, Victorian Literature and Culture, Vol. 33, No. 2 (2005), p. 543).
45 Jack argues that in the 1856 version De Quincey was more knowledgeable and objective (‘truer to fact’), whereas in the 1821 edition he was more faithful to his own emotions (‘truer to feeling’) (Jack, ‘De Quincey revises his Confessions’, p. 145).
46 De Quincey, Selections Grave and Gay, p. 12.
49 De Quincey, Selections Grave and Gay, p. 13.
51 De Quincey, Selections Grave and Gay, p. 12.
52 De Quincey, Selections Grave and Gay, p. 20.
54 De Quincey, Selections Grave and Gay, p. 24.
56 An example of this symbolism is the spiral staircase, which Victor Hugo associates to the ‘spiral motion of the dreamy thought’ ('les mouvements spirailques de la pensée rêveuse') (quoted in Keller, Piranèse et les romantiques français: le mythe des escaliers en spirale (Paris: José Corti, 1966), p. 250).
57 Coleridge, Biographia Literaria; or Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions (London: Rest Fenner, 1817), Chapter 13.
verticality⁶⁰ to a ‘Gothic sense of claustrophobia and incarceration’.⁶¹ Through their conjugating verticality and incarceration, ‘vertiginous élan’ and anguish over the ‘imprisoned space’,⁶² Piranesi’s Carceri evoke both claustrophobia and agoraphobia, thus mirroring De Quincey’s double nightmare of guardianship and orphanhood. In Piranesi’s Prisons, the space is so vast that there is no escape from it. Likewise, in De Quincey’s opium-induced perceptual distortions, the space is so vast that ‘the eye is not fitted to receive it’.⁶³

The interplay between liberating and enslaving connotations of De Quincey’s and Piranesi’s revisions mirrors the antagonism between opium’s stimulating (in the early stages of consumption) and paralysing (at advanced stages of dependence) power. As a result, De Quincey’s ekphrasis in the Confessions is as much a representation of Piranesi’s Prisons as the Prisons themselves – especially in their reworked edition – are an illustration of De Quincey’s struggle with his never overcome addiction.

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⁶¹ Bridgwater, De Quincey’s Gothic Masquerade, p. 167.


⁶³ Adapted from De Quincey, Confessions, IV, XXII, p. 373.
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'A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree': Agency and Amusement in Victorian Asylums

Ute Oswald

Abstract:

The perception of the Victorian asylum is dominated by images of manacles, leeches and padded cells. Yet this obfuscates a very different side of these institutions; throughout the nineteenth century a vast array of entertainment was offered in line with new treatment options. This paper will shed light on these activities by discussing Charles Dickens’s article ‘A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree’ (Household Words, 17 January 1852) alongside an illustration of Christmas celebrations at St Luke’s Hospital (Illustrated Times, 19 January 1861) to investigate whether these embodied a real opportunity to exercise agency or whether they merely represented another tool of social control.

When Charles Dickens visited St Luke’s asylum on 26 December 1851 he was full of trepidation, for he remembered vividly the neglect and abuse in mental institutions of the recent past. 1 St Luke’s had been founded for pauper lunatics in 1750 and during its initial phase enforced the old regime of purges and shackles on the basis of fear and submission. 2 Dickens’s opening paragraphs highlight this environment, describing the Bethlem and St Luke’s of old and condemning the attendants responsible:

Chains, straw, filthy solitude […]; spinning in whirligigs, corporal punishment, gagging […]; nothing was too […] monstrously cruel to be prescribed by mad-doctors. It was their monomania (385).

There is no doubt that certain asylums left much to be desired with regards to adequate patient care. Conditions were often harrowing and the public was understandably outraged. James Norris, chained to the wall in a custom-built harness in his cell at Bethlem was a ubiquitous image, 3 and novels such as Elizabeth Braddon’s Lady Audley’s Secret and Charles Reade’s Hard Cash tapped into and fed this particular stream of Victorian consciousness. However, as Showalter declares, ‘during Victoria’s reign, […] the theory and treatment of madness in England underwent enormous, even revolutionary, change’. 4 Following Pinel and Esquirol’s implementation of so-called ‘moral treatment’ in Paris 5 and new legislation of the County Asylums Acts of 1808 and 1828 and the Lunatics Act of 1845 6 a number of institutions sprang up, many of which were pioneering this now fashionable non-restraint system with a focus on cure instead of long-term confinement. 7 Moral treatment was to be characterised by kindness and attention afforded to all patients, who in turn would ‘be actuated by the common impulse

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3 Simon Cross, Mediating Madness: Mental Distress and Cultural Representation (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), pp. 53-54.


5 Showalter, p. 2.


7 Frontrunner of these was Samuel Tuke at the Retreat in York, closely followed by John Conolly at Hanwell and Robert Gardiner Hill at Lincoln; see Jones, p. 21.
of enjoyment, all [...] busy, and delighted by being so’.\(^8\) This ‘busyness’ would include employment in the asylum as well as participation in recreational activities, be it sporting, creative or otherwise.

The purpose of Dickens’s visit was to witness the celebrations around the Christmas tree, an event still in its infancy in 1851.\(^9\) In light of his own special interest in Christmas as expressed in his novel *A Christmas Carol*, it is not surprising that he chose to describe his experience of this particular visit in great detail. The observations are imbued with a ‘mix of humor [sic], sentiment, and realism’,\(^10\) taking the reader on a journey through the various male and female dayrooms. Dickens laments the state of one gallery as devoid of ‘domestic articles to occupy, to interest, or to entice the mind away from its malady’ (386), thus predisposing its inhabitants to hebetude and ennui. Yet soon after, he voices his relief at the sight of the next room which boasts ‘coloured prints over the mantel-shelf, and china shepherdesses upon it’ (387). It leads him to conclude that there is indeed ‘a great difference between the demeanour of the occupants of this apartment and that of the inmates of the other room. They were neither so listless nor so sad’ (387). This accentuates the role of the material world and emphasises the importance of domesticity in line with new moral treatment ideas. We witness occasional engagement in activities such as ‘a game of bagatelle’ (386/7), before reaching the core of the evening’s festivities. Here, the room is being adorned with holly, music entertains patients and guests alike, and quadrille dancers are setting the scene. Dickens informs us that ‘[...] the ball was proceeding with great spirit, but with great decorum’ (387). The rich plethora of patients taking part in the dance are introduced in typical Dickensian style; we can admire a ‘brisk, vain, pippin-faced little old lady’, ‘a quiet young woman, almost well, and soon going out’, partnered by (as this was one of the few occasions where the sexes could mix)\(^11\) a ‘wry-faced tailor, formerly suicidal but much improved’ and ‘a man of happy silliness, pleased with everything’ (387). It is easy to forget that in Victorian times causes for admission to asylums alongside mania and melancholy included epilepsy, grief, disappointments in love, over-work, masturbation, syphilis, and economic worries,\(^12\) which explains Dickens’s astute observation regarding such differing patient types.

The vigorous dancing and singing ‘until the quaint pictures of the Founders [...] might have trembled in their frame’ (388) pays testament to the popularity of such activities, just as much as the fact that – as soon as the music stopped – the dancers’ return to their respective stations demonstrates an element of control. The lighting of the tree, the procession of patients around it and the distribution of fruit and cake were followed by another session of merriment, ‘compounded of a country dance and galopade’ (388). Dickens closes the account with the following appeal to the public: ‘if you can do a little in any good direction—do it. It will be much, some day’ (389). Here, we can therefore discern an observational sketch of a mid-century lunatic asylum coupled with an attempt to raise funds. Dickens was well known for his social critique of the time and had not only visited other asylums but also included many articles about insanity in both his publications, *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*.\(^13\)

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\(^10\) [http://litmed.med.nyu.edu/Annotation?action=view&annid=12156], annotated by Meegan Kennedy [accessed 22 February 2015].


\(^13\) For a discussion about the changing face of these articles in response to hereditary theories see Deborah Wynne, ‘Dickens’s Changing Responses to Hereditary Insanity in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*’, *Notes and Queries*, 46.1 (1999), pp. 52-53.
According to Simon Cross, Dickens’s visit to St Luke’s was no more than a ‘shrewd public relations manoeuvre by its management’. He contests that Dickens was deployed to write an article which would distance St Luke’s from the notorious Bethlem, hence the initial paragraph referring to malpractices there. However, this is contradicted by the less than flattering descriptions which punctuate the account throughout. Dickens applauds the recovery rate of 69%, yet in the same breath laments the lack of exercise and the ‘rapid accumulation of flesh’ (387), comparing it unfavourably with other institutions of this kind. It was also a fact that Bethlem had undergone major changes, now catering mainly for the middle classes and itself a paragon of moral treatment.

The article was indeed used for publicity purposes, but not until 1860, when the governors were granted permission to reprint the report; this now included a section entitled ‘Contrast between 1852 and 1860’ and detailed the improvements in surroundings and occupation. Cross objects to ‘Dickens’s characterisation of the asylum dance’ as a ‘happy event’, judging it ‘a curious, even perverse, interpretation’. He perceives the description of the dance as “media spin”, referring to the numerous appearances of such images in mid-nineteenth-century newspapers. The terms ‘numerous’ and ‘perverse’ are debatable but a similar image depicting a Christmas celebration at St Luke’s was indeed published in the Illustrated Times on 19 January 1861 (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. A Christmas Tree at St Luke's Asylum, London. Engraving. Illustrated Times, 19 January 1861. Reproduced with kind permission of Bridgeman Images.](image)

The recreation hall is festively decked out; a ‘welcome’ banner is displayed at one end and the band just about discernable on the right hand side, rather suggestive of the harmonious conviviality first mentioned in A Curious Dance. This portrays a later stage of

14 Cross, p. 75.
17 Cross, p. 75.
18 Cross, p. 75.
the proceedings – following two or three hours of dancing – when according to the accompanying editorial the ‘large tree ornamented with toys, fruit, bonbons, and other appendages was wheeled into the middle of the room’. The attendant beside the tree is distributing these gifts which some of the patients in the foreground of the picture seem to be displaying, whilst the figures in the background are blurring into a sea of indistinguishable heads. The description of this image mirrors the domesticity and decorum of the 1851 account, if perhaps not the vivacity captured by Dickens in the final scene; however, we can expect this somewhat static appearance to be reanimated as soon as dancing recommences.

Both artefacts point to this important component of moral treatment, which was far more commonplace in the search for a cure than perhaps illustrated either in contemporary fiction or modern literature on the history of madness. The publication of Samuel Tuke’s Description of the Retreat (1813) set the tone for the ‘need to balance the emotions and distract the patient from painful thoughts and associations’ through the ‘creation of varied employment and amusements’. Provisions for recreation and exercise were often featured in advertisements and credited with ‘valuable restorative function’.

Colney Hatch, for example, Middlesex’s second Pauper Lunatic Asylum which opened in 1851, also regularly entertained its inmates, especially but not exclusively at Christmas (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Entertainment to the Patients, at the Middlesex County Lunatic Asylum, Colney Hatch. The Illustrated London News, 15 January 1853. Reproduced with kind permission of the Wellcome Trust.

23 Showalter, pp. 37-38.
One 1864 account in the Times applauded the great success of Colney Hatch’s Christmas festivities which included Chinese Jugglers, contortionists and quadrille bands (‘to keep up a continual succession of dance music’), only to be sarcastically exploited in a subsequent issue of Punch. The comical element of insanity highlighted here is mirrored in A Curious Dance, where Dickens compares his impending experience to a ‘jocund world of pantomime’ (385), yet the time of publicly exposing inmates for entertainment purposes had by then passed. After all, the account of these festivities resembled very much ‘life on the outside’, as a flyer advertising the ‘Great National Xmas Fair’ at New Cross Public Hall, London in 1884 demonstrates. This was a time when the public explored and adapted Christmas traditions, and entertainment in general began to play an active part in people’s lives; holiday allowances, competitive sporting fixtures, establishment of resort towns and general provision of recreational amenities became commonplace. As Walter Houghton points out, ‘Except for “God”, the most popular word in the Victorian vocabulary must have been “work”, yet “allowance was made for recreation”, because according to Macaulay, “Man, the machine of machines […] is repairing and winding up, so that he returns to his labours on the Monday with clearer intellect, with livelier spirits, with renewed corporal vigour”. It is therefore not unexpected to find a concomitant development in the asylum. Often inmates, especially in pauper institutions, found their social life much enhanced in comparison to their ordinary existence. So much so, that accounts of fun and frolics at Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum caused public disapproval. This patient letter was printed under the headline Life in a Criminal Lunatic Asylum: Coddling our Murderers:

We have about five and a half hours in the gardens every day. There is [sic] books to read…billiards…cards, dominoes, chess…and everything that is necessary for our amusement… I am very satisfied with my lot.

To facilitate the domestication of insanity, particular attention was paid to the location and architecture of institutions. Private institutions, often employing a sobriquet such as Sanatorium or Retreat, resembled country estates with individual apartments and servant accommodation, whilst pauper asylums were understandably less luxuriously designed. However, most boasted recreation halls for plays, concerts and balls, extensive grounds for sports, and day rooms for indoor activities like billiards and board

31 This was particularly lamented by the public in the case of Broadmoor inmates, discussed by Jade Shepherd, ‘Leisure and the Treatment of Criminal Lunatics in Late-Victorian Broadmoor’, IHR London Seminar, 23 February 2015, p. 12. With grateful thanks to the author for making this information available.
32 Berkshire Record Office, D/H14/D2/2/1/1116, letter dated 10 August 1883, describing a vast array of entertainments offered to inmates.
games. As Jane Hamlett asserts, ‘The nineteenth century saw a growing interest in the use of team games in asylums generally, and there was some recognition of their therapeutic potential’. Singling out billiards, she continues to describe how due to the required motivation and concentration, ‘Activities at the green baize table were monitored for signs of a return to health and normality, and noted in casebooks’.

Music and dance were closely linked and also deemed particularly therapeutic. They were alleged to lift the spirits and promoted social bonding, not just among patients but also extending to staff. Music and movement were instrumental in ‘re-tuning’ body and mind and restoring inner harmony, a belief which Dolly MacKinnon traces back to antiquity and for which she cites first-hand successful accounts. Dancing was the most welcome entertainment of all, according to this patient at Crichton Royal Infirmary, Dumfries:

> Of all kinds of amusements, Balls we consider foremost; they not only tend to make us forget our various delusions and fancies, but they contribute to our bodily health, by giving us muscular exercise [...]. The pleasure is intense.

This statement was recorded in the patient magazine *The New Moon*, only one of the many activities instigated by the visionary W.A.F. Browne. Crichton was not only the first British asylum to stage a play (for which Browne claimed high cure success), it entertained its patients and staff with concerts, soirées, its own museum, carriage rides, excursions into the surrounding towns -to assist with resocialisation- and a full educational programme. Its most lasting legacy however is Browne’s collection of patient art; very much in the shadow of Richard Dadd (of Bethlem, then Broadmoor), this is nonetheless a remarkable array of artworks which Browne even employed for diagnostic purposes.

The question is whether these accounts and images convey a sense of agency or social control. Whilst Michel Foucault condemned asylums under the banner of 'The Great Confinement', it must be remembered that, as Hamlett argues, 'Within an increasingly governed culture, institutions are imagined as beacons of normative behaviour'. The discipline expressed through adherence to rules and routines was not restricted to life in the asylum; the asylum world was after all just 'a society within a society - busy [and] purposeful'. Embedded in the asylum regime was thus also the formal employment of patients, dependent on gender and condition; for example, women would regularly

35 See the comparative study by Anna Shepherd, *Institutionalising the Insane in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014) discussing the pauper asylum Brookwood and nearby private Royal Holloway; Jane Hamlett in *At Home in the Institution* also juxtaposes activities and spatial adaptations between pauper and private asylums.

36 Hamlett, p. 53.

37 Hamlett, p. 53.


39 Cross, p. 75; Shepherd, Broadmoor p. 12.


43 Park, pp. 13-22.


46 Hamlett, p. 12.

47 Jones, p. 22.
engage in needlework whilst men tended to the gardens.\textsuperscript{48} However, recreating domesticity for both private and pauper patients was paramount in most institutions as a means to recovery,\textsuperscript{49} and this ‘ideal of domesticity’ -like the rise in entertainment- was very much in line with developments outside the institution, especially for the middle and upper classes for whom ‘the idea of comfort was often central’.\textsuperscript{50} The decorum witnessed by Dickens and visitors in other institutions must not be judged in isolation; society as a whole relied - and still relies - upon certain behavioural patterns to distinguish the rational from the irrational. More importantly, agency lies in what Judith Butler calls ‘the ongoing performances […] subverted by the performers’.\textsuperscript{51} Some patients manipulated these discourses to their own advantage; good behaviour brought reward, and reward was often synonymous with discharge, be it permanent or on home leave.\textsuperscript{52} Gender and class issues not unexpectedly reared their heads in this search for agency of the insane, as working class patients had different needs and expectations, and physical exercise was dominated by men.\textsuperscript{53} An ideal of shared, quasi-familial living pervaded the moral management theory,\textsuperscript{54} and although this in turn carried negative implications for those classes which valued privacy,\textsuperscript{55} it must be stressed that these activities also provided rare opportunities for homo- and heterosocial bonding.\textsuperscript{56} The number of patients attending social events was not always representative of the patient body, but bearing in mind the wide range of causes, this is not at all surprising.\textsuperscript{57}

It can be concluded then that on the one hand -not unlike the outside world- behaviour was controlled and class and gender identities fortified. On the other hand, although the limitations of patient letters must be given due consideration,\textsuperscript{58} it has been demonstrated that for some inmates the amusements on offer afforded happiness and possibly restored reason. The asylum’s material world acted as a catalyst to encourage agency, and Christmas was just one such occasion where conviviality and domesticity were employed to provide comfort, in line with concurrent developments in the Victorian home.\textsuperscript{59} The environment may have seemed ‘curious’, as Dickens’s title suggests, and entertainment was used as a marketing ploy but at the same time it can be viewed as an important early therapeutic option, empowering patients and negotiating agency in the hope of a permanent cure.

\textsuperscript{48} Digby, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{49} Parry-Jones, p. 184.
\textsuperscript{50} Hamlett, pp. 4; 5; 20.
\textsuperscript{51} Hamlett, p. 12, n68.
\textsuperscript{52} Parry-Jones, p. 184.
\textsuperscript{53} Hide, p. 57.
\textsuperscript{54} Melling and Forsythe, p. 48; Hamlett, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{55} Hamlett, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{56} Hide, p. 55; Shepherd, Broadmoor, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{57} Hamlett, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{59} Broomfield, p. 149.
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‘Come and Let Us Sweetly Join’: Engaging with the Dynamics of Early Methodist Practice and its Persecution through an Examination of Two Artefacts Related to the Love-Feast

Yvonne Farley

Abstract

As proto-Methodism spread and developed in the early to mid-eighteenth century the movement was challenged by excessively vituperative satire which attacked the fervour, expansionism and method of its doctrine and practices. This article explores two artefacts related to the history and representation of a prominent Methodist practice, the Love-feast, and suggests that, far from exposing and destroying the movement, satire served to strengthen and energise it, creating and perpetuating a sect mentality which eventually separated Methodism from the Church of England and transformed its future as an independent Christian denomination.

In the catacombs of San Callisto and San Domitilla in Rome there are several Paleochristian frescoes which depict groups of people eating and drinking together.\(^1\) They take their food from large communal plates, their heads are turned towards each other as they converse and their postures appear relaxed and congenial, the semi-circular configuration of the table implying equality and communality. Written around AD70,\(^2\) the Acts of the Apostles reported of the early Christians that ‘all who believed had all things in common...attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favour with all the people’.\(^3\) Described in the Bible as an ‘agape’ or love-feast, this private gathering became a representative feature of the early Christian church, conflating worship and socialising in a ritualised shared experience. Sometimes celebrated, sometimes oppressed,\(^4\) the Love-feast was differentiated from the Eucharist\(^5\) and as such St. Chrysostom described it as ‘a custom most beautiful and beneficial [...] a supporter of love, a solace of poverty, and a discipline of humility’.\(^6\) For the first few hundred years of the Christian Church the agape feast featured in spiritual practice but by the end of the fourth century the early anxieties expressed by St Paul in his letter to the Corinthians in AD54\(^7\) had indeed developed: it became associated with debauchery and inequality and was discountenanced and virtually eliminated by the Church itself – the Council of Laodicia in AD363 said ‘it is not lawful to hold the so-called Agape in the Church or Assemblies, and to eat or set out couches in the house of God’\(^8\). In one or two outposts of apostolic Paulician Christianity the tradition persevered, however, and one of these was Moravia, where in the early eighteenth century the pietistic Count Zinzendorf bought an estate for the domicile of a group of ‘scattered and persecuted co-religionists’.\(^9\) It was through his association with these Moravians that John Wesley

\(^1\) It is possible to gain access to these tombs to view the frescoes. See <http://www.catacombre.roma.it/en/catacombe.php>
\(^3\) Acts of the Apostles 2.44-46.
\(^4\) See, for example, Pliny’s letters to Trajan <http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/pliny.html> or those of Ignatius of Antioch to the Smyrnaeans <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/ignatius-smyrnaeans-hoole.html>
\(^5\) Scholarship differs as to how far the Eucharist was incorporated into the Agape and at what point it became separate. See J.F. Keating, The Agape and the Eucharist in the Early Church (London: Methuen, 1901) for an exhaustive investigation into this point.
\(^7\) I Corinthians 11.17-22.
\(^8\) Quoted in Keating, p. 152.
encountered the Love-feast – it facilitated all the aspects of ‘social holiness’\(^{10}\) that he sought in his systematisation of the proto-Methodist orthodoxy.

This article examines two artefacts connected with this aspect of early Methodist practice. The first is a hymn written specifically for the Love-feast by Charles Wesley in 1740; the second is a satirical print from 1772 which attacks the Love-feast as a synecdoche for all Methodist practice. Together the artefacts show that the very prescriptive ritual which promulgated familiarity and security within the Society served to engender fear and hatred without. The article finally uses Benton Johnson’s theory of religious variation\(^{11}\) to suggest that the incremental ferocity of the sectarian satire and ridicule directed at the Methodists\(^{12}\) created a tension which forced the Methodist Society further along the axis towards sectism, thus shaping the Methodist culture, reinforcing Methodist separatism and eventually leading in the early nineteenth century to the schism from the Anglican Church, against the express wishes of the Wesleys.\(^{13}\)

Although eighteenth-century Anglican churchgoers were used to music during services, this traditionally was in the form of plainsong chants or metrical Psalms.\(^{14}\) The purpose of the music was to worship God rather than to express any personal religious experience and was usually performed by the clergy or by a choir. John and Charles Wesley were familiar with church music, both through their upbringing in their father’s parish at Epworth and through their own ministering experience.\(^{15}\) Neither John nor Charles had any intention of leaving the Church of England\(^{16}\) so the ‘Methodist’ meetings which they originally proposed were held at different times from the Church services and were intended as an opportunity to intensify and explore the Anglican religious experience. Realising that music and song could be communal activities to underpin and cohere the intensely individualistic evangelical experience, Charles Wesley began to write ‘sacred poems’ and looked around for tunes to accompany them.\(^{17}\) These early compositions, which were not set to any prescriptive melodies, began to transform church music forever, at once interpreting, exploring and representing the individual religious experience. Vigorous and unaccompanied singing became one of the most widely acknowledged aspects of Methodist practice\(^{18}\) and it was circumscribed and regulated as were all practices.\(^{19}\) Familiar both with Anglican psalmody and with the German chorales utilised by the Moravians,\(^{20}\) the Wesleys gave some guidance in their hymnals as to which tune to use for the hymns but there was still room for improvisation and any familiar tunes could be used.\(^{21}\) Marini describes these early Evangelical hymns as ‘a primary vehicle of transcendence’ where ‘hearing or meditating upon hymns often mediate(d) the new birth’.\(^{22}\) As such they were sung both at the meetings and at the

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\(^{13}\) For instance, in 1758 John Wesley wrote a pamphlet entitled *Reasons Against a Separation from the Church of England* (London: Strachan, 1760) and Charles wrote in the Preface, ‘His twelve reasons for not separating from the Church of England are mine also. I subscribe to them with all my heart’.


\(^{15}\) Lightwood, p. 9.

\(^{16}\) See note 13 above.


\(^{18}\) Accounts such as William Riley’s in *Parochial Music Corrected* (London, 1762), speaking of the ‘deluded’ Methodists ‘profane way of singing’ and John Scott’s in *A fine picture of enthusiasm* (London: Noon, 1744), where he reports ‘there is great harmony in their singing and it is very enchanting’ give an idea of the variety and intensity of opinion surrounding Methodist music.

\(^{19}\) Just as Love-feasts were discussed and systematised at the Methodist annual conferences, so hymn-singing was subjected to rules and guidance. In the Preface to *Select Hymns with Tunes Annexed*, Wesley’s instructions included ‘Sing lustily…sing them exactly as printed…sing modestly…sing in time…above all sing spiritually’. See Lightwood for an account of the developing formal guidelines for Methodist music.


\(^{21}\) See William Riley, p.3, where some of the ‘ballad-tunes’ used by the Methodists are listed, for example, ‘Busy, curious, thirsty fly’ or ‘Sure Jocky was the bonniest swain’.

Love-feasts, which John Wesley had adopted as another form of Methodist practice; after his visit to the Moravian settlement in Herrnhut, he incorporated this communal eating and drinking occasion into the regular London calendar.23

The image of a supper or feast is used consistently throughout the Bible for the presence of God or Heaven, so for Wesley the Love-feast was a logical extension of Methodist practice – fellowship, with Scriptural evidence to support it. Because there was no Eucharist it was possible for lay preachers to lead this gathering, organising the order of prayers, conversion stories, hymns, eating and drinking into a cohesive pattern. At first the Love-feasts were only for men and were held monthly or quarterly but over time Wesley decided that there could be Love-feasts for women and eventually for mixed groups.24 The men and women would still sit separately, however. In order to differentiate the Love-feast from the Eucharist, the common food was cake and water, the cake shared on large plates or in baskets, while the water was drunk from a two-handled cup which was handed from person to person.25 Hymns were sung and testimonies were heard but there was usually no sermon at this gathering. Held in the evening so that working people might attend, the first ‘general Love-feast’, in September 1738, lasted ‘from 7 until 10 in the evening’ but by April of the following year it lasted until 3am.26 It was confined to certain groups of people within the Society, especially at first, when only the members of the Bands were allowed.27 Gradually, the invitation list expanded but entry was only permitted with a ticket and had to hold the name of the person attending.28 The late hours and exclusivity, coupled with the sound of raucous singing29 and the reputation of discord meant that non-Methodists viewed it with suspicion. Contemporary accounts spoke of ‘the passions of the people [...] rising too high, and breaking through all restraint’ and ‘the anguish of some, and the rejoicing of others’.30 In 1741 Charles Wesley wrote, ‘my soul was exceedingly sorrowful at the Love-feast to find so little soul and so much dispute’.31 As with all aspects of the Methodist Societies, John Wesley sought to regulate the Love-feast, its timing, its frequency and its segregation. In spite of the transparent regulations surrounding the Love-feast, however, it remained odd, elitist and divisive even as Wesleyan Methodism rejected the doctrine of the Elect32 and, believing that all could gain the ‘new-birth’, established and maintained a policy of universality.

24 Baker, p. 11.
26 Baker, p. 11.
27 See John Wesley’s *A Plain Account of the people Called Methodists, a letter* (6th edn, Bristol, 1764).
28 Baker, p. 36.
29 The volume of the singing is implied by the final words of *A confession of faith, sung by all the brethren and sisters at the general love-feast, November 4th, 1744. In the Tabernacle, London* (London, 1744): ‘And Loud like many Waters join!/To shout the Lamb, the Man Divine’.
30 Quoted in Philip Tovey, *The Theory and Practice of Extended Communion* (London: Ashgate, 2009), p. 42.
Come and let us sweetly join,
Christ to praise in hymns divine;
Give we all with one accord
Glory to our common Lord.

Sing we then in Jesus’ Name,
Now as yesterday the same;
One in every time and place,
Full for all of truth and grace.

Witnesses that Christ hath died,
We with Him are crucified;
Christ hath burst the bands of death,
We His quickening Spirit breathe.

Hands and hearts and voices raise,
Sing as in the ancient days;
Antedate the joys above,
Celebrate the feast of love.

Jesus, dear expected guest,
Thou art bidden to the feast,
For Thyself our hearts prepare,
Come, and sit, and banquet there!

Sanctify us, Lord, and bless,
Breathe Thy Spirit, give Thy peace,
Thou Thyself within us move,
Make our feast a feast of love.

Call, O call us each by name,
To the marriage of the Lamb;
Let us lean upon Thy breast,
Love be there our endless feast!

God His blessings shall dispense,
God shall crown His ordinance;
Meet in His appointed ways;
Nourish us with social grace.

Plead we thus for faith alone,
Faith which by our works is shown:
Only faith the grace applies.
Active faith that lives within,
Conquers earth, and hell, and sin,
Sanctifies, and makes us whole,
Forms the Savior in the soul.

Every vile affection kill,
Root out every seed of ill,
Utterly abolish sin,
Write Thy law of love within.

Hence may all our actions flow,
Love the proof that Christ we know;
Mutual love the token be,
Lord, that we belong to Thee.

Love, Thine image, love impart!
Stamp it on our face and heart!
Only love to us be given!
Lord, we ask no other heaven.

**Figure 1. Charles Wesley Hymn: Love-feast (1740)**

This hymn (Figure 1), written specifically for the Love-feast, uses a metrical form of catalectic trochaic tetrameter, regulated, predictable and an easy form for communal singing. Choosing the trochaic means that each verse can start with a strong imperative – an exhortation familiar to the congregation – ‘Come…’; ‘Sing…’; ‘Call…’. Similarly, the missing final syllable allows the line to end on a stress, useful when the leader may be ‘lining out’, that is, reading out the hymns line by line, either for an illiterate congregation or in learning new tunes. John Wesley also encouraged preachers to break off the singing at times and check whether the congregation understood what they were singing. In this hymn the strength of the opening exhortation is softened by the use of the word ‘sweetly’ and in fact this blend of agency and amelioration runs throughout the work and is representative of how a complex sense of spirituality was incorporated into Methodist practice. The hymn also has a unifying theme of time; temporal references such as ‘Now’, ‘yesterday’, ‘ancient’, ‘antedate’, at once praise the omniscience of God and reference the paleochristian experience. The hint of ancient ritual reinforced the sense of stability and tradition which John Wesley in particular wanted to perpetuate.

The lyrics of the hymn refer to several Biblical verses, echoing the Methodist reliance on Scripture; the ‘bands of death’ comes from Psalm 107:14, for instance, while ‘the marriage of the Lamb’ is from Revelation 19:6-9. Charles Wesley evidences a comprehensive knowledge of both the Old and New Testament and would rely on that recognition in the congregation. The hymn also uses a lexicon of commonality – ‘join’, ‘accord’ ‘mutual’ – which attests to the Wesleyan doctrine of ‘social grace’ but at the same time it acknowledges the individual experience of the congregant, asking for Jesus
to be ‘manifest’, to ‘within us move’, in a Lockeante" expression of the power of individual experience. In this it suggests the Methodist quest for a conversion experience which will signify true belief and assurance. The lyrics also acknowledge other Methodist doctrine – such as the idea of justification by faith, ‘Plead we thus for faith alone’ and ‘God it is Who justifies’ – but also talk of Methodist practice, such as helping others, ‘Faith which by our works is shown’. However, as would be expected in a hymn written specifically for the Love-feast, it is the yearning for ‘love’ which underpins the narrative course of the lyrics. This is both the ‘mutual love’ of the group and the love of God. In fact, at the end of the hymn ‘love’ becomes synonymous with ‘heaven’: ‘Only love to us be given!/Lord, we ask no other heaven’. Connoting both the idea of heaven on earth and of human perfection, Wesley thus acknowledges the essence of Methodist doctrine, that the ‘new birth’ can lead, after a period of perseverance, trial, good works and receiving of grace, to a condition of ‘perfection’.

It is in the sense of surfeit and excess that the hymn is linked most closely with the satirical print. Satire of Methodist practice was long-lived and far-reaching but the Love-feast conjured up particular venom in the minds of Methodist detractors. Its semantic implications of illicit sex and excess combined with the evening or late-night timings and rules of exclusivity created mistrust, fear and envy which fed into the satire. Although the Methodist regulations advocated abstinence, austerity and regularity the Love-feast seemed to contravene all these rules: the hymn talks of ‘the feast of love’, the ‘banquet’, the ‘endless feast’ and it is clear that phrases such as ‘We His quickening Spirit breathe’ or ‘Thou Thyself within us move’ conflate religious and sexualised lexicons. The satirists were thus enabled to hurl accusations of broken boundaries, of loss of sense, of family breakdown, of betrayal, promiscuity and foolishness into the highly regulated and circumscribed practice pattern of the Methodists.

Figure 2. A Methodist, Love Feast. Published 1772. I Read. Source: Library of Congress.
In *A Methodist, Love Feast* (Figure 2) the print-maker uses a combination of text and image which work contrapuntally to emphasise the satire. The woman, we are told, is ‘Our sister, Rachel’. The choice of a Biblical name with its meaning of ‘female sheep’ and the description of her as ‘sister’ instantly places her in an evangelical context of inclusivity. Relying on a persecutory discourse which links religious and sexual fervour and which connotes the evangelical leaders as sexual predators, the poem describes Rachel as inviting the priest, Cantwell, into her home ‘to ease her flame of holy Love’. Verbs which may well be used to describe Methodist ‘enthusiasm’ at prayer-meetings and sermons are here used to describe sexual passion and infidelity: ‘She sighs, he groans, she bares her breast/Each longs to make each other Blest’. We know that this is Mr. Dwindle’s home because his box is on a shelf beside the door and he arrives home unexpectedly, ‘thund’ring a hand raised this time in defence rather than exhortation. The disrupted meal is scavenged by a cat and dog, the upturned table and broken crockery symbolic of the fear of loss of order. It is a sparse interior, the only decoration being portraits of Whitefield and Wesley, religious tracts pinned on the wall and a large list of the ‘Rules and Orders’ of the Christian Society for the meeting to be held at ‘Brother Dwindle’s’. There are also the words of a ‘Grace Affirming Hymn’ on the wall, thus with great artistic economy the satirist comments on the fact that Methodist meetings are held in private homes and that there is hymn-singing at these events. The evangelical message is undermined by Rachel holding the bellows, a trope for the ‘hot air’ preached by the Methodists. In looking at these two artefacts together, the line of text from the hymn, ‘Hearts and Hands and voices raise’, commingles with the picture of George Whitefield on the wall in his characteristic raised-hands pose and with the echoing image of Rachel, to intensify the clichés on which the satirist relies. In the print, then, Methodists are represented as deceitful, derivative, greedy, cowardly and promiscuous. They represent broken boundaries, loss of moral order and social chaos.

Satirical forces raged against the Methodist Societies. A combination of scepticism, fear and curiosity produced some extremely vicious and antagonistic satire in poems, plays, music and images. Often linked with either Papists or Jacobites, the Methodists were seen as attacking Christianity from within, as threatening the order of society and as creating moral chaos. A doctrinal belief such as justification by faith, for instance, was seen as both undermining the Christian concept of doing good works and as proclaiming that evil works had no consequence, as once you were justified you had eternal salvation whatever you did. Although the hymn shows Charles Wesley as addressing this solifidian criticism, ‘Plead we thus for faith alone/Faith which by our works is shown’ the satirists were interested only in caricature and used a blanket criticism of ‘Enthusiasm’ to undermine any Methodist voice of reason.

The determination of the Wesleys to remain as part of the Church of England was increasingly challenged by the swelling environment of satirical and physical persecution faced by the Methodists, much of it by Anglican clergy. John Wesley’s attempts to regulate and systemise such practices as Love-feasts and hymn-singing were not sufficient to legitimise those practices outside the Methodist Society and they remained objects of ridicule, further distancing the Society from the Church. In an investigation of what constitutes church or sect Benton Johnson suggested that ‘the distinction between church and sect involves a single variable the values of which range along a

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37 See, for example, *The Amorous Humours and Audacious Adventures of one Wh...d* (London, 1760), which depicts George Whitefield as a predatory and promiscuous manipulator.

38 This name was familiarly used in satire for evangelical priests – see Isaac Bickerstaffe’s *The Hypocrite* (London: Griffin, 1769), for instance, or *The Love-feast, a poem, by the author of The Saints* (London: J. Bew, 1778).

39 *The Love Feast’ a Poem*, is dedicated to ‘The Whole Communion of Fanatics who infest Great Britain’.

40 Lyles, pp. 25-31.


42 Lyles, Chapter Two.

43 Lyles, p. 19.
continuum from complete acceptance to complete rejection of the environment’;\textsuperscript{44} churches are in low tension with their environment while sects are in high tension. The Methodists rejected society and maintained tension by condemnation of its value system – as Charles Wesley writes in the hymn, ‘Every vile affection kill/Root out every seed of ill’ – by establishing entrance-restricted group activities denoted in the print and by creating a strict, punishing and alienating quotidian schedule for themselves. The high state of tension with the environment is both represented and reinforced by the tension between the Love-feast hymn and the Love-feast satirical print; the satirical attack on schism served only to perpetuate it, to improve cohesion and to augment a sect mentality\textsuperscript{45} which ultimately separated the Methodist Society from the Wesleys’ revered and venerated Church of England.

\textsuperscript{44} Johnson, p. 544.
\textsuperscript{45} See Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, Acts of Faith (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2000), Chapter Six, for an investigation into religious group dynamics.
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The Nineteenth-Century Mapping of the Himalaya by the Pundits

Robert Stanley

Abstract
The route mapping of the Himalayan region during the nineteenth century involved disguised Pundits engaged in clandestine survey of the remote and mostly inaccessible areas of Tibet. This essay examines the survey through two artefacts; the Tibetan prayer wheel and the route map of the expedition to Lhasa. This mapping as part of the larger trigonometric survey of India was perhaps one of the last great explorations that contributed to a knowledge bank that would protect British India but ultimately lead to the violation of this previously isolated area of the world.

The mapping of the Himalaya region during the latter part of the nineteenth century is one of the more remarkable undertakings of the period. The clandestine mapping exploits of the native surveyors or pundits engaged in the British survey of the Himalaya during the latter part of the nineteenth century was conducted at a time when travel between India and the Gobi Desert across the Tibetan Plateau was restricted, and information was vague at best. These surveyor-explorer-spy-adventurers through their feats of endurance, skill and bravery added to the understanding of the vast region and contributed to the security of the British interests in the sub-continent. Two artefacts, a prayer wheel and a route map, as tool for and result of the survey exercise, serve as fitting artefact representative of this undertaking. The prayer wheel, used to disguise the identity and intention of the carrier, and to store route mapping data, was an important tool in many of the route map surveys. The maps produced by those who used such disguises and wandered up into the high Himalayas both informed the defenders of British India and also provided information from which British incursion northward would then follow.

Those involved in this endeavour from the 1860s ventured into a huge terra incognita to the outside world and certainly a void in strategic knowledge of the geo-political powers of the day: British India and Tsarist Russia. In order to address that knowledge deficit for the British, the pundits embarked upon ‘route surveys’ (of distance and direction) in the clear understanding that the inhabitants to the north strictly forbade such encroachments and discovery of their purpose could result in severe punishment and even death.

From the 1860s, Captain Thomas G. Montgomerie most clearly recognised the value of having people from Indian border states trained as surveyors so that they might explore areas that were deemed off-limits to all outsiders, particularly Europeans, the seizure of whom Montgomerie felt could, ‘lead to outrage’. Critical of previous survey attempts that had been conducted independently, Montgomerie attempted to have surveyors travel in ways that would build up a matrix of data most valuable to creating an overall picture. Pundits also made observations on people, commerce and settlements thereby building remarkably detailed pictures of the journeys.

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From Peshawar in 1867, Montgomerie as 'spymaster'\(^3\) directed mapping operations to the north; the Pundits themselves designated code names (numbers or initials), the first, Nain Singh Rawat dubbed 'No. 1'. These men, possibly as few as twenty in number, were Brahmans and they were recruited into the Indian Survey team. Their motivation for taking on such dangerous work could be no more romantic than a living wage, yet for long journeys, up to three years' worth of wages might be paid in advance.\(^4\) Nain Singh's father incurred many debts from his various liaisons,\(^5\) yet Pundit contemporary descriptions are limited to survey leader reports, thus a lot of this detail is lost.\(^6\) A device instrumental in both logging route survey information and creating a disguise for the Pundit was the hand-held Tibetan prayer wheel. This is a simple metal cylinder set atop a wooden handle that becomes its axle. The external markings are an embossed prayer script, ('Om mani peme hung') encircling the cylinder which may be encrusted with various decorations and stones. A small bead is tethered to the cylinder by a short cord or chain, and when the handle is rotated this applies a centrifugal force to the cylinder that sets the wheel spinning. The rotation sends the prayer of the carrier upwards. Within its core, and removable by lifting the lid, are paper scrolls of these prayers. The example provided here is a portable version of the large drum versions that are commonly situated near Buddhist monasteries in Tibet and Bhutan, which can also be spun by the hands of passers-by in order to gain merit.

Holy men and devout pilgrims walked the remote roads and tracks of the high Himalaya gaining merits for the journey to Lhasa,\(^7\) the capital of Tibet, the location of which was understood in India prior to the survey merely as 'a matter of guess'.\(^8\) Pilgrims were known to prostrate themselves and rise repeatedly marking out body-lengths over hundreds of miles of pilgrimage.

\(^4\) Waller, p. 42.
\(^5\) Stewart, p. 56.
\(^6\) The Montgomerie reports in The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society constitute a rare example.
\(^7\) Stewart, p. 24.
\(^8\) Montgomerie, 'Report on a route survey', p. 130.
For the purposes of the survey, a prayer wheel was adapted most notably through the replacement of the internal paper prayers with blank paper, which was then used by the Pundit for the recording of distance, altitude, and directional information gathered. A compass could also be secreted beneath the removable lid of the wheel, while a thermometer, used for calculating altitude (by measuring the temperature at which water boiled), was often hidden elsewhere on the Pundit’s person. Some even carried a small sextant (used for establishing latitude) within their robes. Therefore, the prayer wheel was both tool-kit and disguise. Pundits also adapted the string of prayer beads (‘nama’) for the purpose of distance measurement, reducing the number from the traditional 108 to one hundred. Then, having been trained to take steps of a certain uniform length, the pundit could subsequently count off the hundred identical steps, flick a bead, and thereby make an accurate estimate of the distance covered. The compass could be used to judge the direction of those steps from starting point to finish. All this data could then be stored within the wheel, in the belief that it was unlikely that strangers would inspect a prayer wheel to any great degree.

Yet what importance is there in using a religious object for what is, in any reasonable interpretation, a clandestine spying purpose, regardless of a more noble justification of increasing the geographic information for mankind? Such a question requires the interpretation of a modern moral judgement from one particular time upon another, over one hundred and fifty years earlier, which, of course, invites challenge. Yet the very sacrilegious nature of the disguise provided much of its power as subterfuge. That is not to say that travelling holy men did not attract suspicion, and Pundits using this disguise were on occasion searched and even apprehended. If tested, and discovered as false, the religiosity of the chosen disguise would increase the severity of punishment so adopting such a disguise had its risks.

The religious devotion of those pilgrims on passage to Lhasa is juxtaposed against the cunning of the interloper. As to the subjectivity of what constitutes noble endeavour, even for the Royal Geographical Society, post-Francis Younghusband’s invasion of Tibet (an invasion which was to reach Lhasa), a Royal Geographical Society medal for the exploration of Tibet would obviously be viewed very differently in Lhasa and in London. This also invites questions as to the justification of using local personnel as Pundits, and paid relatively little for this hazardous work but this, however, cannot be examined here. It is sufficient to note that this should be viewed in the context of the time and the practices prevalent throughout British India at the time.

Yet the wearing of disguise in order to cross dangerous terrain was not unique to those who dressed as holy men in order to survey for Britain. The earliest ‘Great Game’ exponents, mostly European adventurers such as Moorcroft, had been making variously disguised incursions into the north-western frontier of India (now Pakistan) and Tibet for many years prior to the survey with varying degrees of success. The Pundits themselves utilised other disguises that had to be adapted to the particular environment and those encountered along the way; holy men becoming traders to fit the requirements of area traversed.

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9 Liquid mercury was also used to establish trigonometric readings by theodolite.
10 Waller, p. 42.
The trigonometric survey technique using chain used to create the Indian survey map (see Figure 2) and the Pundit route survey (see Figure 3) differed in significant ways. The Great Trigonometric Survey of India begun in 1802 took over sixty years to complete, and over that period created triangles and transepts the length and breadth of India. From an initial reference point at sea level, the measuring of grid triangles advanced across the landscape by use of ‘triangulation chains’ allowing surveyors to place each reference point accurately in relation to the first and its surrounds and thereby build up a network of neat triangulated position data points across the sub-continent. To place the distant peaks of the high Himalaya in relation to these reference points and thereby measure their height accurately, a method of ‘secondary triangulation’ (noted in text on map and seen in detail in the last map; see Figure 3) fixed the location and height using a bulky theodolite. This method was utilised in 1852 to establish the position of Mount Everest. The extensions seen are from the arc across the southern bounds of the Himalaya first established by the survey.

However, the route survey technique (see Figure 2) used by the Pundits in the less accessible terrain, differed; without the luxury of being able to set up equipment in the open and triangulate positions, the data was gathered mostly by pacing distance, using compass for direction and also measuring altitude by thermometer. The Pundit stride length, despite years of training at Dehra Dun, could not remain consistent therefore introducing error. Pundits, often in peril and fatigued, also had to improvise which would also adversely impact the accuracy of the maps. Trigonometric readings could be taken by understanding the distance and direction and plotting these using the hypotenuse each time but this would involve taking compass readings for the reference point to the original point, a dangerous undertaking subject to the risk of being observed. Each route had to link up with previous knowledge to fill-in blank or questionable areas. Route survey leaders would be frustrated at not being able to link data from various Pundit travels (that is to say, to have routes bound one data set to its neighbour), thereby turning line into picture. They were, however, restricted by the road or river they were following, choosing a route as best they could.

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Figure 2. Route map of the ‘Pundit *_____’ 1857 from Nepal to Lhasa expedition. © Royal Geographical Society

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Objects such as the prayer wheel and even more so, an adapted wheel or the data produced in the form of the map cannot be viewed without the viewer's particular attitudes to colonialism flavouring perception. The artefact cannot be viewed as isolated object even within its cultural context (Tibetan Buddhism) but rather exists within its context filtered through history. The many events and interpretations of history in the intervening years impose themselves upon an object such as this. The label ‘Tibetan’ has come to carry with it in the Western consciousness all the baggage of a long intervening period of Chinese annexation, an exiled Tibetan religious leader and a Tibetan diaspora in Northern India, documentaries of a mysterious plateau 4,000 metres in the air beyond the highest mountain range in the world.

The map also represents a particular vision of the world and the nineteenth-century maps reflect a very modern western scientific vision. They use and build upon the best available knowledge to gain a better understanding of the physical world and attempt at least to convert the unknown or poorly understood into something that can be seen, very much quantified and significantly given boundaries. Maps are therefore tools for limiting and controlling; defining just as they are illuminating devices, simultaneously creating knowledge and destroying the romance of the previously unknown. They therefore de-mythologise the world as they explain it.

Geographic knowledge, of course, also provides power; an advantage that could more easily be converted to control over those areas or exploitation of their resources. For those powers, primarily the British and Russian empires, wrestling for control over large
swathes of the globe for which only blanks could then mostly be attributed, a detailed understanding could be decisive. From the British perspective, with the safety of the Indian Empire interpreted in terms of the perceived viability of a land-based invasion from the west and north, understanding the northern frontier of India was all important.

This ‘Great Game’ or ‘Tournament of Shadows’ was a geo-political struggle played out primarily between Britain and Russia\(^\text{12}\) but Persia and China were important players as well; China being particularly important as the Pundits often needed permissions to traverse Chinese-influenced territories. And these survey exercises must be seen within the context of an extremely volatile time (spanning the Anglo-Afghan wars, the Crimean War and a seemingly inexorable Russian advance towards Afghanistan and India). The map must therefore be viewed within the complex and dynamic prism of the geo-political and military maneuvering within and towards the region, a crucial part of protecting the British empire by understanding that frontier and, equally importantly, understanding the northern approaches to that frontier, which was by any measure, an extremely volatile environment.\(^\text{13}\)

This knowledge would eventually turn that defence into a more aggressive stance with the 1904 (tenuously sanctioned) Younghusband lead British invasion. Similarly, the twentieth-century occupation of Tibet by the Han Chinese was made viable by the knowledge generated in the earlier period. In this sense, the attitudes or motivations of the map makers are made subservient to the usage of that knowledge. The map then subverted and destroyed the cozy security of those who relied on the remoteness and relative inaccessibility to hold back the outside world, a destruction of the mysterious noted earlier.

These two artefacts are important in that they represent the imagination of the framers of the survey, the endeavour, bravery and skills of the Pundits, and the romance of the age. The prayer wheel straddles the romance and mystery of Tibet and the cunning of the spy determined to penetrate the layers of that mystery. The maps of the trigonometric survey were a most advanced scientific approach to understanding the physical environment of their time and the route maps complemented that survey. Maps at once record the ambitions of the makers and describe their own cultural attributes; the motivations of the mappers enmeshed in the geo-political struggles of the time. They should be understood not simply through the simplistic lens as expansionist tools, along with the negative interpretations that can be imposed on them for that reason. It would not, therefore, be useful to view either artefact through a purely apologist nor celebratory lens when elements of both surely cohabit these two objects.

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Sacred Profanity: Decoding the Lily
in Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s *The Blessed Damozel*

Julie Ann Whyman

Abstract

It would be all too easy to dismiss Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s flowers as frivolous nosegays if it were not for their proliferation, compositional relevance and contextual symbolism. This paper argues that flowers, rather than merely scenting Rossetti’s work, contribute to its intrinsic structure, profundity and thematic substance. By comparing Rossetti’s poetic and visual depictions of just one flower, the lily, in *The Blessed Damozel* (1847-81) with relevant entries in Reverend Hilderic Friend’s *Flowers and Flower Lore* (1883) it seeks to stimulate an increasingly fruitful examination of the significance of floral symbolism in Rossetti’s oeuvre.

A lesson in each flower
A story in each tree and bower
In every herb on which we tread
Are written words, which rightly read
Will lead us from earth’s fragrant sod
To hope, and holiness to God.¹

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) was the creator of ‘beautiful women with floral adjuncts’ according to his brother William.² He cites ‘the gentlemen who commissioned or purchased the pictures’ as being ‘chiefly responsible’, implying that flowers were supplementary to Rossetti’s aesthetic vision.³ This contention supports critics denigrating Rossetti’s output as a confusion of irrelevant, unrelated notions⁴ and offers an explanation for why his style was ‘quite out of favour’ for much of the twentieth century.⁵ However, given the significance of detail in his work, the plethora of nineteenth-century floral texts, and Rossetti’s life-long interest in legend and myth,⁶ it is remarkable that a more comprehensive examination of the significance of floral symbolism in his work is still to be achieved.⁷

By comparing entries in Reverend Hilderic Friend’s two-volume floral compendium, *Flowers and Flower Lore* (1883) with Rossetti’s use of the lily in *The Blessed Damozel*, this paper uncovers the documented Victorian understanding of symbolism associated with the flower. It will ask if and how this knowledge contributes to a deeper appreciation of Rossetti’s creative output and considers the wider implications of these revelations.

⁷ Notable floral symbolism contributors include Debra Mancoff and Sarah Phelps Smith.
The Blessed Damozel is not one but at least eight incarnations of the imparadised female, expressed through three surviving poems and at least five pictures. Continually approaching his work with ‘a fresh eye’, the blessed damozel occupied Rossetti for much of his life, first appearing in a poem written before 12 May 1847 and published with amendments in The Germ in February 1850. It was completed shortly before his death. In 1875, nearly thirty years after his first poetic composition, Rossetti created not one but two large-scale paintings of the subject: one commissioned by Glaswegian William Graham in 1871 and a second painted speculatively for Liverpool ship owner, F. R. Leyland, purchased in late January 1881 (Figure 1).

Although these paintings and Rossetti’s poems possess ‘essentially independent identities’ due to the time span between their creation, the depiction of the lily in both

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9 Today exists only in an 1855 memorial reconstruction.
12 Bullen, p. 242.
principal pictures is faithful to the poetry and is remarkably consistent. Other related works include a black and red chalk drawing created for Graham in 1873 and another to persuade Leyland to part with his money, described as ‘one of the best things I ever did – more a picture than a drawing’. Rossetti completed a fifth work in 1874, which he referred to as his ‘gilded picture’, best known today as Sancta Lilias. During Rossetti’s lifetime, floral lexicography was popular throughout Europe, the Americas and particularly widespread in England following the translation of Charlotte de la Tour’s Le Langage des Fleurs (1834). As well as recording sacred and profane interpretations of the natural world for posterity, the art of florigraphy encoded meaning through flower choice and combination, colour, size, position, health, time of growth and period of decline. Bede (circa 672-735 CE) is credited with being among the first to promote the lily as a fitting symbol for the Madonna: ‘the pure white petals signifying her spotless body; the golden anthers within typifying her soul, sparking divine light’. In 1882, the lily became synonymous with the Feast of the Visitation commemorating the journey taken by Mary to visit Elizabeth, her expectant cousin. Friend highlights that ‘in almost every case, where representation of the event is made, white lilies stand by the Virgin’s side, three mystic flowers crowning their three stems’, their number presumably relating to the Holy Trinity. Rossetti demonstrates his knowledge of this association in The Girlhood of the Mary Virgin (1848-9) and Ecce Ancilla Domini! (1849-50).

One cannot be certain, however, that Rossetti ever owned a Victorian flora symbolica text, for although there are fifty unidentified volumes catalogued among his belongings, his library inventory does not list a specific floral title. Emblematic floral codes were nevertheless commonplace in medieval and early modern literature, both of which held significant interest for Rossetti. Indeed, he refers to a seventeenth-century text, John Gerard’s The herball or Generall historie of plantes (1633). Shakespearean metaphor and Chaucerian symbolism when researching the snowdrop, and he shared an intimate understanding of the ‘simple chastity of nature’ with other Pre-Raphaelites. He was particularly sentient of the anthropomorphic quality of flowers, describing how, for example, the peach fruit ‘resembled the human heart’ and its leaf the tongue in one of his favourite crayon drawings, Silence (1870).

15 Fredeman, letter from D. G. Rossetti to Charles Augustus Howell, Thursday 20 August 1874, p. 526.
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15 Fredeman, letter from D. G. Rossetti to Ford Madox Brown, Wednesday, 28 May 1873, now in the private collection of Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber.
16 Fredeman, letter from D. G. Rossetti to Charles Augustus Howell, Thursday 20 August 1874, p. 526.
18 Friend, p. 152.
20 Friend, p. 153.
23 Engelhardt, p. 137.
Indeed, along with *The Blessed Damozel* where the white lily, the purest of all species demands one’s attention, flowers are highlighted in many of Rossetti’s mature paintings.²⁸ Despite John Rothenstein’s assertion that Rossetti had ‘neither the inclination, nor […] the capacity’ to imitate nature, floral emblems are often either central to, or create an indisputable focus within, Rossetti’s composition. In *Bocca Baciata* (1859), for instance, the marigold transforms into the voluminous hair of his subject, and in *Lady Lilith* (1867) a profusion of roses emulates the sensual movement of the woman’s hair as it falls from the comb. When painting *Venus Verticordia* (1864-8) he ‘lost infinite time looking for honeysuckles’ and admitted that his long search for the perfect species had ‘left him penniless’.³⁰ Should further evidence of Rossetti’s floral empathy be required, one has only to compare Rossetti’s painting of *The Blessed Damozel* with Edward Burne-Jones’s interpretation.³¹ Burne-Jones (1833-1898) chooses to present his damozel *sine lilia*, Rossetti, in contrast, positions three gaping lilies centrally, to the right of the canvas, disrupting the work’s largely symmetrical composition and immediately focusing attention on the white and gold floral bouquet. Obviously more than accessories to the profusion of ‘rich stuffs and jewels’³² supposedly dominating Rossetti’s paintings, lilies suggestively mirror the angle of the sword hilt in the predella below. This subversive visual relationship is surely deliberate, being evocative of male and female anatomy and the fertility of the sexual act.

Intimate physical connectivity is also explored in Rossetti’s poetry, although when the lily first appears, it does so with deceptive innocence for: ‘She had three lilies in her hand’.³³ Although this iambic tetrameter appears to be solely descriptive, an understanding of flower lore is revelatory. The white lily or Lady-Lily³⁴ (*lilium candidum*) is one of several flowers especially devoted to and representative of the Virgin, being naturally symbolic of purity and beauty.³⁵ Before the lily became a sacred Christian symbol, however, its identity was decidedly profane being first associated with ancient Norse, Greek and Roman deities; Freyja, Hera/Juno and Venus:

> The ancients believed plants to be under the rule of certain deities, and when the great goddess has laid a powerful hold upon men’s minds, and her name has become associated with many common objects, she could only be banished from men’s thoughts by transferring what had been sacred to her to the Virgin Mary.³⁶

This syncretism is particularly pertinent when lilies make their second appearance in the poem, again unchanged in all versions: ‘And the lilies lay as if asleep/Along her bended arm’.³⁷ The lily may be sacredly pure but according to ancient myth, it also embodies its less chaste alter ego: Juno’s rose. According to legend, Jupiter placed his illegitimate child into the arms of Juno, his wife, as she lay sleeping. When the child had taken his fill, some of the goddess’ milk was spilt as he withdrew from her breast. This precious milk is thought to have formed the Milky Way in the heavens and the rose of Juno, or lily, on earth.³⁸ For Rossetti the poet, the lily paradoxically engenders both the sanctity of the maidenhead and the fecundity of copulation. But for Rossetti the artist and widower, it must surely have evoked the poignant memory of his distraught wife, Lizzie, cradling their phantom stillborn child.

²⁸ Friend, p. 152.
³² Bate, p. 44.
³⁴ Friend, p. 6.
³⁵ Friend, p. 102.
³⁶ Friend, p. 82.
³⁸ Friend, p. 95.
The loss of ‘the spirit child of the blessed damozel’ in 1861 was an ill omen that haunted Rossetti for the rest of his life, rendered all the more painful by the subsequent demise of his wife and second unborn child. This conflation of expectant pleasure with tremulous foreboding is reflected in both principal paintings where lilies emerge from beneath the damozel’s diaphanous veil: its spectral presence threatening the delicate exposed blooms. Beauty is tinged with apprehension as Rossetti deftly creates a vacillating field of attraction and repulsion, the drawing in and the pushing away, so typical of his *modus operandi*.

Nonetheless, the lily, in its natural eternal fragility, offers some hope of life beyond the grave thanks to the floral ideology of Marian apotheosis. According to flower lore when apostles visited Mary’s grave three days after her interment, they discovered it open and filled with roses and lilies: for centuries emblems of mother and son. Resurrection and reunification are, it seems, theoretically possible: a theme explicated throughout *The Blessed Damozel*. Yet, this ethereal supernatural potential, though removed from earth, seems to be grounded within the physical realm:

> She had three lilies in her hand  
> And the stars in her hair were seven.

> Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,  
> No wrought flowers did adorn,  
> But a white rose of Mary’s gift,  
> For service meetly [sic] worn.

Rossetti attributes the ‘wrought’ adjective to the lily, alluding to its nature as ‘worked’ or cultivated on earth in contrast to the wild, unblemished rose, gifted by the heavenly Virgin. This demarcation tends to suggest that the sacred lily becomes sullied by man’s profane touch, reflecting the paradoxical tension between the Desired and the Desiring in the depiction of *The Blessed Damozel*. Further insight from Friend points to the intimate relationship enjoyed by the lily as king of the garden and the rose as queen: they grow in the same soil but possess quite different traits, the lily in this case being the more dominant. This quality is embodied within the holy maiden who possesses a physical potency so strong that she transmutes the inanimate boundary separating her from her lover. In the paintings, her presence dominates the composition, towering over the diminutive figure in the predella. Like the lily, she is the more assertive bloom:

> And still she bowed herself and stooped  
> Out of the circling charm;  
> Until her bosom must have made  
> The bar she leaned on warm,  
> And the lilies lay as if asleep  
> Along her bended arm.

Rossetti’s lilies, meanwhile, visually evocative of the carnal delights in store, lie ‘as if asleep’, in anticipation of their (sexual) awakening. This simile is crucial, for the lily is simultaneously dormant and about to stir; unconsciously conscious, possessing an abundance of potential.

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41 Friend, pp. 151-52.  
42 The *Germ*, 1:5-6 & 2:1-4.  
43 Friend, p. 212.  
Symbolising the fusion of Madonna and sexualised woman, this image of the damozel is the antithesis of Rossetti’s *Sancta Lilias*, one of his first blessed damozel paintings.\(^{45}\) Although Rossetti himself described the flowers in his gilded picture as ‘lilies’,\(^{46}\) and the catalogue for the memorial exhibition of his works at the *Burlington Fine Arts Club* (1883) listed them as such,\(^{47}\) they are, in fact, yellow irises.\(^{48}\)

Contrary to popular opinion the lily and the iris belong to separate genera (*liliaceae* and *iridaceae* respectively) and are botanically fields apart. Rossetti, so fastidious about flowers, is unlikely to have misidentified the bloom for he appears to be well-acquainted with the iris: in 1854, while writing to Ford Madox Brown, he recounts how he had recently drawn Lizzie’s head ‘with iris stuck in her dear hair’.\(^{49}\) He may, therefore, have been referring to the lilies in his poetry rather than the flowers painted on his canvas. Conversely, Friend proffers another possible explanation: the iris, the fleur-de-luce from classical mythology, is also known as the fleur-de-lys: literally flower of the lily. Rossetti is likely to have known about this interdependence and may have been experimenting with the allusion of the golden lily flower. What is clear is that Rossetti’s iconography in the Byzantine-inspired *Sancta Lilias* is definitively more sacred than profane and the iris is symbolically more appropriate. According to Friend’s flower lore, the spontaneous blossoming of irises emblazoned with the *Ave Maria* on a grave of a devoted servant was a sign that earthly supplication could be heard in heaven.\(^{50}\)

When Rossetti painted the iris in Lizzie’s hair it had been during ‘one of the happiest times of his life’\(^{51}\) and *Sancta Lilias* may well be a reflection of an idealised memory of that time. Reflecting the enduring connection between the imparadised lover and her earthly paramour this iris-wielding damozel certainly has more in common with Rossetti’s retiring Dantean heroine, Beatrice, than the sexually provocative lily-bearer, appearing in the later versions for Graham and Leyland. The reason for this may be as pragmatic as it is figurative.

Rossetti was an artist with an eye for business and demonstrated ‘a lack of interest’ in painting anything unprofitable.\(^{52}\) Having promised the picture to Charles Augustus Howell, when Howell failed to ‘stump up’ the money, Rossetti sold *Sancta Lilias* to the Cowper Temples.\(^{53}\) The golden iris, as well as being metaphorically sympathetic to its context, perfectly complements the gilded background, avoiding the necessity to define the body and thus facilitating swifter commercial success.

But herein lies the dilemma, because although arguing that Rossetti’s flowers are critical to both his aesthetic expression and to his profitability, he is not so much concerned with floral minutiae per se but rather with how they combine to evoke sensation. Jerome McGann describes this phenomenon as Rossetti showing ‘the sublime value of enduring human affections … of man’s infinite capacity for sensational response’.\(^{54}\) It is as if Rossetti is seeking to dissolve the limits of finality and challenge the annihilation of not only the spirit but the body, too. In doing so he suggests that endless spiritual unity does not necessitate the erosion of sexual feeling while also significantly rejecting the profane expression of sexual pleasure. He aims instead to purify the ‘meanness’ and ‘repugnance’ of the ‘degradation’ of sensuality.\(^{55}\) For Rossetti, the sacred and the profane are intimate bedfellows: chromatically not black and white but fifty or more shades of grey.


\(^{46}\) Fredeman, letter from D. G. Rossetti to Charles Augustus Howell, p. 526.

\(^{47}\) https://archive.org/details/picturesdrawing00tebbgoog [accessed 1 March 2015].


\(^{49}\) Hawksley, p. 83.

\(^{50}\) Friend, pp. 104-5.

\(^{51}\) Hawksley, p. 83.

\(^{52}\) Henry Campbell, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Three Papers read to the Rossetti Society of Birchington* (Birchington: Beresford, 1993), paper 2, p. 16.

\(^{53}\) Fredeman, letter from D. G. Rossetti to Charles Augustus Howell, p. 530.

\(^{54}\) McGann, p. 41.

Any meaningful decoding of the lily has to acknowledge that Rossetti used flowers to embellish his work with attractive motifs the discerning could interpret. Ever conscious of his artistic whoredom,\textsuperscript{56} dependent upon the ‘whims and fancies’ of his audience, he wrote poetry and painted pictures for financial gain when \textit{flora symbolica} and floriography were predominant and profitable cultural trends. In communion with Nature herself, Rossetti subversively deploys lilies to manipulate two extremes - the sacred and the profane - blurring their essence and fusing them into one \textit{sacrae} paradox. This ludic code, although decodable by digesting floral lore such as Hilderic Friend’s, remains ultimately impenetrable because its fluctuating allusion is amorphous and enigmatically elusive. The lily is simultaneously representative of the Mother of God and a woman pregnant with potential; a devotional icon and a lover; a \textit{puer aeternus} and a child no more; heavenly and yet earth-bound; dead, yet very much alive; gone but forever present. Conversely, Rossetti’s lily, ‘lying as if asleep’, proclaims that human sexuality, like the flower, is not a meaningless, trivial adjunct but a sacred blossoming of the Divine itself, as ephemeral and fragile as it is inscrutable.

\textsuperscript{56} ‘I have often said that to be an artist is just the same thing as to be a whore, as far as dependence on the whims and fancies of individuals is concerned,’ Fredeman, letter from D. G. Rossetti to Ford Madox Brown, 20 August 1874, p. 527.
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Power and Identity: Indian Clubs as a Vehicle for Comprehending Material Culture

George D. Lee

Abstract

People assign meaning to objects, or accept meaning provided to them by others. Using the history of Indian clubs as a vehicle, an analysis model is developed and applied with the goal of uncovering what creates and changes the meaning and actions associated with a material object, and examines two opposing artefacts as evidence of the model’s viability.

Material culture is an interdisciplinary academic field that explores how matter produces human meaning (by constituting and influencing beliefs and values) and action (on those beliefs and values, which are often grounded in social, political and economic systems). Physical culture was a term coined in the nineteenth century which generally encompassed any reference to a specific group’s fitness ideals and methods. Fitness implements like Indian clubs are not only a part of a group’s physical culture but its material culture as well because they are crafted objects that produce meaning and create action. In order to understand just what meaning and actions were brought about by the clubs requires a brief knowledge of their history.

As Lemaire wrote, ‘[t]hat the club is the most ancient weapon nobody can deny; it is also the most natural and handy that could be found, and consequently the first used by man, for we find that Cain slew Abel with a club’. Hindu art often depicts a club in the hands of deities like Vishnu and Hanuman, where it symbolized both spiritual and physical strength (Figure 1).

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According to Hoffman’s 1990 correspondence with N. L. Nigam, Director of the Salarjung Museum in India:

The Indian club can be traced [to] the war club, or gada, a symbol of invincible physical prowess and worldly power. Through the Islamic period, Rajput rulers and Muslim sultans favored the gada as the preferred weapon of combat. It was considered a great honor for a warrior to be trained in the use of the battle club. Through the ages, the war club changed in both name and form.5

Todd asserts that primitive cultures valued swinging big clubs,6 and at some point this value doubled when the club moved from weapon to strength implement and gained a second utilitarian purpose. Soldiers in Moghul armies allegedly ‘paid the minutest attention’ to individual training, which included daily exercises with mugdar (Indian) clubs.7 By the time the British had colonized India, club swinging was observed to have been practiced for physical conditioning: ‘[t]he exercise is in great repute among the native soldiery, police and others whose caste renders them liable to emergencies where great strength of muscle is desirable’.8 After adopting a less strenuous routine for military drill, the British brought the clubs back to Europe, where Germans and Czechs incorporated club swinging into their own physical cultures.9 When the failure of the 1848 revolution prompted the migration of Germans to the United States they brought the clubs to America,10 where the art was assimilated into U.S. military drill in the late nineteenth century.11

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8 Kehoe, p. 8.
10 Thomas, Tae Kwon Do Times.
11 Thomas, Tae Kwon Do Times.
By the early twentieth century, the clubs had already taken hold of the civilian population in Great Britain and the United States as one of the first fitness crazes of modern times, with Queen Victoria endorsing their use and American entrepreneurs commercializing their availability to the average person. In many Western societies, this was a period where sedentariness was replacing manual labour in the workforce as the world fashioned by the Industrial Revolution achieved permanence; gymnasiums opened in cities and the Indian club was a key fitness implement. The clubs became a 'national pastime', and an instructional manual of the day claimed that 'no home is properly furnished without at least a pair'. Colleges and social bodies transformed club swinging into synchronized group activities, and the clubs were Olympic events in 1904 and 1932. However, when society relaxed during the 1920s and 1930s, Indian clubs were identified with the stifling Victorian morals of an earlier time, and eventually became obsolete as individual development was replaced by competitive sports in Western physical culture.

Although Indian clubs began as weapons and then evolved into fitness implements, over time they were also inculcated with other connotations. Clubs have often been associated with masculinity:

The ordinary weapon of the athletic god Hercules was a club [...] In ancient times, both in Greece and Rome [...] the strongest athletes were fond of brandishing clubs, believing themselves to be representatives of Hercules.

In 1834, Donald Walker authored a book entitled British Manly Exercises, wherein club swinging figured prominently; later, Walker followed up with another text called Exercises for Ladies Calculated to Preserve and Improve Beauty, in which he introduced the Indian sceptre (a lightweight version of the Indian club) that used many of the same movements in club swinging. Other authors also introduced books aimed at teaching women the art, and the clubs gained an association with femininity while also remaining steadfastly masculine. Although similar in their respective fitness aims, these gender associations markedly differed once they acquired nationalistic connotations: the image of the club can epitomise the manly protector and defender of the tribe (i.e. Hercules and Indian warriors), yet club swinging by women (as a means to health) was promoted in America during the late nineteenth century as a way to populate the country with native offspring rather than immigrants. Lastly, the nineteenth century saw the rise of the Muscular Christiani movement, where the notion that 'the male body reflected moral character, and that strong, healthy men made up a healthy nation' merged nationalism and religion into a vehicle for spiritual and physical strength, and which call back to the club's more ancient Hindu symbolism.

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12 Hoffman, p. 9.
13 Hoffman, p. 6. See also Bishop quoted in 'War Clubs' by the Iowa Health and Physical Readiness Alliance, [http://www.ihpra.org/war_clubs.htm] [accessed 1 March 2015].
14 Hoffman, p. 27. See also Alter, p. 512. Although clubs were eventually sold by many vendors, both authors credit Kehoe with establishing Indian clubs as a mass exercise routine in the United States.
16 Wisconsin Historical Society 'Indian Clubs for Physical Exercise'.
18 Hoffman, pp. 12, 16; and Alter, p. 522.
19 Thomas, Tae Kwon Do Times.
20 Hoffman, p. 16.
21 Alter, p. 503.
22 Lemaire, p. 7.
23 Todd, pp. 8-9.
25 Alter, p. 519. See also Wisconsin Historical Society 'Indian Clubs for Physical Exercise'.
26 Alter, p. 516.
Thus, a limited analysis of the history surrounding Indian clubs seems to reveal a basic grouping of like functions and effects, as depicted below (Figure 2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin (action): Weapon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strength Symbol (meaning)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Assimilation (meaning)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity (meaning)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Adaptation (meaning)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion (meaning)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2: Indian Club Outcome Categories.** Design by the author.

The chart’s underlying premise is that an object’s original purpose precedes its subsequent meanings, and any actions from those meanings. The club originated as a weapon for action, and this function could be termed its First Order use. Following its origin, as the club became a fitness implement it still retained its original purpose for action but gained an associated purpose as well, which can be called its Second Order use. Later, these uses – either singly or together – symbolised strength; because this symbolism is representative of these uses rather than a separate function or effect, it too is within the Second Order. As these uses became assimilated into existing culture, the original purpose for action ceased; new meanings arose which seemingly aligned with accepted gender norms and thus established a Third Order use in promoting masculinity and femininity, albeit in very different ways. Finally, masculine and feminine uses were adapted to serve other purposes (nationalism and religion), and therefore constitute a Fourth Order use. Depending on additional repurposing, further orders (e.g. Fifth Order, Sixth Order, etc.) could conceivably exist.

At least as it pertains to Indian clubs, the functions depicted on the chart imply that the basic quality which created and influenced this object’s meaning (and actions based upon this and subsequent meanings) is power: power, through the body, to conquer and defend; power to build and preserve national identity; and power to transcend opposing forces, and perhaps even human existence. As such, power can be rightfully termed the use outcome of the object, due to its original purposes for action (as a weapon, and later a fitness implement); the lesser order functions and effects (in this case masculinity, femininity, nationalism, and religion) essentially involve changes in meaning on which proceeding actions occur, and are properly called derived outcomes, since they are derived from the original purpose of the item but are only related to this purpose through the use outcome. Interestingly, in the case of Indian clubs all of the derived outcomes centre on defining concepts of identity, which is itself a form of power, particularly in groups.27

In testing any hypothesis, the key consideration is not how a theory holds against positive results but against negative ones. As evidence of the potential viability of exploring material culture through a use-outcome model of analysis, what follows is an examination of two artefacts involving Indian clubs that are diametrically opposed in

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27 See also Hoffman, pp. 30-41 for examples of Indian clubs personalized with decoration by and/or for individuals as a non-group exemplar of identity.
their connection with physical conditioning: an eighteenth century drawing of Indian clubs as part of a contemporary wrestler’s routine, and the front endpaper of a nineteenth century Indian club swinging manual published for the population at large.

![Figure 3: Indian Body Exercises](image)

This drawing by an unknown artist (Figure 3) clearly conveys the physical conditioning purpose of the clubs, and as such may be an early and accurate example of historical club swinging from a range of images that usually employ Hindu religious art devoid of combat and fitness meanings. The image bears a caption in French (roughly translated as ‘Indian body exercises’), and was perhaps prepared for display to non-indigenous cultures. It most likely belongs to a set of similar pictures in the same style and colouration, which shows the activities of Kabul-based wrestlers, illustrates a training regimen that included calisthenics and fitness devices unique to Indian physical culture, and specifically showcases Indian clubs.

The drawing is documentary and typological in nature, and seems to lack overt political, religious or social messages, although its probable French origin establishes an external viewpoint. The image engages the senses with a dynamic impression, and conveys a thoroughness about the regimen while emphasizing its cultural heritage (as explicitly shown through race and attire, and implicitly hinted at via the absence of dumbbells, which were in widespread use on the Continent by the late eighteenth century). Its perspective efficiently portrays a full complement of exercises on a single page, and strongly suggests that the artist had observed (or received a detailed description from someone who had personally witnessed) the exercises and apparatus performed and used, at least in part due to the accuracy of their biomechanical form and uniqueness of the implements.

At base, the drawing is about physical power: how to develop it, as well as the hallmarks of being able to demonstrate it. The drawing is squarely placed in the Second Order (as a fitness implement, and indicative of symbolic strength and masculinity), which is precisely what it was meant to represent. It is not hard to imagine that those who saw it

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28 At that time, the French East India Company was coming to the end of its involvement in the Carnatic Wars, which left the British East India Company in control of the subcontinent. See 'Carnatic Wars', Encyclopedia Britannica (2015), [http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/96274/Carnatic-Wars> [accessed 1 March 2015].


30 Todd, pp. 5-6.
in its day were left with a feeling of authenticity about the purpose of Indian clubs and the practices and prowess of foreigners, or that those who might look at it now feel a similar authenticity which has since been buttressed by the authority of time. During the close of the eighteenth century, apparently someone thought that the conditioning regimen employed by Indian wrestlers was to be acknowledged, admired, or even feared, and was interesting enough to be at least memorialised if not further disseminated. What is left unanswered by the drawing is why such an intense training regimen was necessary or specifically how the clubs were used in the routine, but the image leaves no doubt that the clubs were an important part of Indian physical culture.

Figure 4. Endpaper for Gardiner’s Indian Club Swinging by an Amateur
(Providence: Freeman & Company, 1884), Library of Congress.
Rather than convey authenticity of purpose, as Hoffman identified, the front endpaper of Benjamin Gardiner’s 1884 book Indian Club Swinging by an Amateur depicts an image by an unknown artist (Figure 4) which should have no relationship to clubs used for physical conditioning: that of a colonist captured and encircled by Native Americans who are waiving them in both hands in a menacing manner.31

Its caption reads ‘They led me bound along the winding flood, Far in the gloomy bosom of the wood’, and may have originated from an 1849 volume that recounted border skirmishes decades prior in Tryon County, New York during the American Revolutionary War.32 According to Potter’s American Monthly, the depicted colonist was Dr Moses Younglove, a surgeon with the colonial militia who was taken prisoner in 1777 and upon release allegedly penned the poem that contained the caption and which described horrific acts performed by the Indians.33

31 Hoffman, p. 44.
33The American Historical Record, and Repertory of Notes and Queries (Philadelphia: John Potter
The image looks like something earlier than the scene described in the caption’s 1849 printing (itself repurposed for Gardiner’s 1884 book) since it resembles an artistic style common during colonial times half of a century earlier (note that the attire of the captive is consistent with colonial dress). Rather than coming across as documentary, it conveys more of a narrative sense by telling a story charged with emotions that harken captive and captor, god-fearing and heathen, the primitive and the contemporary. The image and caption combined signal that it was made for Western audiences (through the use of English), and from this starting point it engages the viewer by connecting to the colonist’s perspective within the larger context of the civilised at the hands of the wild (not just visually through the images of the Native American Indians, but also in a literary manner through the language of a ‘foreboding forest’). It is doubtful that the scene was personally witnessed and was more likely conjured from the artist’s imagination due to its one dimensionality, missing asymmetry, lack of environmental anchors, and absence of any tale that would provide an explanation for the artist having survived being near the ordeal.

In the end, this image is also about power: those who viewed it in its day might have been scared or angry, since it embodies the power of the enemy to threaten, the fear of the ‘other’, and perhaps the power of the enemy’s action to incite retaliation from the aggrieved. Like the 1770 drawing it clearly conveys the practices and prowess of foreigners, yet completely lacks any authenticity about the use of Indian clubs for physical conditioning. Instead, the image immediately taps into the First Order use of the club as a weapon, incorporates Second Order symbolic strength, displays Third Order masculinity, and portrays Fourth Order nationalism in a ‘them versus us’ manner. What is fascinating about this single artefact is that it illustrates the spectrum of changing meanings associated with Indian clubs, but lacks any direct connection to physical conditioning and thus the very contents of the book it represents; it signifies an object that has been repurposed many times over prior to its current depiction. However, despite no direct representation of physical conditioning, this image squarely rests within the use-outcome model’s findings with respect to the original purpose and changing meanings associated with Indian clubs (including the fact that while the image is not a direct representation, the contents of the book upon which it is affixed are), and thereby supports the potential viability of that model to develop insights into material culture.

MacAloon posited the idea of sports as ‘empty forms’: constructs which have lost their ‘cultural and historical content that characterized them in their original context [and] have become an intercultural space to be refilled with diverse meanings’. As far as Indian clubs are concerned, First and Second Order functions seem to be the most important factors in governing cultural repurposing, or derived use. Brownell argues that MacAloon is incorrect because for at least a portion of the population some original meaning is retained. However, Indian club use-outcome analysis suggests that MacAloon and Brownell are both correct; though First and Second Order functions initially create meaning and can be returned to occasionally (such as when British suffragettes deployed Indian clubs as weapons, or the late twentieth and early twenty-
first century re-emergence of Indian clubs as fitness implements), derived outcomes are subsequently established that change meaning and action, yet still serve the same use outcome.

MacAlloon also defined culture as ‘the inherited codes and contexts through which human groups constitute their social worlds and proceed to experience them as more or less comprehensible, meaningful, and actionable’. During the early twentieth century, Indian clubs fell out of fashion as fitness implements in the West. As Wertkin commented:

Ultimately the things around which we organize the various aspects of our lives, along with the knowledge of how we came to acquire them, how they were used, and why we cared about them are discarded or lost. This is especially true of objects that no longer seem to serve a useful purpose.

A recent Pottery Barn catalogue displayed a pair of Indian clubs atop a home office suite as decoration. There is meaning attached to those clubs, but it is probably incomprehensible by most who thumb through the catalogue’s pages. What is left are numerous connotations – some articulable, some lost – that nonetheless operate on us as human beings, and intangibly keep the clubs as something that no home is properly furnished without. Although it requires further scrutiny, a use-outcome model of analysis may be a helpful tool in deciphering what creates and changes meaning and action associated with a material object.

source=bl&ots=hE69_Et5Pp&sig=7j79M6xk8jFQZjhGEUvgXUGQ1r4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=SvXzVOuQFcyHsQTKpIKoBw&ved=0CEoQ6AEwBg#v=onepage&q=Suffragette%20indian%20clubs&f=false [accessed 1 March 2015].
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Figure 1. *Vishnu as Vishvarupa* (cosmic or universal man), watercolour on paper, c.1800-1820. From John Guy, 'Indian Temple Sculpture', London V & A Publication, 2007, p.70. pl.76. ISBN 9781851775095, Victoria and Albert Museum, Licensed under Creative Commons.

Figure 3. ‘Indian Body Exercises’, © The British Library Board, ADD. OR. 4039 f21r.,


Anne-Noëlle Pinnegar

Abstract

Set against a contextual backdrop of contemporary British artists championing disability, this article explores changing attitudes to the self-fashioning of the disabled or impaired human body within emerging discourses of eighteenth-century sensibility, focusing on two contemporary self-portraits authored by ‘deformed’ individuals: an engraving by the celebrated entertainer, Matthias Buchinger (1674-1739) born a phocomelic – without lower arms and legs; and the autobiographical treatise, Deformity: An Essay (1754), by the self-declared hunchback, writer and politician, William Hay MP (1695-1755). Both these works, it is argued, represent landmarks in disability history, standing as pioneering models which continue to find resonance within disability culture today.

Figure 1. Matthias Buchinger (1674-1739). Matthias Buchinger, a phocomelic (1724). Engraving after self-portrait. Etching and stipple; platemark 33.2 x 25.7 cm. Wellcome Library no.195i. © Wellcome Library, London.

The lettering in the panel beneath the bust reads: ‘London, April the 29th. 1724. This is the effigies of Mr. Matthew Buchinger, being drawn and written by himself. He is the wonderful little man of but 29. inches high, born without hands, feet, or thighs, June the 2. 1674. in Germany, in the Marquisate of Brandeburgh, near to Nurenburgh. He being the last of nine children, by one father and mother, vizt. eight sons, and one daughter the same little man has been married four times, and has had issue eleven children, vizt. one by his first wife, three by the second, six by his third, and one by his present wife. This little man performs such wonders as have never been done by any; but himself. He plays on various sorts of music to admiration, as the hautboy, strange flute in consort with the bagpipe, dulcimer and trumpet; and designs to make machines to play on almost all sorts of music. He is no less eminent for writing, drawing of coats of arms, and pictures to the life, with a pen. He also plays at cards and dice, performs tricks with cups and balls, corn and live birds; and plays at skittles or nine-pins to a great nicety, with several other performances, to the great satisfaction of all spectators’. Transcription, courtesy of the Wellcome Library.
Figure 2. Title page to William Hay's *Deformity: An Essay* (Second Edition), 1754. Photo, courtesy of ELS Editions.
Introduction: The heritage of ‘monstrosity’: problems in visual receptions of the disabled human body

Marc Quinn’s iconic sculpture, *Alison Lapper Pregnant* (2005), exhibited at Trafalgar Square in 2005-2007, represents the heavily pregnant, nude Lapper, born without arms and severely shortened legs (Figure 3). Such a colossal, publicly-sited artwork depicting an acutely disabled, expectant mother provoked wide controversy among critics, public and disability activists alike. Lapper’s own photographic self-portraits have continued to celebrate and exhibit images of her nude, phocomelic body publicly (Figure 4). Through these images, she explains, her art ‘questions notions of physical normality and beauty, in a society that considers me to be deformed, because I was born without arms’.

Such uninhibited displays of the ‘deformed’, disabled or impaired human body within the public domain in Britain have long challenged Western (and particularly classical) canons of ‘beauty’ and ‘physical normality’. Despite recent transformative disability legislation in Britain, Lapper states that society still considers her ‘deformed’. Her view is arguably founded on the notion that society has remained conservatively embedded within the binary attitudes to biological anomaly which have historically long divided the ‘monster’ from the ‘human’ – a controversial area of debate which has continually been presented, reinforced and challenged in theological, philosophical, scientific and aesthetic contexts in the West since antiquity.

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Aristotle, for example, had argued that freaks were ‘jokes of nature’ – *lusus naturae*.

Later, Ambroise Paré, in *Monstres et Prodiges* (1573) explained monstrosity in terms of divine or biological causalities (‘the wrath of God’; ‘the unbecoming sitting position of the mother’; ‘by demons or devils’). Francis Bacon’s psycho-philosophical essay ‘Of Deformity’ (1625) argued that, while deformity is not a divine curse, it ‘deforms’ a person’s character because ‘he has a perpetual spurre in himselfe, to rescue and deliver himselfe from Scorne’.

All these receptions were variously alienating to the impaired or disabled person, representing a stigmatised view of disability as analogous with spiritual or biological imperfection. Many such attitudes to bodily anomaly remained arguably unchallenged by disabled people themselves until William Hay’s *Essay* appeared in 1754.

Definitions and receptions of disability during the first half of the eighteenth century in England remained negatively entrenched and focused around the term ‘deformity’. Samuel Johnson, in his dictionary (1755) equated ‘ugliness’ with ‘deformity’ [...] ill-favouredness; ridiculousness; quality of something to be laughed at; irregularity. The collection and exhibiting of anatomical specimens – sometimes human – both ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal’ (including amassing images from printed matter, such as popular broadsides and ballads) and their logical classification within the Natural Order, was viewed as a cultivated activity by such Enlightenment luminaries as Sir Hans Sloane.

David Turner’s recent research has demonstrated that the sight of displaced, disabled people – cripples, beggars and the ‘deformed’ – was a harsh reality in eighteenth-century England. He quotes Francis Grose, writing in late eighteenth-century London that there was nowhere on earth ‘where the feelings of humanity receive so many shocks. Every street, every alley, presents some miserable object, covered with

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5 Fiedler, p. 231.
6 Fiedler, pp. 233-234.
loathsome sores, blind, mutilated, or exposed almost naked to the keen wintry blast’. As Turner summarises: ‘The presence of disability on the streets of eighteenth-century London therefore represented not just a shocking accumulation of personal misfortune, but was also regarded as symptomatic of a more general problem of dirt and disorderliness that impeded the progress of polite, commercial and refined society’.

It is against this background that Matthias Buchinger’s self-portrait (1724) and William Hay’s *Deformity: An Essay* (1754) will be argued to represent significantly progressive landmarks.

**Matthias Buchinger’s self-portrait (1724) (Figure 1)**

Born in 1674 in Ansbach, near Nuremberg, without fully formed limbs, Buchinger never grew to more than twenty-nine inches tall. By 1709, he is recorded as exhibiting himself in Nuremberg, Stuttgart and Zurich. He arrived in England in the retinue of George I, having presented the King with a flute he had fabricated but was never given an official position at Court. Numerous surviving contemporary handbills (such as Figure 5) enumerate Buchinger’s array of skills including calligraphy; performing magic tricks with cup and ball; sword-throwing; shaving himself and powdering his wig; and giving musical performances on the flute, flageolet, hautbois and trumpet.

A virtuoso showman and successful entrepreneur, Buchinger attracted a wealthy clientele and toured as far as Scotland in the 1720s. He married four times and fathered eleven children. He eventually retired to Ireland where he died in 1739. As David Turner has commented ‘his [Buchinger’s] disabled body was a source of pride rather than embarrassment, and a lucrative source of income that propelled him up the social ladder. His shows, in which he ‘performed such wonders as have never been done by any but Himself’, were designed to challenge his audience’s expectations about the capabilities of a limbless person.

Buchinger’s self-portrait (Figure 1) was commissioned by the bookseller Isaac Herbert in 1724; the two men thus perhaps enjoyed some form of commercial relationship. The portrait is arguably ground-breaking for its time in seeking to self-fashion the image of a severely disabled individual as a successful member of early eighteenth-century polite society. Promotional in tone and content, Buchinger’s ‘advertisement’ bears stylistic affinities with the contemporary printed broadsides which popularly promoted freak shows and other entertainments. However, it appears much more socially aspirational in tone than a typical broadside; Buchinger’s self-fashioning here appears to be as much concerned with asserting his ‘polite’ status as a gentleman, as in advertising the range of his talents.

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Recent scholarship has revealed how Buchinger actually ‘stage-manages’ the self-fashioning of his ‘polite’ status in this self-portrait by means of iconographic referencing of élite models of contemporary high-class portraiture. By setting his bust within an oval frame, for example, Buchinger is echoing typically ‘gentrified’ portraits of the period, including those commissioned by royalty (Figure 6).

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As Turner reveals, the intricately-patterned background in Buchinger's self-portrait (Figure 1) arguably serves to advertise Buchinger's calligraphic talents; the dominant heart motifs seem suggestive of his widely-reputed skills as a card-player and gamer. Seated on an exquisitely embroidered cushion, he is elegantly attired in gentlemanly clothes – sporting a fine cravat, waistcoat and jacket. The compositional focus is on his kindly, satisfied face and imposing torso, which both radiate health and classical gravitas. Most remarkably, perhaps, Buchinger's 'disability' is positively celebrated: his stumps are unashamedly depicted protruding from his sleeves – the proud tools of his trade. The accompanying text (see transcription under Figure 1) reinforces and enumerates Buchinger's spectacularly outstanding talents, marital success and exceptional virility.

Overall, Buchinger, in this self-portrait, promotes himself as the model of a socially 'polite', industrious, successful eighteenth-century gentleman-entrepreneur – the ideal Enlightenment figure. Moreover, as Turner points out, '[Buchinger's] physical impairment is presented as neither a barrier to commercial success nor to social advancement'. Such a 'socially-inclusive', productive and 'polite' perspective of disability constructed around the personal experience of an eighteenth-century disabled individual was to be more fully developed by William Hay MP, in his influential treatise thirty years later, discussed below.

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William Hay MP, *Deformity: An Essay* (1754) (Figure 2)

William Hay (1695-1755) was born at Glyndebourne, Sussex, into an established provincial family, a hunchback dwarf from birth. Despite his severe disability, Hay rose to prominence as a man of letters and became a politician, after legal training at the Middle Temple which was curtailed on account of smallpox which damaged his eyesight. He married Elizabeth Pelham, whose father was a cousin of the Duke of Newcastle, and had three sons and a daughter. In 1734 he became MP for Sleaford, remaining in Parliament as a Whig until his death. Hay’s political interests included the field of prison welfare and poor relief. He was appointed keeper of records at the Tower of London in 1753 and died two years later. His numerous writings express the considerable width of his interests, spanning poetry, philosophy, politics and theology. However, he is now mostly remembered for his forthright account of the problems of disability in his day which he recounted from long, personal experience in the penultimate year of his life in *Deformity: An Essay* (1754).  

The following critique of Hay’s Essay draws substantially on recent scholarly analysis. Hay’s *Deformity: An Essay* (1754) opens with an allusion to Montaigne, thereby indirectly referencing the *Essais* (1570-92) but also Montaigne’s status as a pioneer of the authorial self-portrait, famously encapsulated in Montaigne’s statement: ‘Authors communicate with the world in some special and peculiar capacity; I am the first to do so with my whole being, as Michel de Montaigne, not as a grammarian, a poet, or a lawyer’.  

Hay’s narrative, as in Montaigne’s *Essais*, is composed in the first person – a device which spontaneously de-medicalises both subject and subject-matter and immediately establishes a powerful intimacy between Hay and his readers – whether able-bodied or disabled. Stylistically, the Essay combines the ‘polite’ genres of memoir, literary critique and medical testimony. Hay calls it ‘my Apology’ – and speaks directly from his personal experience: ‘Bodily deformity is visible to Every Eye but the Effects of it are known to very few; intimately known to none but those who feel them; and they generally are not inclined to believe them’. He states his intention to treat the topic in a ‘philosophical Light’, albeit highly subjectively: to ‘anatomise’ myself – arguably nuancing Robert Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). Hay anticipates that his publication would be of most interest to the educated class – those ‘so oddly (I will not say unhappily) distinguished’ but hopes that his Essay will be ‘not unentertaining to others’.  

The first part of Hay’s Essay begins by introducing the personal circumstances of his disability and the treatment he has received from others – for example, in infancy, his carers had ‘out of Tenderness tried every Art to Correct the Errors of Nature’ but when this failed, they ‘taught him to be ashamed of my Person, instead of arming me with true Fortitude to despise any Ridicule or Contempt of it’. Describing his sympathetic treatment by close childhood friends but later his terrifying reception by a ‘mob’, Hay promotes a ‘polite’ concept of education for the disabled so they can rise above such anti-social, predominantly physical, behaviour.

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Hay goes on to discuss the natural consequences of disability and stoically suggests that being ‘deformed’ can bring advantages to both the individual and society, such as providing the incentive for living a more temperate life. The disabled person might also, Hay suggests, be able to excel in occupations that engage the mind, if not the body.

The central thesis of Hay’s Essay, however, focuses on Hay’s forthright refutation of Francis Bacon’s assertion that deformed people are naturally ‘Scornfull’ and devoid of affection or benevolence (Essays, 1597). Hay posits instead that deformed individuals are, in fact, deeply sensitive and caring human beings due to their exceptional emotional capacity to overcome the prejudice of others. Hay is of firm conviction that the disabled person develops qualities which can enhance society. For example, he states that stigmatisation of his own deformity did not antagonise him but, rather, prompted him to cultivate ‘higher’, more refined sensibilities, such as his personal revulsion at the sight of animal cruelty.

Finally, Hay ends with an unexpected personal medical digression – reporting his suffering from ‘bladder stones’, from which he claims relief by taking ‘Mrs. Stephens’s Medicine in the solid Form, three Ounces a Day, for about Five Years’. James-Kavan has noted that this medical digression constitutes a concluding ‘polite’ self-fashioning: ‘Hay aligns himself with a host of scientists and worthies, including the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the House of Commons, who also publicly supported the medicine when its recipe was purchased by Parliament in 1740’.

Hay concludes the Essay by acknowledging that Hogarth’s recently published Analysis of Beauty ‘proves incontestably... that [Beauty] consists in Curve Lines’. Hay thus readjusts the pejorative historical analogy of ‘crooked’ with ‘deformed’, rendering the notion now respectable by embedding his argument within the fashionable field of contemporary aesthetics.

A significant innovation, thus, in Hay’s text is the social ‘positioning’ of disability. The Essay arguably gives ‘deformity’ an entirely new subjectivity, refining the position of the ‘victim’ and furnishing him with a strong sense of human dignity. The narrative is firmly rooted within the confines of fashionable mid-eighteenth-century debates about sensibility and this is reinforced by the class-based positioning of its author. However, Hay’s ‘polite’ stance appears somewhat restrictive to the modern reader, as it does not attempt to embrace the wider mass of disability in eighteenth-century England nor ever address the situation of disabled women; they remain absent.

How successful and influential was Hay’s Essay in his day and subsequently? The Britannic Magazine of 1793 praised Hay’s ‘excellent essay’; an autobiographical essay by the disabled theatre-manager George Colman (1732-94) followed Hay’s, in 1761. A piece on ‘Deformity and Beauty’ appeared in The Sentimental Magazine of 1775. Publication of Hay’s collected works in 1794 led to further interest in his Essay.

However, the social victimisation and exploitation of the disabled, particularly through their exhibition in ‘freak shows’ remained big business throughout the nineteenth century, attracting sharp satirical comment (Figure 7). ‘Modern’ disability legislation did not arguably arrive in England until the 1970s, being consistently refined and revised up to the present day: Disability discrimination only recently became a criminal offence under the UK Equality Act, 2010 – arguably only then elaborating on Hay’s tenet that the ‘deformed’ or disabled person can, in some instances, contribute as productively to society as the able-bodied one.

29 James-Kavan, p. 19.
30 All material in this paragraph sourced from Turner, Disability in Eighteenth-Century England, pp. 120-121.
Two examples of later eighteenth-century works of literary and artistic prominence (the second a self-portrait) might suggest that, subsequent to Hay’s Essay, representations of disability began to find increased expression within the mainstream British cultural consciousness: Sarah Scott’s *Millenium Hall* (1762) examines the relationship between a group of women and the disabled in society and Sir Joshua Reynolds’s *Self-portrait as a Deaf Man* (1775) (Figure 8) reveals the artist unashamedly cupping his hand to his deaf ear – Reynolds’s disability was indeed profound enough in his later years for him to have to resort to the use of a silver ear-trumpet.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{31} As depicted in the painting by Johann Zoffany (1733-1810), *The Academicians of the Royal Academy* (1772), currently in the Royal Collection, ref. RCIN 400747.
The full historical significance of William Hay’s *Deformity: An Essay* has only recently been recognised in modern scholarship. Helen Deutsch comments: Hay is ‘the first writer in the history of English literature to conceptualise and articulate physical disability as a personal identity’. Helen Deutsch comments: Hay is ‘the first writer in the history of English literature to conceptualise and articulate physical disability as a personal identity’.32 James-Kavan notes that Hay’s Essay, ‘offers a unique glimpse into the lived experience of a person with a disability in Enlightenment London’. James-Kavan notes that Hay’s Essay, ‘offers a unique glimpse into the lived experience of a person with a disability in Enlightenment London’.33 David Turner remarks: ‘Hay’s text is seen as a landmark publication by modern disability scholars’.34

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33 James-Kavan, p. 10.
Conclusions

Buchinger’s self-portrait (1724) and Hay’s Deformity: An Essay (1754) represent innovative, aspirational attempts to forge ‘civilised’, productive identities on the part of their eighteenth-century severely disabled authors, challenging the prejudice of earlier ‘deformed’ stereotypes. Through the medium of the ‘polite’ self-portrait, Matthias Buchinger and William Hay successfully de-medicalise their disabled status by privileging and celebrating, instead, their outstanding ‘human’ capabilities – for example, remarkable physical dexterity, intellect or refinement of spirit. Fusing ‘disability’ with ‘respectability’ through the finely-tuned self-fashioning of these works, Buchinger and Hay construct the possibility for highly cultivated, enterprising but severely disabled individuals to be perceived as enthusiastic, pro-active participants in the vibrant social and commercial dynamic of Enlightenment London.

While separated by more than two centuries – Alison Lapper’s photographic self-portrait series (Figure 4), when aligned with Buchinger’s (Figure 1) and Hay’s pioneering eighteenth-century works outlined above (Figure 2) – suggests that, while leaps were made by two isolated individuals in Enlightenment London to validate the status of disability within the confines of a new and emerging sensibility, aesthetic variables still surround perceptions of bodily anomaly today which prompt challenge from cultural practitioners.

Lapper’s striking celebration of her own phocomelic form, as powerfully expressed in such works as her self-portraits (Figure 4), arguably stands as evidence that the progressive achievement and enlightened spirit of Matthias Buchinger and William Hay continue to find resonance in the self-fashioning of disabled artists celebrating their humanity today.
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Illustration Credits

**Figure 1.** Matthias Buchinger (1674-1739). Matthias Buchinger, a phocomelic (1724). Engraving after self-portrait. Etching and stipple; platemark 33.2 x 25.7 cm. Wellcome Library no. 195i. © Wellcome Library, London and licensed for re-use under Creative Commons License


**Figure 5.** After Lorenz Beger (1653-1705), Mathias Buchinger, a phocomelic, with thirteen scenes representing his performance. Place/date of publication unknown. Line engraving; platemark, 26.4 x 18.5 cm. Wellcome Library no. 196i. © Wellcome Library, London and licensed for re-use under Creative Commons License

**Figure 6.** After Sir Godfrey Kneller Bt. (1646-1743), *King George II when Prince of Wales*, 1717-1727. Mezzotint, 20.1 x 15 cm. Ref. no. D11936. © National Portrait Gallery and licensed for re-use under Creative Commons License.

http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw60807/King-George-II-when-Prince-of-Wales

**Figure 7.** Artist Unknown. 'The Deformito-Mania', from *Punch*, 4 September 1847, mocking the Victorian passion for freak shows. Engraving. Private Collection. © Look and Learn / Peter Jackson Collection / Bridgeman Images, London. <http://www.lookandlearn.com/history-images/X116468/The-Deformito-Mania> [accessed 15 March 2015]

**Figure 8.** Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), *Self-Portrait as a Deaf Man*, c. 1775. Oil on canvas, 74.9 x 62.2 cm. Ref. NO4505. © Tate Gallery, London.<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/reynolds-self-portrait-as-a-deaf-man-n04505> [accessed 15 March 2015]
‘What are we to expect from women?’:
Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire and Female Canvassing
during the 1784 Westminster Election

Emily Sargeant

Abstract

Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire was one of the most celebrated political women of the
eighteenth century. Her canvass for Charles Fox in the Westminster Election of 1784 was
hugely successful, and yet led to condemnation in the popular press. This article will
consider the nature of these critical reports, and the motivations behind them, based on
the premise that the involvement of elite women in politics in the 1780s was otherwise
normative, within certain boundaries.

Although popular (mis)conception would have it that women had little to no involvement
in politics before the suffrage movement of the nineteenth century, the reality is much
more interesting and complex. In the eighteenth century, elite aristocratic women were
positively encouraged to take an active role in familial political engagements. The form
this took, however, would vary from woman to woman, depending on her marital status,
property ownership and interest in the business of politics itself. In her comprehensive
Elite Women in English Political Life, Elaine Chalus defines the roles open to politically
minded women at this time as ranging from confidante to advisor, from partner to
political hostess.1 Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire, embodied all these categories
and surpassed their boundaries through her charm and political aptitude. As this article
will elucidate, many commentators on the Westminster Election of 1784, both
contemporary and modern, have argued that Charles Fox’s success was largely owed to
the Duchess. It was her political acumen that was ultimately to prove problematic and
led to her vilification in the press, based on three key premises: her sexuality, gender
and class. I intend that the two artefacts I present here will explore and elucidate the
reasons for this. Both are, at varying degrees, critical of Georgiana’s involvement in
Fox’s campaign, and both focus on her gender, sexuality and high status as imperative
to her electioneering success. The first, a satirical print by William Dent, of 1784, entitled
The Dutchess Canvassing for her Favourite Member, shows Georgiana canvassing for
votes, implicated in a sexual embrace with a butcher. Here she stands accused of using
her sexuality to garner popularity for Fox’s cause, and this denunciation would follow her
throughout the election and beyond. History of the Westminster Election, published by J.
Hartley five months after the election itself, is a more sympathetic account. His
anthology is full of anecdotes, newspaper reports and commentary on the election, and
although it presents a more varied view of the Duchess, remains critical of her
involvement in the campaign.

Georgiana became Duchess of Devonshire in 1774, and for the rest of her life she
devoted herself to Whig politics, coming to take on a senior role within the party. As
leader of the ton, the aristocratic social elite, politics was a part of her everyday life. She
involved herself in the inner workings of government, and was invigorated by political
discussion, writing to her mother in February 1784, ‘I give you, I think, a little political
lesson ev’ryday’.2 Unlike many of her contemporaries - elite women who were limited to
a local and familial involvement in politics – Georgiana had a wide influence, and was
quite as capable and charismatic, if not more so, than many of the male politicians in her
circle. She was heavily involved in the Whig party throughout her adult life, but it was

2 Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, Georgiana: Extracts from the Correspondence of Georgiana, Duchess of
the Westminster Election that would create a lasting impression in the national press - not only of the Duchess herself, but also of outwardly political women. This was one of the first times an election had such a national scope, and satirical depictions of Georgiana would reach far beyond their London demographic, becoming the stuff of myth regarded as truth. The Westminster electorate was made up of 18,000 voters, a huge sum for the time, and was comprised of a wider spectrum of society than the usual landed elite. That Westminster was hotly contested between Charles Fox, Sir Cecil Wray and Admiral Lord Hood, ensured that this was one of the few elections in which public opinion truly mattered, and the conclusion was not at all foregone.

The press was to play an important role in the formation of popular opinion, and the extremely public nature of this particular election, in which the allegiances of the middle and merchant classes were ‘up for grabs’, suited Georgiana’s own celebrity and particular talents. Her charm and mass appeal were to prove essential to Fox’s campaign, and would be the deciding factor in his success. It was to prove a double-edged sword however, and after enduring harsh criticism in the Pittite press, it would be the last time Georgiana was to canvass in public. After this point it would become harder for women to engage in politics on such a large and public scale. Increasing restrictions would culminate in the Reform Act of 1832, which would legally disenfranchise all women and formally exclude them from the vote.

Following the Westminster Election, the public political space would increasingly become the preserve of men, while restriction to the private sphere became the norm for women. Although a full discussion of this issue falls outside the parameters of this article, it is relevant to note that the most influential scholarship on this matter was put forward in Jürgen Habermas’ *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. This text aligns public with masculine action and the private homestead as inherently female and irrational. However, recent scholarship has disproved that such spaces were so rigidly gendered at this time, and in reality the distinction between public and private in the eighteenth century was much more fluid and complex.

Even supposedly private acts, such as letter writing, could have public repercussions. It is not until the nineteenth century that this distinction would become more fixed. Chalus and Montgomery have argued that during the 1780s women’s involvement in politics was normative and largely accepted, and yet when they ‘outperformed the men they were ostensibly supporting’, as did Georgiana, they ‘drew upon themselves the ire of satirists’. Elite and aristocratic women were regular participants in the election process, but were always required to remain within certain boundaries. It is when a woman was perceived to step outside these confines that she was vilified in the press and public opinion. The majority of publicly political women were able to participate without the same amount of media attention Georgiana was subjected to. The Duchess writes in a letter to her mother in April 1784, ‘It is very hard they should single me out when all the women of my side do as much.’

As Georgiana crossed boundaries from private to public, she ingratiated herself with the common man whilst canvassing for votes. The newspapers were thus filled with lewd poems and satirical prints, sexualising her involvement in Fox’s campaign. Her popularity was becoming problematic and was far surpassing that of Fox himself – surely, the Pittite press argued, this could only be as a direct result of her supposed use of sexual favours in exchange for votes. *The Countryman’s Frolick; or Humours of an Election* noted in a poem published three days before the polls closed, that when it came to


6 Duchess of Devonshire, 1955, p. 79.
canvassing for votes, male politicians could not compete with Georgiana: ‘What does it avail now of promising votes, | For a Devonshire kiss in an instant turns coats.’ William Dent’s print, *The Dutchess Canvassing for her Favourite Member*, is representative of the gendered dialectic built up around the election, which would denigrate any female political action as sexually corrupt. In Georgiana’s case, this sexually explicit recasting of her legitimate canvass served as an opposition rationale for her success. To suggest that the Duchess may have won votes due to her charm and political acumen, and not by some immoral, sexual means, would be to imply that exceptional women were capable of surpassing men in this arena, and that would be to directly challenge the *status quo*.

The print was released on 13 April, two weeks into the poll, as Georgiana was succeeding in her canvass. It depicts the Duchess locked in a close embrace with a rather short and stout butcher, his lack of height emphasised by his standing on his toes to reach Georgiana’s kiss. She reaches behind his apron to caress what appears to be his erect penis, and this sexual action provides the punch line to the joke of the piece, as she canvasses ‘for her Favourite Member’. The Duchess’s supposed sexual corruption is underlined by further innuendo. Elaine Chalus notes that erect phallic fox’s tails are pinned to Georgiana’s skirt and, ‘the street sign in the corner of the print indicates that the encounter is taking place on ‘Cockspur Street’. The Duchess declares, ‘I’ll leave no Stone unturned to serve the Cause’, and the butcher replies, ‘Then you shall have my Plumper...’; all the while, a young chimney-sweep lies on the ground and peeks up her skirts. It will be pertinent to note at this point that the kiss was a well-recognised

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8 Chalus, 2005, p. 137.
political tool in the 1780s. Male politicians would kiss voters’ wives as a matter of course, and Chalus argues that even elite women would be expected to partake during election season. She notes that this would be, ‘usually as part of their duty to their husband’s political interests.’ Here however, Georgiana canvasses not for a familial connection, and is not passive in the exchange. Dent presents her as the active party – it is she who instigates the sexual action depicted in the image.

While the primary message of the piece is one of sexual immorality, it is also, essentially, one of class. The Duchess stands tall and prominent, towering over the butcher. She is of higher status, and therefore stands from a position of height. As Lord Surrey on the far left persuades the chimney-sweep that Fox will reduce the price of ‘Gin and Porter’, the sweep replies, ‘tho’ I live but in a hogstye, I’ll give him a Plumper.’ The message is clear: Georgiana’s status, and that of the lady behind her, is aristocratic, while the men she canvasses are lowly. Evidently the smear campaign was brought against the Duchess, not only for her supposed sexually immoral behaviour, but because she would dare to go out into the streets and mix with the common man. The History of the Westminster Election tells us that Georgiana, ‘canvassed the different alehouses of Westminster in favour of Mr Fox.’ Whether or not she actually took to the taverns and kissed in exchange for votes is immaterial, what so shook contemporary society is that she would violate the rigid boundaries of her class to breach the lower class space and ingratiate herself with men of low rank. Generally whilst canvassing, women were expected to remain within their carriages, and speak to voters from inside; the carriage remained a protective barrier and signifier of high status. It was not, however, acceptable for these women to walk amongst the common man on the street. Lewis notes that ‘a canvasser was essentially putting herself in the position of asking voters for a favour’, and that Georgiana was, in effect, allowing herself to be in the power of working-class men. This could never be acceptable and provoked much of the outrage in the popular press at her involvement.

Although Dent’s print is indicative of the presentation of Georgiana in the popular press at this time, we cannot take it as wholly representative of the common view. As John Brewer posits, ‘the assumption that political prints provide an unrefracted image of political live produces its own distortions.’ Although much of what was written about Georgiana in the papers (primarily The Morning Post) was negative at this time, there was an alternative (Whig) view that would credit the Duchess for much of Fox’s success. Lewis notes that the more explicit prints of Georgiana, ‘can be interpreted only as an attempt to stop her canvass.’ This argument would suggest that the primary reason for Georgiana’s vilification in the press was because she was winning the election for Fox. In his The History of the Westminster Election, J. Hartley insists that, ‘All advertisements relative to the Westminster Election should be in the Duchess of Devonshire’s name. She is the candidate to all intents and purposes.’ Although The History presents a critical view of Georgiana’s political actions, it is a more nuanced account than Dent’s print and is often in her favour. Hartley positions himself as a ‘Lover of Truth and Justice’, in direct opposition to the writers of the Morning Papers.’ His text was published five months after the close of the election, in October 1784: the publication of this anthology so many months after the event is indicative of the draw which the election and, indeed, Georgiana held over the public imagination.

9 Chalus, 2005, p. 130.
11 Chalus, 2005, p. 146.
14 Lewis, p. 132.
15 Hartley, p. 254.
16 Hartley, p. xi.
Having Georgiana’s name attached to a newspaper article, book or item of clothing, would guarantee sales. Although Hartley takes to criticising the Duchess on a political basis, her appearance is a constant source of attraction. Georgiana was well known for her fashion, and took to using her clothing as an effective campaign tool, wearing fox fur and the colours of the Whig party. Hartley reads into this further and when Fox’s standing in the polls was at a particularly low point, he notes that ‘Her Grace was dressed in a black riding habit, probably lamenting the hopeless condition of the party.’

Every aspect of her appearance and behaviour was under intense scrutiny and, according to Hartley her actions were the prime topic of conversation through all sections of society. He describes one incident in which the Lord of the Back Stairs presented Georgiana’s conduct during the election to the Queen as ‘extremely wrong.’ The Queen retorts, ‘I admire her spirit and friendship, and sincerely wish that there was even half the truth and worth in the nobility that surround the throne.’ So much of what was written about Georgiana surrounding the election was fabrication, but in this instance, the matter of its veracity is not important. That Hartley aligns the Queen with Georgiana lends an air of respectability to her political action that had previously been stripped by the Pittite press.

Hartley shames the accounts of Georgiana in the morning papers as ‘wretched’, and yet her gender is problematised in his own text in a much similar way. As we have already seen, much was made of Georgiana’s own political acumen, and contemporary reports were to intimate that she was essentially the candidate for Westminster, and not Fox. Her behaviour was therefore masculine and a betrayal of her own sex. For Hartley, women cannot be held up to the same standards as men with regards to canvassing, and he asks, ‘what are we to expect from women?’ For him, women’s femininity should exclude them from the canvass; although Georgiana is celebrated for her beauty and position in society, she is mocked for her political contribution. To be political is not compatible with ‘that feminine modesty, and unassuming delicacy which form the characteristic of an amiable woman’. Staunch advocates of the Whig cause failed to be deterred by Hartley and Dent’s critique of their star supporter, and Fox would go on to use such critiques to his advantage, calling attention to the gender of his canvassers.

Contrary to electoral convention, Fox chose to split his canvassers by gender, and through his campaign focus on the beauty of the women in his camp. This tactic therefore inverted the attack the Pittite newspapers posed against Georgiana as a female electioneer. Lewis notes that Pitt had been mocked by the Whigs for his supposed asexuality, and Fox used the beauty of his female canvassers to ‘attack Pitt’s manliness, or rather the perceived lack thereof.’ This strategy was to prove successful, and as the polls closed on the 17 May, Fox gained his seat with 6,233 of the votes.

In their presentation of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire variously as sexually promiscuous and masculine in her canvass, both Dent’s print and Hartley’s anthology are indicative of the prevailing views of political women in the eighteenth century. They form part of a dialectic that surrounded the Westminster Election, regarding the problematic role of elite women in the English political process. As this article has explored, women were generally accepted in the political arena, with strict conditions as to their involvement. Dent’s print and Hartley’s History focus on three key themes regarding her canvass: namely, that she was selling her body for votes, that she was Fox’s mistress and that she was betraying the female sex through her actions. In other words, the criticism directed towards Georgiana and any other woman at the forefront of politics at this time, could be categorised into gender, sex and class. As long as a woman did not

17 Hartley, p. 227.
18 Hartley, p. 352.
19 Hartley, p. 227.
20 Hartley, p. 227.
21 For more information on this point, see Lewis, pp. 140-143.
22 Lewis, p. 140.
23 Duchess of Devonshire, p. 82.
24 Foreman, p. 111.
challenge the status quo in these areas, her political activity would be considered normative, and even applauded. It is because Georgiana surpassed the generally accepted female role, and was so successful in her position, that she was so heavily criticised. Yet, despite these vicious reports of Georgiana in the press, she was roundly praised for her contribution to the Whig cause. In a debate that took place after the election entitled, ‘Is it consistent for the female sex to interfere at elections?’, the motion was carried in the affirmative, supporters naming Georgiana as evidence of their argument.25 Her charisma, political acumen and sense of duty to the Whig cause would ensure her place as their foremost supporter, and as the most successful female politician of the eighteenth century.

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How to Write about a Queen Regnant

Leah Gilliatt

Abstract

This article seeks to analyse how England’s first queen regnant was portrayed and how contemporary supporters of Mary reconciled the queen’s female body natural with the tradition of male monarchy and role of the monarch as God’s representative. It considers representations of Queen Mary I as presented in five ballads and in a letter from Marco Antonio Faitta (secretary to Cardinal Pole) to Ippolito Chizzola, Doctor in Divinity.

Mary Tudor was England’s first queen regnant. Those who sought to portray her in any medium were therefore presented with an unprecedented challenge. Representations of queen consorts and male monarchs abounded. But a queen regnant was a different creature entirely. In England in 1553, there was no equivalence in the titles of king and queen. A king was a leader in the masculine tradition, renowned for his wisdom, his justice and his ability to use his martial power to protect the country.1 His authority, as an anointed, legitimate heir, was God-given. A queen was the wife of a king, deriving all of her authority from him. It was therefore understandable if the concept of a queen regnant required some careful adaptation and innovation from the queen herself and those who wished to support her. Tension between the female body natural and the sacred body politic of Queen Mary I was inevitable.

This article will consider the co-existence and unavoidable fusion of these two elements, the feminine and the monarchical, within a selection of contemporary ballads2 and a letter3 written by Marco Antonio Faitta, the Venetian secretary to Cardinal Pole. The ballads selected were written between 1554 and 1558 by supporters of Mary. The two authors who can be identified with certainty are Catholic priests Leonard Stopes and William Forrest (later one of the queen’s chaplains). Mary was well aware of the potential power of ballads, distributed cheaply to the masses, as demonstrated by her proclamation, soon after her accession, banning the printing of ‘books, ballads, rhymes and interludes’ without special licence. The ballads considered in this article would certainly have met with royal approval, idealising Mary and exemplifying the ideal female monarchy. The language used is full of figurative devices. Alliteration abounds, metaphorical allusions monopolise the content and hyperbole is heaped into each stanza. The content is designed to entertain, to evoke admiration for both author and subject and ultimately to be memorable. The text chosen to complement this selection of ballads is a letter written by Marco Antonio Faitta, secretary to Cardinal Pole (papal envoy to England from 1554 with whom Mary worked closely to undo the royal supremacy of the church established by Henry VIII). In contrast to the ballads, the letter had a single recipient in mind, Ippolito Chizzola, Doctor in Divinity and native of Brescia. Its intention was to inform, the language simple and literal. The letter contains a precise description of the queen’s actions and reactions over the course of three days as opposed to the

2 Hyder Edward Rollins, Old English Ballads 1553-1625 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920): ‘A Ninvectyve agaynst Treason’; ‘A new ballade of the Marigolde’; ‘An Ave Maria in Commendation of our most Vertuous Queene’; ‘Now singe, nowe springe,oure care is exil’d, Oure vertuous Queene is quickened with child’; ‘The Epitaphe upon the Death of the Most Excellent and our late vertuous Queene, Marie, deceased’.
3 Rawdon Brown, et al. (eds), Calendar of State Papers, Venetian (1864-1898) [hereafter CSPVen], VI, pp. 434-437.
generalised tributes offered by the ballad writers. It was written on 3 May 1556 to inform the reader of Queen Mary’s Easter ceremonies, starting with the ceremony of the feet washing on 3 April, Maundy Thursday (known as Royal Maundy), followed the next day, Good Friday, by the blessing of the cramp rings and the blessing of the scrofula victims.\footnote{A disease with glandular swellings, possibly a form of tuberculosis. Also known as ‘the King’s evil’ as a result of the reputed ability of French and English monarchs to cure the disease.}

Faitta describes how the queen washed the feet of forty-one women then handed each woman forty one pennies ‘giving each with her own hand’.\footnote{CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.} The following day, Mary blessed rings of gold and silver contained in two large covered basins, ‘taking them in her two hands she passed them again and again from one hand to the other’.\footnote{CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.} A key part of the subsequent ceremony, the blessing of those suffering with scrofula, involved the queen ‘pressing with her hands in the form of a cross on the spot where the sore was’.\footnote{CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.} These ceremonies described by Faitta demonstrated emphatically that Mary as queen regnant was every bit as sacred as a king. By practising the laying of hands on the sick, Mary was continuing the tradition, albeit a sporadic one, of English kings stretching back to Edward the Confessor,\footnote{Sarah Duncan, Mary I: Gender, Power and Ceremony in the Reign of England’s First Queen (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), p. 119.} despite the fact that no woman had done so before. A monarch’s hands were anointed as part of the coronation ceremony. Subsequent direct contact therefore allowed for the divine benediction to be somehow transferred, whether to the precious metal of a cramp ring or directly to a suffering subject. This otherworldly status was conferred specifically as a result of being anointed in sacred oils (chrisms). Well aware of the importance of this, Mary had been concerned before her coronation lest ‘the holy chrisms prepared in England may not be such as they ought’,\footnote{CSPS, XI, p. 220.} as a result of the ecclesiastical censures on the country during Henry’s and Edward’s reigns. She had therefore sent Renard, the Imperial ambassador, a request that he ‘write to the Bishop of Arras to send some of the holy oil from over there’\footnote{CSPS, XI, p. 228.} to ensure that the impact of being anointed at coronation could not be called into question. As Starkey asserts, a king with any sense spent a great deal of effort on tricking out his person as a suitably magnificent emblem of royalty.\footnote{David Starkey, ‘Representations through Intimacy’, in Symbols and Sentiments, ed. by Ioan Lewis (London: Academic Press, 1977), p. 189.} Mary performed the Easter ceremonies dressed in ‘the finest purple cloth, lined with marten’s fur, sleeves so long and wide they reached the ground’.\footnote{CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.} This display of royal magnificence served to enhance Mary’s divine status.

In the ballads too there is evidence of the queen’s divine connection. It is claimed that Mary, as legitimate, ‘lyege lady and Quene’, is therefore under God’s protection, the rightful monarch, ‘whom the myghty lorde preserve from all hurte and myschaunce’.\footnote{Rollins, ‘A ninvectyve agaynst Treason’, p.5.} The extent of the support evident at Mary’s accession as described in ‘A ninvectyve agaynst Treason’, is akin to the ‘reverence’\footnote{The Vita Mariae Reginae of Robert Wingfield of Brantham, ed. and trans. by Diarmaid MacCulloch, Camden Miscellany, 28; Camden Society, 4th series, 29 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1984), p. 251. Wingfield is here describing the response from Mary’s soldiers as she reviewed her troops prior to an expected clash with Northumberland during her bid to claim the crown.} and ‘idolatry’\footnote{Antonio de Guaras, The Accession of Queen Mary: Being the Contemporary Account of a Spanish Merchant Resident in London, ed. and trans. by Richard Garnett (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1892), pp. 96-97. De Guaras describes the joy of Londoners at Mary’s proclamation as Queen.} described by Wingfield and de Guaras respectively.\footnote{Duncan, p. 118.} The ballad relates the, ‘joyful godlynes’ of Mary’s queenship,
emphasises the, ‘greatest joy’ and, ‘much gladness’ of the populace at her accession, ‘as
the lyke was never seene’ because, ‘God had shewed on us his grace in gevyng a rightful
queene’. As the monarch, ‘God loveth her’, as evidenced by the fact that he protected
her against her enemies. As a legitimate, anointed monarch Mary, whom, ‘God of his
goodnesse hath lent to this land’, had every bit as much of a claim to be God’s
representative as any of her male predecessors.

Furthermore, her gender allowed for (and her name encouraged) comparisons with the
Virgin Mary. As the ‘Marigolde’ of Forrest’s ballad, Mary absorbs as part of her identity
the qualities of, ‘Christes mother deere that as in heaven shee doth excell’. Hoping for
an heir, one ballad requests, ‘Fruyte of her body God grant us to see’. With no mention
of a father, the image is reminiscent of a virgin birth, miraculous and god-given. Like her
namesake, Mary’s chastity and piety are above question: she is ‘the lampe of vertue’s
light’, a ‘Queene of vertues pure’, and ‘to praye was her delight’. Faitta likewise
emphasises her, ‘extreme piety’ and, ‘love of religion, offering her prayers to God with so
great devotion’. A ballad written to celebrate the reported pregnancy of the queen
makes reference to, ‘Oure Kyng, our Quene, our Prince that shall be, That they three as
one, or one as all three’ seemingly referencing the Holy Trinity in this description of the
royal family. As well as frequently making both direct and indirect reference to the Virgin
Mother, authors writing about Mary could just as easily cast her in the role of the Saviour
himself. Potentially Messianic qualities are hinted at as the ‘Lorde’ sent, ‘her Grace […]
our maners to mende, our deeds to redresse’. Although the ceremonies described by
Faitta ostensibly demonstrated Mary’s awe-inspiring powers, a Christ-like humility is
evident throughout. The Royal Maundy ceremony required the monarch to wash the feet
of the poor. In preparation for the blessing of the cramp rings, she began by, ‘kneeling a
short distance from the cross before moving towards it on her knees’. Mary remained
on her knees whilst giving her benediction to the rings. Likewise, as she pressed her
healing hands to the sores of scrofula sufferers, Mary was, ‘kneeling the whole time’. Reversing
the role of monarch and subject, appearing as a servant, physically humbling
herself, the queen is presented once again as God’s chosen representative.

As well as being presented as sacred, Mary was praised for her specifically feminine
virtues. As the ‘Marigolde’, Mary’s identity is that of earthly woman, ‘Golde in earth to
have no peere’, every bit as much as divine monarch. Portrayed as ‘golde’, precious
and rare, Mary is possessed of all laudable feminine traits. Exhibiting a particular brand
of, ‘womanly wisdom’ all, ‘widowes, with maidens and wives, of this blessed woman
example may take’. Women who, as widows, maidens and wives, all had their roles
defined by men are to take example from the queen regnant, the one woman who
defines her own role. Throughout the ballads, Mary is depicted as meek and merciful, the
‘Mirror of all womanhood’. This sentiment is reflected in Faitta’s letter as he comments
on Mary’s, ‘compassion and devotion’ and makes the assertion that, ‘there never was a
queen in Christendom of greater goodness than this one’. This symbolic representation

23 Rollins, ‘The Epitaphe upon the Death of the Most Excellent and our late vertuous Quene, Marie, deceased’
pp.24-25.
24 CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.
25 Rollins, ‘Now singe, nowe springe, oure care is exil’d, Oure vertuous Quene is quickened with child’, pp. 20-22.
27 CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.
28 CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.
31 Rollins, ‘The Epitaphe upon the Death of the Most Excellent and our late vertuous Quene, Marie, deceased’
pp. 24-25.
32 CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.
as the epitome of feminine perfection is briefly complemented by consideration of Mary as an individual. She had been exceptionally well educated even for a princess, having had courses of study devised for her by renowned humanist scholar Juan Luis Vives under the supervision of her equally well-educated mother, Catherine of Aragon. It is as a unique individual that Mary is praised for her ‘education’ and ‘conversacion’. Faitta also praises her as an individual who, ‘in all her movements and gestures and by her manner, she seemed to act not merely out of ceremony but from great feeling and devotion’. Ceremonial obligations aside, Mary kisses the foot of one of the poor women, ‘so fervently that it seemed as if she were embracing something very precious’.

Though meek and mild, Mary is also presented as strong. Her strength is of a feminine nature, characterised by patience and endurance and thus entirely appropriate to a woman. In the literal description of Faitta, the practicalities of the ceremonies afford opportunity for him to praise her endurance classifying as ‘remarkable’ the fact that she, ‘went the whole length of that long hall [...] ever on her knees’ during the Royal Maundy foot washing. After observing her laying hands on the scrofula sufferers, Faitta comments on Mary, ‘enduring for so long a while and so patiently so much fatigue’ (there is, of course, no thought for the endurance exhibited by the victims of the disease!). The figurative language of the ballads also praises Mary’s strength. Despite being a delicate, ‘floure’, the Marigold is resilient and, ‘sheweth glad cheare in heate and colde’, ‘endurying patiently’ any ‘stormes’. Mary is brave as any monarch should be. However, her bravery is not fierce or warlike but the result of piety as ‘[i]n greatest stormes she feared not for God she made her shielde’.

In addition to praising Mary as a woman, the authors of the ballads and Faitta offer examples of how traditions of kingship, both imagery and ritual were adapted to accommodate a queen regnant. The ceremony of the Royal Maundy had gradually become personally connected to the monarch who performed the ritual of washing the feet of the poor. From the time of Henry VIII, the number of participants matched the monarch’s age as did the number of pennies gifted to each. For the first time, as a concession to Mary’s gender, women had their feet washed by the monarch. In ‘An Ave Maria...’, Leonard Stopes depicts Mary as a warrior. Yet, just as the queen regnant’s bravery is presented in a different way to that of a king, so her role as martial leader is given a twist. In the ballad’s imagery, the ‘army’ that Mary commands and the defence that she constructs are not ones of sword and spear. ‘Hope is her helmet, Faith is her shielde and Love is her breastplate’ as she faces her foes. The queen will be every bit as effective as a king though her methods may differ.

Confusion over what a queen regnant was can be demonstrated by the contradictory contemporary reports of Mary’s pre-coronation outfit. According to one account, ‘Her Majesty was marvellously adorned, her mantle of silver and her head-dress of gold’ in the manner of a queen consort. However, another account has her, ‘sat in a gown of blew velvet, furred with powdered armyen’ more usual to male monarchs on that day.

34 CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.
35 CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.
36 CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.
37 CSPVen, VI, pp. 434-437.
39 Rollins, ‘The Epitaphe upon the Death of the Most Excellent and our late vertuous Quene, Marie, deceased’, pp. 24-25.
40 The ritual for appointing new Knights of the Bath provides another example of adaptation as a result of Mary’s gender: a proxy (the Earl of Arundel) attended the section of the ceremony which required the men to be naked in the bath whilst taking their oath.
42 de Guaras, pp. 118-119.
As Richards suggests, this confusion of expectations and uncertainty over whether Mary was dressed in the tradition of a queen consort or a king reflected a more general uncertainty over the presentation and nature of a female monarch. Furthermore, in direct contrast to the established tradition of the English monarch opening parliament, Renard, the Imperial ambassador, reported to Charles V in August 1553 that, ‘certain councillors now opine that it would be better to hold the parliament before the coronation’ causing the Queen much ‘distress’. This is suggestive not only of the anxiety about the correct procedure for determining female monarchy, but also the opportunity for change provided by the novelty of a queen regnant. Mary and Philip’s pre-nuptial marriage treaty serves to highlight how female monarchy was something of an oxymoron in 16th century England. As the monarch, Mary possessed power that, as a woman (or more precisely, a wife), she required help with safeguarding. The treaty agreed that Philip should only, ‘aid’ Mary in the administration of ‘her realms and dominions’, ‘do nothing whereby anything be innovate in the state...laws and customs of the said realm’ and ‘leave unto the said lady, his wife Queen Mary, the whole disposition of all the benefits and offices, land revenues and fruits of the said realms and dominions’. In these examples, the queen regnant’s sacred monarchical power was apparently threatened by the vulnerability of the woman’s body in which it was housed.

However, the artefacts discussed in this essay tell a different story, demonstrating how the queen regnant could be celebrated as a divine monarch, a woman and, where necessary, both simultaneously. The Bishop of Winchester’s sermon, preached at Mary’s funeral, recognises the traditional female roles played by the queen, asserting that ‘she was a king’s daughter, she was a king’s sister, she was a king’s wife’. However, he also recognises Mary’s unique position as ‘a queen and by the same title a king’. To her supporters a queen regnant could be, as a woman, the best of all that was female and, as a monarch, possessed of sacred power. However, what these two written representations suggest is something more subtle than this, not merely a clumsy mixture of queen consort and king but a genuine fusion of different elements coming together to create a unique, unprecedented entity. It was unnecessary to separate the queen’s two bodies. The woman and the monarch could be presented as not merely co-existing but as complementing each other. Thus Mary became the ‘lamb-like lion feminine’, not merely a princely queen or a feminised king but a new type of monarch, represented as having the capability of being both powerful and unthreatening.

45 CSPS, XI, p. 238.

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Women and the Indian Mutiny: Framing the Mutiny in a *Punch* Cartoon and a Lucknow Diary

Anna Matei

Abstract

Artefacts and news coverage created in Britain during the Indian mutiny represented and interpreted that conflict, creating meaning for the public and the victims of the mutiny. Tenniel’s *Punch* cartoon ‘The British Lion’s Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger’ and Katherine Bartrum’s Lucknow diary constructed meaning through dialogue with national and sectional culture. Both wanted to be understood, and so used and linked elements of British and narrower community tradition to create their representations. In the process, they constructed women’s place in the mutiny too, but while one focused on women as symbolic victims, the other represented their real, personal suffering.

The Indian mutiny, 1857-58, was interpreted and defined in contemporary Britain through public discourse built to a large extent by men around the symbol of woman as victim, but also shaped by women as active creators of news and interpretation. Literature on the subject of women in the mutiny tends to focus on their function in the national debate as rallying points – defenceless victims whose deaths served the British as cause and justification for violent retribution. The importance of this function, and women’s self-characterisation, to British empire-building in the later nineteenth century is also highlighted. This article shall focus on the way the collective conversation around the mutiny led to the framing of women’s experience in India in a way that was, in fact, more complex than the literature suggests. From comparative analysis of Tenniel’s ‘The British Lion’s Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger’, a *Punch* cartoon from August 1857, and Katherine Bartrum’s *A Widow’s Reminiscences of the Siege of Lucknow*, a mutiny diary published in 1858, it will appear that the mutiny discourse in Britain was multi-faceted and made up of elements that could be constructed in a way that conveyed new meaning and function by re-appropriating elements of Victorian culture. Generally accepted and understood national tropes were used as part of collective discourse on a national level, but they could also become creators of a more sectional, community-specific framework for the mutiny. As it shall emerge from analysis of the framing of women’s presence in the mutiny, around the events of Lucknow a tradition was created that was specific to the survivors of the siege, and was designed to contain their experiences by expressing death in Lucknow in terms that matched contemporary British concepts of death. Parallel to this discourse, a collective one that framed women as victims of the mutiny also existed, much stronger in 1857, but still influential in 1859.

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1 This article shall refer to the events of 1857-58 as the Indian mutiny, not the Indian rebellion or first war of independence, for simplicity and consistency, as it focuses on nineteenth-century British attitudes to 1857, in the context of which mutiny is the most appropriate label. It shall also refer to British, not English, attitudes, as most of those studied spoke of British rule in India, although the artefacts compared in this article were produced in England.


4 Blunt, pp. 414-418.
Tenniel’s ‘The British Lion’s Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger’ is the first representation by *Punch* of women as the victims of the Indian mutiny, and so is an important expression of the prevailing British attitude to the mutiny in its early months.\(^5\) We know from Patrick Leary’s work that the creation of the Large Cut was a process geared towards achieving a topical, easy-to-understand representation of the week’s chosen theme.\(^6\) This one shows a woman holding a child, attacked by a tiger, which in turn is being attacked by the British Lion. With the caption this shows that the message is British vengeance on India for the murder (and potentially rape) of women. But so much is taken for granted about British anxiety over the deaths of women by August 1857 that few studies stop to wonder why Tenniel chose to include the British Lion and the Bengal Tiger to represent the mutiny as a whole, and why this became such a resonant metaphor for the process as the British saw it.\(^7\) To understand that, we need to deconstruct the cartoon and re-build our grasp of why each one of its components was chosen.

Of the key visual components the most obvious trope is the British Lion. *Punch* used it regularly, alongside Britannia and John Bull, as an embodiment of Britain.\(^8\) Thus, the British Lion was easily recognised by readers of the magazine as a metaphor for Britain. But cartoons also had to be topical, and in the context of contemporary press attitudes to the mutiny this one was, as a result of the appearance of the Lion: its representation mid-leap suggests strength, showing powerful British reaction to the conflict. As Leary

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\(^{6}\) Leary, pp. 40-44.

\(^{7}\) The first issue of *Punch* to visually represent the mutiny is that of 25 July 1857, through the half-page cartoon of Sir Colin Campbell, ‘Every Inch a Soldier’.

\(^{8}\) Leary, p. 35.
has shown, the Large Cut tended to be based on the leader in *The Times* published the Wednesday before the publication, on a Saturday, of *Punch*. In this case, that leader focused on American attitudes to the Indian mutiny, and emphasised certainty across the Atlantic in firm British action: ‘it is understood [...] that the more serious undertaking of reducing the revolted Sepoys is only a question of time and of expense’. The Lion looks muscular, healthy, and through its position in the foreground much larger than tiger, or woman and child. It bares its teeth and is mid-leap, mane standing on edge, and we see one of its eyes fixed on the Bengal Tiger. All of this suggests strength, and the gaze also makes it the only active component of the cartoon. However, representing the British Lion as strong and active contradicts Issue 83 of *Punch*, published just one week before this cartoon, where the British Lion voices a complaint against being overused as a decorative motif in London, saying ‘It is well beknown that old I’m grown – ain’t the Lion as I used to be’. That the representation in Tenniel’s Cut is new shows that the artist was choosing to illustrate a growing element of collective discourse, the need for vengeance, and this required deviation from the more recent use of the trope in *Punch*.

The visual element of Bengal Tiger over unconscious or dead woman and child is also taken from contemporary collective discourse, and shows *Punch*’s participation in it with this cartoon. Mark Lemon, publisher of *Punch* at the time, called this Cut a ‘fighting’ one; indicating that it appealed to contemporary patriotism. This has a lot to do with the context of this visual component, and its message of violent British action against India – vengeance. The Bengal Tiger appears above its victims, but forced to retreat by the arrival of the British Lion. Its gaze is on the Lion, but its eye is barely visible, and it appears smaller than the Lion, all suggesting its subjugation and defeat. To contemporaries, this would have recalled but also reversed the imagery of *Tippoo’s Tiger*, the mechanical organ once belonging to Tipu Sultan, held at the time by the East India Company. Tipu’s organ shows a Bengal tiger in the process of devouring a European, most likely British soldier. The tiger is over its victim, victorious. The reversal of this representation by the Tenniel cartoon, suggesting that now the British will be successful in their violent action, is likely to have been understood by contemporary readers, as during its stay in the East India House and Museum, 1808-58, *Tippoo’s Tiger* was firmly in the public eye. But Tenniel’s image is also the creation of a new trope, linking this message of British success to the earlier Victorian public meaning of Bengal tigers as symbols of a dangerous India: in the early nineteenth century tiger attacks were the most feared cause of death in India, and news of one such British death was likely to have inspired even *Tippoo’s Tiger*. Therefore, the Bengal Tiger is also an understandable symbol of the mutiny in India, implying at once the imminent British victory over the mutiny and the threat of the conflict. That this representation worked to rally the British, and firmly entered public discourse, is evident from the afterlife of the cartoon: already a week after its first publication it appeared as the banner of an army recruited for India in a *Punch* cartoon.

The key message of the *Punch* cartoon was imminent British success in repelling the real threat of the Indian mutiny, through necessary firm action amounting to revenge. This message was conveyed through careful presentation using visual tools that were rooted in contemporary culture relevant to the relationship between Britain and India, but those visual tools were also given a new meaning for contemporary culture, one that made the cartoon ‘fighting’. This use and re-shaping of elements of the cultural context is also

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9 Leary, p. 45.
10 ‘While the Unemployed Politicians of Paris Are’, *The Times*, 19 August 1857, p. 9.
11 ‘The Humble Petition of the British Lion To Mr. Punch’, *Punch*, v. 33.83, 15 August 1857, p. 63.
12 Leary, p. 43.
15 *Tippoo’s Tiger*, p. 4, describes the contemporary complaints against the large number of daily visitors the Tiger received.
16 *Tippoo’s Tiger*, p. 11.
17 ‘Willing Hands for India’, *Punch*, v. 33.85, 29 August 1857, pp. 88-89.
apparent in Katherine Bartrum’s writing about the Lucknow events of the Indian mutiny. In the process that leads from personal diary to published account Bartrum framed her experience based on and for the British collective tradition. But her framing of the Lucknow events was not taken up by those outside the circle of Lucknow survivors, and it was not taken solely from discourse on the mutiny. *A Widow’s Reminiscences of the Siege of Lucknow* appeared in 1858, and on top of the mutiny diary contained a Dedication, Preface, Bartrum’s letters home, and the letters of her husband. As part of the publication process the diary went from a handwritten, increasingly messy account in a school exercise book with pages filled from top to bottom, to a blue octavo volume with a cover stamped with a geometrical pattern and carrying its title in gilt letters surrounded by gilt floral scrolls.  

This in itself shows the attempt to contain the events of the mutiny.

The framing of Bartrum’s Lucknow narrative continues with the dedication, where Bartrum offers her text to the sacred memory of her husband and child:

Sacred to the Memory of
Robert Henry Bartrum;
Bengal Medical Service,
Born August 16th, 1831,
Killed at the Relief of Lucknow,
September 26th, 1857:
Also of
Robert Spilsbury Bartrum,
Only Child of the Above
Robert Henry Bartrum and Katherine Mary,
His Wife,
Born February 17th, 1856, Died February 11th 1858.

"Is it well with thy Husband?
Is it well with thy Child?
And she answered, it is well."

The visual presentation and language of the dedication link it to Victorian expressions of Christian grief: it looks like and uses the language of contemporary gravestones, and the Biblical quotation reinforces this link to Christian expressions of grief. In the context of Lucknow, this is important, as Bartrum and all other survivors witnessed and had to come to terms with a lot of death, and the accounts of other women show that they all struggled to experience and present this in the Christian tradition. In her published account as well as the manuscript Bartrum records a large number of deaths and after each she attempts to provide a Christian framework by using Biblical language: ‘I sat beside him and gazed upon his [her child’s] happy countenance, I could not weep for my little lamb, safely in-gathered into that fold where he “shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more”’. The letters of Reverend Polehampton written in Lucknow show that attempts to take comfort from belief in an afterlife were common at Lucknow: ‘Poor Captain Wildig [...] died a few days after I wrote. […] I have a good hope that he has entered into “rest”’.

Both writers are using the collective British narrative of Christian grief to come to terms with their own experiences. Bartrum also shows the attempt to maintain Christian rituals for making the events of the mutiny comprehensible through
the burial of her child. After his ‘good death’ account, as part of which his peaceful sleeping looks, showing his acceptance by God, are recorded, the child is buried in a Christian ceremony at Calcutta.\textsuperscript{22} Again, this framing of death in the Lucknow circle is shared by the Polehamptons; after the eldest child’s death ‘Emmie’ Polehampton places flowers on his grave and arranges them in the shape of a cross.\textsuperscript{23} The peaceful looks of the Bartrum child are a key part of the contemporary narrative of good, that is to say Christian, death. But Bartrum’s repeated emphasis on Christian deaths also shows something more specific to the Lucknow context: to counter the increasing disruption of normal, British, life in Lucknow, the survivors created their own discourse on the siege in which Christian expressions of grief that were normative in the metropole played a key role.

The two extant contemporary reviews of Bartrum’s text show that Lucknow narratives had a cultural afterlife in the collective discourse about the mutiny, but not along the same lines as Bartrum and other survivors entered it. Both reviews date to 1859, and are brief commentaries in the contemporary press. The first one, published in \textit{Athenaeum} 2 April 1859, describes Bartrum’s account as the saddest of ‘all the tales of suffering and sorrow relating to the Indian revolt’.\textsuperscript{24} This presents \textit{A Widow’s Reminiscences} as an account of victimhood. The second review echoes the sentiment, calling it a ‘sad story, simply told’.\textsuperscript{25} The authors of both emphasise female authorship, one stating that the text was written in ‘simple but appropriate’ language, which nevertheless did not take away from its ‘pathos’.\textsuperscript{26} This comment suggests that simplicity is something male reviewers associate with women who join the collective discourse on women’s experiences in Lucknow, suggested by ‘simply told’ in the second review, too. Despite the criticism, these reviews show that public debate around the Bartrum narrative accepted women’s contributions to it. But they also show that outside the circle of Lucknow survivors the Christian grief language was not continued, with the reviews instead returning to the collective trope of women as victims of the mutiny – as sufferers of sad tales.

Both artefacts show that the representation of women was an important element of collective conversation about the mutiny. In Tenniel’s Large Cut, this representation is, on the first level, placing an unconscious or dead woman holding a child under the Bengal Tiger. And yet, the pairing cannot simply be explained based on already existing traditions. If the Cut had wanted simply to reverse the message of \textit{Tippoo’s Tiger}, it could have shown a British soldier attacked. Because it shows a woman and child instead, studies of women’s roles in the Indian mutiny use it to represent British fears and anger after news of the Cawnpore massacre of women (and children) on 15 July 1857.\textsuperscript{27} However, although the massacre had taken place by the time Tenniel’s cartoon was published, news of it had not yet been confirmed in Britain: \textit{The Times}, used by \textit{Punch} as reference point for news of the mutiny, only published a detailed account of the massacre at Cawnpore on 29 August 1857, and referred only to the killing of those leaving Hugh Wheeler’s entrenchment before 15 July.\textsuperscript{28} Therefore, it is unlikely that Tenniel represented women as victims as a result of the events at Cawnpore, or that Cawnpore made the female form an easily understandable metaphor. And yet, the representation of women made the cartoon extremely powerful. In December 1857 it was reproduced in the pantomime of the Standard Theatre, as well as being used as a banner in the cartoon in \textit{Punch}, as discussed above.\textsuperscript{29}

The source of this element of the cartoon is the increasing amount of news of atrocities against women and children circulating in Britain from August 1857. Tenniel’s work

\textsuperscript{22} Bartrum, p. 72. On ‘good death’ see “‘Suppressed Grief’”, p. 367 and pp. 380-387.
\textsuperscript{23} Polehampton, p. 195.
\textsuperscript{24} ‘A Widow’s Reminiscences of the Siege of Lucknow. (Nisbet)’, \textit{Athenaeum}, no. 1640, 2 April 1859, p. 449.
\textsuperscript{26} ‘A Widow’s Reminiscences’, \textit{Athenaeum}.
\textsuperscript{27} See for example Morris, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{28} ‘The Mutinies in India’, \textit{The Times}, 29 August 1857, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{29} Morris, p. 63, and ‘Willing Hands for India’. 
translates news into a metaphor for every fear associated with the mutiny, which shows how a political cartoon could construct, as well as rely on, collective discourse. Women participated in producing the news on which Punch could rely: on 7 August 1857, for instance, a woman wrote a letter to the editor of The Times discussing the destruction of British houses during the mutiny.\(^{30}\) To modern readers this might not suggest an attack on women, but to contemporaries the home was the woman’s domain, and, as Alison Blunt has illustrated, such attacks on British houses created fears for the ‘defenceless white wife and mother’.\(^{31}\) Katherine Bartrum’s published diary shows that Anglo-Indian women published their male relatives’ letters, too: her husband’s correspondence with his mother, included in Bartrum’s published account, indicate that vengeance after attacks on women was perhaps first thought of in India: ‘All prisoners are deliberately shot or hung’, and ‘At first I loathed the idea, but now [...] I feel pleasure in seeing those creatures revenged upon’.\(^{32}\) This letter is part of a much larger set written by men as eyewitnesses, also framing the British discourse through the mediation of newspapers such as The Times: ‘our ladies have been dragged naked through the streets by the rabble of Delhi’.\(^{33}\) This, then, is what made the placement of a woman (and child) as the victim of the Bengal Tiger topical and rallying in Tenniel’s mutiny cartoon, but the cartoon also turned a very specific issue at the early stages of the mutiny into a symbol of British emotions throughout the conflict.

The way Tenniel’s cartoon represents women removed the agency real women showed in writing letters and publishing diaries. This is evident in the visual clue of the woman’s face being invisible. This taking away of agency from women also appears from the fate of Katherine Bartrum’s published text, two years after Tenniel created his cartoon. Although she carefully edited it, updating its language and structure, her reviews dubbed her text ‘simple’, and focused on her ‘sad story’, as we have seen above. One of the reviewers even reduced the text simply to a ‘record of the anxieties and sufferings of a mother and wife’, reinforcing the role of woman as victim, and as general symbol, moving from one specific woman to universal womanhood.\(^{34}\) This links Bartrum’s fate directly to the kind of news that was present in the British press in 1857, and shows the lasting effect of the early representation of woman as the symbol of the victimisation of innocents. It also completely overlooks Bartrum’s inclusion of letters in her published account that are not about her own fate, but about her husband.\(^{35}\) Bartrum shows that she is conscious of her position as a woman publishing a previously private account in her Preface: ‘It is not the wish of the writer of this little Volume, [...] to draw, [...] a picture of sights and scenes through which it has been her lot to pass;’ she makes her account available ‘at the desire of her friends’.\(^{36}\) Other women writing about Lucknow also chose to use the request of friends as their justification for daring to publish their diaries. Georgina Harris wrote ‘As no lady’s diary has hitherto been given to the public, the friends of the writer have thought that it might interest others’.\(^{37}\) Maria Germon’s sister also felt the need to defend this diarist: ‘You ask about the “Diary of Lucknow”. My sister never intended publishing them [sic] – but she was so continually pressed to do so by a few friends’.\(^{38}\) This framing device places agency for publishing with the ‘friends’. Of course, even if there were real friends behind women’s published diaries, the references to them also become linguistic tropes of the Lucknow discourse, constructing publication as an involuntary act.

\(^{31}\) Blunt, p. 407.
\(^{32}\) Bartrum, p. 86.
\(^{33}\) ‘The Indian Mutinies’, The Times, 8 August 1857, p. 12. See also Blunt, p. 408.
\(^{34}\) ‘A Widow’s Reminiscences’, Tait’s.
\(^{35}\) Bartrum, pp. 66-87.
\(^{36}\) Bartrum, Preface.
\(^{37}\) Georgina Harris, A Lady’s Diary of the Siege of Lucknow, Written for the Perusal of Friends (London: Murray, 1858), p. iii.
\(^{38}\) Letter of M. A. Garratt to her cousin, Maria Germon, A Diary Kept by Mrs R. C. Germon, At Lucknow, Between the Months of May and December, 1857 (London: Waterlow and Sons, 1870) Gutenberg e-book, front endpaper of the original volume.
In reality, Bartrum’s participation in the discourse was not involuntary, shown by the serious editing of her text. She added the framing devices of the dedication and Preface, filled in gaps in the story of the mutiny by adding letters, and edited her account to include judgement of certain events. The entry for 25 December stands out. In the manuscript, Bartrum writes ‘How sad a Christmas for all. They will be thinking of me at home’. In the published account, this becomes ‘How they will be thinking of us at home today. It is such a sad Christmas: so different to all that have gone before’. This implies interpretation of the events of Lucknow, and self-awareness of the author’s experience as a ‘sad story’. That we can tell changes were the result of a process of editing is vital as it shows that Bartrum was publishing in the context of an already suppressed mutiny, and as a survivor, naturally inclined to evaluate her experiences. But the sections she updated also show elements of women’s victimhood, the kind of suffering the national discourse focused on in 1857, such as the lack of proper homes. She was influenced by and part of the collective discourse that had by now established its presentation of ‘woman’.

Representing the Indian mutiny was a complicated matter in the wake of the conflict and for those who lived through it. There were emotional issues to portray and address; here, these were fears around atrocities against women and children, and grief over the death of loved ones. But meaning also had to be created, in a national and sectional context. In the case of Tenniel’s cartoon this involved combining the visual traditions of *Punch* with newly emerging national preoccupations that did not yet have a definitive visual representation. For Katherine Bartrum, the attempt to create meaning was a more personal one, and was part of the shared experience of those survivors of Lucknow who witnessed the deaths of their loved ones. But Bartrum, as other Lucknow women (and men), and as Tenniel, also used Victorian British tradition to create meaning, relying on the language of Christian grief and death. National discourse did not adopt this framing of Lucknow by its survivors as it did the symbolic use of woman as mutiny victim. Nevertheless, Bartrum was influenced by the national discourse, editing into her account the public perception of women in India as victims. Her editorial work on her diary also shows that women could have agency in the process of representing the mutiny, although, as in 1857 so in 1858-59 that agency was contained by male commentary.

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39 'Manuscript Copy of a Diary'.
40 Bartrum, p. 62.
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Mirroring Mothers: Self-Identity and the Maternal Threat
in George Eliot’s Adam Bede and Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s Lady Lilith

Olivia Bam

Abstract

An analysis of the character Hetty Sorrel in George Eliot’s Adam Bede (1859) and Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s Lady Lilith (1868) as reflections of the Victorian preoccupation with narcissistic women. The two women, at first glance very different, highlight the psychological relevance and significance the mirror holds for the works themselves and the mirror’s wider social implications.

Hetty Sorrel in George Eliot’s Adam Bede (1859) and Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s portrait Lady Lilith (1868) are, at first glance, an incongruous pairing. Eliot’s heroine is a simple, yet ‘distractingly pretty’1 country girl, a mere seventeen-year-old, who falls victim to the seductions of the local gentry and ends the novel exiled, though not executed, for the murder of her illegitimate child. The story, though set in 1799, was inspired by recent true events2 and tapped into the public’s fascination with the overblown sense of ‘mass infanticide’3 during the 1850s into the 1860s. Lady Lilith is the “modern” version of Lilith from Talmudic legend. She is Adam’s first wife, before Eve. She is sumptuously attired, or in fact, in a state of dishabille, in what appears to be a private boudoir. What links these two women is the mirror. This ‘proverbial emblem of female vanity’4 is given a distinctly modern feel by both Eliot and Rossetti. Though Adam Bede and Lady Lilith both predate psychoanalytic theory, examining aspects of the works through this lens highlights surprising similarities, particularly in respect to maternity, reflecting contemporary social anxieties and conditions.

Nineteenth-century debate over the “woman question” attempted to define woman, her duties, her character and her biology (including sexuality). The ideal Victorian woman was pure, passive, frail; a ‘paragon of self sacrifice’5 and ‘self-renunciation’.6 Her existence was defined in reference to her husband.7 The denial of self, and the physical isolation of fulfilling domestic duties (including maternal duties)8 as the ‘angel in the house’9 led, however, to the perception of woman’s ‘constitutionally inverted identity’.10 Women were ‘self-contained, unindividualised’11 and depicted as circles, the moon, Diana and, significantly, mirrors. These associations reinforced the desired reflectivity and responsive traits of the ideal, beautiful woman. In a perversion of this, however, ‘the altruist [became] an egoist’, a Narcissa, consumed with her ‘own fulfilment’.12

2 See Reynolds’ introduction in Eliot, p. XV.
6 John Ruskin, Sesame and Lilies (1865), quoted in Dijkstra, p. 13.
9 Coventry Patmore, quoted in Dijkstra, p. 18.
10 Dijkstra, p. 74.
11 Dijkstra, p. 129.
12 Dijkstra, p. 147.
It is against this backdrop that Eliot presents Hetty Sorrel in the ‘reifying language of men about women’. This seventeen-year-old, orphaned beauty is infantilised and likened to the nature surrounding her (‘kittens, or very small downy ducks’). Her round, fleshy beauty is that of a child, all ‘dimples’ and ‘pouting’. Small fissures in the presentation of Hetty’s infantile innocence appear in the description of her (limited) self-awareness: she acknowledges the effects of her beauty on men, treats it as a ‘performance’ and relishes it with ‘cold triumph’. Her aunt, Mrs. Poyser, views her as a ‘peacock’ with a heart as ‘hard as a pebble’.

Chapter XV: The Two Bed-Chambers reveals Hetty’s true character in front of the mirror, or more specifically and significantly, two mirrors. Her insularity is signalled by her ‘always’ bolting the door and by the locked drawers of her dresser. She performs her ‘religious rites’ in front of the mirror by candlelight. Her preference for a ‘red-framed mirror without blotches’ over the ‘tarnished’, ‘old-fashioned looking-glass’ has manifold significance. The tarnished, old mirror, ‘fixed in an upright position’ cannot be angled to Hetty’s desire, to capture the image she requires. In fact, it is uncomfortable to get close to. Hetty first consults the hand-held mirror she purchased secretly and once pleased with her reflection, she puts it down, proceeding with her mission to fashion herself into ‘the picture of a lady’ she has seen in Miss Lydia Donnithorne’s dressing-room. She may then consult the old mirror which ‘couldn’t help’ returning the ‘lovely image’. Hetty is using her hand-held mirror first to fix in her mind what she wants to see, the imaginary, the result of her priming. Notably her goal is to become an image, not an animate woman, and, significantly, it is an image she connects with her lover, Arthur. La Belle comments on the mirror’s ‘reflectivity’ allowing its viewer to ‘see that destiny and transform it into the foundation of their self-conception’. The act of mirroring is a process of ‘socialisation’, or establishing an identity, she argues, referencing Lacan’s theory of “mirroring” in infants. An understanding of this process is important in order to understand Hetty’s character, and has further implications for the examination of Eliot’s intentions for the novel and its connections to Rossetti’s Lady Lilith.

Lacan maintains that an infant (up to six months) has a ‘unified’ image of itself in the mother, a ‘fusion’, and is totally dependent until he becomes the subject in the presence of the mirror, or mother acting as mirror, whereby she reflects back to the infant what he projects. This self-awareness, or recognition of the self as ‘I’, is also acknowledging the self as ‘Other’ (in the sense that ‘yes, that person over there is me’). This fragmentation precipitates the necessity of the split from the mother and facilitates the formation of the ‘Ideal-I’. A gradual integration into culture and language (La Belle’s ‘socialisation’ above) follows, and the ‘Ideal-I’ is maintained in the ‘Imaginary Order’, which must be distinguished from ‘reality (the fantasy world we convince ourselves is the world around us) and the real (the materiality of existence [...]’.

14 Eliot, p. 92.
15 Eliot, p. 92.
16 Eliot, p. 93.
18 Eliot, p. 170.
19 Eliot, pp. 163-5.
21 La Belle, p. 94.
In Hetty this process appears to have been disrupted. She externalises and objectifies her own fashioned image further (‘O yes! She was very pretty...’) while simultaneously also internalising it. The narrator notes that during this process of internalisation she has a ‘different sensation’ from her previous mirror sessions, feeling an ‘invisible spectator’ resting his eyes on her ‘like morning on flowers’, in what becomes a perversion of the classic ‘mirror-mistress-lover topos’. She hears his voice, feels his arms around her, smells the ‘delicate rose-scent of his hair’. She internalises her projection of his presence. This is apparent in the use of contemporary female-flower imagery employed for Hetty, which also connotes Arthur’s scent (as Hetty perceives it), inextricably linking it to her. She is arrested in her psychological development at the mirroring stage, unsuccessfully integrating the outside world, or the ‘real’ into Lacan’s workable ‘reality’, but instead basing her sense of self in Lacan’s ‘Imaginary Order’. She fuses with her fantasy of Arthur, which in itself is an inversion or perversion of the female being reflective: Arthur is imbued with feminine attributes (his ‘soft voice’ and ‘delicate rose-scent’). Indeed, the narrator’s reference to contemporary thoughts on female sexuality (‘passion vibrating in return’ to the male initiator) is in fact satirised through Hetty’s self-referential and narcissistic desire.

Hetty’s true nature is revealed to the reader in the presence of two mirrors. Hollander notes that only with two mirrors can the viewer attain ‘a true look at the face seen by

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28 See also Eliot, p. 110.
others’, in the ‘indirect doubled image’, which ‘cancels the danger and the trap’. Hetty, as noted above, of course has no interest in using the mirrors for this purpose and subsequently does not escape the trap. Her “true look”, her seeing, is in the seeming. She cannot perceive Derrida’s crucial \textit{différance} between what is reflected and what is real.

That the chapter itself constructs a double is, for the plot, significant. Hetty’s room is adjoined to Dinah’s, providing a mirror, or reverse left-right image, perhaps. When Hetty is seemingly ‘captured in the motionless silvered trap’, Dinah enjoys the ‘wide view’ from her window over the moonlit fields. Gilbert and Gubar, in their analysis of another mirror-tale, \textit{Snow White}, might just as readily have been talking of Hetty:

To be caught and trapped in a mirror rather than a window, however, is to be driven inward, obsessively studying self-images as if seeking a viable self.

Chapter XXXI: Hetty’s Bed-Chamber, by contrast, forces Hetty into confrontation with the mirror as the unity of the vision with the self is shattered. In this instance, Hetty retires to her room to read a letter Adam has delivered from Arthur. Her narcissism is intact, though vulnerable as the scene opens: the letter has a ‘faint smell of roses’ (my emphasis). She has a visceral reaction to Arthur’s letter of rejection and her ‘white marble face’ (unlike the ‘rose-petal’ cheeks of before) implies petrification. She cannot see her reflection in the ‘old dim glass’, which for the modern reader is reminiscent of Freud’s theories of the uncanny and linked to the fear of castration. La Belle notes the ‘disunity’ between self and image in the mirror is often the ‘beginning of a psychological disorder’. Crucially it is in the old family mirror, symbolic of the mother, that Hetty cannot see herself at first. On re-reading the letter, which can be seen to signify Lacan’s ‘Symbolic field, the field of language’ (or the layman’s “reality”), Hetty sees herself as other in the mirror, as she is, not a fantasy version of herself:

It was almost like a companion that she might complain to – that would pity her. She leaned forward on her elbows, and looked into those... eyes...

Hetty is only now embarking upon Lacan’s “mirroring process” through the symbolic mother’s mirror. The violence of this separation from her fantasy world is detailed, and of course will continue with limited success throughout the remainder of the novel. Described as a baby ‘just beginning to toddle’ early in the narrative, Eliot effectively undercuts the prevalent desirability and viability of infantilised women, first as psychologically “integrated” adults and then as capable mothers. Hetty is depicted as ‘dangerously deviant: unfeminine in her lack of maternal love’, unthinkable and monstrous to Victorian sensibilities. A modern psychological reading of \textit{Adam Bede} sees Hetty’s incompetence, ambivalence and disassociation from the crime and the child itself (as evidenced in her partial burial of the child, her silence in court and refusal to acknowledge having given birth except in her confession to Dinah) as reflections of her underlying un-integrated psychological state.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{29} Anne Hollander, \textit{Seeing through Clothes} (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), p. 393.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Simone de Beauvoir, \textit{The Second Sex}, quoted in La Belle, p. 9.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Eliot, p. 171.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Eliot, pp. 361-3.
\item \textsuperscript{34} Eliot, p. 92.
\item \textsuperscript{35} La Belle, p. 22.
\item \textsuperscript{36} Willette http://www.arthistoryunstuffed.com/jacques-lacan-mirror-stage/ [accessed 14 March 2015].
\item \textsuperscript{37} Eliot, p. 363.
\item \textsuperscript{38} Eliot, p. 92.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Gould, p. 272.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Eliot, p. 493.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Eliot, p. 466.
\item \textsuperscript{42} Eliot, pp. 490-1.
\end{itemize}
In Rossetti’s *Lady Lilith*, a different kind of woman is presented. Far from Hetty’s infantile naïveté, Rossetti places a rarely represented, mythological woman in front of the mirror, or, more accurately, mirrors, in a contemporary boudoir scene. Her altar-like vanity table, complete with candles, is reminiscent of Hetty’s place of worship. Lilith is surrounded by reflective and cold silver, glass and polished dark wood surfaces. Rossetti’s typical “floral attributes” for his women also adorn Lilith, infusing the scene with a luxuriant eroticism. The red of the cut poppy at the bottom right of the painting is linked to her lips, symbolising female genitalia. The focus is Lilith’s languid gaze into the mirror whilst combing her hair. Where movement is necessarily implied, there is an overall sense of stasis and stagnation. The roses from the top right corner seem to have grown around Lilith. The crowded, “intense” composition of the painting imbues the scene with airlessness, antithetical to thriving flowers. Rossetti’s *Body’s Beauty*, in the tradition of the double, is the accompanying sonnet to *Lady Lilith*. It provides a reflection and expansion of this notion of stasis. Lilith is age-old:

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And still she sits, young while the earth is old,
And subtly of herself contemplative. (my emphasis)
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‘Still’ implies lack of motion, but also endurance or continuity. The lack of energy is indicative less of a search or struggle for identity and more of complacency, notably the opposite of Hetty’s busy and bustling interactions with the mirror. This complacency is borne out by her rejection of the large mirror (the mother’s mirror) and also the angle of her hand-held mirror. The oval shape of the mirror refers to her self-involved narcissism. However, she is not captivated by the image of her face (symbolic of self-knowledge or identity). On closer examination the mirror is, at least partially, angled to her hair and specifically the hair that has just been combed. Gitter convincingly links weaving and combing hair and notes that the weaving is ‘analogous to narrative thread, the story line’. The viewer’s gaze is compulsively drawn to the large screen of hair she is combing out. The metaphor is mirrored and expanded in *Body’s Beauty*:

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Draws men to watch the bright web she can weave,
Till heart and body and life are in its hold.
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In Homer’s *Odyssey*, Penelope wove to control her own fate when faced with the prospect of marriage to one of her undesirable suitors. Here, Lilith is presented as knowingly in control of not just her own fate, but, in a more threatening way than Penelope, she is in control of men she ensnares.

Motionless, Lilith looks at the mirror not to construct an identity, but to luxuriate in her power, her control over the fates of others. The mirror fuels her narcissism by reflecting this known power. Additionally, this power redoubles itself by being the agent by which

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44 William Michael Rossetti, quoted in Bullen, p. 100.
46 Allen, p. 291.
49 *Body’s Beauty*, lines 5-6.
52 Gitter, p. 938.
53 *Body’s Beauty*, lines 7-8.
more victims are captured, and the implication is, fed upon (perhaps through the consumption of sexual energy as implied by the 'straight neck bent').

What becomes apparent through examination of the painting in conjunction with its mirror, Body's Beauty, is that, much like Eliot, Rossetti employs contemporary thoughts or imagery in order to undermine their validity. Lilith's initially desirable passivity, her floral accompaniments, confinement in a domestic setting are all myths, ironically dispelled by a mythical woman. In casting off her floral head garland, she is a perversion of the classic Venus, surrounded by mirrors, who wears the wreath as a symbol of her status as the 'ideal lady'. On closer examination her extreme isolation, the lack of precise or comprehensible physical location (indoors or outdoors?) is disorientating, as is the black background out of which the roses inexplicably flourish. Even the large vanity table mirror reflects an exterior scene, not the interior of the boudoir making it seem like a window. Lilith has rejected an outward-looking window in favour of an inward-looking mirror. The incomprehensibility of the scene for the viewer has an unsettling maelstrom effect, in which only Lilith's steady gaze at the mirror is fixed: the eye of the storm. The disorientation effect inextricably links the viewer to the scene (as Lilith 'draws men' towards her). The act of looking at or outwards is reversed and introspection is required by the viewer to an extent perhaps not as urgently demanded in Adam Bede by its often unsympathetic narrative voice.

The viewer's gaze is the male gaze, intruding upon an intimate boudoir scene. Made aware of the dangers by Body's Beauty (which was engraved on the original frame) the viewer is still unable to avert his gaze, under her 'spell'. If, as Hollander notes, the presence of two mirrors offers the possibility of 'truth' perhaps Rossetti shifts the burden of self-identification to the viewer.

Returning to the legend, Lilith is the monstrous mother who spawns demons. She is also a murderer of infants. Though not painted in true profile to produce a physical barrier to the viewer, her ultimate rejection is her refusal to return or “mirror” the viewer's gaze. Her children, lacking “mirroring”, exhibit signs of fragmented psychological development as demons. Again the horror of the monstrous mother is evident and compounded by her seemingly serpentine hair, echoed in the sibilance of the eleventh line of Body's Beauty: ‘And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall snare…’. She is the Medusa, whose petrifying gaze can be equated to arresting the development of a child, leaving it unable to progress psychologically and integrate effectively into society. Though arguably these images of maternity are subordinated by the overtly sexual nature of the painting (by contemporary standards), they are undoubtedly present and threatening.

The Delphic principle 'Know Thyself' referred to a self-knowledge absent of all 'sensory appearances' of the physical reflection. What becomes apparent in both works is the central role of the mirror to Hetty's and Lilith's identities. Both exhibit narcissistic fascination not just with their beautiful reflections, but with the identities they construct for themselves in front of the mirror. Hetty becomes a fine lady, adorned in jewels and silks and Lilith replenishes her power over men through the magic of her “woven” hair. Notably their regenerative energies, their fertility even, are focused inward, despite abundantly fertile, natural surroundings. Their beauty belies their barren interiors. Of

54 Body's Beauty, line 13.
55 Goodman-Soellner, p. 440.
56 Hillis Miller, p. 334.
57 Body's Beauty, line 7.
58 For discussion of narrative voice in Adam Bede see Catherine R. Hancock, "“It was Bone of Her Bone and Flesh of Her Flesh, and She had Killed It”: Three Versions of Destructive Maternity in Victorian Fiction", Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory, Vol. 15 (2010), pp. 299-320; and Mason Harris 'Infanticide and Respectability: Hetty Sorrel as Abandoned Child in Adam Bede', English Studies in Canada, Vol. 9 (1983), pp. 177-197; and Gould.
59 Body's Beauty, line 13.
60 Hollander, p. 393.
61 Melchior-Bonnet, p. 105.
course, both are mothers, but murdering mothers; mothers who damage their offspring. Eliot and Rossetti present these women with varying degrees of sympathy. Hetty is, if not forgiven for her crime, spared execution. As an ‘abandoned child’ herself, ‘just at the infantile beginning of consciousness’, her crime, though morally unambiguous, is a result of her psychological underdevelopment. At the mirror, Hetty is searching for an identity, but without the formative mother’s mirror, she is left without the ‘needed internal structure’ and unable to integrate her fantasy self with reality. Eliot uses Hetty to reflect Hayslope’s failure and, on a wider stage, to force the viewer to re-examine contemporary debates over infanticide and the importance of the maternal to the contemporary psyche. Lilith’s mirror gaze is different: it is part of her appeal. Rossetti acknowledges the paradoxical attraction of the self-involved, rejecting woman. The male viewer craves the fulfilment, the reassurance, of Lilith’s (the mother’s) formative gaze, all the time knowing it will annihilate him. Lilith, of course, has had no mother of her own, like Hetty, and is presented therefore as lacking maternal instinct and compassion. She exists solely in the unreal boudoir of the artist’s imagination versus Hetty’s very realistic rural setting, based on a real case, most likely reflecting their creators’ intentions for interpretation. Rossetti undoubtedly intended Lilith to be representative of the ‘libidinal force, disruptive of social and family stability’ of the New Woman, though arguably Rossetti’s anxiety lay in her implications for him personally rather than on a wider social scale. Additionally, what links the two works is their complex exploration of the psychological implications, on a personal and public scale, of women in front of the mirror. They eschew the simple explanation of vanity, before even the publication of Freud’s psychoanalytic theory, and encourage deeper analysis. Hetty and Lilith’s beauty is a foil for their true interiors. Appearances are deceptive. The message is clear: know thyself through, and not just in, the mirror.

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64 Bullen, p. 134.
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The Art of Appearance: The Concept and Implications of Cosmetics in the Eighteenth Century

Alexandra Abrams

Abstract

A study of an excerpt from Letters to the Ladies, on the Preservation of Health and Beauty. By a physician, (1770), and a boîte à mouches, (c. 1750-1755), to explore how, in the eighteenth century, achieving beauty became a preoccupation in itself. Its importance is focused on by exploring the effort – and dangers – taken in its achievement. The article will also use the artefacts to assess the language of appearance, in terms of status and intention. It will demonstrate that ‘beauty’ became such a preoccupation that some even gave their lives in its name.

The eighteenth century marked the dawn of an era in which looks and fashions became as important as birth. It was a period when ‘getting ready’ became about far more than simply putting on clothes and looking presentable; it was a time when looks – and the process of achieving those looks – became crucial. The ‘beau monde’, synonymously known as the ‘haute ton’, came to characterise London’s elite society, and the importance placed on beauty, as made evident in the group’s French name, reflected and encouraged its necessity. This article will examine two artefacts, one of instruction and one of use, to examine and demonstrate the importance placed on good looks. It will also bring in further sources to demonstrate the efforts taken to achieve beauty, as well as critiques of doing so, in order to gain a fuller understanding of the concept of achieving beauty and the ways in which such activities were regarded. Interestingly, the instruments used to achieve the highest ‘physical’ state often caused far more contention than pleasure, and they were much more dangerous than they were necessary. The two artefacts focused on in this article will touch upon these facets, whilst allowing the reader to understand at first hand why the value of cosmetics became widespread, and how even the instruments used were designed accordingly.

The first artefact to be examined is a letter from a work published in 1770 entitled Letters to the ladies, on the preservation of health and beauty. By a physician. It is a handbook dedicated to the importance of looking one’s best, and contains numerous recipes enabling one to do so. Its purpose in itself suggests the efforts women were willing to make in order to enhance their looks, whilst acting as an example of why they believed that it was necessary to do so. Such is immediately evident in the work’s title, which relates and prioritises ‘health and beauty’. Such a connection suggests that they are of equal importance, immediately allowing the reader to infer the necessity of being beautiful. Indeed, Letters profoundly demonstrates the importance of appearances, opening with ‘As beauty is the most amiable of all personal endowments...it will ever command the attention of the elegant and refined part of mankind’.

The context in which readers understood beauty, as both a gift and an objective. It was written at the height of the eighteenth century, in a world where beauty had grown into a quality necessary for elite social standing, alongside birth and culture.

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2 Letters, p. 12.
3 See Greig, 2013.
The writer continues relating the work to the upper classes, noting that 'The art of improving beauty was so diligently cultivated in ancient Greece'. This links the art of beauty with the art of culture, thus emphasising its value. The importance of the Classical world was relished during the era, with the Grand Tour opening the eyes of many to the wonders of the ancient world. The inherent social standing implied by one's travel to, and thus appreciation of, the world of antiquity, increased its status in contemporary understanding. Further, the Classical age was regarded as one of 'human excellence' and 'perfection', and the constant references made towards the time reinforce the importance of beauty.

Somewhat problematically, the work is written by 'anon', which prevents the historian gaining a full understanding of its background. One cannot infer the class, or intentions, of the writer. Was it written by someone of the social standing it alludes to? The reader does suppose that it was written by a 'physician' as suggested in the title, which is interesting in terms of the implicit dangers of using the cosmetics listed in the work. The nature of the author therefore implicitly suggests the importance of makeup, by suggesting its importance in the light of medical dangers. However, whilst physicians were not women, one must wonder whether there is any truth in this suggested authorship. For if it was written by a woman, or user of such cosmetics, it would call for a different interpretation. As will be explored, the use of cosmetics was appreciated in varying ways between the sexes and the classes.

Letter II goes on to demonstrate the efforts required to achieve the predefined concept of beauty. It specifies the importance of complexion, which, as Caroline Palmer explains, was the height of fashion in the Georgian era and manifested in terms of white paint, rouge and patches to cover any blemishes. It presents the reader with a recipe for the removal of freckles. The chosen passage only details the first stage of the method, which takes over twenty-four hours to complete and requires at least one more recipe.

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4 *Letters*, p. 12.
8 Palmer, p. 15.
Such recipes, it was believed, had the ability to alter a woman’s appearance so as to achieve the ‘beauty’ accepted by social norms. They consequently demonstrate how much effort women went to in order to achieve their looks.

Figure 2. Thomas Rowlandson, ‘Six Stages of Mending a Face’, 1792.

‘Six Stages of Mending a Face’, a print by Thomas Rowlandson (1792; see Figure 2), was usefully published at the same time as Letters, and so exemplifies this wonderfully. It portrays Lady Sarah Archer emphasising the lengths gone to in order to achieve the perfect appearance, using the six images to demonstrate the lengthy work by allowing them to crowd the image. Her facial expressions are particularly interesting. They initially tell of the struggle and discomfort associated with the toilette, and the pride in her smile – found only in the last illustration – stresses the need to look beautiful. One can further compare the first and last illustrations to infer the perceived power of makeup and cosmetics, such as that created by the recipe above. The cartoon allows one to infer the different techniques required in achieving the desired looks, whilst appreciating the way in which every last detail must be accounted for. Letters, in its entirety, is one hundred and eighty-eight pages long, reinforcing the extent to which even the most minute details of beauty were approached, and the lengths gone to, in order to rectify them. The cartoon also highlights this article’s suggested correlation between status and beauty, its subject linking the importance of beauty to the upper classes. The use of ‘mending’ in its title suggests that the resulting stage and its beauty was the way one’s face ought to look, thus indicating the necessity of beauty.

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However, it must be noted that it is entirely mocking the routine, suggesting conflicting opinions about cosmetics. It is important to recognise that Lady Archer and her looks were a frequent subject of such contemptuous cartoons, suggesting the attention given to the art of cosmetics and the perceived duplicity in the made-up face.

Turning one's attention back to Letters, the recipe also leads one to infer another contentious issue, that of the danger of cosmetics. It calls the reader to use 'oil of tartar', which is known today as the poisonous potassium carbonate. Other dangerous ingredients such as 'lead, mercury and arsenic', were prominent. Indeed, many cosmetics featured harmful substances, so much so that there had been a preventative Act in 1724, nearly fifty years before Letters was written, intended to regulate London-based cosmetics. Such a legal step emphasises the widespread use – and danger – of cosmetics.

One cannot infer the dangers of cosmetics from Letters alone; indeed one cannot assume that its author knew of the perceived threats of the recipe's ingredients. However, the poison in the ingredients was beginning to become apparent. Maria Gunning, a society beauty, was eventually killed by her extreme use of cosmetics at twenty-seven years old. She died in 1760, ten years before Letters was written. It is widely known that her husband had warned her against her prolific use of lead-based cosmetics and, when considered in tandem with the Act of 1724, it becomes apparent that an awareness of such dangers was almost definitely known by 1770 – particularly after such a high profile death. Poignantly, the frequent use of cosmetics despite their danger, reinforces the extreme importance given to looking good: it was worth risking one's life. Its irony is profound when one considers that Letters was written by a 'physician'.

The reader has learnt about the importance of cosmetics from such sources as Letters, above, and can therefore understand the intrinsic importance of such artefacts, which were necessary to the obligatory 'perfect beauty' of high society ladies. As already discussed, Letter II calls for a perfect, 'unspotted' complexion. This article's second artefact, a boîte à mouchoes, or rouge and patch box from 1750-1755, was necessary for achieving such looks.

\[16\] Marsh, [accessed 15 February 2015].
\[18\] The Metropolitan Museum of Art [accessed 18 February 2015].
Made a mere twenty years before this article’s first artefact, the box is a physical manifestation of the instructions and wording in *Letters*, designed to help uphold a woman’s perfect complexion. It features three main compartments: one for rouge, another for taffeta patches, and the third for the mirror and brush necessary for applying the makeup. Its practicality is implicit, being small enough to be available for whenever needed and consequently often carried around by its owner. Its size and thus portability implies the importance of its contents, which could be required at any given moment.

The box contained rouge, which was a primary aspect of the desired complexion mentioned in *Letters*, and introduces the understanding of makeup as a tool. Interestingly, periodicals valued the prominence of rouge in portraits, ‘as a means of catching husbands, since men were foolish enough to be taken in by it’. As objects intended to capture the best of their subjects, the prominence of rouge in paintings can be used to imply its value. Simultaneously, its prominence in portraiture connects it to the upper classes, attributing it a social prestige that will be explored later. However, it was incredibly popular in eighteenth-century England, as demonstrated by the vast amounts being imported.

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21 See *Letters*.
The boîte was also made to hold patches. These, in particular, were necessary to cover up any blemishes in the skin. Although the box dates slightly earlier, they were prominent from around 1760, in an era where many succumbed to smallpox. However, they were useful even in the absence of pox marks, or to distract from their original intention when the marks were present. The patches were often used to convey a message, as conveyed in Figure 4. One's sexual desires, even political ambitions, could be determined by where one placed the patches on one's skin. Their aesthetic potential was enhanced by their availability in heart or star shapes, suggesting a frivolous and amusing aspect of covering blemishes.

![Figure 4. Modern diagram of the meaning of patches, as understood in the eighteenth century.](image)

One will note that the descriptions are written in French, reminding one of the widespread influence the French court had over appearances. The box reinforces this concept both in terms of nature and material. Poignantly, this influence can be detected in its design. The French design of Rococo is abundant in the curls of the gold, and the

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26 Rendell [accessed 18 February 2015].
27 Inglis [accessed 18 February 2015].
28 ‘Beauty Spots – More than Just a Mark’, This is Versailles <http://thisisversaillesmadame.blogspot.co.uk/2013/09/beauty-spots-more-than-just-mark.html> [accessed 18 February 2015].
shell-like quality of the agate; the use of gold in such a manner resembles the design schemes of the French court. The utensil was even named in French, boîte à mouches, and was probably sold in France, suggesting a symbiotic relationship. This French influence reflects the use of cosmetics in general; many of the English cosmetic fashions, particularly rouge and patches, were influenced by the French.

This is particularly troublesome in terms of the struggling Anglo-French relations of the mid-eighteenth century, which is interesting in this case. The context in which the box was made was either just before, or during the Seven Years’ War. It is here that one begins to see the influence of the French on English cosmetics. This led to a widespread dislike of rouge, with its French influences conferring on it a nature of moral deterioration. Consequently, such obvious French influences, both in terms of its nature and design, indicate a lack of importance given to politics by the consumers, even though they would have been members of the influential and politically inclined upper classes. Conversely, it could suggest the importance of beauty in its priority over political allegiances.

There was another contentious aspect to the use of makeup. Cosmetics, such as those featured in the boîte, symbolised an artificial change to nature in the name of vanity. In masking her ugliness and blemishes, as suggested by the Rowlandson cartoon above, a woman could also hide her true nature. Makeup allowed women to be appreciated for things they were not, and enticed men under false pretences. Lady Archer, pictured in Figure 3, was a regular illustration of the duplicitous nature of cosmetics, her over-emphasised ugliness reinforcing the power of cosmetics.

The makeup contained within the boîte demonstrates this, and was often understood by such prolific figures as William Hogarth as tools of a corrupt morality in terms of its powers of sexual attraction. This made many uncomfortable, as they felt painted faces to be false, often removing any individuality and giving its wearers an air of ‘unreadability’. Such a criticism was extended by the more comical critique of the practicality of cosmetics. As The Spectator wrote, ‘a sigh in the languishing lover, if fetched too near, would dissolve a feature; and a kiss snatched by a forward one, might transform the complexion of the mistress to the face of the admirer’.

Interestingly, by furthering the concept of makeup as a ‘mask’, one can argue that it had the ability to ‘mask’ one’s true birth and status. The boîte is particularly ornate, being decorated with gold and agate. Fundamentally, this luxury confirms and reinforces the poignancy of cosmetics and suggests its appreciation as valuable. This understanding applies to both the concept of beauty itself, and the cosmetics required to achieve it. Makeup had been inherently connected to the upper classes, and its status as expensive only served to increase its attractiveness. Its value increased one’s looks, whilst also commodifying the concept of beauty. It could now be bought. Whilst this was

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29 http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/history-of-art/rococo.htm
31 The Metropolitan Museum of Art [accessed 18 February 2015].
33 Palmer, p. 198.
34 Palmer, 2008.
36 See Letters.
37 See Palmer.
40 The Metropolitan Museum of Art [accessed 18 February 2015].
41 http://www.nwta.com/Spy/Winter/Makeup.html
beneficial to those of lower classes, it caused much unease amongst many as suggested elsewhere in this article.

This, together with the 'unreadability' of women's emotions and natural faces, was particularly confusing in a context of social malleability. What was once considered expensive and only accessible to the upper classes could now be consumed by those of a lower status. They were given the opportunity to look expensive. Further, in a climate where beauty was given an increased importance alongside birth and culture, one could now use makeup to climb the social ranks in a manner previously unheard of. Consequently, a critical link between makeup and social climbing developed to coincide with its masking nature. As Palmer explains, this was relatively threatening to men, particularly of upper classes, as the time was one of incredible social and economic movement.\textsuperscript{42} She continues this argument to perhaps unjustifiably suggest that 'make-up thus came to be characterised as a socially corrosive force, to be mocked in the same proportion as it was feared.'\textsuperscript{43} Whilst there is no doubt that cosmetics clouded people’s true looks and nature, referring to them as 'socially corrosive' may be particularly extreme language to use.

The eighteenth century introduced the concept of beauty as a prerequisite for ultimate social standing, immediately increasing the value of the objects which helped achieve this. Its power is both demonstrated and emphasised by the artefacts in this article. \textit{Letters} clearly states the importance of beauty, allowing one to understand why cosmetics became so popular. Its recipe, together with the supporting sources, strengthens this by demonstrating the efforts put in to achieve such beauty, despite the known dangers of the process. The \textit{boîte à mouches} allows one to visibly appreciate and connect with the manner in which 'beauty' was achieved, whilst its luxurious nature reinforces the importance of cosmetics as suggested by \textit{Letters}. What was once reliant on birth was now tantalisingly straightforward to achieve. For the first time, there was something achievable that could enhance one’s 'natural' being and allow one to rise up the social ranks. Importantly, it was something that was subtle in its obviousness; everyone was wearing it and there was no way to separate the ‘real’ from the ‘false’. Cosmetics were a mask, a mask enabling sexual prowess and social malleability for those not ‘deserving’; no one knew who was real. The frequent critiques and fears associated with cosmetics confuse the nature of ‘beauty’ somewhat. What was intended to attract often had the power to do just the opposite; it even had the power to kill. Whilst this article has merely scratched the surface of the world of cosmetics, it has given the reader a brief, yet broad, insight into its appreciation.

\textsuperscript{42} Palmer, p. 201.
\textsuperscript{43} Palmer, p. 199.
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“...they no power have, unlesse to dye”: Margaret Cavendish’s ‘Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life, and his foolish Ambition’ (1653) and Edward Collier’s Still Life with a Volume of Wither’s ‘Emblemes’ (1696)

Hannah Yip

Abstract

This article explores the vanity of human life as represented in a poem, ‘Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life, and his foolish Ambition’ (1653) by Margaret Cavendish, and a vanitas painting, Still Life with a Volume of Wither’s ‘Emblemes’ (1696) by Edward Collier. These artefacts will be explored within the wider context of post-Civil War 1650s Britain and its prosperous recovery in the 1690s, demonstrating how both artefacts, produced in very different environments, could be seen to constitute a traditional early modern emblem in their portrayal of the brevity of human life.

Britain in the 1650s was preoccupied with reminders of death, due largely to the widespread consequences of two Civil Wars (1642-1646 and 1648-1651). The execution of Charles I in 1649 validated the conviction of death as the ultimate destiny, regardless of social standing or personal wealth. The chaos caused by the breakdown of the monarchy and its consequences upon the people provided the seeds for much of the poetry written in this period.

By the 1690s, Britain had regained the economic stability lost during the Civil War years. This is demonstrated by the increased trade in luxury goods from overseas, which included Middle Eastern textiles and precious stones and metals from the New World and Africa. Ornate silverware reverted to its original status as a symbol of wealth when previously it had been melted down and used to fund the Civil Wars. Such was the increasing demand for still life paintings of luxury artefacts, a genre which originated in the Netherlands in the early seventeenth century, that Dutch artists flocked to England to make their fortune. In certain still lifes, artists critiqued the self-satisfaction of the emerging middling classes, who would buy these artworks to enhance the sense of their newly-acquired prosperity afforded by an expanding global trade. Known as vanitas paintings, these illusionistic renderings of luxurious objects amongst symbols of death reminded the discerning observer that the pursuit of material wealth as an end in itself was futile.

This article will explore two artefacts which represent seventeenth-century preoccupations with the vanity of earthly life. The first artefact, ‘Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life, and his foolish Ambition’ (See Appendix), from Poems and Fancies (1653) by Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673), is taken from the turbulent period in the aftermath of the second Civil War. Cavendish was a Royalist, and had composed her book whilst in

3 This title will be hereafter shortened to ‘Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life’.
4 Poems and Fancies was revised twice, in 1664 and in 1668, by which time Cavendish’s fortunes had been much altered; her approach in these two editions consequently centres on retrospective knowledge. I will be using the first edition of 1653, which remains ‘the issue of a uniquely lonely and difficult period of Cavendish’s life’. See Judith Elaine Walker, ’Torment to a Restlesse Mind’: An Analysis of Major Themes in Poems, and Fancies (1653) by Margaret Cavendish’ (unpublished MPhil. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1996), pp. 2-3.
London. The second artefact, *Still Life with a Volume of Wither’s ‘Emblemes’* (1696) (see Appendix, Figure 1), is a vanitas painting by Edward Collier (c. 1642-1708). Collier moved from Leiden to London in 1693 in order to take advantage of the growing popularity for still life paintings in England. This particular vanitas painting is noteworthy for several reasons. Firstly, it features *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635), an emblem book by George Wither (1588-1667). By the time Collier had executed this painting, Wither had been dead for almost thirty years. Collier depicts in this painting the idea that Wither’s text and portrait are all that remain. The significance of this will be discussed in conjunction with Cavendish’s philosophy of immortality and self-preservation in writing.

Of equal importance is the concept of the emblem as a brief motto, picture (pictura), and accompanying moralistic text in verse form (subscription). Wither composed ‘Metricall Illustrations’ of thirty lines to allegorical designs by Gabriel Rollenhagen (1583-1619), which completed each emblem. ‘Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life’ and Collier’s painting together seem to constitute such an emblem. Cavendish’s poem of thirty lines finds its visual counterpart in Collier’s painting which includes a Latin inscription taken from the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes 1.2, ‘ VANITAS VANITATUM ET OMNIA VANITAS’ (‘Vanity of vanities, all is vanity’). Although Cavendish and Collier were driven by different motivations of an earlier and later period respectively within the latter half of the seventeenth century, both captured the concept of man’s delusion and the futility of earthly life, and both attempted to negotiate death in their art.

Margaret Cavendish’s first published work, *Poems and Fancies* (1653), was written, she claimed, ‘in my Husbands absence, to delude Melancholy Thoughts, and avoid Idle Time’. Cavendish suffered deeply from the rampage of the Civil Wars. A maid-of-honour to Queen Henrietta Maria, the French wife of Charles I, her ineptitude with French coupled with her tendency to be ‘Bashfull’, meant that she was often regarded as ‘one of the most insignificant of Court personages’. In addition to these feelings of inadequacy within the Court, she spent most of her twenties in exile abroad in the service of Henrietta Maria, during which time four members of her beloved family died back in England. Her childhood home in Colchester was also destroyed during this period by Parliamentary forces. Understanding that the estates of her husband William, the marquis of Newcastle, were to be dispersed, she travelled to England in 1651 in the hope of claiming ‘a small annuity to relieve their penury’. The petition, however, was unsuccessful, and the lonely Margaret was made to suffer even more in a bleak London which had barely recovered from the second Civil War.

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5 Edwaert Colyer used many different variations of his Dutch name, but used an anglicised version (‘Edward Collier’) when resident in England. See Batchelor (ed.), p. 1.
9 Margaret Cavendish, ‘TO POETS’, in Margaret Cavendish, *Poems and Fancies*. 1653 (Menston, Yorkshire: Scolar Press, 1972), pp. 121-23 (p. 122). Note that, on occasion, the pages are misnumbered.
10 ‘...I understand no other Language; not French, although I was in France five yeares’. Margaret Cavendish, ‘To Naturell Philosophers’, in *Poems and Fancies*, unpagedinated.
11 Margaret Cavendish, ‘A true Relation of my Birth, Breeding, and Life’, in Margaret Cavendish, *Natures Pictures Drawn by Fancies Pencil to the Life* (Menston, Yorkshire: Scolar Press, 1972), pp. 121-23 (p. 122). Note that, on occasion, the pages are misnumbered.
13 See Cavendish, ‘A true Relation of my Birth, Breeding, and Life’, pp. 375-76. See also Mendelson, p. 27.
While she wrote poetry in order to occupy sleepless nights away from her husband, her decision to publish her writing stemmed partly from William’s ‘need to affirm their aristocratic status in the aftermath of the Civil War’. The printing of her work as a lavish folio volume, funded by William, contributed to their image of a continued magnificence. Cavendish, however, was not content merely to contribute to her husband’s refusal to succumb to social oblivion; she longed for fame for herself. While she attempts, in her considerable amount of prefatory and postscript material in Poems and Fancies, to justify her writing as a woman (‘it is harmlesse and free from all dishonesty’; ‘Wives, Sisters, & Daughters, may implore their time no worse then [sic] in honest, Innocent, and harmlesse Fancies’), she admits candidly that her decision to publish was one of vanity. Vanity was ‘natural’ to our Sex, as it were unnaturall, not to be so, and all she desired was ‘Fame [...] wherefore I with my Book may set a worke every Tongue’. It is important to note, however, that she sometimes attempted to exonerate herself by stating her childlessness. She entreats the reader to ‘Condemne me not for making such a coyle | About my Book, alas it is my Childe’. The act of publishing was her alternative since she had no children; it was her way of ensuring that she would be remembered by posterity. The dichotomy between what she aspired to, an honourable fame achieved by merit, and an iniquitous ‘Ambition’, which ‘inclines to vain-glory’, is apparent throughout Poems and Fancies. Her inner conflict is redolent of the restlessness which is prevalent throughout this work, and ‘Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life’ illustrates her self-doubt with regard to her own ‘ambition’ for fame.

As noted previously, death and the fluctuation of material wealth were fixated in Cavendish’s mind as a consequence of the loss of her family members and her husband’s fortune. Man’s covetousness is depicted in the ‘Houses, thick, and strong, and high’ (l. 5), which he builds as if he would live forever, but which she knows is not the case from the experience of her ruined childhood home and the confiscated estates of her husband. What is more, Cavendish ends the poem with a lament on man’s ‘high Ambition’ (l. 27) which can only meet with death and nothingness. The poem’s central concern is the futility of man’s materialistic pursuits but also her preoccupation with fame, which she concludes at least in this poem to be simply a word which will recede, as man will also, ultimately into silence.

The transience of life and the meaninglessness of human ambition are also explored in Edward Collier’s Still Life with a Volume of Wither’s ‘Emblemes’. In contrast to Cavendish’s pecuniary misfortunes, Collier was financially successful as a professional artist working in London in the last decade of the seventeenth century. Collier was known not only for his trompe l’oeil paintings of letter racks, but also his vanitas still lifes, of which one was in the collection of William of Orange at his Het Loo palace.

It is noteworthy that the vanitas painting presents difficulties as a self-contradictory genre. While the vanitas attempts to capture the falsity of worldly possessions, the

17 Chalmers, p. 28.
19 Cavendish, ‘TO ALL NOBLE, AND WORTHY LADIES’, A3.
20 ‘For first, I have no Children to imploy my Care, and attendance on’. See Margaret Cavendish, ‘To the Reader’, in Cavendish, Poems and Fancies, unpaginated.
24 All references to this poem will be taken from Margaret Cavendish, ‘Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life, and his foolish Ambition’, in Cavendish, Poems and Fancies, pp. 97-98.
25 Approximately sixty variant trompe l’oeil paintings of letter racks by Edward Collier survive, which is a testament to his popularity. See Batchelor (ed.), p. 23.
painting itself is a valuable commodity. What is more, the vanitas painting portrays the transience of objects, yet it effectively prolongs the life of those objects by preserving them in an image which lives on for the duration of the painting’s life. This contradiction of principles mirrors Cavendish’s Poems and Fancies, in which her ceaseless internal conflict of values between her longing for a merited fame and her recognition of an innermost ‘ambition’ is played out.

More specific points of affinity between ‘Of the Shortnesse of Man’s Life’ and Still Life with a Volume of Wither’s ‘Emblemes’ are discernible. Cavendish’s poem opens with an immediate appeal to the senses by referring to the ‘sweet’ gardens (l. 1). She continues to explore the senses with extravagant imagery for the eyes (‘Houses, thick, and strong, and high’ (l. 5); ‘Heavens Mansions’ (l. 13)), finishing with an aural conceit of life and fame as ‘an empty sound’ (l. 19). Collier goes further, appealing to all five senses in his painting. Both the musical score and Wither’s text demand to be picked up and examined visually. The tangibility of the carved flowers on the silver porringer and the texture of the imported silk cloth, illusionism achieved by an absence of brushstrokes, invites the viewer to touch. Taste and smell are represented by the fruit and glass of wine on the table. The musical instruments, particularly the broken strings on the violoncello and the score, refer to music as a fleeting pleasure for the ears. With the subtle depiction of the senses, both Cavendish and Collier are criticising the tendency of man to be seduced into false pursuits.

Further correspondences can be made. Cavendish’s ‘Hoard’ of a ‘Masse of Wealth’ (l. 7) is represented amply in Collier’s jewellery box, watches, instruments, and porringer. The absence of ‘Soule’ and ‘Substance’ (l. 20) is found in the skull, its ‘lack of external flesh and internal brain’ symbolising the loss of human physical beauty and ability to reason.28 It is significant that the head in Wither’s portrait is inclined in the same direction as the skull, as if to indicate that the famous poet met this fate. The poet’s transient state is emphasised in the epigram directly underneath his portrait, which reads:

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\begin{align*}
\text{What I WAS, is passed by;} \\
\text{What I AM, away doth flie;} \\
\text{What I SHAL BEE, none do see;} \\
\text{Yet, in that, my Beauties bee.}
\end{align*}
\]

The poem which follows in the real emblem book, ‘The Authors Meditation upon sight of his Picture’, proclaims ‘How vaine it is, our Portraiture to leave | In Lines, and Shadowes, (which make shewes, to day, | Of that which will, to morrow, fade away) (ll. 2-4).29 Wither ends this poem with the hope that his industry, or his ‘dutifull intent, | To doe the Worke I came for, e’re I went’, will mean that he ‘to others, may some Patterne be, | Of Doing-well […]’ (ll. 71-73); in other words, he wishes to be remembered for his good works rather than by a portrait.30 Wither’s book from this point goes on to include emblems on the subject of death (see Appendix, Figure 2). Significantly, Collier does not paint an entirely faithful representation of the book. While he portrays fairly accurately the respective title page and Wither’s portrait and epigram (see Appendix, Figures 3-4), giving the impression of true reality, he is in fact representing a falsehood as there is no known edition of Wither’s text which prints the portrait page directly after the title page in this manner.31

27 Wahrman, p. 27.
30 Wither, ‘The Authors Meditation upon sight of his Picture’, unpaginated.
The inclusion of Wither’s book represents in many ways what Collier wished to impart to the discerning viewer. In his inaccurate depiction of the book’s page order, he ultimately concluded that his art was simply a skilful illusion, ‘a deceitful vanity of vanities, an idol without spirit’. However, the book is also important because the text has remained and it is captured in this picture, despite the fact that the poet is long gone. The text will last as long as future generations continue to read it. This is precisely what Cavendish was hoping to achieve by writing; she wished to preserve her name and live on in word, if she could not in flesh. Furthermore, in recognising the precariousness of life in the body, she occasioned not nihilism, but rather productivity. She appealed in particular to women, who ‘hath so much waste Time, having but little imployments,’ believing that writing, the ‘harmlessest Pastime’, has the ability to tame the ‘wilde thoughts’ which produce ‘unprofitable’ and ‘indiscreet’ actions. With its injunction not to pursue material wealth devoid of spirit, Collier’s painting also encourages the viewer to make the right choices in this short earthly life, indicated by the hourglass and funerary urn. The painting depicts a series of luxurious commodities in an unnatural situation; a forgotten, shadowy place, emphasised by the lack of any natural source of light within the painting. The instruments are left unused and the watch waits to be wound up; the objects do not fulfil their intended purpose. The unused tomes behind Wither’s text reflect Cavendish’s observation that ‘The worst Fate Bookes have’ is to be ‘laid aside, forgotten like the Dead’.

Together, Cavendish’s poem and Collier’s painting seem to comprise nothing less than an emblem; a composition of motto, image, and text which presents a moral vision about the meaning of earthly life in its ‘frank recognition of life’s temporariness’. Cavendish’s poem, in the manner of an emblem, presents a direct reference to a scene, subsequently expounds its moral significance, and finishes by commending the application of a moral to the reader, which is to be deciphered by the reader himself; Collier’s painting provides a visual framework for interpreting this moral. Both observed that poetry and art can ‘outstrip the limitations of the natural world’. They used their respective mediums to convey their shared message, in order that, in the words of Wither on his title page (which are tellingly removed from Collier’s painting), ‘Instruction, and Good Counsell, may bee furthered by an Honest and Pleasant Recreation’.

32 Muñoz Simonds, pp. 229-30.
34 Margaret Cavendish, ‘AN EPISTLE TO MISTRIS TOPPE’, in Cavendish, Poems and Fancies, A4.
35 Cavendish, Poems and Fancies, p. 213.
36 Wright, p. 51.
Appendix

*Of the Shortnesse of Mans Life, and his foolish Ambition.*

by Margaret Cavendish

In Gardens sweet, each Flower mark did I,
How they did spring, bud, blow, wither, and dye.
With that, contemplating of Mans short stay,
Saw Man like to those Flowers passe away.
Yet build they Houses, thick, and strong, and high,
As if they should live to Eternity.
Hoard up a Masse of Wealth, yet cannot fill
His Empty Mind, but covet he will still.
To gaine, or keep such Falshood Men do use,
Wrong Right, and Truth, no base waies will refuse.
I would not blame them, could they Death out keep,
Or ease their Paines, or cause a quiet Sleep.
Or buy Heavens Mansions, so like Gods become,
And by it, rule the Stars, the Moon, and Sun.
Command the Windes to blow, Seas to obey,
To levell all their Waves, to cause the Windes to stay.
But they no power have, unlesse to dye,
And Care in Life is a great Misery.
This Care is for a word, an empty sound,
Which neither Soule nor Substance in is found.
Yet as their Heire, they make it to inherit,
And all they have, they leave unto this Spirit.
To get this Child of Fame, and this Bare word,
They feare no Dangers, neither Fire, nor Sword.
All horrid Paines, and Death they will indure,
Or any thing that can but Fame procure.
O Man, O Man, what high Ambition growes,
Within your Braine, and yet how low he goes!
To be contented onely in a Sound,
Where neither Life, nor Body can be found.

*From Poems and Fancies (1653)*
Figure 1. Edward Collier. *Still Life with a Volume of Wither’s ‘Emblemes’* (1696)
Oil on canvas, 838 × 1079 mm. © Tate Britain, London.
Figure 2. Gabriel Rollenhagen and George Wither. Emblem 48. Engraving (by Crispin van de Passe) and motto, 99 × 111 mm, with epigram and verse by George Wither. A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne: The First Booke (1635).
Figure 3. George Wither. Title page, *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* (1635).
Figure 4. George Wither. ‘The Authors Meditation upon sight of his Picture’, with portrait by John Payne. Line engraving, 206 × 157 mm (1635).
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Illustration Credits

Figure 1. Edward Collier, Still Life with a Volume of Wither’s ‘Emblemes’ (1696) © Tate Britain, London:

Figure 2. Gabriel Rollenhagen and George Wither, Emblem 48:

Figure 3. George Wither, title page:

Figure 4. John Payne and George Wither, portrait and poem extract:
The Tragic Heroine as 'cõmoditie': *Iphigeneia* by Lady Jane Lumley and *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey* by Paul Delaroche

Trudie Messent

Abstract

Lady Jane Lumley's *The Tragedie of Euripides called Iphigeneia translated out of the Greake into Englishe* refers to the mythical tragic heroine, Iphigeneia, as 'cõmoditie' to family and nation. The familial power politics surrounding Lady Lumley's first cousin, Lady Jane Grey, resulted in the subject of Delaroche's painting, *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey*. These artefacts exhibit parallels and contrasts; in particular, whilst both tragedies were precipitated by paternal actions, Lumley's *Iphigeneia* focusses on the heroine as a commodity in a familial and national power discourse, whereas Delaroche concentrates on the 'tragic heroine' as an emotive historical and artistic commodity.

This essay will explore representations of the 'tragic heroine' as a commodity, through a comparison of *The Tragedie of Euripides called Iphigeneia translated out of the Greake into Englishe* (hereon referred to as *Iphigeneia*) and *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey* (abbreviated to *Jane Grey*), a historical painting by Hippolyte (known as Paul) Delaroche. Although these two artefacts are in different mediums and were produced almost three hundred years apart, they are directly linked: the execution of Lady Jane Grey occurred around the time that Lady Jane Lumley (also known as Joan or Joanna Lumley), first cousin to Lady Jane Grey, was translating *Iphigeneia*. They both feature daughters as a 'commodity', for whom the father is 'an occasion of his owne childes death'. In *Iphigeneia*, the prose narration of events leading up to the sacrifice of the heroine appears straightforward, but is instead subtly gendered: it develops over the course of the play from a focus on filial duty, told by predominantly male voices, to an increasing emphasis on self-determination, told by a heroic female voice. Delaroche's painting suspends action just prior to the execution, focussing attention on the emotive elements of the scene, without directly referencing the underlying familial discourse and power politics. It could be argued that in highlighting the emotive and sexualised in his painting of Lady Jane Grey, Delaroche is using her representation as a gendered artistic commodity. The material nature, date and context of each artefact is initially examined, followed by a comparison of the artefacts in their portrayal of the 'tragic heroine' as a 'commodity', whose wellbeing was sacrificed in order to obtain a familial or national objective.

Lady Lumley’s *Iphigeneia* is credited as the first extant translation of a Greek play into English. It is based upon *Iphigeneia at Aulis* by Euripides, which utilised a mythical narrative to critique ‘Greek culture and politics at the close of the fifth century’ [BC]. While producing her translation, Lady Lumley probably also consulted the Latin translation of Euripides’ play by Erasmus, *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, as she included a translation of Erasmus’ Latin *Argumentum* not found in Euripides. *Iphigeneia* is the only English text in a small quarto manuscript of laid paper, measuring 19 cm by 14 cm, which appears to be Lady Lumley’s common-place, or rough copy book. It is inscribed

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1 Lady Jane Lumley, TRANSLATIONS by Joan, Lady Lumley London British Library MS Royal 15 A. IX. Holograph, folios 63-97.
3 Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. IX. TRANSLATIONS fol. 76, 475-476.
5 Carmel McCallum-Barry, 'Why did Erasmus Translate Greek Tragedy?' *Erasmus Studies*, Volume 24, Issue 1, (2004), p. 52. Note: 'Iphigenia' is used in this essay except when the reference quoted has used 'Iphigenia'.
6 Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. IX. TRANSLATIONS folios 63 – 65.
'The doinge of my Lady Lumley dowghter to my L. Therle of Arundell', suggesting that this manuscript was started after her marriage in c.1550, when she was fifteen years old. Some leaves, such as those used for Iphigeniea, are unusual in that the widely spaced 'chain' ribs are horizontal and the 'laid' ribs vertical. The folios preceding Iphigeniea in the manuscript have the more usual vertical chain ribs, suggesting the manuscript was built up successively. The early folios, with a 'pot and flower' watermark, comprise epistolae and Greek to Latin translations of Isocrates' orations, which Lady Lumley copied out neatly as New Year presents for her father. Arundel had provided his three children with an expensive humanist education, including Latin and Greek, a Tudor symbol of wealth and status. Iphigeniea is written on paper with a distinctive 'glove and five point flower' watermark, known to have been available at Nonsuch Palace, where Lady Lumley was chatelaine for her father from 1557.

The dating of Iphigeniea is uncertain but important, as it affects the context in which Iphigeniea was written. The timing of Lady Lumley’s translation, relative to Lady Jane Grey’s execution, would seem relevant to a play based on the death of a tragic heroine. Purkiss argues for a date before Lady Jane Grey’s execution: 'If Iphigeniea was written after her execution on 12 February 1554, it might have made very uncomfortable reading for Arundel, and raised questions about just who had been sacrificed and how willingly.' Arundel acquired Archbishop Cramer’s library in 1553, which included Euripides’ Greek play Iphigeniea aulius, and Erasmus’ Latin translation, providing Lady Lumley with access to these texts. Using evidence from Lumley’s dated ‘presentation manuscripts’ and the distinctive watermarks, Wynne-Davis suggests between 1552 and 1558 for the manuscript, with Iphigeniea dated 1556 to 1557.

The nature of Iphigeniea is also contested. Although referred to as a translation, Lumley lists the ‘spekers in this Tragedie’, indicative of a spoken text. Lumley’s use of prose instead of verse also suggests her translation might have been designed to be spoken or staged. Wynne-Davis argues that Lady Lumley may have adapted Iphigeniea for staging at the Banqueting House in Nonsuch Palace Grounds, a known setting for at least one play in Lady Lumley’s lifetime. Evidence presented by Wynne-Davis includes Lumley’s replacement of the Greek goddess, Artemis, with the Latin goddess Diana, referencing the Diana Fountain at Nonsuch Palace.

The importance of Nonsuch Palace and the familial context in which Lady Lumley translated and adapted Iphigeniea, is evidenced by her elaborate funerary monument, shown in Figure 1. The ‘Arundel horses’ and ‘Lumley parakeets’, together with the figures of her deceased infants and the inscription on the casket, illustrate Lady Lumley’s position as part of a powerful combined family discourse. Her classical scholarship is

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8 Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. IX. TRANSLATIONS, fol. 1.
10 Lady Jane Lumley, London, British Library, MS Royal 15 A. I. ISOCRATES, Archidamus, translated into Latin by Joan, Lady Lumley (d.1577), as a present to her father Henry FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel. Holograph and Lady Jane Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. II. ISOCRATES, Evagoras, or fourth oration against Nococles, translated by the same for the same and described in her dedication as her fourth yearly gift of the same kind. Holograph.
13 Marion Wynne-Davies, p. 114.
16 Wynne-Davies, pp. 114, 121.
17 Lumley MS Royal 15 A IX TRANSLATIONS, fol. 65v.
18 Wynne-Davies, pp. 124 -125.
19 Wynne-Davies, p. 124.
celebrated in the sgraffito scene, of Jason and the dragon, which symbolises the ‘triumph of wisdom over strength’.\textsuperscript{21}

\textbf{Figure 1. Lady Jane Lumley’s Funerary Monument:} Nonsuch Palace and familial discourse. Lumley Chapel, Cheam. Photograph by T Messent, with permission.

Lumley Chapel in Cheam is in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust.

The second artefact, The Execution of Lady Jane Grey by Paul Delaroche, is shown in Figure 2. It is dated 1833 and is a painting in oil on canvas, measuring 251 x 302 cm, unusually large for a single piece of linen. It is a double-lined canvas which was used for premium paintings in the nineteenth century and was pre-stretched and pre-primed.\textsuperscript{22} Evidence from a series of drawings dating from 1830, and the Whitworth watercolour and bodycolour study dated 1832, suggest that Delaroche worked on the composition of this painting intermittently for four years.\textsuperscript{23} Jane Grey was first displayed at the 1834 Salon in Paris and is known as a ‘Salon piece’, designed for maximum visual impact.\textsuperscript{24}

Delaroche was born in 1797, the second son of an art dealer, four years after the execution of the former King and Queen of France, Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette.\textsuperscript{25} Delaroche witnessed the ‘July Revolution’, as well as the rise and death of Napoleon. Interest in English history ‘was stimulated by post-mortem studies’ of these French events\textsuperscript{26} and Delaroche visited England several times.\textsuperscript{27} Since the reign of Elizabeth I, a

\textsuperscript{21} Mark Evans, (ed.) The Lumley inventory and pedigree: art collecting and lineage in the Elizabethan Age: facsimilie and commentary on the manuscript in the possession of the Earls of Scarbrough (Roxburghe Club: 2010), p. 36.


\textsuperscript{23} Bann and Whiteley, pp. 130-134.


\textsuperscript{25} Bann and Whiteley, p. 35.

\textsuperscript{26} Strong, p.53.

plethora of narratives, such as *Memoirs and Remains of Lady Jane Grey*,\(^{26}\) and plays, including Rowe’s *The Tragedy of Lady Jane Gray*,\(^{29}\) were published and performed in England and France. Delaroche would have been aware of these, and also of English historical art, particularly prints, through members of his mother’s family, who were ‘Keepers of Prints’ for a major art collection.\(^{30}\) Delaroche produced a number of historical paintings prior to *Jane Grey*, including *The Death of Elizabeth*, reminiscent of illustrations in David Hulme’s *History of England*.\(^{31}\) Delaroche was noted for evoking memories of multiple historical events, through the depiction of one ‘enduring moment, its prefigural doubling of moments’.\(^{32}\)

![Delaroche painting of the execution of Lady Jane Grey](image)

**Figure 2.** Paul (Hippolyte) Delaroche (1797 – 1856), *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey*, 1833, (oil on canvas). Dimensions: 251x 302 cm. Location: The National Gallery, London (NG53). Reproduced by permission of Bridgeman, Image: BAL72630 © Bridgeman.

Although created in France, by a French artist, *Jane Grey* relates to English history and has been displayed in The National Gallery, London since 1975.\(^{33}\) Delaroche attached this explanation: ‘Jane Grey, whom Edward VI had, through his will, appointed heir to the throne, was, after a nine-days long reign, imprisoned by order of her cousin Mary, who, six months later, had her beheaded. Jane Grey was executed deep in the Tower of London, aged seventeen, on 12 February 1554.’\(^{34}\)

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\(^{29}\) Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Lady Jane Gray: As it is acted in the Theatre-Royal in Drury Lane* (London: Bernard Lintott, 1715).


\(^{34}\) Bann and Whiteley, p. 102.
Although Lumley’s *Iphigeneia* dates from sixteenth-century England and Delaroche’s painting from nineteenth-century France, the historical context of both of these artefacts featured political instability and executions, see Figure 3. Lady Lumley’s attitude to the religious unrest and political intrigue of her period is unclear, although both the Fitzalan and Lumley families were committed Catholics, and Lord Arundel was instrumental in the downfall of his niece, Lady Jane Grey, who was a devout Protestant. The execution of Lady Jane Grey depicted by Delaroche was broadly contemporaneous with Lumley’s translation of *Iphigeneia*. Delaroche may have known the myth of Iphigeneia but it is unlikely that he knew of Lady Jane Lumley’s translation of *Iphigeneia*, as it was first published in 1909.

Figure 3 illustrates familial and political events in sixteenth-century England and in nineteenth-century France, culminating in Delaroche’s painting *Jane Grey*. This figure sets out parallels in familial positioning and political strife.

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**Figure 3. Relationship between *Iphigeneia* and *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey*:**
Including relevant political events in England (1537 - 1576) and France (1793 - 1834).

Design: T. Messent.

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39 Bann and Whiteley.
Shifting socio-cultural attitudes are reflected in the reception of both artefacts. Little is known about the initial reception of Lady Jane Lumley’s Iphigeneia, or if it was performed. Lady Lumley’s Iphigeneia was subject to considerable criticism for containing inaccuracies during the 1940s. Modern critiques are more positive: ‘in terms of gender politics and Jane Grey’s execution, the many and complex resonances of the text shine through.’ Lady Lumley’s Iphigeneia was staged in 2013 and 2014 and is subject to continued academic interest.

Jane Grey received a rapturous response at the Paris Salon in 1834 but Delaroche’s posthumous reputation declined rapidly. When stored at the Tate Gallery, Millbank, the painting was affected by the 1928 Thames floods and reported irretrievably damaged. The rolled canvas was rediscovered by chance and restored in the 1970s. Jane Grey was not then perceived as high quality art and some critics thought it was of more interest as an art history curiosity. It has been extremely popular with the public since it was rehung in 1975, although modern critics have only recently started to recognise the artistic merit in Delaroche’s work, including Jane Grey.

This essay will now explore in depth how the ‘tragic heroine’ has been portrayed in these artefacts, and the extent to which the heroine was treated as a commodity. The self-sacrifice of the heroine was a recurring theme in tragedies by Euripides. These plays included ritual and rhetorical elements: the noble sacrifice is the epitome of perfection, a consenting virgin who offers her life for her community.

For the French Jane Grey ‘contained poignant allusions to their own revolutionary past;’ such as the execution of Marie-Antoinette. In Victorian England Jane Grey depicted a ‘foremost historical heroine’ and a ‘victimized child-woman’. Although Lady Jane Grey, as a married woman, would not typify Euripides’ ‘tragic heroine’, Delaroche portrays Jane Grey as an innocent victim, not explicitly as a commodity to national and familial power politics.

In relation to the theme of ‘tragic heroine’ as commodity, Iphigeneia includes all of Euripides’ elements. Iphigeneia, a noble-born virgin, is explicitly presented as both a filial and national commodity. In Iphigeneia the heroine’s father and uncle are key to the drama. Helen is the promised wife of Menelaus, Iphigeneia’s uncle. When Paris takes Helen to Troy, it is Iphigeneia’s father, Agamemnon, who leads the pursuit. The prophecy of Calchas, that the Grecians will only be successful if Iphigeneia is sacrificed, precipitates the tragedy:

AGA: And Calchas the prohesier [...] if my daughter Ephigeneya be slaine and sacrafiised to the goddess Dyana, that then the whole hooste shall not onlye haue free passage to Troye, but also victorially conquer it; (Iphigeneia, fol. 68v.123-130)

45 Riopelle, pp.17-19.
46 Barringer, p. 11.
48 Riopelle, p.20.
50 Strong, p. 125.
51 Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. IX. fols 63r-97r.
Agamemnon bemoans his fate, rather than that of his daughter, and even when Menelaus relents, Agamemnon insists on Iphigeneia’s sacrifice, justifying his decision on his fear of Ullisses taking revenge on his country and other children:

AGA: Alas, Alas: What a greate reproche it is, the father to be an occasion of his owne childes deathe.’

(Iphigeneia, fol. 76‘. 474-476)

[...]
AGA: Brother do you not feare Vlisses?

(Iphigeneia, fol. 77‘. 536)

[...]
AGA: But if it shulde chaunce that I shulde flie, then truly they wolde not onlie seke to destroie me, but also my children’

(Iphigeneia, fol. 78‘. 549–552)

Tudor society stressed filial duty. Lady Lumley signed a letter to her father, ‘Filia tua tibi deditissima Joanna Lumleya’ (‘Your daughter most devoted to you Joanna Lumley’). When Lady Jane Grey wrote to her father before her death, she finished, ‘I am, Your obedient daughter til death, JANE DUDLEY’.

Iphigeneia demonstrates filial affection throughout, even whilst pleading with her father, against the cruelty of her sacrifice and expressing the natural desire of all men to live:

IPHI: Nowe O father I knelinge upon my knees and making moste humble sute, do mooste earnestly desier you to haue pitie uppon me, your daughter, and not to sley me so cruely, for you knowe it is geuen to all mortall men to be desirous of life.’

(Iphigeneia, fol. 88v. 1027–1033)

She also appeals to Agamemnon on the basis of his love for her:

IPHI: You semed euer to loue me beste of all your children [...] And will you nowe consent to my dethe?

(Iphigeneia, fol. 89r. 1035–1036; 1042-1043)

As Iphigeneia progresses, there is a subtle shift in Iphigeneia’s attitude, from an unwilling filial pawn, to a willing heroine, prepared to sublimate her self-interest and become a ‘sacrificial commodity’ to ‘purchase’ victory for her nation. She apportions blame to the city of Troy, the goddess Venus, Paris and her aunt, Helen. Not to her father, uncle or the Grecians:

IPHI: O Vnhappi Troye whiche haste norisshed and brougthat wicked man Paris: O Vnfortunate Venus whiche diddest promise to giue Hellena to him, for you haue bene the cause of my destruction, thoughe in dede I throughge my deathe shall purchase the grecians a glorious uictorie.’

(Iphigeneia, fol. 89v–90r. 1079–087)

Iphigeneia twice refers to herself as a national commodity, speaking to her mother:

IPHI: Againe remember how I was not borne for your sake onlie, but rather for the cõmoditie of my countrie.

(Iphigeneia, fol. 92r. 1185-1187)

And then specifically to purchase victory for the Grecians:

IPHI: Wherefore I shall desier all you women to singe some songe of my deathe, and to prophecie good lucke unto the grecians: for with my deathe I shall purchase unto them a glorious uictorie.

(Iphigeneia, fol. 94v. 1297–1301)

52 Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. IX, fol. 4. Transcription and translation by T. Messent.
Iphigeneia repeats her willingness to be a commodity for the national good when she consoles her father as she passes him on the way to the altar:

IPH: Wherfore seinge that I shall be sacrificed for the commodoite of all grece, I do desier you, that none of the grecians may slae me preulie: for I will make no resistance againste you.  

(Iphigeneia, fol. 95v. 1348-1352)

A facet of a gendered reading of Iphigeneia is that, whilst the male members of her family, in particular her father and uncle, are very dominant in the early parts of the play, the female voices of Iphigeneia, her mother Clytemnestra and the female Chorus, are increasingly vocal as the play progresses. This is particularly evident from Clytemnestra’s long speech berating Agamemnon, in which she pleads for Iphigeneia, castigating her own sister, Helen.

CLIT: For if any man shoulde aske of you the cause of the death of your daughter, you woulde answer for Helens sake, which can be no lawfull cause, for it is not mete, that we sholde slewe our owne childe for a naughtie womans sake:  

(Iphigeneia, fol. 87v. 978–983)

Female sibling relationships were important. Lady Jane Grey wrote to her sister, Katherine, on the evening directly before her execution. Lady Lumley added an interchange mentioning Iphigeneia’s sisters, which was absent from Euripides’ original:

CLIT: but tell me what shall I saye to your sisters from you?  

IPHI: Desier them I praie you, not to mourne for my death.

(Iphigeneia, fol. 93v. 1254-1257)

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**Figure 4. Iphigeneia, Lady Lumley and Lady Jane Grey: familial relationships and events.**  
Design: T. Messent. Sources: Bolland and Cooper; Gooch; and Guy.

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54 Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. IX. fols 66r–87r.  
55 Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. IX. fols 87v–88v.  
Figure 4 illustrates the familial relationships and events in *Iphigeneia*, and for Lady Jane Lumley and Lady Jane Grey. It summarises the parallels evident in the contributory actions of their male relatives and highlights the shift in gendered involvement: male relatives precipitate the tragedies, but it is the female Chorus who escort Iphigeneia to the altar, whilst Lady Jane Grey is escorted to her execution by two noblewomen.

In *Iphigeneia* the causal roles of Agamemnon and Menelaus form part of the narrative. In *Jane Grey* Delaroche does not record the actions of Lady Jane Grey’s relatives, such as her father’s participation in a rebellion which ultimately led to her execution. Lady Jane Grey’s importance as a commodity to family ambition and a Protestant monarchy, is not included in Delaroche’s painting. Jane is presented as a helpless victim rather than as a proclaimed Queen.  

Marriage played a role in both tragedies. The powerful Duke of Northumberland became Lady Jane Grey’s father-in-law upon her marriage to Guildford Dudley. Northumberland precipitated her downfall by encouraging Edward VI to name Lady Jane his heir.

In Greek tragedy a key trope is sacrifice of the tragic heroine as a form of marriage, with allusions to the letting of the pure blood of maidens and their sexualisation. This trope is clearly evident in *Iphigeneia* as her father uses her fictitious marriage to Achilles to persuade his wife to send Iphigeneia to him, so that he can carry out her sacrifice. He is criticised by Senex, the elderly messenger, for his deceit:

\[
\text{SEN: Thou haste prepared greuouse thinges, O kinge, for thou haste determined to sacrifice thy owne childe under the colour of marriage. (Iphigeneia, fol. 69'. 175–178)}
\]

Purkiss details the ‘homologous relation between marriage and death’ at length, going on to discuss the ramifications of Lady Lumley’s Catholic faith and the Catholic view of ancient times, ‘when innocent girls were routinely put to the sword to appease pagan gods and goddesses slighted with their loyalty to Christ’. This appeasement is referred to several times in *Iphigeneia*, for example:

\[
\text{IPHI: Bringe me therfore unto the aultor of the temple of the goddes Diana, that with my blode I maye pacifie the wrathe of the goddess againste you. (Iphigeneia, fol. 94'. 1301–1305)}
\]

The Chorus is important in drawing attention to Iphigeneia’s physical attributes:

\[
\text{CHO: Beholde yonder goethe the uirgine, to be sacrificed with a grete companye of souldiers after hir, whos bwtifull face and faire bodi anone shalbe defiled with hir owne blode. (Iphigeneia, fol. 95'. 1319-1323)}
\]

This juxtaposition of a ‘uirgine, to be sacrificed’ with ‘a grete companye of souldiers’ exemplifies a component of Greek ‘tragic heroine’ narratives: ‘the imagery is not only sanctified but sexualised. Iphigeneia is beautiful and her beauty is about to be defiled, spoiled, ruined.’ Thus Iphigeneia’s death functions as a trope for rape, the opening of Iphigeneia’s body as a ‘form of defloration’. The visual image of a beautiful young girl, wearing a thin white under-dress, ‘at the mercy’ of the male executioner, is another example of this trope, here employed by Delaroche in *Jane Grey*. The attention drawn to Jane Grey’s wedding ring highlights the significance of her marriage in this tragedy, see Figure 5 overleaf.

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60 Purkiss, p. xxviii.

61 Purkiss, p. xxxii.

62 Purkiss, p. xxxii.
Although Delaroche’s composition is pared down, with only five figures, it combines visual form and narrative, as shown in Figure 5. Progressing left to right, from Lady Jane’s discarded over-dress and petticoats, past her mourning ladies, then her wedding ring, towards the executioner’s axe. Attention next shifts to the central figures, ‘a grey-haired man’\textsuperscript{63} leaning over her, and Lady Jane Grey, kneeling and with waxen hands reaching for the block. All eyes are averted or hidden.\textsuperscript{64} The background is a forbidding grey interior conveying a sense of confinement, although her execution was actually carried out on Tower Green. The meditative pose of the executioner is an important compositional change from the ‘grosser, sword-bearing figure’ in the 1832 Whitworth study.\textsuperscript{65} Delaroche’s suspension of action just before the execution, heightens our anticipation of the impending climax, so that we ‘tremble before a catastrophe which has already taken place’.\textsuperscript{66}

\textbf{Figure 5. Paul Delaroche. The Execution of Lady Jane Grey.}

Annotated to show compositional elements which create narrative and evoke emotional response. Annotations and Border Layout by T Messent. Text of annotations: adapted from Stephen Bann.\textsuperscript{67}

Image BAL72630 Reproduced by permission © Bridgeman.

The emotional impact of Delaroche’s \textit{Jane Grey} is heightened by repeated motifs, such as the lacing of Lady Jane Grey’s corset, reprised in the cushion and the executioner’s waistcoat. Another group of motifs is the knot in her blindfold, her bodice ribbon and the loops in the rope.\textsuperscript{68} In 1868 Hamerton wrote, ‘With Delaroche the human interest of the subject was the first thing’.\textsuperscript{69} The major elements of Delaroche’s technique for creating an emotional response to this human interest, according to Bann, are illustrated in Figure 5.\textsuperscript{70}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Cecil Gould, (1975) 2\textsuperscript{nd} page, unpaginated.
\item Bann and Whiteley, p. 108.
\item Bann and Whiteley, p. 133.
\item Bann and Whiteley, pp. 102-109.
\item Bann and Whiteley, p. 108.
\item Bann and Whiteley, pp. 102-108.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Delaroche sought inspiration ‘from a wide cultural repertoire’, such as etchings by Opie, religious symbolism and Troubadour paintings. Yet Delaroche’s highly focussed composition is in stark contrast to earlier depictions, such as the etching by Jan Luyken, *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey*, which shows large numbers of people on and surrounding the scaffold and the standing figure of Lady Jane Grey with outstretched arms, as shown in Figure 6.

![Figure 6. Jan Luyken, *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey*, published 1664-1712, (etching)](image)

Private collection, Image XJF377230 Reproduced by permission © Bridgeman.

In an exchange with the Chorus, Iphigeneia’s references to the ‘sone’ and ‘light’ act as tropes for life and accentuate the tragedy of its loss. They provide a visual perspective within the narrative:

Iphi: Alas thou sone, which arte comforte to mans life, O thou light which doeste make ioyfull all creatures, I shalbe compelled by and by to forsake you all and to chaunge my life.  

*(Iphigeneia, fol. 95r. 1314–1318)*

The device of light is also used by Delaroche, to draw attention to Lady Jane Grey’s white dress and the straw ‘as yet unstained’ where her head will fall.

Both artefacts have strong dramatic elements. Lady Lumley repeatedly increased the dramatic impact of her translation by omitting or drastically shortening sections of lyrical chorus. Here two lines of prose replace over a hundred lines of verse:

Cho: What is this? Me thinkes I see Menelaius striuinge withe Agamemnon’ seruante.  

*(Iphigeneia, fol.70v. 206-207)*

In *Iphigeneia* the climax of the action is a very theatrical moment when, just before the sword strikes, Iphigeneia miraculously disappears, replaced upon the altar by a sacrificial ‘white harte’.

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71 Bann and Whiteley, p. 104; pp. 128-129.
72 Bann and Whiteley, p. 108.
73 Lumley, MS Royal 15 A. IX. fol. 96’, 1370.
Dramatic representation is a key element of Delaroche’s paintings. Bann suggests Mademoiselle Anaïs, an actress who modelled for Jane Grey, embodied ‘concentrated drama’ [...] ’with the tragic eloquence of outstretched arms’. This emphasised the stark reality of Jane’s helplessness and increased the emotive resonance of Jane Grey.

In conclusion, although their contexts differed both geographically and temporally, these artefacts shared many characteristics, most noticeably the theme of a young, tragic heroine, sacrificed as commodity to family and nation. Iphigeneia, based on a mythical tragic heroine, was translated in a period of political turmoil, which included the execution of Lady Jane Grey. Delaroche’s painting of Jane Grey, based on her execution, referenced historical tragedy, linking past and present political unrest. Iphigeneia and Jane Grey both include narrative and visual elements, although in different mediums and varying proportions. These artefacts both lend themselves to a gendered interpretation: they feature a tragic heroine whose predicament was largely precipitated by male relatives. As the narrative progresses, there is a shift towards female voices and the support of female attendants. These artefacts share an innovative approach, in evoking emotional response by simplification and concentration. In recent years both artefacts have experienced renewed academic interest and acclaim.

There are differences: Iphigeneia is mythical whilst Jane Grey represents a historical event, although much altered through the lens of historical distortion and artistic licence. Iphigeneia focusses on a daughter as a paternal commodity, a relationship not shown in Delaroche’s representation. Lady Lumley’s translation, whilst referring to classical mythology, was an artefact created within the milieu of a humanist-educated Tudor noblewoman, with her awareness of familial power politics, national responsibility and filial duty, and this is reflected in her translation. There is no direct indication that Lady Lumley was alluding to Lady Jane Grey in Iphigeneia. As Hodgson-Wright notes, ‘any allusion to contemporary politics was of necessity subtly nuanced’.

Delaroche painted with the emotional sensibilities of a culture undergoing political turmoil, referencing back to an earlier period of unrest in Tudor England, but reminiscent of more recent French events, such as the execution of Marie-Antoinette. Delaroche’s emphasis is on the moment, with little indication of the causal familial discourse or Jane Grey as a parental commodity. Delaroche used the ‘innocent victim’ narrative of Lady Jane Grey’s execution primarily as an artistic commodity and structured his painting to elicit an emotional response.

Filial duty and gender politics are viewed very differently by modern society, conditioned by Freudian concepts of Oedipus, reverse Oedipus, and the Electra complex. It is difficult for a contemporary audience to ignore an awareness of Foucault and familial power discourses. These artefacts did not inform each other, rather, a comparative study of their communality enriches our understanding of elite women and the potential tragedy inherent in their roles. An interpretation of the ‘tragic heroine’ as familial, national, emotional and artistic ‘cõmoditie’ would appear to be embedded in both these artefacts, then as now.

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74 Bann, (2010), p. 35.
75 Bann, (2010), p. 43.
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________ MS Royal 15 A. II. ISOCRATES, Evagoras, or fourth oration against Nococles, translated by the same for the same and described in her dedication as her fourth yearly gift of the same kind. Holograph

________ MS Royal 15 A IX TRANSLATIONS by Joan, Lady Lumley. Holograph

________ MS Royal 17A XXIII ‘SENTENCES painted by the Lorde Keepars gallery at Gorhambury [co. Herts] and selected by him [sc. Sir Nicholas Bacon] out of divers authors and sent to the good Ladye Lumley [Jane, daughter of Henry Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel, and first wife of John, Lord Lumley] at her desire’

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Two Perspectives on the Execution of Sir Thomas Armstrong (1684):
Tory Triumphalism and Dutch Distaste

James Drabble

Abstract

This essay analyses two accounts of the execution of Sir Thomas Armstrong, which took place at Tyburn on 20 June 1684: the broadside ballad, *The Traytors Last Farewel*, published within days of his death, and the etching, *Thomas Armstrong, Binnen Londen, gehangen en gevierredeelt*, created by Jan Luyken in 1698. The study finds two different interpretations of the execution: the ballad reflecting Tory triumphalism at its height, four years before its deflation with the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and the etching displaying Dutch distaste for the betrayal of their cherished right of refuge.

London, June 20. This day Sir Thomas Armstrong was Executed, being drawn upon a Sledge to Tyburn, and then Hanged and Quartered.¹

This stark notice in the London Gazette of June 23 1684 announced what was later to be officially acknowledged as an egregious miscarriage of justice. Armstrong had been implicated in the Rye House plot to kill Charles II and his brother, the duke of York (later, James II), in 1683 but was later exonerated by parliament. His case evidently caught the public's imagination; one of a number of commercially-produced, competing accounts published just days after the execution reports that his demise attracted crowds from all classes 'that the like hath not been of late observed in any Execution of this Nature'.² However, this study wishes to look beyond the prosaic, journalistic accounts of Armstrong's death to consider two contrasting artistic responses to the event. One is an item of ephemera, a low-brow broadside ballad with accompanying woodcut illustrations; the other, an illustration by one of the finest engravers in Europe intended for the gentleman connoisseur. In the twenty-first century, the quartering of an executed man as part of the judicial process is unimaginable; in the seventeenth century it was a normal part of the prevalent discourse of punishment. It will be suggested that, although both artefacts have their weaknesses as historical evidence, read together they allow today's viewer to look beyond the horror of the act and gain insights into the Zeitgeist within which this public execution was played out.

Born into a cavalier family, Sir Thomas Armstrong (bapt.1633, d.1684) had come into parliamentary and Court circles through the patronage of James, duke of Monmouth, Charles II's eldest illegitimate son.³ Like his patron, Armstrong was drawn to the Whiggish, anti-popish politics of Anthony Ashley Cooper, first earl of Shaftesbury (1621–1683).⁴ Shaftesbury's machinations revolved around preventing Charles's heir presumptive, the Catholic-leaning duke of York, from coming to the throne. Armstrong, along with the duke of Monmouth and many other leading Whigs, was implicated in the culmination of this scheming, the so-called Rye House plot to kill the king and his

brother, when it was exposed in June 1683. Many of the conspirators, including Armstrong, immediately fled to the Calvinist Netherlands, the traditional refuge for Protestant exiles. In his absence, Armstrong was attained on an ‘Outlawry for High-Treason’, meaning his summary execution if apprehended. His whereabouts, in Leiden, became known to the authorities and he was seized under obligations imposed on the Dutch under the Treaty of Breda (1667) to hand over regicides to England. Brought back to London, he appeared before Lord Chief Justice Jeffries, on 14 June 1684, to answer his attainder. Armstrong attempted to use an archaic legal device which would have allowed him the alternative of a trial to summary execution, giving him a chance to persuade a jury of his innocence. However, after a protracted legal argument, Jeffries rejected Armstrong’s demand to have ‘the benefit of the law’, with the response, ‘That you shall have by the grace of God. See that execution be done on Friday next according to the law. You shall have the full benefit of the law’. It was duly carried out on 20 July.

With the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the tide of sentiment turned in favour of the Whigs. In January 1690 Armstrong’s family petitioned parliament for an annulment of the Attainder and recompense of £5,000 from the judges in the case for the loss which resulted from it. Although they failed at this attempt, the Attainder was reversed on the granting of a Writ of Error, in 1694.

The first artefact in this study is the black-letter broadside ballad The Traytors Last Farewel: Or, Treason Miraculously Discover'd (London, 1684; Fig. 1). So-called because they were printed in black-letter text on only one side of a folio sheet of paper, these ballads were England’s ever-present, cheap popular entertainment from the sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth. Writing in 1593, Henry Chettle remarked that ballad-mongers were to be found ‘in every corner of cities and market towns of the realm singing and selling of ballads and pamphlets’. Often printed as soon as the day after an ‘event’ and principally intended for the poor to middling sorts, the ballads’ topics were a rich mix of ‘murders, floods, witches, fires, tempests, and what not’, a commentator noted in 1641.
The configuration of The Traytors Last Farewel is typical for the seventeenth century. Printed in landscape orientation, its appearance is dominated by four woodcut images, relating different aspects of an execution. At the top of the page is to be found the title together with a preamble introducing the ballad and the name of the tune to which it should be sung, *Let Oliver now be forgotten*, all printed in ‘white letter’. This preamble indicates that it was published within days of the event it commemorates. The text of the ballad, nine stanzas of eight lines each (see transcript in Appendix 2), is printed in black-letter. No author is credited for the ballad, as was often the case after the Restoration, but, as required by law, at its foot is the name and address of the printer to whom it was licensed by Stationers’ Hall.

This study’s second artefact is an etching on paper, captioned *Thomas Armstrong, Binnen Londen, gehangen en gevierendelijk* (Amsterdam, 1698; Fig. 2). It purports to depict the quartering of Sir Thomas Armstrong’s body after his hanging. The etching is dominated by the raised platform on which the execution takes place. At its centre, with the help of his assistant, the executioner is poised to butcher the remains of Armstrong’s body into the final quarters. The other quarters lie in a heap in the foreground. Behind the executioner, a priest, an officer and some soldiers look on. In the background, a large crowd is observing the scene, which is set in what appears to be a town square. Despite its subject matter, the etching has been carefully composed and executed, to create an elegant, detached image. Unlike the anonymous broadside ballad, we know the names of the principal creators of this work. It is signed ‘I.L.’ but, from its style alone, particularly the elongated figures with their distinctive oval faces, it is

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19 Rollins, p. 305.
20 Rollins, p. 281.
21 Tr. ‘Thomas Armstrong, hanged and quartered in London’. 231
recognisably the work of Jan Luyken (1649-1712). Luyken was the most prolific and famous printmaker in Amsterdam, the centre of the publishing world in the late seventeenth century. He favoured subjects which would evoke a visceral reaction, none more so than this one.

Figure 2. Jan Luyken (1649-1712), Thomas Armstrong, Binnen Londen, gehangen en gevierendeelt (Thomas Armstrong hanged and quartered in London) (1698). Etching, paper; 197×154mm [Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1896-A-19368-1203].

Unlike the broadside ballad, this is not a standalone work; rather, it is one of twenty-four illustrations to be found in the three-volume series entitled Treur-Toonneel Der Doorluchtige Mannen (Amsterdam, 1698) by Lambert van den Bosch. It recounts, in two or three pages of Dutch text each, the tragic ends of great or infamous men and women, finishing with Sir Thomas Armstrong (see Appendix 2 for a list). By including

23 Jonker.
25 Which can be translated as Memorials for Illustrious Men.
him in this company, Bosch is making a statement about contemporary ideas of Armstrong’s importance. The natural home for Treur-Tooneel Der Doorluchtige Mannen would have been, in the first instant, the library of a Jonkheer, therefore Luyken’s etching of Armstrong’s end should be interpreted from a Dutch perspective, rather than one informed by British domestic politics. That having been said, by the time it was published, sympathy for Armstrong had secured his posthumous reversal of Attainder so, perhaps unintentionally, it reflected the mood in London, as well. Furthermore, it would have struck a chord with the Dutch-speakers in the Royal court in England for the Rye House plot would have had a special resonance for the Williamite monarchy; two years before the etching was published a similar, but Jacobite-inspired, plot with the intent to assassinate William III was unmasked, with numerous executions the inevitable result.26

As historical evidence for the execution, these artefacts vary in their veracity. The following contemporary report of Armstrong’s end, consistent with the other surviving accounts, will serve as a benchmark:

[Armstrong was] put into a sledge that was prepared for his Passage to the Place of Death, attended by a very numerous Guard, and so great a Number of Spectators of all Degrees and Qualities, that the like hath not been of late observed in any Execution of this Nature.27

Once delivered to Tyburn, the execution site, he was placed in the cart used on such occasions. After being attended by Dr Tenison, vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields (the parish in which Tyburn fell), and making his peace with God, the cart was driven off leaving Armstrong hanging until ‘Death then came upon him’. 28 The account continues:

[A]fter … the Sufferer had hung about half an Hour, and the Executioner had divested him of his Aparrel, he was cut down according to his Sentence; his Privy Members dissected from his Body, and Burnt; his Head cut off, and shewed to the People as that of a Traytor; his Heart and Bowels taken out, and committed to the Flames; and his Body Quartered into four Parts, which, with his Head, was conveyed back to Newgate, to be disposed of according to his Majesties Pleasure, and Order.29

On the face of it, the woodcuts accompanying The Traytors Last Farewell, although crude, closely reflect the historical fact. They show: Armstrong’s journey by sledge; the escorted walk to the scaffold; Armstrong hanging from the gibbet, observed by a large crowd and a guard of halberdiers; and lastly, the executioner poised to start his quartering next to the fire awaiting Armstrong’s entrails. This is a trap for the unwary historian, however. To save on cost and time, woodblocks were generic in appearance and frequently reused in ballads.30 The man on the gibbet appears as early as 167531 and continued to be reused, though defaced by wear and woodworm holes in the printing block, until late in the century (Fig. 3). Although not identical, the image of the quartering is crudely derived from one in an earlier ballad, ironically about the execution of the Catholic martyr, Edward Coleman (Fig. 4). Perhaps, further research might reveal earlier origins for the other two images, as well.

The exquisite execution of Luyken’s engraving might seduce the viewer into believing it exhibited greater veracity than the ballad’s crude woodcuts. At its centre, it shows the executioner, the infamous Jack Ketch who was to bungle the beheading of the duke of

27 An Impartial Account, p. 2. 28 An Impartial Account, p. 2.
29 An Impartial Account, p. 2.
Monmouth a year later (despite being handsomely tipped),\(^{32}\) poised to deliver the final blow in quartering Armstrong. In its unflinching depiction of the realities of this last act of degradation, it is an arresting image. However, a closer analysis reveals it to be as generic as the ballad. While the scene does give the impression of the crowds who had gathered to watch Armstrong’s demise, the *mise-en-scène* is a town square bordered by the characteristic gables of Dutch merchant houses, with the gibbet shown as a simple post and lintel.

Fig. 3. Detail from *DEVOL’s last Farewel* (late seventeenth century) [EBBA 31760, University of Glasgow Library - Euing 77].\(^{33}\)


In fact, Tyburn was in the countryside, to the north of Hyde Park and ‘Tyburn tree’ was a triangle supported on three legs at least from the late sixteenth century, as Shakespeare indicates in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, \(35\)

\[
\text{Thou mak'st the triumviry, the corner-cap of society,}
\]
\[
\text{The shape of Love's Tyburn, that hangs up simplicity.} \quad 36
\]

This configuration is shown in another seventeenth-century illustration (Fig. 5). It also shows the cart, mentioned in the reports and used to ‘drop’ the condemned man; an impossible task on Luyken’s raised platform.

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36 Act IV, Scene 3.
Luyken does not seem overly concerned by a need for topographical accuracy in his illustrations. Another plate in the series, showing the execution of the duke of Monmouth in 1685, also places the scene in a generic Dutch cityscape, this time as a substitute for Tower Hill (Fig. 6). This lack of specificity is understandable. Finding reference images for these less well-known sites would be problematic. Luyken’s approach appears to be to let his principal actors create the atmosphere for each event through their demeanour, rather than establish ‘place’ through his scenery.

Analysis of the text of The Traytors Last Farewel is more rewarding, in terms of its historical accuracy, than of its images. For the most part, its intent is to mock and scorn Armstrong. However, it also reveals a topicality and knowledge of Armstrong’s biography, starting with the first line:

Old Tony he led you to Ruin, [1]37

‘Tony’ is Anthony Ashley Cooper, first earl of Shaftesbury. Although he died in exile before any attempt was made to put it into effect, Shaftesbury was the instigator of the Rye House plot.38

And when you heard the Narration,
Of the kings Proclamation,
The Sea you crost, forsaking the Nation, [21-23]

On the 28 June, 1683, a Royal proclamation offered a reward of £500 per head for the arrest of Armstrong, amongst others.39 He duly fled to Holland.

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37 Numbers in brackets will refer to the ballad’s line number, as shown in Appendix 1.
38 Alan Marshall.
39 By the King. A Proclamation for the Apprehending of James Duke of Monmouth, Ford Lord Gray, Sir Thomas Armstrong Knight, and Robert Ferguson (London, 1683), Early English Books Online <http://ezproxy-
For Armstrong you dy’d a Traytor,  
Gray will be found little better,  
When he comes here early or later,  
And Ferguson too must come in for a share. [37-40]

Fellow conspirators, Lord Gray and Robert Ferguson were with Armstrong in Leiden shortly before his capture but, unlike him, they escaped apprehension.\(^\text{41}\)

Now ’tis in vain for to babble and prate. [8]

\begin{verbatim}
when he receiv’d Sentence of Death:  
he fain would have come to a Tryal,  
But yet there was a denial, [37-40]
\end{verbatim}

Here the ballad taunts Armstrong’s memory for his attempts to deploy legal strategies to avoid execution, made futile by Judge Jeffries’ denial of trial.

The true value of these artefacts is in what they tell about the mood surrounding this execution. It is not simply the scorn heaped on Armstrong, which is the indication of the polemical nature of the ballad. The verse castigates the

\begin{verbatim}
maintainers of Tony’s Old Cause,  
That rail’d against Lawful Succession:  
to tread down our National Laws:  
Yea both the Prince and his power, [42-45]
\end{verbatim}

\(^{40}\) 'Onthoofding van James Scott Hertog van Monmouth Te Londen, 1685, Jan Luyken (1698)', Rijksmuseum <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.144208> [accessed 9 March 2015].

\(^{41}\) Greaves.
Later, it urges,

*Then let us pray for the king and respect him,*

*The heavens I hope will direct him,* [53-54]

In these lines the political tone of the ballad is made clear. Here is set out the essence of Tory belief in the lawful succession of the monarchy, the divine right of kings and the (Anglican) church. With talk of *Tony’s Old Cause* [42] (the ‘Good Old Cause’ being the watchword of the early Commonwealth period) and *treach’rous Round head* [70], and setting the ballad to the tune *Let Oliver now be forgotten*, the Whigs are associated with the antitheses of Toryism. To underline these sentiments, the ballad finishes with the Tory flourish of ‘While we that are Loyal cry, God save the king’.

The mood set by Luyken’s etching is more reflective. In Holland, Armstrong’s execution caused much disquiet. The Dutch republic had no less a propensity for public execution than Britain and regularly practised it, either by beheading or breaking on the wheel. However, it was felt that the manner in which the chief magistrate of Leiden had handed over Armstrong, ostensibly to conform to the obligations of the Treaty of Breda but actually for the £500 reward money, transgressed Holland’s tradition of providing safe haven for refugees. This distaste may have been compounded by the knowledge that Armstrong’s mother was Dutch and he, himself, had been born in Nijmegen. Furthermore, he had been wounded at the battle of St Denis (1678) fighting with his patron, the duke of Monmouth, for the Dutch against the French. Turning Armstrong over to a neo-Catholic king and his fervently Catholic heir would surely have caused the Protestant Dutch moral qualms.

With this in mind, it is possible to read the image as empathetic in its overall tone with Luyken’s cool, elegant line lending the scene pathos, wholly absent from the ballad with its jaunty rhythm and its crude illustrations. Despite the barbarous nature of the butchering of Armstrong’s carcass, there is a stillness about the composition, embodied in the posture and solicitous gaze of the priest and the soldiers. Even the crowd is watchful. It might be seen that the executioner represents the corruption of the link between the judiciary and the state (Judge Jeffries was a political appointment, the last of its type) or of the venality of the chief magistrate of Leiden betraying Dutch principles for 500 pieces of English silver, whereas the priest stands for the higher moral duty displayed by Dr Tenison, later to become Archbishop of Canterbury, on the day of the execution. It had been Tenison’s job to persuade Armstrong to repent his crime. Consistent with his protestations of innocence, Armstrong had refused; despite this Tenison, himself anti-papist, granted him absolution.

In conclusion, the artefacts in this study have offered two different perspectives on the hanging and quartering of Sir Thomas Armstrong: one framed at the time of the execution and aimed at a domestic audience of the poor to middling sort; the other conceived in Holland, with the hindsight of almost fifteen years and with a Dutch gentry audience in mind. Neither, as exhibited at their respective holding institutions, can be read solely on its own terms; both have to be decoded with the help of contemporary context.

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43 Morrill, p. 390.
44 *A Description of Holland: Or, the Present State of the United Provinces, Etc* (Leiden, 1745), p. 19.
45 Strien, p. 12.
47 Greaves.
50 William Marshall.
accounts of the execution and knowledge of the period’s politics. However, once decoded, the first reveals a jubilant celebration of the Tory defeat of the Whigs and their plotting together with support for the existing monarch and the lawful, God-given line of succession; the second, a reflective regret at the tainting of the Dutch ideal of refuge and an empathy with Armstrong’s plight, which, by the time of its publication, was in tune with the change of sentiment in London indicated by his reversal of attainment in 1694.

This suggests that McShane is correct, in her critique of the idea of broadside ballads as proto-newspapers, in commenting that despite their topicality, many broadside ballads were unintelligible unless the reader, or listener, was already aware of the events discussed. Angela McShane, ‘The Gazet in Metre; or The Rhiming Newsmonger: The Broadside Ballad as Intelligencer. A New Narrative’, in News and Politics in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800), ed. by Joop W. Koopmans (Leuven & Paris: Peeters, 2005), pp. 131–52 (p. 131).
Appendix 1

Transcript of 'The Traytors Last Farewel'

1 Old Tony he led you to Ruin,
   To kick against Power and State,
   But now it has prov’d your undoing,
   For all he’d a Politick Pate:
   For now you may see they look sower,
   The law has invincible Power,
   And I do hope will all Traytors devour,

8 Now ’tis in vain for to babble and prate.

9 O Armstrong, you see your Condition,
   You find what your Plotting hath done,
   Your Pride and your haughty ambition,
   Did since you from England to-run:
   For the old course you were taken,
   Loyal Allegience forsaken,
   It doth appear such Laws you were making,

16 But now it will fill you with horror and fear:

17 Sure Armstrong was highly besotted,
   to act in so horrid a thing,
   for treacherously you have Plotted,
   against a most Soveraign king:
   And when you heard the Narration,
   Of the kings Proclamation,
   The Sea you crost, forsaking the Nation,

24 But now all your hopes is drowned at last.

25 For hatching and Plotting of Treason,
   O Armstrong you entred your hand,
   Contrary to Law, Right, or Reason,
   Against the great king of the Land:
   Every Wheel was in motion,
   They did it in point of Devotion,
   At last for fear you crossed the Ocean,

32 And now a fine halter doth fall to your share.

33 you aimed at the very foundation,
   our gracious good king and the heir,
   The strength and the stay of the Nation,
   but now you are catcht in the Snare
   For Armstrong you dy’d a Traytor,
   Gray will be found little better,
   When he comes here early or later,

40 And Ferguson too must come in for a share.

41 These were the blades of Sedition,
   maintainers of Tony’s Old Cause,
   That railld against Lawful Succession,
   to tread down our National Laws:
   Yea both the Prince and his power,
   Dayly they fought to devour,
   They would have sent Loyal hearts to the Tower,

48 Without all dispute this was their intent.

49 Those villains then in the conclusion,
   had they but obtained their will,
   The Land would have been in Confusion,
   and innocent Blood for to spill:
   Then let us pray for the king and respect him,
   The heavens I hope will direct him,
   With all his Train ever protect him,

56 And send him a long and prosperous Reign.

57 But Armstrong was never so daunted,
   No, ne’r since he first drew his breath.
   O then he with horror was haunted,
   he fain would have come to a Tryal,
   But yet there was a denial,
   O Armstrong, you had better been Loyal,

64 Then to be found to be one of the Crew.

65 But let him have what he deserved,
   and give to each Traytor his due,
   Let Charles our good king be preserved,
   from all the implacable Crew:
   Let Drums and Trumpets sound it,
   hang each treach’rous Round head,
   So let them swing, thus be confounded,

72 While we that are Loyal cry, God save the king.

FINIS
Appendix 2

The plates, and their subjects, from *Treur-toonneel der doorluchtige mannen.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Plate</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Date of death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volume I</td>
<td>[1]</td>
<td>Frontispiece]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Erik IV, king of Denmark</td>
<td>1250</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Edward II, king of England</td>
<td>1327</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>James I, king of Scotland</td>
<td>1437</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Willem II, count of Holland</td>
<td>1256</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Aelius Seianus, favourite of the Emperor Tiberius</td>
<td>AD31</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Álvaro de Luna, duke of Trujillo</td>
<td>1453</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wolfert I van Borselen</td>
<td>1299</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jöran Persson, favourite of king Eric XIV of Sweden</td>
<td>1568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume II</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tuman bay II, last sultan of Egypt</td>
<td>1517</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lady Jane Grey</td>
<td>1554</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Don Carlos of Spain</td>
<td>1568</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Willem I, prince of Orange</td>
<td>1582</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Johan van Oldenbarneveld</td>
<td>1619</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bohemian noblemen</td>
<td>1621</td>
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<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Thomas, earl of Stafford</td>
<td>1641</td>
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<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Charles I of England</td>
<td>1649</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volume III</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Giuseppe Caraffa</td>
<td>1647</td>
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<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Marchese Monaldeschi</td>
<td>1657</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Henri de Fleury de Coulan</td>
<td>1666</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Marquise de Ganges</td>
<td>1667</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Cornelis and Johan de Witt</td>
<td>1672</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Earl of Argyll</td>
<td>1685</td>
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<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>James, duke of Monmouth</td>
<td>1685</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Sir Thomas Armstrong</td>
<td>1684</td>
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‘Would the Scandal Vanish with My Life’: John of Gaunt in Two Tudor Afterlives

Jessica Fure

Abstract

Two artefacts produced during the Tudor era, both depicting John of Gaunt, convey a surprisingly unified tone despite the difference in date and medium. The Beaufort Portrait shows Gaunt's dynastic ambitions and hints at the noble character established for him in Tudor lore. Shakespeare’s characterisation of Gaunt from Richard II culminates in the iconic deathbed speech, one of the most-quoted descriptions of England in literature, makes Gaunt, in his own words, a prophet, eulogising his country's greatness as part of his family's legacy, and taking the peace of England with him when he dies. In each work, Gaunt appears positioned as a vital part of England's history, a noble founder of England's ruling family.

John of Gaunt, first Duke of Lancaster, was a dynamic figure at the end of the Middle Ages. As the fourth son of Edward III, he lived at the beginning of England’s initial foray into becoming a serious European power. He attempted to gain his own domains on the continent, first as Duke of Aquitaine, a title he was forced to resign, then through a failed campaign to become King of Castile and León.¹ After the death of his older brothers, he became one of the primary forces in England, weathering such crises as the Peasant’s Revolt and John Wycliffe’s dispute with the church.² He served as a patron to both Wycliffe and Geoffrey Chaucer³ and counted English and European monarchs among his descendants.

Perhaps the most well-known of his descendants include Henry Bolingbroke, who became Henry IV in an accession that laid the foundation for the War of the Roses, and the Tudors, who emerged as the final, victorious Lancastrian claimants at the end of that turbulent era. The Tudor dynasty ruled England during the Renaissance era, enjoying the fruits of the artistic expansion as a supplement to their political power and employing them to craft a public image and control public perception. As their ancestor, John of Gaunt enjoyed an increased profile and a boost to his posthumous reputation, as seen in two Tudor-era artefacts, a portrait commemorating one of his political positions, and a fictionalised version which serves as pivotal character in a Shakespeare play.

¹ Gaunt relinquished the Duchy of Aquitaine after resistance from the Gascons. His claim to the Castilian throne was through his second wife, Constance of Castile, and supported by João I of Portugal. A joint invasion failed to occur, and Gaunt renounced his claim in a treaty with John of Trastámara sealed by the marriage of Gaunt's daughter Catharine to Trastámara’s son Henry, resulting in Gaunt’s descendants including the kings of Spain and Portugal, as well as the Holy Roman Emperors via the Hapsburgs.
² Gaunt was Wycliffe’s staunch protector, and therefore also a significant figure in the pre-Reformation. Eventually, Chaucer became Gaunt’s brother-in-law after the duke married Katharine Swynford, his third and final wife.
The painting in question (Figure 1), unofficially called ‘The Beaufort Portrait,’ remains the possession of the current Duke of Beaufort. Executed in tempera on a panel, it was created as one of a series of portraits depicting the Constables of Queenborough Castle, said to have been commissioned by a later warden, Sir Thomas Cheyne. As part of this series, the portrait serves as part of demonstrating the level of political power and honour that the title of Constable entails, bolstering the reputation of the office itself as well as its current holder. However, when examined closely, it reveals a surprisingly well-crafted narrative of Gaunt’s persona, an image shaped, purposefully or not, to suit the Tudor regime’s purposes. In basic terms, the portrait shows a man in three-quarters pose staring out with a confident gaze. He wears formal armour, complete with his ducal coronet, his title reinforced by the ducal scepter in his right hand, a symbol of authority and responsibility. His left hand rests atop his sword; along with the armour, it suggests a wherewithal and willingness to defend his domains.

The three-quarter pose itself performs some interesting functions. It allows a nearly full view of the face, improving the level of facial detail with the addition of some, but not all of a profile’s curves. The shoulder angle does not detract much from the body’s bulk,
important if the painting must convey a sense of physical, political or personal strength. The pose became widely used in Renaissance portraits, maintaining that popularity afterwards. It might seem odd that the portrait shows such an abbreviated view of the face; the coif, while an important component of the armour, also obscures the line of the chin and the left facial area. One important point of this, however, is that it draws attention to the eyes, clearly a strong feature in Tudor court paintings after Holbein, and rendering the arresting gaze more powerful when surrounded by the predominating darkness. Upon close inspection, it also highlights the traces of light brown and gold (possibly faded from the legendary Plantagenet red-and-gold colouring) in Gaunt’s beard, traces that would be lost without the contrast of a dark background.

The upper left corner contains Gaunt’s coat of arms. The ducal coronet sits atop a representation of the Garter – as in The Order of the Garter – imprinted with the motto Horo soit qui mal y pense (Middle French: ‘shame on him who thinks evil of it’) in gold lettering, both symbols indicating Gaunt’s exalted rank and corresponding honors. Within the Garter, the escutcheon bears the Plantagenet arms showing the lions of England quartered with the fleur-de-lis of France, marked out with Gaunt’s heraldic difference, a label of three points ermine. An inescutcheon of pretence occupies the centre, indicating John of Gaunt’s claim to the throne of Castile and León.

These arms reoccur on Gaunt’s surcoat, as they would in battle, with the difference that the castle and lions are fully presented, being quartered on the garment’s dexter side. Arthur Charles Fox-Davies calls heraldry ‘the shorthand of history’. The text on the right of the painting reads Johannes Filius Quartus/Edward Tertii. Rex/Castellae Et Legione/Dux Lancastiae/Constabularus Castle De Queensbourg Quin/to Octobris. Anno/Regni EDW Tertii Ann/giae 50. Franciae 37, or ‘John, fourth son of Edward III. King of Castile and León, Constable of Queenborough Castle, Fifth of October, in the fiftieth year of Edward II’s reign of England, thirty-seventh year of reign of France.’ The date refers to Gaunt’s appointment as Constable in October of 1376, the 50th year of Edward III’s reign.

The painting, then, establishes Gaunt as a formidable political player; it informs us repeatedly of Gaunt’s position in the Plantagenet dynasty at a time when their campaign against France was at its most successful, and indicates Gaunt’s own ambitions towards a foreign throne. The arms and armor speak to his military prowess, instrumental in both cases, but they also bolster the weight of his authority on his native soil. If such a powerful figure occupied the office of Constable, the position gains importance through association, but it also suggests that the position is honourable enough to merit noting among the other indications of Gaunt’s impressive rank. This idea of the office’s merit increased by holder who in turn gains more honour even as he confers it, almost creates a paired mirror effect, amplifying the concept to infinity: Gaunt’s glory magnifies Queenborough’s, which increases Gaunt’s, ad infinitum.

If glorifying a previous Constable were not enough, Cheyne would have extra incentive to remind viewers of a connection to Gaunt. His career spanned the reign of each Tudor monarch, joining the court at the end of Henry VII’s time, and ending only with his own death soon after Elizabeth I confirmed all the honours and offices conferred on him by her predecessors. His most active years were spent during the reign of Henry VIII, and included some additional good fortune through his friendship with Thomas Cromwell and his familial ties to Anne Boleyn; it is a testament to his statesmanship and relationship with Henry VIII that Cheyne escaped any significant damage when the king’s favorites fell. He displayed the same political acuity in evading repercussions of supporting Jane Grey’s accession, becoming instrumental to Mary I. Part of his continued success may

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7 For more on dating, see note 18.
8 This is especially interesting on a more spurious note: Gaunt’s purported illegitimacy would mean careful emphasis on visual ties to his father and other relations.
10 This also includes a reign of 37 years over (part of) France.
have been his support of her Spanish marriage, even to the point of receiving a monetary reward from Philip of Spain.\textsuperscript{11}

The Tudor-Spanish connection holds an important key to understanding the Beaufort Portrait, which suffers from some discrepancies regarding not only the execution date of this version, but as to the dating of the subject.\textsuperscript{12} Both Anil Silva-Vigier and Alison Weir suggest that one reason for confusion regarding the painting’s date stems from the presence of the Castilian arms, saying that it must be a copy from an original pre-1388, as Gaunt renounced his claim at that time.\textsuperscript{13} This is not necessarily the case; in fact, a painting executed at any point after Catharine of Aragon’s arrival in England might include the Castile and León arms, symbolising an alliance of two houses descended from John of Gaunt.\textsuperscript{14} In fact, pageants celebrating Catharine’s marriage to Arthur, Prince of Wales in 1501,\textsuperscript{15} Emperor Charles V’s arrival into London for his visit of 1522,\textsuperscript{16} and Mary I’s marriage to Philip, King of Spain in 1544\textsuperscript{17} all included genealogical tracing of a common lineage via Gaunt as a point of pride.

The Beaufort painting may be based on an earlier portrait, but the inclusions and expansions of detail\textsuperscript{18} are in line with the Tudor aims. Cheyne’s career began after Catharine’s first marriage, but was in full swing by Charles’ visit and certainly at a crucial point before and after Philip’s arrival. He had every reason to want to underline the Castilian connection via Gaunt at any time during these two periods, while simultaneously adding an additional link to the sitting monarchs, reminding them that he held an office worthy of their ancestor. Again, Gaunt’s prestige enhances the office and its current holder, creating a valid reason for any Constable of Queenborough to showcase it to maximum effect, let alone one serving monarchs doubly connected to Gaunt, and therefore, this increases an already existent incentive to paint Gaunt in a positive light.

One of the most formative portraits of Gaunt, however, is not in a visual medium. Shakespeare’s version of the Duke of Lancaster from Richard II carries such cultural weight that it changed his name in popular consciousness.\textsuperscript{19} The play opens with Richard addressing his uncle using ‘Gaunt’ as a familiar name before reminding the audience of the Duke’s title,\textsuperscript{20} and from there, John, Duke of Lancaster becomes John of Gaunt in popular nomenclature.

\textsuperscript{12} This confusion also extends to the artist’s name, given variously as Luca Cornelli, or Lucas Cornelisz. Again, Bridgeman Education’s information is the author’s preferred resource.
\textsuperscript{16} Glenn Richardson, The Field of Cloth of Gold (New Haven, Connecticut, 2013, Online).
\textsuperscript{17} Goodman, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{18} Robert Graves dismisses the problem of invention or copy when he says “The most important works of Lucas Cornelisz which remain in this country are the sixteen small portraits of the constables of Queenborough Castle, now at Penshurst, although almost all of them must be copies of earlier pictures, if not apocryphal,” stressing the importance of Cornelisz’s role rather than his source. Dictionary of Painters and Engraver:Biographical and Critical. New Ed., Rev. and Enl. (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1886), p. 325.
\textsuperscript{19} Charles Forker says, ‘It is a mark of Shakespeare’s popular appeal as a historian that ‘John of Gaunt’ is now a common name for this Duke of Lancaster’, noting that the name had not been in common usage during the Duke’s life. Charles R. Forker, ‘Introduction,’ in King Richard II, William Shakespeare and Charles R. Forker (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2002), p. 174. Indeed, thanks to the rumours about his paternity, contemporary usage would have been offensive, if not slanderous. The verbal corruption of his birthplace “Ghent” into “Gaunt,” has also served to produce a certain romanticism or suspicion onto his character in later writings, thanks to the connotations of the word entirely unconnected with the Duke.
\textsuperscript{20} Harry Berger makes a fascinating argument regarding Richard’s address of his uncle in Imaginary Audition: Shakespeare on Stage and Page (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 51-53.
Shakespeare gives Gaunt an unprecedented amount of spiritual and social authority in this scene. As the eldest living Plantagenet male, he speaks to his younger brother, the Duke of York while occupying a liminal space between living and dying, which lends a mystical weight to his words. His impending death also allows him the freedom to criticise his royal nephew; he begins the speech by likening the king to short-lived forces of nature that damage their surroundings while destroying themselves (lines 32-39) before spending the next nineteen lines praising the land Richard is poised to ruin.22

Here, Richard’s Gaunt speaks as the good gardener bound to his land by both love and duty of care, embodying the principal values of a feudal world which fades further with

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21 The end of the play bears out the idea of York as a lesser power, one who cannot control the fighting in his own house, let alone hold the peace in England, and again subtly implies that the York branch is lesser than the Lancaster.

22 Forker describes this moment as 'Shakespeare's character, in his function as spokesman for the highest values of English Monarch, as champion of the common people...’ Forker, pp. 146-147.
his passing. This tribute to a vanished time comes with a reminder that not only Gaunt is becoming part of that past, but also that he – and by association, his son – comes from the same exalted lineage that Richard is poised to fail. Gaunt’s virtue of care implicitly passes to his son, who, unlike Richard, has had a father’s guidance to nurture the noble values necessary in a good king (40-55).

The rationale for praising England’s geographical isolation (50-56) becomes clear in light of Gaunt’s contention that it is being destroyed from within (64-73). By stressing the idea that the nation is naturally impervious to outside forces, Gaunt places the blame for potential ruin upon those within its boundaries. In calling Richard a landlord, Gaunt suggests the king has cheapened his position and reiterates the idea that Richard had the greatest responsibility for the realm. Gaunt closes the speech with a final act of noblesse oblige, ‘Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life/How happy then were my ensuing death!’ (74-75) Gaunt cannot bear the impending shame to his family and his land, lamenting that he cannot take England’s disgrace to the grave instead of the memory of its glory.

This passage marks a highlight of Shakespeare’s work, but it is also a significant example of the tension inherent in dramatising history. The play’s Gaunt straddles a blurred line between fact and fiction, and it is difficult to tell whether this serves Shakespeare’s purpose as a dramatist more than his political commentary on the Tudor monarchs. Robert Ornstein says that ‘Elizabethans hoped to find in the past recorded in the Chronicles and recreated by poets and dramatists a mirror for their own times,’ but as with the portrait, the work is a product of the political climate at the time of its creation. Charles Forker notes the manner in which Shakespeare uses an earlier play, Woodstock, transferring much of the title character’s virtues onto his portrayal of Gaunt, especially significant as Thomas of Woodstock did not have Gaunt’s genealogical cachet.

As a focal figure in the Tudor lineage, it is unsurprising that Gaunt should appear favourably in artefacts produced during the dynasty’s reign. Through glorifying the Duke of Lancaster, his descendants bask in the additional glow of his bolstered reputation. The opportunity to rewrite history and repurpose art as an overriding narrative with room for expansion and elaboration was and remains a powerful political tool. The consistent narrative across mediums over the span of decades or even centuries, is somewhat more unusual, but not entirely unexpected. Other artefacts concerning John of Gaunt may tell a more complicated story, but the ones told by the Beaufort Portrait and Shakespeare’s ‘time-honour’d Lancaster echo in much the same manner.

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24 Paola Pugatti constructs a compelling argument about history onstage in Shakespeare the Historian: ‘The dramatist’s responsibility was even heavier than the historian’s, for the dramatist addressed a large and varied audience, which did not coincide with the public that read history books, or indeed any books at all. This meant for a large part of the audience, the past of their country was not what was set out in written narratives but rather what was presented on the stage, and what the stage presented was often much less conformist than what they could read in the chronicles: not only on account of the ‘amphibiology’ of certain plays, but also because of their realistic stance and their skeptical attitude towards the idea of a history dominated by providence.’ (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1996), p. 50.
27 Forker, pp. 144-152. He also quotes George Walton Williams’ statement that ‘Gaunt is consistently idealized in the play’, Forker, p. 174.
Both works address the past and the future, using a deceased subject to mould the perceptions of living observers. The Beaufort Portrait exists as part of a series establishing an office’s lineage; it emphasises Gaunt’s vitality and power to represent the weight of his presence while he lived in order to enhance the position and its current holder. In effect, although it is a static portrait, the past acts as an active force in the composition, bringing to bear all the weight of the subject’s life. Shakespeare’s Gaunt suggests the weight of his death,\(^2\) using the power of a dying man’s speech to evoke the glory of an era that fades with him while simultaneously passing the burden of that historic lineage onwards past the limit of his vision. He mourns the immediate future as much or more than the past, implicitly urging his listeners to look forward and carry his noble principles into practice. While the Beaufort Portrait recalls the firm foundation of the Tudor dynasty, Richard II’s John of Gaunt reminds all who will listen of the perils and necessity that entailed the birth of that lineage.

These two posthumous portraits sustain a vivid afterlife, informing modern viewers with additional layers of meaning, even as they once revised history for their contemporary audiences. Both artefacts wield the authority of antiquity, and were meant to do so from the moment of their creation, but now have the additional function of serving as a commentary on the age that produced them. Their narrative influence continues to move on in the manner of the living, despite being tinged with death from their beginnings.

\(^2\) This may be yet another reason why Shakespeare chose to call him by the then lesser-known appellation; ‘Gaunt’ evokes death even in his name.
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Michael Freeman

Abstract

The ‘Little Tin Idol’ was the original Football Association Challenge trophy (FA Cup), given to the teams that won the competition from 1872 to 1896. The commonly held view is that football is ‘a gentleman’s game played by ruffians’, a quote attributed to Oscar Wilde. However, an analysis of the Oxford University team that won the FA Cup in 1874 and other early FA Cup winning teams will show this view to be incorrect. A member of the 1874 team, Reverend A.H. Johnson, had a pioneering role in the development of the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education.

Association Football is also known as soccer to differentiate it from rugby football and the American version. In this article the term ‘football’ will be used to denote Association Football and soccer. It has been described as ‘….a gentleman’s game played by ruffians’.1 Although there is no formal attribution of the quote, it is believed to have been uttered by Oscar Wilde. The basic premise is that gentlemen do not play football. However, as will be shown, this is not true of the overwhelming majority of leading teams and footballers from the 1830s to the 1880s. Until the 1830s, football was a rugged, disorganised game played mainly by the working classes.2 From the 1830s it was adopted by the English Public schools and developed into two sports as Baker explains.3 Some schools followed Rugby School, playing a version where the ball was carried, whilst others did not allow handling of the ball (save the goalkeeper). From this originated the formal rules, competitions and governing bodies of Rugby Football and Association Football.

Beginning in 1872, the major football club competition was the Football Association Challenge trophy, better known as the FA Cup, which survives to this day and is the premier club football competition in England. The 18-inch high trophy given to the winning team was known as the ‘Little Tin Idol’, as it had the figure of a football player on the top.4 Little Tin Idol was stolen in 1895 from an outfitter’s shop, whilst on loan from the then holders, Aston Villa. It was never found and a replica was made which was used until 1910. Players of the winning side were given small replicas of Little Tin Idol, so when it was stolen it was easy to create a full-size replica, shown in Figure 1. Although no longer used the replica is owned by Mr David Gold, who is joint chairman of West Ham United Football Club.5

Figure 1. The oldest remaining FA Cup, a replica of Little Tin Idol.
Credit – Oldepeso (Wikipedia).
If today we saw a newspaper headline saying that Oxford University had won the FA Cup, we would assume it was a misprint. Had the winners been Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester United, Tottenham Hotspur or Arsenal, we would not be surprised. However, this merely underlines the difference between the early winners of the FA Cup and the current leading teams. Yet Oxford University did win the 1874 competition. The team, shown in Figure 2, beat the Royal Engineers 1-0 in the final at Kennington Oval, on March 14th 1874.

![Figure 2. Oxford University's F.A. Cup-winning side of 1874. Standing: Vidal, Green, Mackarness, Johnson, Benson, Birley, Nepean. Seated: Otway, Patton, Maddison, Rawson. Credit – Public domain.](image)

The 1874 Final gives an indication of the composition of football teams of the time and the social status and background of the players. It must be remembered that both teams were amateurs, although the Royal Engineers took the unprecedented step of having a training camp before the final – pioneering the now usual process of preparation for matches. The Royal Engineers’ team was composed entirely of officers; 9 lieutenants and 2 captains. The Oxford team is shown in Table 1 with their previous schools and eventual occupations.

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8 Warsop, p. 19.
Table 1. Members of the Oxford University 1874 FA Cup Team. Compiled from Warsop (2004).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Edward Burroughs</td>
<td>Charterhouse</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Clergyman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepean</td>
<td>Charterhouse</td>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>Clergyman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Coleridge Mackarness</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Hornby Birley</td>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Thomas Green</td>
<td>Eton</td>
<td>Balliol</td>
<td>Banker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert H Benson</td>
<td>Marlborough</td>
<td>Brasenose</td>
<td>Barrister/Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Brunning Maddison</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Christ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Stepney Rawson</td>
<td>Westminster</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Schoolmaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuthbert John Ottaway</td>
<td>Eton</td>
<td>Brasenose</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Arthur H Johnson</td>
<td>Eton</td>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>Clergyman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Walpole Sealy Vidal</td>
<td>Westminster</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Clergyman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Patton</td>
<td>Eton</td>
<td>Balliol</td>
<td>Barrister</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the players, all were students apart from Reverend Arthur Henry Johnson, who was at the time Fellow and Chaplain of All Souls College, having graduated from Exeter College in 1868. Johnson was to become a well-known Oxford character over the next sixty years and had a key role in the founding of Oxford Extension, the precursor of the Department for Continuing Education.

Oxford Extension lectures were designed to give the Oxford experience to a wider audience. The original idea was to have satellite colleges all around the UK, which were affiliated to Oxford and providing an Oxford education to more people. Although this did not happen, Oxford Extension lectures did start to be given outside Oxford. The first Oxford Extension lecture was given by Johnson on 26 September 1878 at the King Edward VI School in Birmingham. At the time, he was a lecturer in Modern History to four Oxford colleges (Trinity, St John's, Wadham and Pembroke).

Johnson, also known as 'the Johnner', spent his life in Oxford, from his matriculation at Exeter College in 1864 to his death at 5 South Parks Road on 31st January 1927. Apart from football, he was an accomplished runner, winning the Eton school steeplechase when he was fifteen. He won Blues in 1865 and 1866 for long-distance running. His running prowess was very useful when he was a Pro-proctor chasing errant students who were unable to escape him.

Johnson was a lecturer in Modern History at University College (from 1885) and at Trinity, Hertford, Merton, St. John’s, Wadham, Worcester, Corpus Christi, Balliol and Pembroke Colleges, often seen dashing between colleges to give lectures. An appreciation beneath his Times obituary described as ‘legendary’ the number of colleges at which he had been a lecturer and tutor. From 1906 to his death he was a Fellow of All Souls College and College Chaplain. He previously held these positions between 1869 and 1874. He wrote many books on history including Europe in the XVI Century. He

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9 Warsop, pp. 90-91.
10 ‘Taking the University Outside Oxford’, Oxford University Department for Continuing Education <https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/history/extension.php> [accessed 19 March 2015].
12 Goldman, p. 32.
13 The Times, 1 Feb. 1927, p. 17.
14 Warsop, p. 91.
was appropriately described as ‘a country gentleman in holy orders’; apart from football, his interests were fishing, hunting and shooting. As Goldman notes ‘He was a hunting, shooting, and fishing don, whose attachment to field sports was legendary and accomplishments at them prodigious’. Johnson’s obituary in *The Times* recorded his running skills, but made no mention of his part in the 1874 FA Cup winning side. The appreciation beneath his obituary likewise says nothing of his footballing past, although it remarks, ‘But at all forms of sport he was *facile princeps*’ (roughly translated as ‘easily the best’). His wife Bertha was principal (1894-1921) of what became St. Anne’s College Oxford.

Johnson, with his background, interests, sporting prowess and profession, is typical of the type of gentleman playing football for the leading teams of the 1870s and 1880s. It is quite clear that the Oxford team was drawn from men who had come from leading public schools (apart from Maddison), who then went on to enter one of the main professions. Additionally, the biographies of these men show they were playing football at school before going up to Oxford; this is evidence that football was popular in some of the public schools. A review of the finalists in the first ten seasons of the competition also shows the connection between football and the public schools, universities and armed forces.

Oxford reached the final in 1873, 1874, 1877 and 1880. The Royal Engineers contested the 1872, 1874, 1875 and 1878 finals. The Wanderers appeared in the 1872, 1873, 1876, 1877 and 1878 finals. They were formed in 1863 by a group of Old Harrovians (ex-pupils of Harrow school). Old Etonians played in the 1875, 1876, 1879 and 1881 finals, formed of former Eton pupils. Old Carthusians, drawn from former pupils of Charterhouse school, played in the 1881 final. Clapham Rovers appeared in the 1879 and 1880 finals. They were a team of men generally working in the City of London in the professions or as traders or brokers. Most players were educated at public school and some had played for other leading teams.

Thus in the first ten seasons of the FA Cup, the six clubs that contested the finals represented the social, professional and institutional elite of English society. In this period, football at the highest level was an elitist sport. From the description of the membership of leading teams, and the social backgrounds and professions of the Oxford University 1874 FA Cup winning side, it is clear the gentlemen and professional classes pervaded the leading football teams of the 1870s and 1880s.

This argument is further strengthened by a review of the background and future/actual professions of the 158 players who competed in the first ten FA Cup finals. As an example of the 158, 25 were barristers, 15 solicitors, 38 Army officers and 16 clergymen. Nearly all went to public schools; for example, Eton supplied 48 players and Charterhouse 15 players. Many of these players excelled at other sports, with 46 of them playing cricket at first class or minor counties level.

It is also clear that these are teams from the south of England, and the north-south divide will be discussed below. When the Football Association was formed in 1863 it was regarded as a southern-centric organisation of upper-crust clubs. All the early southern football clubs were amateur, and the relationship between the amateur and the

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15 Goldman, p. 33.
16 *The Times*, 1 Feb. 1927, p. 17.
17 *The Times*, 1 Feb. 1927, p. 17.
18 ‘St Anne’s College, Oxford: About the College, Bertha Johnson (1894-1921)’, <http://www.st-annes.ox.ac.uk/about/history/principals/bertha-johnson-1894-1921> [accessed 18 March 2015]
19 Warsop, pp. 55-140.
21 Warsop, p. 8.
22 Warsop, p. 7.
gentleman was defined in 1866 by the newly formed Amateur Athletic Association as follows:

Any gentleman who has never competed in any open competition, or for public money, or for admission money, or taught, pursued or assisted in the pursuit of athletic exercises as a means of livelihood, nor as a mechanic, artisan or labourer.  

The effect of this was to exclude manual workers and the working classes, be they skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled from most forms of ‘organised’ amateur sport. It was considered that manual workers could be tempted to take bribes from gamblers and therefore only men of independent or substantial financial standing would not need such financial inducements. This points toward amateurs as gentlemen who are either members of the aristocracy or the professions. The idea of the amateur gentleman was firmly rooted in the upper and middle classes of society. The other result of this definition is a form of segregation, whereby the gentleman classes did not engage in sporting contests with the working classes. These lines were blurred to some extent with football, especially with the clubs which developed in the north of England and the Midlands. Teams from northern England and the Midlands began to emerge in the 1870s and by the 1880s were a serious threat to the FA Cup dominance of the southern gentlemen teams.

The non-southern clubs had different histories. Blackburn in Lancashire provides an interesting comparison. It had two teams in the 1870s and 1880s. Two old boys of Shrewsbury public school founded Blackburn Rovers in 1875. Members of the team came from Blackburn Grammar School and Malvern public school. The blue and white team colours owed much to the influence of Cambridge graduates amongst the membership. To some extent these were ‘northern gentlemen’ although in the long term, Blackburn Rovers was one of the teams to eventually benefit from the introduction of professional players as discussed below.

Blackburn Olympic was the other club, and its membership was mostly local mill workers. Olympic became the first northern and truly working class club to win the FA Cup in 1883, when it beat Old Etonians 2-1. This was a crucial turning point in the rise of the northern clubs, the migration to wider social participation in football and the move towards professionalism. The Olympic win over a leading team of southern gentlemen caused a major controversy in the south. It had long been thought that the northern clubs were paying players, which was not allowed under the amateur rules, but there was little direct evidence.

Before the final, Olympic had taken their players on a training trip to Blackpool, and the argument was that as these players were manual workers, they could not afford to take time off work so they must have been paid. Of course this contrasted with the Royal Engineers who trained intensely before playing Oxford University in 1874, but as officers and gentlemen the financial queries did not arise. Another issue was that one player, Jack Hunter, had relocated to Blackburn to play for Olympic, having been given a job at the local mill. This trend was seen in many northern clubs, and the suspicion was that good players were induced to join clubs with offers of jobs and payments. No action was taken against Olympic; however, later it was found that Olympic had indeed arranged jobs, paid time off work for players, and made additional off-balance sheet

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23 David Allen Pierce, Applying Amateurism in the Global Sports Arena: Analysis of NCAA Student-Athlete Reinstatement Cases Involving Amateurism Violations (Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest, 2007)
24 Warsop, pp. 7-8.
payments to them. Such activities beckoned the professional era and the end of the
gentlemen football player. None of the Old Boys’ teams appeared in a FA Cup final again. The
finals were dominated by professional northern teams, and the next southern club to win the FA Cup again was the amateur team of Tottenham Hotspur in 1901 and 1902. Northern dominance was then reasserted until 1921, when Tottenham Hotspur, now professional, won the FA Cup for the third time.

The growth of the northern clubs resulted in the Football Association allowing professionalism under its rules in July 1885. The rules were strict, and players could only represent a team if they were born within the same area as the club they played for, or had lived within six miles of the club for a period of two years. However, this still maintained the distinction between amateurs and professionals. The privileged amateurs continued to govern the game through the Football Association, and professional players were seen as employees, almost servants, of the clubs. The new FA rules caused issues for professional clubs in the subsequent FA Cup competitions, especially where players had been 'imported' from outside their regions, and did not meet the two-year residency qualification. Thus in the first few years of professionalism, the professional clubs often fielded under strength teams.

As professional clubs developed they needed to generate income, and more regular matches were needed to attract paying spectators. The cup competitions such as the FA Cup and Lancashire Cup were limited and, of course, there was always the prospect of being knocked out of the competition. Infrequent friendly games also gave no certainty of financial stability. The solution was the formation of the Football League in April 1888, with 12 founding teams, Accrington, Aston Villa, Blackburn Rovers, Bolton Wanderers, Burnley, Derby County, Everton, Notts County, Preston North End, Stoke, West Bromwich Albion and Wolverhampton Wanderers. These were all professional teams from the north of England or the Midlands, and the split between the amateur south and the professional north and Midlands was complete. The first games took place on 8th September 1888, and the season comprised 22 games for each team, playing twice against each of the other 11 teams.

The unstoppable tide of professionalism in football swept aside the gentleman amateur. The great Old Boys' teams of the 1870s and 1880s could not compete with the strength of the professional teams where players dedicated more of their time to training, perfecting skills and tactics. Whether this change classifies football as 'a gentleman’s game played by ruffians' is open to debate. It is interesting to note that in The Times obituary (and appreciation) for Reverend A.H. Johnson, no mention is made of his footballing achievements. By the time of his death in 1927, football had become a professional sport, watched largely by working class men. Perhaps The Times thought the association with ruffians was more apt. In which case, it would probably not have been acceptable to associate a distinguished Oxford Don with football!

The Reverend A.H. Johnson was a member of the Oxford 1874 FA Cup winning team and a key figure in the development of the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education. His background (Eton and Oxford) and profession were typical of the amateur gentlemen playing football in the Victorian era. From the 1830s until the early 1880s, the leading football teams were made up of gentlemen amateurs from the social, professional and institutional elite of English society. Team members being drawn from the Public Schools, Oxbridge and the armed forces. Therefore, we can justly say that for many years, Victorian football was a 'gentleman's game played by gentlemen'.

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28 Davies, p. 36.
30 Gibbons, p. 82.
31 Gibbons, p. 84.
32 Gibbons, pp. 103-105.
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