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SPECIAL ISSUE:

THEATRE AND POPULAR CULTURE IN THE ENGLISH RESTORATION AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

EDITED BY ANNA MIKYŠKOVÁ

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EDITORIAL

Anna Mikyšková

THE period of English Restoration theatre was for a considerable time in the shadow of Renaissance studies. This tendency was, to a great extent, fuelled by the traditional focus on Shakespeare and his contemporaries. However, the period of English theatre that resumed its life after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 is an equally rich and significant era, one that largely shaped not only the later reception of the pre-Interregnum theatre, but also laid much of the foundations for modern theatre as we know it today. This is also confirmed by the fact that the theatrical period of the Restoration and eighteenth century (which are in many ways culturally impossible to divide clearly) has attracted a growing scholarly interest in recent years. Studies such as Peter Kirwan and Emma Depledge's *Canonising Shakespeare: Stationers and the Book Trade, 1640–1740* (2017), Al Coppola's *Theater of Experiment: Staging Natural Philosophy in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (2016) and Jean I. Marsden's *Theatres of Feeling: Affect, Performance, and the Eighteenth-Century Stage* (2019), to name but a few, as well as recent surveys, for instance, *A Cultural History of Theatre in the Age of Enlightenment* (2017), and anthologies, such as *The Routledge Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Drama* (2017) and *The Routledge Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Performance* (2019), clearly demonstrate that the theatre culture in question was a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that deserves further enquiry. The present monothematic issue of *Theory and Practice in English Studies* (*THEPES*) hopes to contribute to this ongoing discussion.

The issue, entitled "Theatre and Popular Culture in the English Restoration and Eighteenth Century," is one of the outcomes of the ongoing project "English Theatre Culture 1660–1737" funded by the Czech Science Foundation (project code GA19–07494S) and conducted at the Department of Theatre Studies and the Department of English and American Studies, Masaryk University, Brno (for the project's description, see Krajník et al. 2019). The aim of the project is twofold. On the local level, it aims to prepare and publish the first Czech anthology of Restoration plays which will be informed by up-to-date scholarship. On the international level, it strives to foster vibrant research into the area of Restoration theatre and bring together an international community of both junior and senior scholars and theatre practitioners interested in the Restoration theatre culture. To achieve the latter, two international online Restoration symposia were organized, one in October 2020 (see

Hájková 2021), the other in April 2021 (which you can read about in the present issue in the conference report by Filip Krajník). The symposia proved successful and facilitated engaging discussions which resulted in the publication of the first 2021 issue of *Theatralia* journal, subtitled "Performance Cultures of English Restoration (1660–1737)," and the first 2021 issue of *THEPES* journal which you are currently reading.

The present monothematic issue aims to explore the connections between the English Restoration and eighteenth-century theatre and popular culture. Since the early Restoration until the mid-eighteenth century, English theatre culture witnessed a marked shift towards increased commercialization and popularization of theatre. Gone were the post-1660 close association with the court, royalist productions and prominently elite (well-off and upper-class) audiences. Instead, the experimentation with new genres, the opening of new theatres and the growing differentiation of the theatre evening into mainpieces, *entr'acte* entertainments and afterpieces challenged the established cultural hierarchies of the period.

The term "popular culture" has always been difficult to pin down, as popular culture can be defined in multiple ways. Historically speaking and leaving the study of twentieth-century pop culture aside, popular culture as a concept emerged with what Peter Burke termed the "discovery of the people," when late eighteenth-century folklorists started to preserve the, in their view, disappearing popular culture of the common people (Burke 2009, 23). However, the implied sharp distinction between elite and popular expressions of culture was in time becoming more and more problematic. As with other similar terms, the categories of this "two-tier model" were too neat and too convenient to account for the description of most cultural practices and artefacts, which gradually led to the study of local cultures and various shared cultures, which put increasingly more emphasis on the diversity, multiplicity and interrelatedness of cultural experience (e.g., Shershow and Reay). Although the categories of high and low have troubled historians for a long time now and no matter how unstable and unreliable these concepts are, *the high* and *the low*, or *the elite* and *the popular*, are constructed categories with a history of their own, and it is useful to ask where they come from and how ideas about them shaped the changing historical perception of leisure entertainment.

The English long Restoration is precisely the type of culture in which the distinction between high and low genres, though seemingly clear-cut, is very much open to discussion. For instance, the conventional division between Restoration London public theatres, which offered intellectual drama, and popular entertainments in the streets and at local fairs is no longer sufficient, especially as we move to the early eighteenth century, when much of the popular spectacle and show became a regular part of London theatrical evenings (to the dismay of many social and cultural commentators of the period). As far as audience division into elite and popular groups is concerned, it does not hold even for the early Restoration (for example, Samuel Pepys was able to sit in the same theatre audience as the king and visit a dirty alehouse and the Bartholomew Fair within one week, not to mention his collection of popular broadside ballads). The aim of the issue is, therefore, to foster the discussion about the shifting cultural trends of the Restoration and eighteenth-century theatre and explore the various modes of theatre's engagement with the popular culture of the period. Due to the existing multitude of popular culture's definitions and contexts in which it has been studied, it is not an ambition of this issue to come up with yet more theoretical definitions of the term. Instead, it seeks to open a space for discussions about what the word "popular" means, or might have meant, when applied to the theatre of the Restoration period and beyond. Each of the contributors approached the topic from a different perspective and, as a result, this issue offers a variety of articles that hint at the diversity of the Restoration and eighteenth-century theatre experience.

Eva Bilská opens the issue with her study about the rise of the Restoration actress as a modern celebrity. In her discussion of Lady Macduff and Lady Macbeth in William Davenant's *Macbeth* (1664), she argues that the female dramatic characters were, to a great extent, understood through the popular reputation of the actresses that portrayed them. By combining this theatrical reading with a textual interpretation of the two key female characters of the play – in this case a motivic interpretation based on the then popular metaphor of body and soul – Bilská shows how the textual and performance realities might have merged to create an ambiguous image of femininity on the Restoration stage. **Kristýna Janská** traces the prologues and epilogues associated with the Exclusion Crisis, examining the playwrights' anxieties about the growing competition for audiences' attention, as other forms of popular entertainment such as fairs, rope-dancing, jigs, as well as political print and other ways of political engagement, were luring their spectators away. By employing the theory of cultural public sphere, Janská shows that with the increasing commercialisation of popular entertainment, on which the London public theatres were dependent, the "elite" conception of Restoration drama was becoming obsolete, and new, more popular, modes of theatrical entertainments were taking over. In his paper, **Filip Krajník** focuses on the early eighteenth-century English farce and asks what a play-text can tell us about the English popular theatrical tradition. Starting with a literary analysis of Benjamin Griffin's afterpiece farce *The Humours* *of Purgatory* (1716), which clearly drew on a popular tale from Bocaccio's *Decameron* and other Continental sources, Krajník also explores the performance tradition of the farce and argues that plays in the long Restoration popular culture could be interpreted within a frame of complex and shifting intertextual networks. In her contribution about the Jack Sheppard Craze of the 1720s, **Klára Škrobánková** examines London popular criminal narratives. Stories about Jack Sheppard the prison breaker abounded specifically after his 1724 execution and inspired writers of pamphlets, farces, pantomimes, as well as ballad operas. As Škrobánková demonstrates, the various genres took inspiration from one another and gradually created two parallel narratives – the contemptible criminal vs. the noble thief, whose most legendary portrayal survived in John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728). Finally, **Jessica Banner** moves the conversation to the middle of the eighteenth century, focusing on David Garrick's 1748 production of *Romeo and Juliet* and discussing the new fashioning of the character of Juliet. By taking into account the visual representations of Juliet and other heroines from the mid-eighteenth-century sentimental fiction, Banner analyses Juliet's speech and costume in Garrick's adaptation, arguing that his Juliet had lost the tragic qualities of her Shakespeare's predecessor and, instead, assumed sentimental qualities which responded to the popular taste of the period.

The issue continues with a short academic note by **Laura Alexander**, who offers an original reading of the character of Marplot in Susanna Centlivre's comedy *The Busybody* (1709). She challenges the traditional heteronormative interpretation of the male characters, re-examines Marplot's dependence on his male friends and argues for a homoerotic reading that invites discussion about homoerotic love and tolerance in the eighteenth-century sentimental comedy.

The next section of the issue, "Interviews, Reviews, Conference Reports," opens with an interview with **Moira Goff** about dancing on the London Restoration and eighteenth-century stages. As a baroque dance specialist and experienced baroque dancer, Moira Goff insightfully talks about French dancing in English Restoration theatre. She also sheds light on the key role of John Weaver, the dancing master, and John Rich, the theatre manager and famous Harlequin, in the development of English pantomimes. Furthermore, she explains the French notation system for baroque dance which was adopted by the English dancing masters and thanks to which we can nowadays have a good idea about what was danced not only in London at that time. According to Goff, a greater scholarly focus on early eighteenth-century dancing, which has been generally overlooked by theatre historians, would very much deepen our understanding of the English popular stage, on which dance, music and stage action used to be of equal importance.

Sharon Wiseman contributes with a review on the live streaming of Hannah Cowley's *The Belle's Stratagem* (original premiere in 1780), which was performed online by the Red Bull Theatre (New York) via Zoom on February 22, 2021. This production is one of the many online theatre projects, realized in the last year and a half, which attempted to bridge over the long period when theatres worldwide had to be closed due to the covid-19 pandemic. As Wiseman shows, the Zoom platform has its limitations and potential advantages alike. **Klára Škrobánková** follows with a review of the recent volume *Music and the Benefit Performance in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (2020, ed. Matthew Gardner and Alison DeSimone), which, among other things, demonstrates that the musical and theatrical affairs in England of the eighteenth century were, in practical aspects of the entertainment business, very similar and that benefit performances were a key principle of the popular theatrical entertainment of the period. Lastly, **Filip Krajník** provides a report on the aforementioned second online Restoration symposium from last April, which offers an overview of the lectures and seminar papers which partly inspired this issue.

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RESEARCH ARTICLES

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THE CONCEPT OF FEMININITY IN DAVENANT'S *MACBETH*

Eva Bilská

Abstract

This paper concentrates on the concept of femininity in Davenant's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, which premiered in 1664 and was first printed in 1674. It takes into consideration the cult of celebrity that became characteristic for the Restoration theatre, as well as the philosophical context of the period. Analysing both the Macduffs' and the Macbeths' marriages by using the soul-body metaphor, it seeks to interpret the relationship dynamics and the roles within. Considering social and gender expectations in Restoration England, the paper further discusses the way in which the spectacle and the soul-body metaphor helped to shape the leading female characters' femininity.

Keywords

Restoration theatre, *Macbeth*, William Davenant, soul and body, femininity, early modern actresses, cult of celebrity, spectacle

* * *

DESIGNED to attract and captivate the audience, the spectacle of Restoration theatre productions offered not only music and dancing, but also sophisticated staging. Complex stage machinery and scenery ensured a flux of theatregoers, as well as steady income for theatre companies. With the first actresses officially on the stage, a new theatre culture emerged, in which the character of an actress became just as important as the role that she portrayed. Given the growing power of spectatorship, adapting Shakespeare's *Macbeth* thus meant catering to an audience with different tastes and heightened awareness of performers' private lives.[1] William Davenant's version of the play therefore offered characters that would suit these new expectations. At the same time, however, this adaptation also became a medium both supporting and challenging Restoration notions of femininity. The leading female figures of the play, Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff, may therefore be seen as characters whose femininity is influenced by various cultural and intellectual phenomena including the phenomenon of celebrity, the nature of the spectacle, as well as philosophical background and social expectations.

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[1] For more on the interest of the audience in performers' private lives, see, for instance, King 1992, 85–86, or Eisaman Maus 1979, 599, who both see is it as an impetus for Restoration dramatists to write their plays with particular actors and actresses in mind.

Staged for the first time in 1664 at Lincoln's Inn Fields and praised by Samuel Pepys in 1667 for its spectacular witches (Pepys 1667, 7), the play was seeking support for the newly restored monarchy by equalling Macbeth with Cromwell (Kroll 1990, 855). Malcolm's concluding wish to have the tyrant's dead body hanged on a tree (5.2.17–20), a symbol of kingship, must have corresponded in the minds of the Restoration audience with the digging up of Cromwell's corpse in 1660 and his subsequent hanging at Tyburn (Kroll 1990, 855). However, while this political message was an outcome of a pursued agenda, it was rather due to artistic than political ambition that the play earned its popularity.

Captivating the audience with an impressive spectacle that offered not only music and dances, but also such sophisticated tricks as flying witches, the production of *Macbeth* helped the Duke's Company to establish itself and to increase its popularity (Greenfield 2013, 39). The Restoration theatre, however, opened the door not only to new technical possibilities. This new chapter in the history of English theatre brought with it also a new perception of actors and actresses.

The Restoration audience that came to see plays and mingle with others did not come to see only the characters on the stage. Neither did their appreciation go out to actors for their impersonations, but rather for how well these actors managed to combine the given character with their own personality. Actors, and actresses in particular, were praised for how well they *animated* the character, not for how well they *embodied* it, as it was rather self-expression than true acting abilities that became appreciated (Eisaman Maus 1979, 599).

This self-expression therefore determined the success of an actress in the eyes of her audience as well as inspiring the doubling of bodies and performances: there existed a performance of a character and, simultaneously, an actress's self-expression of the character (King 1992, 78–81). Consequently, two bodies of female actresses could be perceived at the same time: the real and the fictional (King 1992, 78–81). As both were taken into consideration by the audience, dramatic tension appeared which gave rise to cults of celebrity surrounding female actresses (Eisaman Maus 1979, 599). Discussing William Chatwood's *A General History of the Stage*, first printed in 1749, Katharine Eisaman Maus points out how the choice of an actress shaped the response of an audience to the play:

> Ann Bracegirdle, who resisted the advances of enamored aristocrats throughout her career . . . was applauded when, as Cordelia in the revised *Lear*, she described herself as “Arm’d in my Virgin Innocence” although the promiscuous Mrs Barry, “in the same part, more fam’d for her Stage Performance than the other, at the words, *Virgin Innocence*, has created a Horse-laugh . . . and the scene of generous Pity and Compassion at the close turn’d to Ridicule.” (Eisaman Maus 1979, 599)

Perceived at the same instant, the actresses’ two bodies simultaneously generated two interpretations that either supported each other – and, consequently, earned applause and admiration from the audience – or contradicted each other and elicited only jeers and laughter.

This preoccupation with private lives inevitably sparked the interest in the actresses’ lower-class status: William Oldys’s *Biographical Dictionary of Actors* published later in the eighteenth century stresses the low origin of the first famous actresses; likewise, it does not forget to mention the belief that Nell Gwyn’s mother was a brothelkeeper in Drury Lane (King 1992, 85). The first Restoration actresses therefore had to face an audience that tended to equal their low-born status with sexual availability, a tendency that inspired unmasking scenes, whose object was to strip an actress of her theatre character, to expose her as a sexual object and thus present her as more approachable and available than the character she epitomized (King 1992, 86).

Yet, despite having their low-born origin exposed, actresses, and particularly the famous ones, became the only group of females able to negotiate for themselves a publicly acknowledged status that ensured them a certain independence, as Eisaman Maus points out:

> The employment of actresses does not, however, coincide with a more general broadening of female participation in public life. In fact, during the second half of the seventeenth century women seem to have been loosing rather than acquiring opportunities for gainful employment. Men were encroaching upon such traditionally female occupations as brewing, textile manufacture, dressmaking, and midwifery. Women were less and less likely to run businesses or enter trades independently of their husbands[.] (Eisaman Maus 1979, 600)

With many female occupations in decline, the rising celebrity cult enabling actresses to enjoy a publicly accepted social standing can therefore be interpreted as one of the available means by which the perception of femininity could have been influenced. With missing a clear-cut distinction between fiction and reality, the portrayal of femininity on the Restoration stage did not reflect, but either explicitly or implicitly shaped, challenged and contested the general perception of this theme.

Although re-working an already existing play, Davenant's adaptation can be read as a reaction to this tension surrounding female characters that began to characterize the theatre culture. The popularity of Jane Long may thus well have been the reason why Lady Macduff became such a prominent character (Greenfield 2013, 45), while the wish to have a real couple in leading roles may have been the reason for casting Mary Saunderson Betterton as Lady Macbeth alongside her husband in the role of Macbeth. Inheriting from Shakespeare the strong and remorseless Lady Macbeth and the innocent Lady Macduff, Davenant extended their roles by elaborating on their relationship with their husbands.

However, although fictitious, neither the Macbeths' nor the Macduffs' relationship is unreal by seventeenth-century standards. Using evidence from diaries – such as the preacher Henry Newcome's or the high-ranking gentlewoman Lady Grace Mildmay's – Keith Wrightson comments on the emergence of strong personal relationships:

> The picture which emerges indicates the *private* existence of a strong complementary and companionate ethos, side by side with, and often overshadowing, theoretical adherence to the doctrine of male authority and *public* female subordination. (Wrightson 1998, 92)

The "strong complementary and companionate ethos" characterizes both fictitious couples and reveals how much the hidden private aspect of a relationship and a need for the publicly acceptable presentation of femininity correlate.

Contrasting the Macbeths and the Macduffs with one another, Davenant presents his characters as couples with a strong private streak that would not have been unknown to his audience. Furthermore, Davenant intensifies the couples' marriages by giving each husband the lines that betray how much they rely on their wives for their well-being. The instance when Macbeth is sick because his wife is ill – "I am sick in her, and my Kingdom too" (4.1.272) – or the moment when Macduff advocates the murder of Macbeth by relying on the moral character of his wife – "Though Sickly in my self, yet Well in you" (3.1.184) – are both examples of mutual dependence that transgresses the borders of individuality. The wives' purity and spiritual health correlate directly with the husbands' moral integrity and strength.

Compared to Shakespeare, Davenant was criticized for stripping the play of his predecessor's great poetry without substituting it with anything substantial (Spencer

1925, 643). However, this mutual dependency between the wife's purity and the husband's health tends to suggest otherwise. Just as the strong private aspect characterizing the stage relationships can be seen as the result of the growing social changes in the way relationships began to be understood, so, too, could this conspicuous soulful connection be interpreted in the light of philosophical and religious ideas existing at that time. Understanding it metaphorically, this theme of the soul-body connection could be expected to influence the theatrical concept of femininity and the existing cult of celebrity presented in the play, and to either challenge or support these. The femininity of Davenant's female characters in *Macbeth* can thus be seen as a construct comprised of remnants of former Renaissance characters on the one hand and the revived interest in soul-body philosophy on the other, both of which became reshaped by the Restoration theatre culture and the phenomenon of celebrity that brought actresses independence.

Historically speaking, the soulful connection, characteristic of the married couples in Davenant's *Macbeth,* is the result of a long philosophical tradition that goes back to the Greeks. Reacting to Plato, Aristotle proposed a concept in which the soul became married to the body because it was only through the vehicle of body that it could realize its potential (Porter 2003, 32). This soul-body dualism then found its place in Christianity, particularly in the story of Adam and Eve, in which Eve was assigned the role of tempting flesh that could seduce the soul – represented by Adam – into sin (Osmond 1974, 285–86). Throughout the Middle Ages, this concept underwent numerous transformations. For Thomas Aquinas, for instance, the body was an instrument, while for Christian Platonists, it became the soul's dungeon (Porter 2003, 37). The same variety was apparent in the use of metaphors: while the soul was usually masculine because it referred to the biblical Adam and through him to reason, it was also occasionally described as a woman, particularly when a visual description was offered, such as in the medieval work *De Querimonia et Conflictu Carnis et Spiritus seu Animae*, attributed to Hildebert of Lavardin, where the soul is described as a woman in mourning (Osmond 1974, 284–85).

The seventeenth century continued this theme and expounded this inherited philosophical tradition, as can be seen in the letter (1663) by Sir Kenelm Digby, an English courtier and diplomat, where the soul stands for guidance: "And as the Feminine Sex is imperfect and receiveth perfection from the Masculine; so doth the Body from the Soul" (quoted in Osmond 1974, 288). Andrew Marvell's poem "A Dialogue between the Soul and the Body," written in the 1650s, echoes the idea of a body as the soul's dungeon: "O who shall from this Dungeon, raise / A Soul inslav'd so many wayes?" (quoted in Porter 2003, 40). While it may be no surprise that the soul-body theme suited the artistically austere period of the Interregnum (Osmond 1974, 371), it may come more of a surprise that the interest continued well after the ascension of Charles II. Research conducted independently by Rosalie Osmond and Roy Porter demonstrates that, although the prevailing tone became philosophical rather than pious, "the 'body and soul' pairing remained as pervasive as ever" and that "[o]f all the metaphorical analogues . . . the most popular and explosive [pairing] was that of husband and wife" (Porter 2003, 41).

With this prevalent husband-wife analogy used metaphorically to describe the soul-body relationship, Davenant had at his disposal a tool that was both philosophical and poetic. His treatment of the theme is artistic and therefore bound up with the plot and the characters. Since the artistic way enables all the possible combinations to be brought out, and not just the most basic one in which the soul is masculine and stands for the husband and the rational, while the body is feminine and stands for the wife and temptation, subtle differences can be identified in the marriages of both Lady Macduff and Lady Macbeth when the soul-body philosophy is applied. As the religious discourse of the seventeenth century presented the soul as both masculine and feminine, two different types of femininity become more distinct when the dialogues of both couples are analysed with these analogies in mind.

Lady Macduff's deep soul connection with her husband could thus be read in the light of an analogy suggested, for instance, by James Howell's dialogue *The Vision: or A Dialog between the Soul and the Bodie* (1651), in which the soul resembles a veiled nun – a feminine figure:

> At last I found it was my Soul which useth to make sollices in time of sleep . . . Afterwards, the fantasma varying, she took a shape, and the nearest resemblance I could make of it was to a veild Nunn with a flaming cross on the left side of her breast. (quoted in Osmond 1974, 287)

In this dialogue, the soul is a woman governing and leading the body which is presented here as a man. The character of Lady Macduff seems to function in a similar way. Meeting the witches in Act 2, Scene 1 (306–404), she proves mentally and spiritually stronger than her husband who becomes courageous only after she has refused to submit to fear: "Am I made bold by her? how strong a guard / Is innocence?" (2.1.382–383). Howell's image of the soul as an innocent nun seems to correspond well with Lady Macduff's spiritual innocence that gives her moral strength to support her husband and steer him onto the right path.

She thus repeatedly takes on the role of a motivator who leads her husband away from an unjust and undue course of action. Her opposition to her husband's plan to kill Macbeth generates a discussion on tyranny (3.1.132–200), out of which she tends to emerge again as the metaphorical soul guiding the metaphorical body (her husband). In the extract from Howell's dialogue quoted above, the soul is a woman, as distinct from the classic analogy, where the soul is equalled with masculinity, rationality and the biblical Adam. Representing the rational, Lady Macduff's supposed soul's masculinity bonds well with her courage and leadership.

Although her conspicuously virtuous character seems to foreshadow the theme of virtuous heroine in distress, her innocence is not of a suffering kind. Famous for her stage fighting and tavern scenes, Jane Long, who performed Lady Macduff, became famous, as Anne Greenfield points out, for her portrayal of "bold, comedic, conspiring, and at times sexually-explicit heroines, and after 1667 . . . for her sexy breeches roles" (Greenfield 2013, 45). Although there is no contemporary witness account about Long's performance of Lady Macduff, the actress's vivacious character that earned her roles of sexually bold heroines might suggest how the (on paper) submissive role could have been shaped on the stage (Greenfield 2013, 45). If actresses were to animate the performed character, not to embody it, then Long's Lady Macduff would not have been a submissive wife, a gentle advisor appealing to her husband's moral integrity, but a lively and decisive companion. Standing for the soul and the rational, Lady Macduff's femininity thus goes against the general notion of female subordination.

If boldness was the hallmark of Jane Long's performance, then Mary Saunderson Betterton's personal perseverance and capability could have well enriched her portrayal of Lady Macbeth also. Becoming one of the only two female shareholders of the Lincoln's Inn Fields Company in 1695 (the second was her stepdaughter Ann Bracegirdle – Eisaman Maus 1979, 600), Betterton was also one of the few actresses who managed to keep her life private and gossip free. Yet, while avoiding attention from the audience that relished hearing about actors' private lives, her appearance next to her husband, Thomas Betterton, who played Macbeth, must have been intentional. The real and the fictional couples overlapped, and the audience was invited to make the connection.

Furthermore, as the play continued to be performed, a rather slightly ironic interpretation may have been made by the audience in the case of Mrs Betterton, who later in her life began to teach acting not only to young actresses, but also to the Royal daughters to whom she became a mentor and voice coach. As she taught acting in her real life, some of her lines in *Macbeth* must have become particularly powerful for those in the audience who did not fail to make the connection when she as Lady Macbeth instructed her husband to "Let your looks be clear, / Your change of Count'nance does betoken fear" (1.1.433–34), or when she advised him to "Look like the innocent flower, / But be the serpent under't" (1.1.427–28). That she indeed played the role in an intense powerful way well into her advanced years may be seen from the praise her performance received by Colley Cibber in his memoir *Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber*:

> Mrs. *Betterton*, tho' far advanc'd in Years, was so great a Mistress of Nature, that even Mrs. *Barry*, who acted Lady *Macbeth* after her, could not in that Part, with all her superior Strength, and Melody of Voice, throw out those quick and careless Strokes of Terror, from the Disorder of a guilty Mind, which the other gave us with a Facility in her Manner that render'd them at once tremendous and delightful. (Cibber 1740, 134)

Together with her husband, who performed the part of Macbeth until the end of his career (Spencer 1925, 622), she thus created a couple that was characterized by intensity.

In Davenant's version of the play, the strong bond between the Macbeths is illustrated by the fact that they are both plagued by ghosts (Macbeth by Banquo's, his wife by Duncan's), as well as the fact that they share their feelings and plans long after the murder is committed. Lady Macbeth becomes unambiguously informed about both Banquo's death and the intended murder of Macduff because she remains Macbeth's confidant: "He and *Banquo* must embrace the same fate" (3.1.405). The Macbeths have no children. Instead, they have a goal that turns them into business partners. As neither of them happens to be satisfied and comfortable in the given role, blame is constantly shifted. Macbeth accuses his wife of blowing his "Ambition up into a Flame" (4.1.322), while she reproaches him, "You were a Man. / And by the Charter of your Sex you shou'd / Have govern'd me, there was more crime in you / When you obey'd my Councels, then I contracted / By my giving it" (4.1.324–328). While Lady Macbeth's reproachful lines may be calling for individual responsibility, her speech can also be interpreted metaphorically with the help of the soul-body analogy.

Rather common among the religious texts, this metaphor appears, for instance, in Nicholas Mosley's *Natural and Divine Contemplations of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man* (1653), where the body is presented as a wife that is to be married to the soul – a husband. The body is described here as an adorned bride, while the wedding itself is the day of her Resurrection:

> Even such is the inward grace and outward Magnificence, Pomp and State of the body in the morning of her Resurrection and Ascension from the Chamber of death, to be Espoused again to the Soul in an everlasting Wedlock. (quoted in Osmond 1974, 289)

Because it was expected of the soul to govern the body just as the husband governs his wife, problems could be expected when it turned the other way round, as Jeremy Taylor argues in his sermon *The Marriage Ring*:

> The dominion of a Man over his Wife is no other than as the soul rules the body . . . the soul and body make a perfect man, when the soul commands wisely, or rules lovingly. . . . But if the body shall give lawes, and by the violence of the appetites first abuse the understanding, and then possesse the superior portion of the will and choice, the body and soul are not apt company, and the man is a fool and miserable. (quoted in Osmond 1974, 283)

The relationship of the Macbeths can be interpreted by using this metaphor because allusions to both the body and the soul appear in the text. After reading her letter, Lady Macbeth asks spirits to transform her body, while Duncan's murder makes Macbeth complain, "For *Banquo's* issue, I have stain'd my soul" (3.1.60). These ideas are taken over from Shakespeare's original play, but their meaning alters when Lady Macbeth accuses her husband of not governing her. Her accusations intensify the soul-body distinction and highlight the marriage analogy.

Her wish to be controlled and dominated is, however, not so much an expression of desired submission, as of a desire to be held in check by reason. Because Davenant omits the lines in which Lady Macbeth abuses love as an argument for murder, leaving out her exertion, "From this time / such I account thy love" (Shakespeare 1.7.39–40), the appetite for power which Lady Macbeth stands for does not become tainted by emotion. It remains solely within the physical sphere. As assertiveness and ambition are generally understood as masculine traits, Lady Macbeth is also a subject to the process by which these masculine traits begin to define her female body.

While it could at first glance seem that ambition would deprive Lady Macbeth of her femininity, the opposite is true. As the conversations and disputes with her husband reveal, she remains feminine throughout the play. Just like the biblical Eve, she poses as a seductress and represents the body – the weak flesh endangering and seducing the soul, her husband, to an unreasonable act of murder. She remains feminine even when she proves ambitious and assertive because the act of murder turns these masculine traits into weakness associated with the feminine body.

The surreptitious killing of Duncan and an open fight in a war are the complete opposite. When Lady Macbeth argues, "Can you fear / To be the same in your own act and valour, / As in desire you are?" (1.1.510–12), she abuses the concept of valour turning assertiveness into cowardice, a positive trait into a negative one. Even though she denounces her femininity (1.1.396–412) and considers herself more masculine than her husband whom she perceives as "too effeminate" (1.1.384), it is her who stands for the body and weakness associated with it because the act of murder she proposes transforms assertiveness and courage into cowardice.

When the soul-body philosophy is taken into consideration, the dialogues in Davenant's *Macbeth* tend to question, if not even subvert, the strict division between the feminine and the masculine. While Lady Macduff could seem very feminine because of her submissiveness, innocence and virtue, she is, in fact, rather masculine because she stands for the guiding soul/reason/masculinity. Similarly, Lady Macbeth is very feminine although her ambitious, even ruthless, behaviour could suggest otherwise.

The choice of the actresses and the fashioning of the characters support this interpretation. Jane Long as Lady Macduff most likely enhanced the suggested masculinity while Mary Saunderson Betterton probably imbued her Lady Macbeth with the similar intensity and ambition that she may have shown when teaching acting or working as a voice coach for Royalty. Therefore, even though the leading female characters also function as their husbands' conscience (Lady Macbeth) and moral support (Lady Macduff), the Restoration fashioning turned them into much more complex characters that the audience could have enjoyed interpreting. Particularly as Davenant's production employed the spectacle to demonstrate the difference between the powers of reason and unreason.

While it is possible to interpret Lady Macduffs' moral strength as overconfidence in her own virtue leading to her politically imprudent behaviour and eventually also her death (Miller 2008, 872–73), her boldness becomes striking when taken in the context of the spectacle in Act II. Although characterized by music and singing, the scene is more than a spectacle of magic since it follows the rules of the Restoration aesthetics which considered music suitable only for the supernatural scenes (Plank 1990, 395). Perceived as a means by which the irrational and the supernatural could be made comprehensible, music rather suited the scenes with witches and other supernatural creatures whose existence was taken with a pinch of salt (Plank 1990, 395).

Given the status of music that appears in this scene, the encounter between the Macduffs' and the witches can be interpreted as the meeting between the rational and the irrational (with the magic and supernatural representing irrationality). Performed by male actors (Plank 1990, 398–99), the witches highlight an unusual division of male-female characteristics. Contrary to the period expectations, irrationality and unreason are in this scene represented by male figures: the witches and, to a certain extent, also by Macduff who can overcome his irrational fears only with the help of his wife.

This scene does not contain the traditional male superiority, as championed by George Savile in his *The Lady's New-Year Gift, or, Advice to a Daughter* (1688):

> We are made of differing *Tempers*, that our *Defects* might be mutually supplied: Your *Sex* wanteth our *Reason* for your *Conduct*, and our *Strength* for your *Protection*: *Ours* wanteth your *Gentleness* to soften, and to entertain us. (Savile 1688, 27)

On the contrary, the Macduffs co-operate and rely on each other, but both reason and strength are expressions of innocence and virtue – attributes of Lady Macduff, not of her husband. Despite appealing to her femininity when her husband is to depart for England (3.1.440–441), her courage on the heath and in her imperatives, such as "May you be never by Ambition led: / Forbid it Heav'n, that in revenge you shou'd / Follow a Copy that is writ in bloud" (3.1.138–40), tend to confirm her masculinity.

Davenant himself, as the author of this Restoration version, goes against the notion of gentleness and subordination as solely feminine qualities. Not only because he gave Lady Macduff to actress Jane Long, whose acting career rested on strong, active female roles, and polarized her against irrational male witches that serve as a foil for her strong femininity, but because he supported this notion of strong femininity by the underlying soul-body philosophy. Lady Macduff is, contrary to general expectations, the embodiment of the rational soul which protects her husband from doing wrong. Lady Macbeth, on the other hand, although also guiding her husband, proves to be a bad influence because ambition, which seem to be of masculine quality, is, in the context of the soul-body philosophy, a sign of weakness when promoted by a wife. Lady Macbeth thus symbolizes the body that needs to be guided by the soul, but her femininity can also be understood as an expression of anxieties surrounding the social position of women in Restoration England. As diaries and advice books testify, women were expected to remain subordinate since they were perceived as wanting reason and guidance. Lady Macbeth, unlike Lady Macduff, can be seen as an example confirming these general expectations. The audience could therefore enjoy a special dramatic tension that was born from the cult of celebrity as the reputation of Mary Saunderson Betterton as that of a capable businesswoman coincided with the business-like character of the infamous Lady Macbeth, whose venture confirmed the anxieties held about incapable women that Betterton as an actress proved false. Davenant's *Macbeth* thus reveals ambiguous concepts of femininity all of which were extant in Restoration England but could be presented only on the stage.

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"THE NATION'S WEATHER-GLASS A PLAY-HOUSE IS": THEATRE IN THE PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES OF THE EXCLUSION CRISIS

Kristýna Janská

Abstract

Based on a corpus of prologues and epilogues staged between 1678 and 1683, the study offers an overview of major tropes reflecting the troublesome situation of theatres due to the political turmoil of the Exclusion Crisis. Based on Habermas's theory of the rise of the public sphere, supplemented by the theory of the cultural public sphere from contemporary media studies, it explores the relationship between Restoration theatre, political engagement of the public, political print and popular culture. All of these are represented by the prologues and epilogues as a threat to the "elite" conception of Restoration drama and they constitute serious competition to the stage. The harsh, satirical tone of the framing texts, which escalated in the years of the crisis, betrays a fundamental anxiety of the authors and speakers caused by their economic dependence on the emerging cultural marketplace and the changing dynamics between "elite" art, popular culture and entertainment.

Keywords

Prologues, epilogues, Restoration drama, Exclusion Crisis, public sphere, popular culture

* * *

> *Though* Plays *and* Prologues *ne'er did more abound,*
> *Ne'er were good Prologues harder to be found.*

ATTESTING to the profusion and popularity of prologues and epilogues in the later Restoration period, these are the opening lines to the poignant prologue to Thomas Otway's *The Atheist*, which in itself is a masterpiece of the genre. It should suffice to justify its longer citation at the very beginning of this article, but apart from the pleasure when read, it also illustrates most of the topics discussed here – the gradual shift towards the harsh, "scolding" tone of prologues and epilogues by the end of the 1670s, the difficult situation of theatres in competition with various strains of "popular" culture and the arising public sphere in the sense of wide-spread engagement with politics and popular print:[1]

> To me the Cause seems eas'ly understood:
> For there are *Poets* prove not *very good*,
> Who, like base Sign-Post Dawbers, wanting Skill,
> Steal from Great Masters Hands, and Copy ill.
> Thus, if by chance, before a Noble Feast
> Of Gen'rous Wit, to whet and fit your Taste,
> Some poignant *Satyr* in a *Prologue* rise,
> And growing *Vices* handsomly chastise;
> Each *Poetaster* thence presumes on *Rules*,
> And ever after calls ye downright Fools.
> . . . .
> He always in One Line upbraids the *Age*;
> And a good Reason why; it Rymes to *Stage*.
> With *Wit* and *Pit* he keeps a hideous pother;
> Sure to be damn'd by One, for want of T'other:
> But if, by chance, he get the *French* Word *Raillery*,
> Lord, how he fegues the Vizor-Masques with Gallery!
> . . . .
> From our *Two Houses* joyning, most will hold,
> Vast Deluges of *Dulness* were foretold.
> Poor *Holborn Ballads* now being born away
> By Tides of *duller Madrigals* than they;
> Jockeys *and* Jennyes *set* to Northern Airs,
> While Lowsie *Thespis* chaunts at Country Fairs
> *Politick Ditties*, full of Sage Debate,
> And Merry Catches, how to *Rule the State*.
> . . . .
> No: Let th' angry 'Squire give his *Iambicks* o're,
> Twirl Crevat-strings, but write *Lampoons* no more[.] (Otway 1684, "Prologue")

Among others, this poem reflects the popularity of scathing, satirical prologues and epilogues in the late Restoration period, while simultaneously revealing the inherent liminality of the genre. The sharp satirical tone illustrates the prevalent attacking mode of prologues, though this time the primary victim is not the critical audience in the pit, as would be typical for the genre, but rather rival authors.

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[1] For further discussion of the relationship between popular print and the rise of the public sphere, see for example McDowell 1998.

Although it has been identified as a direct attack at Thomas Shadwell by J. C. Ross (1973, 753–60), it does, at the same time, satirize the vogue for chastising prologues that were predominant since the onset of the Popish Plot. Indeed, the rhymed couples disclosed by Otway (age–stage, gallery–raillery, etc.) appear frequently and had become a stock tool in the genre by the year 1683, when *The Atheist* was staged.[2] What Otway achieves in his text is to satirically subvert the common pretension of prologue speakers to the right to moralize by shattering their aesthetic authority, while implicitly asserting his own authority as a superior poet through the very tool of satire.

As we will see, (re)assertion of aesthetic authority is one of the key features of the prologues and epilogues of the Exclusion Crisis years 1678–1683, so much so that its constant reiteration bespeaks certain anxiety. Considering the wealth of material, the critical attention paid to the genre of prologues and epilogues in the period still seems to be surprisingly scarce. Apart from the critical edition by Pierre Danchin (1984), which only offers a modest, summarizing introduction, and the gender- and actor-focused monograph by Diana Solomon (2013), there are only a few studies available. Following the suggestions of Danchin and Solomon that the fundamental characteristic of the genre is its specific positioning on the triangle of author – actor – audience, Paul McCallum analysed the formation of a common identity of the Pit through the discourse of prologues and epilogues. He focused on the strategy of "cozening" as a scheme in which the flattering image of a Pit-member had been built and indulged for a decade in order to be undermined and ridiculed afterwards, in the turbulent years of Exclusion Crisis. Though McCallum is careful to mention that the cozening scheme was not premeditated (2007, 35), the narrative he creates is in its essence teleological and aims towards "poets' assertion of and exercise of expanded cultural authority" (2007, 57).

Nevertheless, returning to Otway's prologue to *The Atheist* cited above, we need to realize that after the previous success of *Venice Preserv'd*, Thomas Otway gained the seemingly safe position of established playwright, and yet his preoccupation with rival writers of supposedly lower aesthetic capabilities betrays deep insecurity inherent in the very matrix of the theatre of the Restoration period, and perhaps of theatre as such. This article proposes a different reading of the escalated, harsh tone of Exclusion Crisis prologues and epilogues.[3] Using these framing texts as specific kinds of meta-theatrical commentaries, unlike most aesthetic debates presented in the immediate interaction with the audience, shows how the aesthetic authority of theatre as a place for poetry and art (in their idealized understanding as devoid of economic motives presented in many of the framing texts) stands in an ever-lasting clash with the rules of cultural marketplace, demand for entertainment and popular culture. The reading of prologues and epilogues presented in this article focuses on the reflection of the situation of the licensed theatres during the political crisis and their relation, or rather opposition, to what could be vaguely termed "popular entertainment." Deriving from the fluid conception of popular culture presented in Barry Reay's *Popular Cultures in England 1550–1750* and bearing in mind the variety of overlapping publics and their "cultures" during the whole Early Modern period, the article sets out to explore the concept from a different perspective. Rather than applying a pre-defined conception of the "popular" and the "elite" on the theatrical texts, this paper explores what the theatrical commentaries present as "popular" in the Restoration drama itself and what they see as their genuine competition. It transpires that though Restoration theatres remained elite in their nature (considering the high admission price and close relations to the Court), there is inherent anxiety hidden in the prologues and epilogues, which emerges in times of (political as well as economic) crisis, especially after the Popish Plot allegations of 1678. The harsh tone of prologues and epilogues in the plays staged during the turbulent years of the Exclusion Crisis bespeaks fundamental insecurity, instability and confusion about the changing cultural function of the theatre.

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[2] Dating of all plays mentioned here is based on Susan J. Owen's *Restoration Theatre and Crisis* (2003, 311). If not stated in the print, it is assumed that the author of prologues and epilogues is the same as the author of the play.

[3] Based on McCallum's argument, the corpus of prologues and epilogues chosen for this study was limited by the years of greatest political turmoil following the Popish Plot allegations, 1678–1683,

1. Popular Features of Restoration drama

In his complete edition of Restoration prologues and epilogues, Pierre Danchin pointed out several distinctive features of these framing texts after 1677. Among others, he mentions the prominence of speakers while "the author seems to disappear," omnipresent reflections of the political crisis, frequent separate broadside publications and numerous complaints about the "sad situation of the stage" (1984, xiii–xxiv). Even this brief list points to the specific status of prologues and epilogues in terms of their interpretation and inherent liminality of the genre which playfully explores the margin between the fictional world of the stage

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and only included prologues and epilogues attached to plays staged or published in this period (based on the bibliography compiled by Susan J. Owen 2003, 300–11), thus omitting a number of manuscript texts.

and the real world of the audience and responds to both (often in almost Brechtian terms). Prologues and epilogues form bridges between the stage and the audience and to a high degree reflect upon the relation of the theatre to the cultural and social context. As stated in the introduction to a study in "minor" genres of eighteenth-century drama,

> one can hardly analyze prologues and epilogues without bearing in mind the historical and cultural contexts of their composition. In these works, the actual texts and their social contexts are inseparable, and the fluid nature of prologues, epilogues, and dedications as they were performed on the stage often mirror the mutable historical context. . . . [P]rologues and epilogues represent a kind of conversation, a dialogue between playwrights and between playwright and audience. (Ennis and Slagle 2007, 20)

The matrix is more complex though. Restoration prologues and epilogues profoundly explore the liminal space *in-between* – the interplay between the author and his play, the audience, the actor in his role in the play, the actor as a speaker of the prologue, the actor as a "public persona" (already a kind of performed identity). Moreover, with the emergence of politically engaged prologues and epilogues of the Exclusion Crisis, they entered another liminal space – suddenly they were frequently published separately as broadside prints, thus invading a newly formed space of popular political print and accentuating the potential of theatre to facilitate public debate.

We have seen in Thomas Otway's prologue to *The Atheist* that even the vogue for poignant, "scathing" prologues and epilogues was commented upon in the genre itself (similarly in Charles Saunders's *Tamerlane*: "How modern Prologues differ from the Old! / Those su'd and pray'd, but these huff, rail, and scold"; 1681, "Prologue"). As mentioned above, Paul McCallum has interpreted this discursive strategy as a means of establishing aesthetic authority of the playwrights, especially in the most prominent prologues and epilogues by the most prolific author of the framing texts in these years, John Dryden. Dryden's texts typically sneer at the audience's poor taste and often reiterate popular features of Restoration plays as opposed to what would be considered art and poetry:

> Their Treat is what your Pallats rellish most,
> Charm! Song! and Show! a Murder and a Ghost!
> We know not what you can desire or hope,
> To please you more, but burning of a *Pope*. (Dryden and Lee 1679, "Epilogue")

Dryden and Lee's epilogue to *Oedipus* employs a food–drama metaphor, recurrent in a majority of the texts, and is mocking the audience for their lack of appreciation/taste for true poetry. As has been studied extensively, Restoration theatre was highly dependent on the visual spectacle and sophisticated stage effects, i.e., the "show," and this epilogue draws attention to several other features of successful plays: the importance of music and rhymed songs, visual spectacle, great effects like the appearance of a ghost and violence.[4] The last line of the epilogue then bears first mention of the Popish Plot and subsequent events and is the first to present the political turmoil and political engagement of the public as new competition to the stage, factually luring its audience away, among other things by merging of political news and movements with popular culture, as in the Pope-burning processions.

The suggested discussion of the dominance of visual over aural/textual aspects of theatre has common predecessors in Early Modern prologues in what Brian Schneider has called the "war of senses" (2016, 71–91) and is still dominant in the Restoration texts. Frequently seen in Dryden, we can also find the motif of visual aesthetic pleasure presented as less sophisticated in the prologue to John Banks's *The Destruction of Troy*:

> Wev'e nothing more to welcome you to Night,
> Than a plain, undrest Play, a homely Sight,
> No Shew to take your Eyes, that are more kind,
> And easier pleas'd than is the dainty mind.
> Language with you's esteem'd upon the Stage,
> Like some affected Gallants of this Age;
> Not for their Sence, but for their Equipage. (Banks 1679, "Prologue")

It is this kind of text that leads McCallum to his assertion of authority gained by the authors of late Restoration prologues in which he finds "identification of the poet with Providential power, justice, and order" (2007, 60). Dryden in the prime of his career truly does not restrain his scathing tone towards the audience when he describes the Pit as deserving rat poison in the epilogue to *Troilus and Cressida*:

> Poets have cause to dread a keeping Pit,
> When Womens Cullyes come to judge of Wit.

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[4] On the importance of violence and murder on Restoration stage, see Jean I. Marsden's chapter "Spectacle, Horror, and Violence" in *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre* (2000, 174–90). The thrill of a murder on the stage is also reflected in Dryden's prologue to Lee's *Caesar Borgia*.

As we strow Rats-bane when we vermine fear,
’Twere worth our cost to scatter fool-bane here.
. . . .
Next, those, to whom the Stage does not belong
Such whose Vocation onely is to Song;
At most to Prologue, when for want of time
Poets take in for Iournywork in Rhime. (Dryden 1679, “Epilogue”)

The epilogue illustrates the typical sneering attitude towards an “undeserving” audience, but also draws our attention to what seems to be a permanent worry among prologue and epilogue writers: the popularity of rhyme, jigs and songs in popular culture as well as on the stage. With the disappearance of rhymed couplets from heroic drama, rhyme regains its usual opposition to blank verse and playwrights utilize it as a means of luring the audience (through its customary use in prologues, epilogues and songs), but also dissociating the texts from “elite” drama. The liminality of prologues and epilogues as a genre emerges here in the inherent conflict in which they systematically satirize the less elite genres of songs and rhymed poems despite being of the same kind in form and often in content as well. The same phenomenon is reflected in the frequent satire of the popularity of prologues and epilogues (already seen in Otway’s *Atheist*, but also in the epilogue of Thomas D’Urfey’s *The Injured Princess*):

Our next new Play, if this Mode hold in vogue,
Shall be half Prologue, and half Epilogue.
The way to please you is easie if we knew’t,
A Iigg, a Song, a Rhyme or two will do’t[.] (D’Urfey 1682, “Epilogue”)

Another frequent feature of drama, scorned by the dramatist but mentioned in many framing texts, is the popularity of “noise.” In terms of a show, we could interpret noise as the aural counterpart of spectacle: this can comprise a lot of theatrical tools, including scenes of strong emotions, fights, violence and rabbles. Noise is certainly considered as unartistic, simplistic feature of a play opposed to sophisticated wit, as in Thomas Shadwell’s *The Woman-Captain*:

Good sence, like solid Meat to sickly Men,
As soon as swallowed, is thrown up agen;
And for strong Meats, but few of ye are fit
. . . .
Remembring how you used that last he writ,

> He made this Low, so to your Level sit;
> Plenty of Noise, and scarcity of Wit[.] (Shadwell 1680b, "Epilogue")

We see Thomas Shadwell, whose drama supported the Whig partisan aims, using the very same tools as the stark Royalist Dryden: sneering at the audience's poor taste and employing the food–poetry metaphor. This stock metaphor is mostly used to differentiate between the popular "easily palatable" features of drama, such as farce, noise, rhyme etc., and the more "elite" types of drama, such as sophisticated satire or tragedy, as in Dryden's prologue to *The Loyal General*:

> Weak Stomacks with a long Disease opprest,
> Cannot the Cordials of strong Wit digest:
> Therfore thin Nourishment of Farce ye choose,
> Decoctions of a Barly-water Muse:
> A Meal of Tragedy wou'd make ye Sick,
> Unless it were a very tender Chick. (Dryden 1680b, "Prologue")[5]

Similarly to the first prologue by Thomas Otway, all the quoted texts share satire that is inherently double-edged. Despite their sneering tone and complaints of the audience's poor taste, they also reinstate the audience in the position of power, as the plays framed by these texts and the prologues and epilogues themselves comply with public demand.

2. Political Engagement as a Rival to the Stage

Almost all drama of the Exclusion Crisis years was, more or less, politically engaged. That accounts even more for the prologues and epilogues, which never before or after took such open political stance as in these years. However, apart from actively supporting one of the sides in the conflict, there is a strong sense of jeopardy in the texts – political turmoil is represented as a direct threat to the stage (and age). In the reign of Charles II, most of the dramatists and actors were highly dependent on the favour of the Court – but the theatre does not enter politics merely to support the Court (or the Whigs in a few rare cases), it is the political engagement of the audience that deeply affects the stage. Throughout the years 1678–1683, we repeatedly read of the dilapidated state of theatres, low attendance and economic troubles, as in the prologue Aphra Behn's *The Feign'd Curtizans*:

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[5] Similar use of the food–poetry metaphor is found in the prologue to *Mr. Turbulent*, in which the author compares the audience to a guest who had eaten before coming and then complains about the feast.

> The devil take this cursed plotting Age,
> ’T has ruin’d all our Plots upon the Stage;
> Suspicions, New Elections, Jealousies,
> Fresh Informations, New discoveries,
> Do so employ the busie fearful Town,
> Our honest calling here is useless grown[.] (Behn 1679, “Prologue”)

The Popish Plot allegations and subsequent political turmoil are presented in the prologue as a direct threat to the theatres. Not because they would endanger the stage directly, but rather as competition and rival entertainment for the London public. The concept of political interest and engagement as a kind of entertainment will play a crucial role in our further reading. This complaint is followed by a simile between the alleged frivolity of the stage and keeping a mistress, when the citizens “piously pretend, these are not days, / For keeping Mistresses and seeing Plays.” Dryden, in the prologue to Nathaniel Lee’s *Caesar Borgia,* similarly refers to the hunger for what Behn termed “fresh informations”:

> You love to hear of some prodigious Tale,
> The Bell that toll’d alone, or *Irish* Whale.
> News is your Food, and you enough provide,
> Both for your selves and all the World beside.
> One Theatre there is of vast resort,
> Which whilome of Requests was call’d the Court.
> But now the great *Exchange* of News ’tis hight,
> And full of hum and buzz from Noon till Night[.] (Dryden 1680a, “Prologue”)

The court of Charles II (and monarchy in the Early Modern period and Restoration in general) was often analysed by scholars for its highly performative character.[6] However, in these turbulent years, the performative aspect is not limited to the functional use of strengthening the monarchy explored by Reay and others, but unintentionally becomes a full-fledged drama with a newly arising audience among the citizens, to whom cheap print offers unprecedented access to the Parliament and Court proceedings and events. This drama is mediated by newspapers and pamphlets much like traditional drama is mediated by the theatre and actors. Playwrights are acutely aware of this new development, as is visible in Dryden’s prologue to Nathaniel Lee’s *The Loyal General*, in which the newspapers and political print are paralleled with the popular entertainment of the fairs:

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[6] For the analysis specific to the court of Charles II, see for example Jeremy W. Webster’s *Performing Libertinism in Charles II’s Court: Politics, Drama, Sexuality* (2005). For the performance of royalty as a kind of popular entertainment and culture, see Reay 2014, 143–51.

> The Rest may satisfie their curious Itch
> With City Gazets or some Factious Speech,
> Or what-ere Libel for the Publick Good,
> Stirs up the Shrove-tide Crew to Fire and Blood!
> Remove your Benches you apostate Pit,
> And take Above, twelve penny-worth of Wit;
> Go back to your dear Dancing on the Rope,
> Or see what's worse the Devil and the Pope! (Dryden 1680b, "Prologue")

Comparing political print and engagement together with religious debates (or rather anti-Catholic events and gatherings) to the popular performances of acrobats in fairs draws our attention to the crucial transformative process of the Restoration, i.e., the rise of the public sphere. Although Jürgen Habermas identified the Glorious Revolution as the turning point in the rise of the public sphere, as Paula McDowell stressed in her revision of Habermas's theory, it was already the explosion of the press in 1640s and outstanding growth in literacy during the century that enhanced the emergence of the public sphere in print (1998, 4). The prologues and epilogues under our scrutiny certainly attest to the popularity of the political press and debates in the years of the Exclusion Crisis: "Those who once lov'd the Stage, are now in years, / And leave good *Poets* for dull *Pamphleteers*; / Nay, for the worst of Rascals, *Libellers*" (Shadwell 1680a, "Epilogue"). Another epilogue by John Dryden not only refers to the print as competition to theatres, but shows that it is more successful in engaging their audience:

> 'Tis not our want of Wit that keeps us Poor,
> For then the Printers Press would suffer more:
> Their Pamphleteers their Venom dayly spit,
> They thrive by Treason and we starve by Wit. (Dryden 1682, "Epilogue")

However, the satirical commentaries of these poems concerning political print obviously do not present the serious political debates and engagement somewhat idealized in the original Habermas's theory of the rise of the public sphere. Their sneering tone and drawing a constant parallel between the print and popular entertainment rather invites the reader to employ the modern television term of "infotainment," including its derisive connotations.[7] The association of politics, media and entertainment, so common in modern social criticism and media studies, is far from automatic in the studies of the Early Modern period, though even Habermas acknowledges the revolting power of popular culture in Bakhtin's understanding presented in *Rabelais and His World* in the prologue to a second edition of his *Structural Transformation*.

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[7] Though infotainment is a term coined in the twentieth century in relation to television, it is very useful to apply to the culture of news from the very beginnings of journalism. It constantly reminds the media scholar of the utmost importance of public demand and audience when considering even the beginnings of print and publishing culture. For more details, see Thussu 2015.

The understanding of popular politics of the period as a kind of specific "infotainment" seems surprisingly viable in view of the prologues and epilogues and their presentation of political print and debates, and opens space for further research. It might prove useful to also employ the concept of "cultural public sphere," as suggested by contemporary media studies, to the popular politics of the Restoration period. According to Jim McGuigan, "Habermas distinguished between the literary public sphere and the political public sphere. Although not separate from one another, their functions diverged in a significant manner." The literary public sphere allowed for a "complex reflection on chronic and persistent problems of life, meaning and representation" (2005, 429). This binary conception, based on the rather idealized, elite function of journalism in democracy and on elite art, does not offer space for various layers of cultural response to the political life and for entertainment. Therefore, adding the "cultural public sphere" to make a triad allows for a wider consideration of various kinds of media, entertainment, art and literature including their commercial aspects. McGuigan maintains that

> the concept of a cultural public sphere refers to the articulation of politics, public and personal, as a contested terrain through affective – aesthetic and emotional – modes of communication. The cultural public sphere trades in pleasures and pains that are experienced vicariously through willing suspensions of disbelief; for instance, by watching soap operas, identifying with the characters and their problems, talking and arguing with friends and relatives about what they should and shouldn't do. (McGuigan 2005, 430)

Turning further to history, McGuigan also shows how the concept can be applied to the nineteenth-century melodrama, in which the sentimental, rather than the cognitive, is a means of education through its affective power. "The cultural public sphere provides vehicles for thought and feeling, for imagination and disputatious argument, that are not necessarily of inherent merit but may be of some consequence" (2005, 435).

Similarly to Victorian melodrama thus conceived, Susan J. Owen has shown how pathos, horror and violence were commonly employed by Restoration playwrights to convey serious political arguments through their affective power and also how the Pope-burning processions and pamphlets, which prologue and epilogue authors label as lampoon and libel, were highly effective in stirring the public debate. It follows naturally that Odai Johnson describes the Pope-burning pageants as “Whig theatre . . . that sought by performative strategies to politicize the crowd as a stable subject of the Whig Party” (2000, 14). All these events and prints, as well as drama, employ the affective power, which McGuigan explored, to stir the political public debate. We have made an association between the court of Charles II and drama earlier, but applying the concepts of cultural public sphere and infotainment to political engagement represented by our prologues and epilogues makes it possible even to draw a link between the hunger for political news of the Exclusion Crisis and modern-day soap operas as analysed by McGuigan.

The association of culture and political debate in the framing texts is enhanced by further parallels between the theatres and the print. Aphra Behn’s epilogue to *The Feign’d Curtizans* warns the audience of dangerous consequences, if the theatre (written after the two theatres merged) needs to close:

> So hard the Times are, and so thin the Town,
> Though but one Playhouse, that must too lie down;
> And when we fail what will Poets do?
> They live by us as we are kept by you:
> When we disband, they no more Plays will write,
> But make Lampoons, and Libell ye in spight[.] (Behn 1679, “Epilogue”)

Followed by a list of common vices that would thus become public, the association of poets with lampoons rather denigrates the playwrights (thus playfully exploring the gap between the authors and the speakers of prologues and epilogues),[8] but also achieves to associate print with the fictionality of drama, denying its authority as an agent of real political debate. Nevertheless, satire is always a double-edged weapon. Despite the number of satirical attacks on the political pamphlets, libels and lampoons, prologues and epilogues themselves enter the same “industry” when they make profit by being increasingly often sold separately as broadside publications (Danchin 1984, xviii–xx).

By drawing attention to the economic suffering of theatres and playwrights, Aphra Behn’s epilogue also contextualizes both the theatre and the profitable print as an essentially economic, commercialized activity, in which the market and popular demand play a vital role. The painful economic dependence of theatres and playwrights on their audience is one of the stock themes in the prologues and epilogues of the period, as in Nathaniel Lee's epilogue to *Theodosius*: "The Pit and Boxes make the Poet dine, / And he scarce drinks but of the Criticks Wine" (Lee 1680, "Epilogue").

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[8] John Crowne went a step further in this dichotomy, when associating poets with priests and libel and asking for support of theatres as a space for gathering and social events: “Well, Sirs, damn Plays and Poets as you please, / But pray support a Play-house for your ease. / Ladies some Journeys to Hide. Park may spare, / Our empty Play-House ha’s enough fresh Air. / And Gallants pray support us not for Plays, / But to find Ladies here in rainy days” (Crowne 1679, “Epilogue”).

Considering the debates over the rise of the public sphere, it is also worth mentioning that the print and newly arising culture of political debates was primarily associated with the middle class of wealthy Cits, fashionable youth and the popularity of coffee-houses:

> With Politick shrug, and notable wise Look,
> They censure Councels, who ne'r read a Book.
> The Citt, who with his Wife and hopeful Son
> Would come t' a merry Play, now all does shun,
> And on the Guard learns to let off a Gun.
> Others their Shops and precious Wares neglect,
> With their wise Heads the Nation to protect:
> Ev'n Bulks all day of Tenants are bereft;
> For News stitching, and singing Psalms are left.
> Each Coffee-house is fill d with subtle folk,
> Who wisely talk, and politickly smoke. (Shadwell 1680b, "Prologue")

Similarly, by the end of the crisis, in his comedy *City politiques*, John Crowne represented coffee-houses with their political debates as direct competition to the dilapidated theatres: "Then Coffee-Houses Theatres were grown, / Where Zealots acted in a furious tone" (1683, "Prologue").

The representation of coffee houses as a rival space in the theatrical framing texts is thus another common trope asserting the newly arisen political culture as a kind of popular entertainment that needs its audience and shares it with the Restoration theatre.

3. Restoration Theatre and Popular Culture

All the excerpts we have seen so far share a sense of dissatisfaction with the state of things. This can be and has been very easily attributed to the general anxiety of a society in crisis, to the fear of political turmoil, Popish plots, memories of the civil war, etc. However, a striking number of the framing texts comments specifically on the dilapidated state of theatres and on the low attendance caused by rival interests. It seems therefore that although a lot has been written on the appearance of lower classes in the audience of Restoration theatre, there is still space for research in the relation of the official theatres to popular culture and *vice versa*. Considering the prologues and epilogues explored here, there was a clearly conceived, vital competition and the audience overlapped. The development of theatrical evenings in the eighteenth century testifies to the gradual change in the taste of the audience and its formative role for the stage. Though Restoration theatres were elite and directly supported by the Court, their sole association with poetry and "sophisticated" drama (reiterated repeatedly in Dryden's framings texts) gradually changes, possibly enhanced by the market forces. Pierre Danchin has noted how, by the end of the seventeenth century, the changing trends result in the growing importance of the actor and the large number of plays written by actors themselves (attesting to the dominance of practise over education) (Danchin 1984, xxxii–xxxiv).

A brief overview of the Exclusion Crisis prologues and epilogues shows the variety of popular entertainment viewed as rival to the theatres, including the rope-dancing and fairs mentioned above, popular tales and plays about Robin Hood (Tate 1680, "Epilogue"), New Market horse races (Anonymous 1682, "Prologue") and even executions: "Let us be Mute 'till the whole Truth comes out, / Not like the Rabble at Executions, shout" (Ravenscroft 1687, "Epilogue"). All of these do not occupy a separate space in the "popular" and do not attract a completely different audience. The audiences clearly overlap and the distinction between "elite" drama and "popular" entertainment, which the framing texts constantly try to reassert in discussions both of popular features of Restoration drama and in the satire on their competitors, falls apart.

Despite the prolific aesthetic debates over classical drama, French dramatic tradition and other subjects of controversy, authors of prologues and epilogues are apparently fully aware of the growing gap between aesthetic theories of elite, educated artists and poets, and the wide-spread demand for popular entertainment, sustained and enforced by the arising cultural marketplace. Some are ready to embrace these new cultural mechanisms, some, e.g., the Poet Laureate John Dryden, struggle with their acceptance and defiantly fight against them by harsh satire, vainly trying to reassert their aesthetic authority.

One of the typical metaphors reflecting the ambivalent position of playwrights and poets in this situation is the sexual representation of theatres, playwrights and actors as prostitutes. This widespread trope is not so obvious in cases like Aphra Behn's *The Feign'd Curtizans*, where the young actress teases her audience for being "neglected at eighteen" (1679, "Epilogue"). The text does not make an explicit connection between the actress's playful teasing and parading her youth and beauty, and the theatre as such, and yet, bearing in mind the context of other prologues and epilogues concerned with the "abandoned stage," the speaker stands in synecdochical relation to the whole theatrical company she represents. Other texts then make the association of theatres with prostitution more explicit, e.g., Nathaniel Lee in the epilogue to *Theodosius*:

> Old Writers should not for vain glory strive
> But like old Mistresses think how to thrive,
> Be fond of ev'ry thing their Keepers say,
> At least till they can live without a Play.
> Like one that knows the Trade, and has been bit;
> She doats and fawns upon her wealthy Cit;
> . . . .
> So should wise Poets sooth an awkard Age,
> For they are Prostitutes upon the Stage:
> To stand on points were foolish and ill-bred;
> As for a Lady to be nice in Bed:
> Your wills alone must their performance measure,
> And you may turn 'em ev'ry way for pleasure. (Lee 1680, "Epilogue")

This epilogue lays bare the full economic (and aesthetic) dependence of theatres on the audience and though the capacity of the public (represented, tellingly, by a wealthy Cit) for critical, aesthetic judgment might be doubted, the power relations are quite clear, and the argument of authority gained by the actors and playwrights falls apart. Despite the constant scathing tone of the prologues and epilogues and mockery of popular culture and the rising public sphere, the authors are bound to follow the demand for popular entertainment:

> We on the Stage stand still, and are content,
> To see you Act what we should Represent.
> You use us like the Women that you Woe;
> You make us sport, and Pay us for it too.
> Well, w'are resolv'd that in our next Play-Bill,
> To Print at large a Tryal of your skill;
> And that five hundred Monsters are to fight,
> Then more will run to see so strange a sight,
> Than the *Morocco*, or the *Muscovite*. (Banks 1682, "Epilogue")

Crisis of any kind always discloses hidden tensions and suppressed conflicts in a system. In our case, the Exclusion Crisis not only revealed the fragility of the Stuart monarchy based on the divine right theory of kingship, but also triggered a transformative process in all layers and fields of the cultural landscape. A brief overview of the dominant tropes in the prologues and epilogues of the critical years shows how their authors were actively engaged in the political debates, but also the anxiety inherent in the transformative processes and economic pressure of the changing tastes of the public.

Due to their fundamental liminality, prologues and epilogues prove to be a great tool for the exploration of cultural dynamics of the theatre. Of course, the satire and performative character based on a set of conventions disqualifies these framing texts from being taken as evidence of the historical theatre-going experience, but the changes in recurrent motifs do point to the major issues and conflicts of the day.

Despite the assertion of playwrights' aesthetic authority and the harsh satirical mode of approaching the audience in the framing texts, the changing dynamics of the cultural marketplace made the theatres acutely aware of their economic dependence on the audience, and any assertions of moral superiority of art and poetry become dubious, similarly to the fragile distinction between elite art and drama, and popular entertainment. The gradual formation of the (cultural) public sphere is perceived as a threat to the conception of Restoration theatre as an elite place for poetry and traditional Aristotelian drama, and subsequent development shows the real force of the threat. As Mary Knapp shows in her monograph, the complaints about the state of theatre and the invasion of popular entertainment on the stage persist in the prologues and epilogues throughout the eighteenth century, when dance, pantomime, operas and other "minor" genres of the period became an inherent, if not the dominant, part of the theatrical evening (Knapp 1961).[9] Essentially, we might say that the same mechanisms of art competing with entertainment and commercialization are also reflected in much of the theatrical and media debates of the twenty-first century.

Apart from these inherently theatrical concerns, the prologues and epilogues we have read also shed a new light on other relations between modern-day media studies and the studies of Restoration culture. In their playful and comical discourse, they pose questions about the validity of the newly arising journalism, which is in its very essence and since the very beginning connected to economical profit and demand for popular entertainment. They reflect the anxiety related to the growing political engagement of wider masses of citizens, they reflect the confusion about the cultural function of drama and theatre standing in-between "timeless" art or poetry and pressing issues of the day which occupy and entertain the audience, but they also reflect how the political engagement and developing democracy transform popular culture(s) and show how wide and fluid this concept is. Popular culture as represented by the theatrical framing texts is not limited to fairs, races and other kinds of entertainment listed above. It is a fluid concept influencing the official drama itself through the dominance of the visual spectacle over the text, noise over poetry, through the popularity of rhymes, jiggs, songs and farce, through the preoccupation of drama with political news of the day. And last but not least, through the huge popularity of prologues and epilogues, which in their existence between the stage and the audience, as well as between the theatre and the print, belong both to the sphere of drama and theatre and to the world of political news and coffee-house debates.

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[9] On the transformation of the theatrical evening, see also Ennis and Slagle 2007.

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HAUNTED PURGATORY: BOCCACCIO'S *DECAMERON* 3.8 AS AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AFTERPIECE

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Abstract

The present article addresses the issue of intertextuality of the English theatre of the long Restoration period (1660–1737), using Benjamin Griffin's farce *The Humours of Purgatory* (1716) as a case study. Although *The Humours of Purgatory* clearly employs a then popular tale from Boccaccio's *Decameron*, the study argues that, especially during the play's production, a number of other factors (some of which were beyond the realm of the text) entered the referential framework of the piece, making it virtually impossible to talk about a single source and its straightforward adaptation or a clear-cut genealogy of the work. Employing Marvin Carlson's concept of ghosting (or "haunting"), the study shows how elements of various works from both literary and theatre cultures of the time participated in complex and shifting intertextual networks, with multiple links and relations between their individual members. From the analysis it also transpires that the early eighteenth-century farce was an integral and valuable part of English theatre culture of the time, one that – along with other "lesser" or "popular" theatre forms that helped to shape the performance tradition of the period – deserves more systematic academic attention.

Keywords

Boccaccio, *Decameron*, intertextuality, Restoration theatre, English theatre of the eighteenth century, Benjamin Griffin, *The Humours of Purgatory*, farce

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VIEWED frequently as a "quasi-dramatic work" itself, Boccaccio's *Decameron* was a rich treasury of material for both Continental and English early-modern theatre cultures (Smarr 2019, 75). Louise George Clubb maintains that "[h]aving plot features from the Decameron tradition was virtually requisite to the genre *commedia* from its formative time" (Clubb 1998, 180); Melissa Emerson Walter has recently demonstrated how central the Italian novella was for the (chiefly female) characters and situations of Shakespeare's early comedies, additionally providing an appendix with a tentative list of roughly three dozen non-Shakespearian plays of the English Renaissance that clearly employ tales from Boccaccio's collection (Walter 2019).[1] Although less discussed than the Renaissance, the indebtedness of the English theatre of the long Restoration period to Boccaccio has also been acknowledged: his tales and individual episodes are traceable, among others, in Aphra Behn's *The Rover*, in several comedies by Thomas D'Urfey (including *The Injured Princess, or the Fatal Wager*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, which itself is partly based on Boccaccio; D'Urfey's name will be mentioned again later on), in the anonymous *The Lover's Stratagem, or Virtue Rewarded*, in Susanna Centlivre's *The Cruel Gift* and *The Busy Body*, and a number of other dramatic pieces (Wright 1957, 244–60, 318–30). Directly or through an intermediate, Boccaccio's tales provided English playwrights with a wide array of plots, tones and situations that proved to be extremely effective on the stage – some of them to such an extent that, over time, they enjoyed multiple employments, reshapings and revivals.[2]

The present article will address the employment of one tale from Boccaccio in a 1716 afterpiece by Lincoln's Inn Fields actor and minor dramatist Benjamin Griffin (1680?–1740), entitled *The Humours of Purgatory*. Having enjoyed moderate success, several revivals and two benefit nights,[3] *The Humours of Purgatory* is in many respects a prototypical early eighteenth-century English farce: it is based on a simple and well-known story, at the centre of which is a trick played on the aging, extravagant protagonist (originally played by Griffin himself); the piece includes feigned identities, an assemblage of high and low-class characters, who are largely stereotypical, straightforward, often physical humour, a dancing set-piece with music, and a happy resolution, with a moral lesson learned. Rather than focusing on the details of the farce's plot and its similarities to – or diversions from – Boccaccio's model, we might well take *The Humours of Purgatory* as a case study of how the novella, along with its various elements and iterations pre-existing in some form in the audiences' cultural memory, helped to create a complex intertextual network in which Griffin's afterpiece partook and which was created in collaboration between the playwright and the theatregoing audiences who attended the piece's production. Indeed, to use Marvin Carlson's terminology, when *The Humours of Purgatory* premiered at Lincoln's Inn Fields on 3 April 1716, the performance was haunted by a number ghosts: of Boccaccio and his original story; of the story's afterlife in English early-modern literary culture; of its long tradition of more than a hundred years on English stages; of the Lincoln's Inn Fields' repertory at the time; of the conventions of the then rapidly rising genre of farce; of the production's cast and their previous rôles; and of visual aspects of the production, such as props and costumes. Carlson describes the phenomenon of "ghosting" of a new work by its predecessors in the audiences' minds as a "process of using the memory of previous encounters to understand and interpret encounters with new and somewhat different but apparently similar phenomena," arguing that, of all forms of arts, it has always played an especially important rôle in the theatre (Carlson 2001, 6). Although the aforementioned list of "ghosts" haunting Griffin's piece is by no means complete, it is hopefully illustrative enough to allow us to argue that the straightforward relationship between a "source" and an "adaptation," to which literary history in particular still tends to resort, is not sufficient to describe the complex genealogy of a dramatic work and its reception within an existing cultural tradition. At the same time, it demonstrates how deeply embedded the farce – a commercial genre scorned at the end of the seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth centuries by authors such as John Dryden, James Miller and Samuel Derrick (Holland 2000, 107–108; Howe 2011, 25) – came to be in the English theatre culture of the early eighteenth century.

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[1] The most prolific author in this respect seems to have been John Fletcher, with at least seven Boccaccian inspirations (Walter 2019, 153–58). Smarr notes that, when writing alone, Fletcher tended to turn to Boccaccio for plot elements more often than when working collaboratively (Smarr 2019, 87).

[2] For a dated and incomplete, yet useful catalogue of the influence of the *Decameron* on European literary and theatre cultures, see Jones 1910.

[3] The afterpiece was staged at Lincoln's Inn Field on 3, 4 and 6 April 1716 (*The London Stage*, 2:395, 396); then on 28 April 1718, which was Griffin's shared benefit night (2:492), 28 April 1719, also Griffin's shared benefit night (2:537), 9 and 21 January, and 8 and 19 February 1720 (2:562, 565, 567, 569) as *The Hypochondriac*; then revived under its original title at Goodman's Fields for 18, 19, 20 and 25 November 1745 (3:1194, 1195, 1196); and, finally, at Haymarket Theatre for 25 April 1748, announced as "written by the late celebrated Mr Griffin" (4:49).

As mentioned above, the plot of *The Humours of Purgatory* is simple and easy to follow, perfectly satisfying the needs of the genre of the short afterpiece: Don Lopez, a notorious hypochondriac, is certain about his imminent death and writes his last will, disinheriting his only daughter, Constantia, if she marries, and bequeathing all his estate to the church. Dressed as a friar, Don Silvio, Constantia's lover, gives Don Lopez the last confession, during which the latter admits to a number of sins, including fornication and defalcation. Neither Don Silvio nor an also summoned physician, however, are able to talk Don Lopez out of his delusion. In order to cure him of "that Sort of Folly we call Hypocondriack, or Melancholy" (Griffin 1716, B5^{v}), Don Silvio suggests indulging Don Lopez's fantasy, performing a mock funeral (during which Don Lopez comically argues from the coffin with the onlookers who talk ill of him) with an aim to "perswade him that he's in Purgatory, and that he must eat and drink there" (Griffin 1716, C3^{r}). In a dark room in Don Lopez's house, Don Silvio and a couple of servants, dressed as ghosts, subsequently explain to Don Lopez that he has indeed died, offer him food and wine from "*Acheron*'s fertile Banks" (Griffin 1716, D5^{v}) and give him a comical account of the inhabitants of Purgatory – in a vein not dissimilar from the anonymous Renaissance anti-Catholic jestbook *Tarltons Newes out of Purgatorie* (1590), whose title and association with the early English comedian celebrity Richard Tarlton (d. 1588) might have provided a source of inspiration for Griffin.[4] Finally, Don Lopez falls asleep and, upon his awakening, is made to believe by his family and servants that everything was just a preposterous dream. He ultimately admits to his folly, agrees to Constantia's marriage with Don Silvio and promises his wife, Julia, "to be a more reasonable Husband for the future" (Griffin 1716, E4^{r}).

The basic trajectory of Griffin's plot is lifted from two popular Renaissance stories: (1) the hypochondriac element, along with the mock funeral and the argument during the procession, were inspired by tale no. 58 from the early sixteenth-century jestbook *Tales, and Quicke Answers*, entitled "Of the foole that thought him selfe deed, whan he was a lyve" (F2^{v}– F3^{v}, contraction expanded);[5] (2) the ultimate source of the purgatorial portion is the eighth novella of the third day of the *Decameron*, whose rubric, according to the then most recent 1702 translation (attributed to John Savage),[6] runs,

> Ferondo takes a Powder, which made him sleep so long, that they thought he was dead, and so buried him. An Abbot, who was his Wifes Gallant, takes him out of the Grave, and puts him in Prison, making him believe that he was in Purgatory. Afterwards he pretends to raise him from the Dead, and makes him own a Bastard, that he had by his Wife during the time. (Boccaccio 1702, 1: 151)

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[4] Interestingly enough, the background stories of those in purgatory in *Tarltons Newes* are mostly also drawn from the *Decameron* (*The Cobler*, 10). For more on the English collection in the context of late sixteenth-century English religious controversies, see Stelling 2018.

[5] This Italianate tale is a translation of the anecdote "Mortuus loquens" from Poggio Bracciolini's fifteenth-century Latin collection *Facetiae*; a derivation of the same story later appeared as the *novella seconda* of the *seconda cena* of Antonio Francesco Grazzini's *Le Cene* (after 1549). Roger Clegg and Lucie Skeaping point out that no. 51 of *Tales, and Quicke Answers*, "Of the inholders wyfe and her ii louers" (E3^{v}– E4^{r}), might have been the direct basis for the popular Renaissance jig *Singing Simpkin*, suggesting a deeper affiliation of this jestbook with the early-modern English theatre culture (Clegg and Skeaping 2014, 100–101).

[6] Although a number of Boccaccio's tales had been known to English readers through collections such as William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure* (1566), the first complete translation of the *Decameron* in English (attributed to John Florio) appeared as late as 1620 (printed by Isaac Jaggard, the printer of Shakespeare's First Folio three years later), enjoying its fifth edition by 1684 (see Armstrong 2007).

While the first of the novellas was associated with literary rather than performance culture in England,[7] Boccaccio's tale would have been employed in at least four or five English dramatic pieces by the time that *The Humours of Purgatory* was first staged, essentially constituting Louise George Clubb's "theatergram," or a stock situation that migrated among plays, regardless of the immediate dramatic context in which its individual iterations appeared.[8] The most immediate of the previous employments of the tale, Thomas Southerne's tragicomedy *The Fatal Marriage* (1694), would be an obvious candidate for direct inspiration.[9] The play's subplot[10] revolves around the family of Fernando, "a Coxcombly old Fellow" (1.1.38), who is jealous of his beautiful wife, Julia, has disinherited his son, Fabian, and opposes the marriage of his daughter, Victoria, to her lover, Frederick. To get his revenge, Fabian (who pretends to have turned religious, wearing a friar's habit) drugs his father at a wedding feast and has him buried in a monastery, where the latter is "beaten . . . like a Dog" (4.1.3). When supposedly raised from the dead again, Frederick believes that he "was alive in Purgatory; and stood in't a good while" while facing the Devil himself (4.1.56–57). Ultimately, he renounces his former suspicions, settles half of his estate upon Fabian and bequeaths the other half to him when he dies, and gives blessing to Victoria and Frederick. A playful moment of subversion of the Italian novella is Fabian's companion Carlos's failure to seduce Julia while her husband was presumably dead: in accordance with late seventeenth-century comedic decorum, Julia proclaims that "there are Women, who won't be provoked to injure their Husbands" (4.1.23–24).[11]

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[7] Tanya Howe has also linked the funeral scene in Griffin's farce with the growing availability of funeral practices to the English middle class at the end of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, mentioning several other plays of the period containing funeral humour, including Edward Ravenscroft's *The Anatomist; or, The Sham Doctor* (1696), Richard Steele's *The Funeral; or, Grief a la Mode* (1701) and Susanna Centlivre's *A Bickerstaff's Burying; or, Work for the Upholders* (1710) (Howe 2013). It is very possible that *The Humours of Purgatory* was in early eighteenth-century audiences' minds ghosted by both the then current socio-economic context and the aforementioned plays.

[8] In print, a version of the Boccaccio story first appeared in English as "The Somners [Summoner's] Tale" in the 1590 Chauceresque anthology *The Cobler of Caunterburie* (K2^r–K4^v). Though otherwise following the plot of the Italian model fairly closely, the Summoner's tale is set in Wickham, Hampshire (*The Cobler*, 95).

[9] Indeed, William J. Burling lists *The Humours of Purgatory* as "based on the subplot of Thomas Southerne's *The Fatal Marriage*" (Burling 1993, 62).

[10] The main tragic plot of *The Fatal Marriage* is based on Aphra Behn's novella *The History of the Nun; or, The Fair Vow-Breaker* (printed 1689), which itself is a version of the eighth tale of day four of the *Decameron*. When David Garrick adapted Southerne's piece in 1757 as *Isabella, or, the Fatal Marriage*, he jettisoned the "purgatorial" comical subplot.

[11] This statement almost anticipates *The Provoked Wife* by John Vanbrugh, written in 1697. In Vanbrugh's comedy, the titular wife, Lady Brute, is also being provoked into taking revenge on her abusive husband and having a lover (which she, like Julia, ultimately does not do).

While Griffin obviously took a number of details from Southerne's version of the story (such as the name of the wife, who remains anonymous in Boccaccio, the existence of the daughter and her lover who want to get married, and the husband's initial wish to bequeath his estate to the church rather than his child), the physical depiction of Purgatory on the stage arguably had different inspirations, as *The Fatal Marriage* does not visualise Frederick's punishment. The brief masque of ghosts in Griffin's farce could have been influenced by the final scene of the first part of Thomas D'Urfey's *The Comical History of Don Quixote* (1694), in which Vincent the innkeeper, in order to cure Don Quixote of his follies, stages an elaborate masque for the latter with music and a dance of furies, at the end of which Don Quixote and Sancho Panza are both locked in a cage and brought from the stage, supposedly "to th' Place the Fates have ordered" (D'Urfey 1694, I2^r). While this version of the plot diverges from Boccaccio's archetype in some key aspects, the overall situation still shows enough affinity with the Italian novella to create an intertextual link with both the *Decameron* tradition and Southerne's piece.[12] An older iteration of the same situation, which probably also inspired D'Urfey and which Griffin might also have known, is in John Fletcher's *The Night Walker: or, The Little Thief* (c. 1611, rev. by James Shirley by 1633), where Tom Lurcher and his companions drug the old miserly justice Algripe and take him to a dark vault, where they, dressed as furies, tell him that they "have commission from the Prince of darkenesse, / To fetch thy [Algripe's] blacke soule to him" (4.5.12–13). Ultimately, the justice promises "To become honest, and renounce all villany" (4.5.53), annulling his forced marriage to Maria and returning her dowry to let her marry her lover, Frank Heartlove. In addition to these two dramatic works, which arguably had some direct or indirect influence on Griffin, we also cannot rule out the possible inspiration from the early Jacobean comedy by Edward Sharpham *The Fleire* (c. 1607).[13] Towards the end of that play, the eponymous Fleire ("Fleer" or "Fleerer," in fact Seignior Antifront, the deposed Duke of Florence in disguise), dressed as an apothecary, sells a sleeping potion instead of poison to his daughters, who plan to murder two English gallants, Spark and Ruffle, for refusing their romantic overtures. Upon their awakening in prison, the men confide their dream of hell to Antifront, giving a comical account of its inhabitants, similar to the one given to Don Lopez by Don Silvio as a purgatorial ghost. Spark's remark in particular that "the diuels are excellent companions, theile drink your Dutch captains, or Court Ladies spunges" (Sharpham 1607, H1^{v}) seems almost to prefigure Griffin's vision of Purgatory as a place of merry drinking. Another detail that might have been lifted from *The Fleire* is the aforementioned apothecary, who appears as one of the disguises of Antifront in the Jacobean play (crucial for the Boccaccian element of the plot) and as a full character in Griffin's farce. Although Southerne's piece still seems to be closest to Griffin's in certain details and the basic contours of the plot, we can see that a number of other "ghosts" could have both left their mark on the farce's textual shape and readily created associations in the original audiences' minds.[14]

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[12] In this context, it is not without relevance to note that, on the opening night of 3 April 1716, *The Humours of Purgatory* followed a production of the second part of *Don Quixote* (*The London Stage* 2:395), in which the scene in question from the first part is repeatedly alluded to. While Lincoln's Inn Fields did not stage the first part until 1720, it was regularly given before 1716 at Drury Lane, Queen's Theatre and Norwich (see Vol. 2 of *The London Stage*). It might be assumed that the second part of *Don Quixote* was largely attended by the audience who knew and liked the first instalment of the D'Urfey's trilogy.

[13] Although there is no record of a post-1660 production of *The Fleire* in London theatres, the play enjoyed some popularity in print in the earlier half of the seventeenth century, reaching its fifth edition by 1631. As a playwright, Griffin was well acquainted with the pre-Interregnum theatre tradition: his first play, *The Injured Virtue* (1714), was based on Philip Massinger and Thomas Dekker's 1620 tragedy *The Virgin Martyr* (see Mikyšková 2019); his second (and last) mainpiece, *Whig and Tory* (1720), is a more radical adaptation of John Fletcher and William Rowley's 1623 comedy *The Maid in the Mill*, newly set in Griffin's native Norfolk (see Krajník 2019).

An even more important aspect of theatrical intertextuality than the "textual ghosts" mentioned above, however, are the "visual ghosts" of the production that are directly linked with the audiences' reception and memory. By nature, these ghosts might be less dependent on the playwright's intention (although, as we shall see, a deliberate intertextual play with physical elements of several productions is easily possible) and more shaped by theatregoing audiences and their previous experience and current expectations. In the case of afterpieces, that were by nature meant to be received within a larger theatrical context (the most immediate part of which was the performance of the mainpiece which the afterpiece usually followed), the idea of visual or physical intertextuality is perhaps even more apposite than in some other theatrical genres.

Indeed, as Leo Hughes has pointed out, the text or story of a farce tended not to be the most crucial components of the piece's ultimate production or even its success (although it is the only one to which we nowadays have direct access):

> As we range through the texts of farces printed in the period under survey we are vaguely conscious of missing something. Where there is so much repetition of the same device, so little variation from a conventionalized

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[14] Of course, Griffin's afterpiece is also a representative of a much broader genre of "news from hell," which, as Benjamin Boyce has demonstrated, was still thriving in eighteenth-century English culture, including the theatre (for instance, in Henry Fielding's *The Author's Farce* [1730] or his *Eurydice* [1737]; see Boyce 1943).

> pattern of intrigue, it is sometimes hard to see how one farce caught on while a half dozen others, not strikingly different in the reading, failed. What was the secret ingredient which enabled the one to outdistance and outlast the others? Most often the answer is, I believe, the action or the actor. What is dead and repetitious on the printed page may well have been very much alive in the capable hands of a trained farceur. (Hughes 1956, 153)

Peter Holland, likewise, points out that "the theatre of farce is also actors' theatre, a dramatic form that depends on and relishes the actors' skills" (Holland 2000, 109). Tony Howe furthermore refers to "the centrality of the body as a locus for meaning-making" in the farce (Howe 2011, 30), arguing that this genre is "replete with characters whose bodies fully inhabit the space of farce, with actors whose bodies and roles give dimension to that space" (Howe 2011, 42). While we have no witnesses to the physical or visual aspects of *The Humours of Purgatory* from the time it was originally staged, it is crucial that these elements be taken into consideration when addressing the theatregoing audiences' horizon of expectations and the possible extratextual influences on the piece. Even from the sketchy information that we have, it is, indeed, possible to argue that the actor and his body did dominate the production of the farce and presented the strongest point of referentiality between the action on the stage and the performance tradition which it entered.

"Short and slight of build," Griffin established himself as a low comedian of Christopher Rich's new Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre soon after its opening in 1714, his forte being "testy old men and skirt parts" ("Griffin, Benjamin," 365). Soon after Griffin's death, Thomas Betterton called the actor a "useful comedian, of the humorous Class," but dismissed his own dramatic attempts as "trifling Performances" that were met with "deserved Contempt" (Betterton 1741, 151). In 1733, Theophilus Cibber noted that Griffin was "a very popular attraction" of his theatre (although he was referring then to the actor's later engagement at Drury Lane rather than Lincoln's Inn Fields – "Griffin, Benjamin," 367). What is most important for us is the fact that among Griffin's numerous comical rôles was Fernando in Southerne's *The Fatal Marriage* when the play was revived at Drury Lane in January 1716 – just three months before the opening night of *The Humours of Purgatory*.[15] Additionally, among the original cast of Griffin's afterpiece, we find Henrietta Moore (fl. 1698–1730), who had played Victoria in *The Fatal Marriage* at Drury Lane in 1708 (*The London Stage,* 2:177), now returning eight years later to play Julia in *The Humours of Purgatory* (Griffin's counterpart to Southerne's same-named mother to Victoria). While the engagement of Moore could have been a coincidence or simply a case of typecasting, Griffin's reprising of the central rôle must have been evocative for the audience, especially if both Griffin's and Southerne's plays were performed concurrently on the same stage throughout 1716. We can only speculate to what extent the two characterizations shared the same voice, movements or facial gestures. It is very well possible that, in subsequent performances, Griffin elaborated on his Don Lopez, usurping even more space for his character (which the renaming of the farce for the 1717–1718, 1718–1719 and 1719–1720 seasons as *The Hypochondriac* might suggest). In that case, it cannot be ruled out that the original relationship of the model and the copy (however tentative such a relationship could be, of course) was reversed, and the rôle of Fernando in later performances of *The Fatal Marriage* could very well have been ghosted by the more dominant (and possibly more theatrically appealing and memorable) Don Lopez from Griffin's newer afterpiece.

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[15] The earlier surviving cast list of the *Fatal Marriage* is from 9 November 1716 (*The London Stage*, 2:420) and is largely identical to the one from 26 October 1717, both featuring Griffin in the rôle (2:466).

The textual and personnel link between the plays also invites speculation that both the productions at least partly shared their visual material, such as props and costumes. If so, this could, again, have been an act of production pragmatism as much as an artistic decision, as we can assume that a cheap short afterpiece would have mined the theatre's inventory in the same manner as it did the existing textual tradition. In our case, the most obvious act of possibly conscious recycling would have been the disguises of Southerne's Fabian and Griffin's Don Silvio, which are both supposed to fool Fernando and Don Lopez respectively, each in its own way.[16] Besides the common purpose of the single visual object in the two dramatic plots and the similar circumstance, it is interesting to note that, while Fabian's costume is designated as "a Fryar's Habit" (stage direction after 2.1.52 and the opening SD of 3.1; upon seeing Fabian in the habit for the first time, Frederick remarks, "How! *Fabian* turn'd Fryar!" – 2.1.53), in *The Humours of Purgatory*, Don Silvio gets the habit from Julia, who calls it "an old Fryar's Gown in the Wardrobe" (Griffin 1716, A6^{v}). What is significant in Griffin's rendition of the situation – besides the virtually identical verbal description of the object – is Julia's emphasis on the fact that the gown has been pre-owned and that she takes it out of the family's inventory, giving it an *ad hoc* purpose for the occasion. Could this be a playful reference to the costume's previous employment in Southerne's play, or even all the other plays in the theatre's repertory that had previously made use of it? It is plausible that, given the special purpose of the costume in the plot, the audience would have paid more attention to it than to other possible visual "doublings" of this kind and that the gown would have raised further associations between Griffin's and Southerne's pieces, perhaps even in a parodic mode.

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[16] Additionally, the costume also links the plays to the central character of the lustful abbot from Boccaccio, who is otherwise absorbed by other rôles in the dramatic iterations of the story.

As we have seen, a number of factors potentially entered into the reception of Griffin's farce in 1716, making the piece part of a complex intertextual network that included texts, themes, dramatic patterns, actors and visual elements of the productions. What is also worthy of consideration, however, is the way in which *The Humours of Purgatory* itself potentially partook in other similar networks and helped to create the horizon of expectations for newer works, just as elements of works by Boccaccio, Southerne, D'Urfey and others had previously served Griffin's farce – in other words, how a haunted text and a haunted production could haunt other texts and other productions. A possible connection could be found, again, in the physical presence of an actor – or, in this case, an actress – on the stage. On the cast list from the opening night of *The Humours of Purgatory*, we find that the rôle of Constantia was played by a Mrs Robertson (*The London Stage*, 2:395). Nothing is known about this actress, apart from the rôles assigned to her at Lincoln's Inn Fields between 1716 and 1720, Constantia being her debut ("Robertson, Mrs," 15). Judging from the list of other characters that she played, Robertson specialised in young female lovers. In her final year with the theatre, she played Maria in Griffin's *Whig and Tory* – a comedy which he based on a plot by Fletcher, while placing the story in the then current context of the political rivalries in England of the early years of the Whig Supremacy (*The London Stage*, 2:565). Similarly to Constantia, Maria is in love with the young Ned Indolent, and the two lovers cannot marry because of Ned's eccentric testy father Sir John, played by none other than Griffin himself. Indeed, at several points, Sir John is strikingly similar to Don Lopez, well beyond the general character type. The former's frenzied rant against physicians, whom he would like to drown "all for a Parcel of Puppies" (Griffin 1720, B3^{v}), clearly echoes Don Lopez's contempt for the profession, which he calls "a Cheat" and all who practice it "Knaves" (Griffin 1716, B4$^{r–v}$); and so does Sir John's first appearance on the stage in a nightgown, which Don Lopez presumably (although the published text does not directly indicate it) wore for the whole of *The Humours of Purgatory*. With only a slight change (from the father to the father-in-law to be), Robertson's and Griffin's characters from the older farce, including their relationship and circumstance, were written again into *Whig and Tory*, possibly inspiring a ghosting effect similar to the one that Southerne's character of Fernando did in *The Humours of Purgatory* not that much earlier.[17] One may easily say that, by creating this blend of character and narrative recycling (which was not uncommon at the time), both Griffin the author and Griffin the actor became their own ghosts, drawing the audiences' attention to further possible links (conscious or not) between the two plays.

The Humours of Purgatory may not have been one of the most popular or most original early eighteenth-century English farces, yet it can be well used as a representative example of the inherently imitative, while remarkably creative character of the English theatre of the period. Although somewhere at the beginning there was a popular Italian novella, whose theatrical potential was recognised by a number of playwrights before Griffin, the relationships between Griffin's afterpiece and the older iterations of the story cannot be easily established – especially if we take into consideration the issue of the cultural memory of the theatregoing audience, who could make their own, highly unstable, associations. It is probable that some of these links in the minds of the spectators were consciously invited by the author himself, who counted on the pre-existent knowledge of certain texts, dramatic patterns and conventions on the part of habitual theatregoers; however, given that *The Humours of Purgatory* was written at a time of strong competition between London theatres, when there was an extreme hunger for new material, some of the intertextuality could also occur simply due to a lack of time and resources or pure pragmatism. The aim of the present case study was to show that, when addressing adaptive efforts in early-modern theatre (or any theatre, for that matter), it is necessary to abandon the idea of a single, easily recognisable source or a clear genealogy of a dramatic work, and to go beyond the purely textual level of the piece. At the same time, we have seen how "higher" and "lower" genres of English post-Restoration theatre interacted with each other and how plots, characters and situations migrated across dramatic forms. The multi-genre character of the late seventeenth and eighteenth-century English theatre is thus another area deserving more systematic academic attention.

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[17] *Whig and Tory* premiered on 26 January 1720 (*The London Stage*, 3: 565), just five days after a production of *The Humours of Purgatory* (as *The Hypochondriac*) and less than two weeks before another (see fn. 3).

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CLAPPING TO A CRIMINAL:
THE JACK SHEPPARD CRAZE OF THE 1720s

Klára Škrobánková

Abstract

Jack Sheppard, a real historical figure executed in 1724 London, became the focus of many biographical publications and theatrical pieces immediately after his demise. This article examines the earliest literary works featuring Sheppard and the way the character of a criminal entered London's stages. By analyzing the digression from the facts of Sheppard's life, the tendencies of the popular theatrical genres of the 1720s emerge. Based on two works of art, Thurmond's *Harlequin Sheppard* (1724) and Walker's *Quaker's Opera* (1728), one can trace the development of the theatre devices as well as the marketing strategies dramatic authors used to lure the audience into theatres. Both examined pieces were not particularly successful but Thurmond's pantomime significantly inspired John Gay to write *Beggar's Opera*, basing the character of Macheath on Sheppard. Walker then combined the two phenomena – taking the strategies of new ballad operas, he re-purposed the story of Jack Sheppard and adapted it into *Quaker's Opera*.

Keywords

Jack Sheppard, pantomime, ballad opera, eighteenth century, *The Beggar's Opera*, biography

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THE figure of Jack (or John) Sheppard, a London-based criminal executed in the fall of 1724, has periodically emerged on the English stage, significantly influencing English popular culture. Beginning during his lifetime, Sheppard's popularity continued to grow throughout the 1720s, culminating with the publication and staging of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* in 1728. The second wave of Sheppard's popularity came in the first half of the nineteenth century with the publication of William Harrison Ainsworth's novel *Jack Sheppard. A Romance* (published serially in *Bentley's Miscellany* from 1839 to 1840), which inspired nine new theatre adaptations (Moore 2014, 294). However, the popularity of the character was quickly cut short after "the murder of 72-year-old Lord William Russell by his valet, Courvoisier. At his trial, Courvoisier claimed he had gone to his master's bedroom to kill him after reading *Jack Sheppard*" (294). The murder led to the subsequent ban on staging and publishing of any work of art featuring the name of Jack Sheppard. The interest in the famed criminal was revived in the twentieth century not only with Brecht's adaptation of *The Beggar's Opera* entitled *Die Dreigroschenoper*, but also by the 1969 movie adaptation *Where's Jack*, which focused on the events of Sheppard's life.

Despite many books often mentioning Sheppard as the inspiration for Gay's Macheath,[1] very little attention has been paid to the collection of literary artworks that were published around the same time that shared a common interest in the retelling of the exciting story of Sheppard, who was able to successfully evade the law. This article describes the tendencies in the 1720s writings about Jack Sheppard, focusing on the employed strategies of marketing such pieces and the development of the theatrical genres which featured the character of the famous criminal.

Criminality was a part of everyday life in early eighteenth-century London, as there has not yet been a police force, and "stealing, from people or houses, with or without violence, [was] the most common crime" (Picard 2004, 233). It is, therefore, not surprising that various depictions of criminal activities have found their way onto the stage. At the beginning of the century, the popularity of pantomimes featuring the beloved Harlequin was immense. As John O'Brien suggests, there has been close association between pantomime and criminality, "as early eighteenth-century harlequinades frequently cast their hero as a petty thief, and often brought him into contact with the criminal justice system" (O'Brien 2015, 150). London audiences were thus used to comical rendering of criminal characters, which later combined with political satire, which was growing in popularity. The often-published biographies of infamous thieves, burglars and other criminals not only offered an insight into London's criminal underground culture, but also provided a space for the subtle critique of societal development. "The criminal narrative functioned as a means of critiquing a developing commercial society in England," addressing the local government's inability to control the community's vices (Gonzales 2002, iv). The figure of Jack Sheppard as well as Sheppard, the dramatic character, stands witness to both forces behind contemporary popular culture. On one hand, he was a certain sort of short-lived celebrity, "a figure of widespread fascination and even admiration" (O'Brien 2015, 153). On the other hand, he and his life story quickly became a platform for an amalgam of theatrical tendencies, such as the harlequinization of the main hero or the satirical depiction of the English society in the 1720s. The study of various texts, whose authors worked with the figure of Jack Sheppard, can then illustrate the way English popular theatre developed at that time and what appealed to the audience.

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[1] See Fiske's chapter on ballad opera in *English Theatre Music in the Eighteenth Century* (1973), C. Winton's discussion of Gay's literary presence in Thurmond's *Harlequin Sheppard* in *John Gay and The London Theatre* (1993, 75–86), or D. F. O'Keefe's dissertation "Ballad Opera, Imitation, and the Formation of Genre" (2007, 85–92).

Jack Sheppard's life resembled biographies of many London criminals and lowlifes. Born in 1702 in Spitalfields, London, as John Sheppard, he grew up in a carpenter's family and later became a carpenter's apprentice. This profession acquainted him with various tools that he later used for committing robberies and, most importantly, escaping from prisons, which made him famous all over London. He was commonly associated with petty criminals, prostitutes, and gamblers, but according to the available sources, was never a violent criminal, and only stole. One of the earliest mentions of Sheppard in the period press was published on July 25, 1724 in *The Daily Journal*. The short entry informed of the arrest of Sheppard, who previously escaped from the New Prison in Clarkenwell and was charged with several burglaries (Norton 2003). The succeeding pieces of news provide more information about Sheppard's fate, many attempts to escape from prison and three successful escapes, his associates, and the letters Sheppard allegedly wrote. On November 17, 1724, one day after Sheppard's execution, *The Daily Journal* lengthily describes the events of the hanging, but also advertises the upcoming publication of Sheppard's biography. The biography was implied to be a pamphlet written by Sheppard himself:

> When he [Sheppard] arrived at the Tree, he sent for Mr Applebee, a printer, into the cart, and in the view of several thousands of people, deliver'd to him a printed pamphlet, *Entitled, a Narrative of all the Robberies and Escapes of John Sheppard, giving an exact Description of all his Robberies and Escapes, together with the wonderful Manner of his Escape from the Castle in Newgate, and of the Methods he took afterward for his Scurity, &c. which he desired might be forthwith printed and publish'd.* N.B. The said Narrative is now publish'd by John Applebee, Printer, in Black-Fryers; and sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster. (Norton 2003)

The pamphlet was probably the work of Daniel Defoe, who had previously written *The History of the Remarkable Life of John Sheppard Containing a Particular Account of his Many Robberies and Escapes,* published by Applebee shortly before Sheppard's death. Although the new edition entitled *A Narrative of all the Robberies, Escapes, &c. of John Sheppard* promised the complete list of Sheppard's crimes, its greatest feature was nevertheless the personal narrative of Sheppard. The title page of the publication claims that the text was "[w]ritten by himself [Sheppard] during his Confinement in the Middle Stone-Room, after his being retaken in Drury-Lane" but it probably was the result of Defoe visiting the prisoner in Newgate prison and interviewing Sheppard out of personal interest (Defoe 1724b, 2). Both *The Daily Journal* and the frontpage state that *The Narrative of all the Robberies and Escapes* was published on Sheppard's request; however, it seems probable that Defoe himself was invested in publishing the work as he significantly contributed to the criticism of the social state of London in the previously published pamphlet on Sheppard's life, writing that:

> *The* Legislative Power *has not been wanting in providing necessary and wholesome Laws against these* Evils, *the executive part whereof (according to your great Privileges) is lodged in your own Hands: And the Administration hath at all times applyed proper Remedies and Regulations to the Defects which have happen'd in the* Magistracy *more immediately under their Jurisdiction. . . . But here's a* Criminal *bids Defiance to your* Laws, *and* Justice *who declar'd and has manifested that the* Bars *are not made that can either keep him* Out, *or keep him* In, *and accordingly hath a second time fled from the very* Bosom Of Death. (Defoe 1724a)

The *Narrative* then appears to be a continuation of the insight into the mind of the criminal and the ineffectiveness of the criminal system, which was not able to immediately arrest and punish Sheppard, letting him escape four times in total – firstly from St Giles's Roundhouse and New Prison and then twice from Newgate Prison. These successful prisonbreaks led to Sheppard's legendary status and distinguished him from the rest of London's criminal underground culture. The story of Sheppard's life and death quickly became popular and embedded itself in the minds of London's citizens. The public had already been supplied with news reporting on Sheppard's crimes, which was later followed by his biographies and portraits. The entrance of the Sheppardian character on the theatrical stages could be expected, as

> [s]tories *continued* to thrive only when they were framed historically and/or supported by material evidence. Stories apparently need an association with a place or a date, an object or a person, to be believed, and to be transmitted, even if such stories can also be transplanted to another context when that suits the needs of the storyteller. (Pollmann 2017, 121)

The public awareness of Sheppard's life combined with many writings commemorating or describing his deeds, enabled the story of Jack Sheppard to spread freely. Following the publication of Defoe's accounts, many biographies of Sheppard emerged, narrating allegedly accurate events of his life. Such interest in the life of a criminal was, however, nothing unusual. Already in 1611, Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker featured the real-life character of Moll Cutpurse in their play *The Roaring Girl* and in 1662, bookseller William Gilbertson published the biography of this London petty criminal and an occasional performer Mary Frith, entitled *Life and Death of Mrs. Mary Frith. Commonly Called Mal Cutpurse*. Since the early seventeenth century, Frith appealed to English authors as she "dressed and acted like a man, visiting, 'alehowses'" (Wynne-Davies 2009, 21). Similarly to Sheppard, Frith's life and crimes have been gradually altered to fit the purpose of the writers. For instance, Alexander Smith, the author of the 1714 book *A Complete History of the Lives and Robberies of the Most Notorious Highwaymen, Shoplifts, and Cheats of Both Sexes*, fabricated "an episode in which she [Frith] is 'known' to have accosted and robbed the parliamentarian general Thomas Fairfax on the road to Hounslow Heath" (Mowry 2005, 27). The female outlaw, again like Sheppard, inspired Daniel Defoe to create the character of Moll Flanders (27). Moreover, during the life of Jack Sheppard, a comparably popular criminal emerged from London's criminal underground culture. Jonathan Wild, the double agent fighting crime while engaging in various criminal activities, gained considerable recognition, and led to the creation of Gay's Peachum in the *Beggar's Opera*. All three of these criminals were distinguishable within the scope of the London environment – a cross-dressing female thief, crime-fighting double agent, and serial escapist were certainly attractive characters to dramatize as the public enjoyed seeing such rebellious figures on stage. Yet, their greatest appeal was in their realness, in the thrill of knowing that the depicted crimes did indeed happen. It is no surprise then, that it was necessary to publish the criminal's biography and only then come with a play featuring the dramatic rendition of the said thief or burglar.

Immediately after Sheppard's death, the anonymous *Authentic Memoirs of the Life and Surprising Adventures of John Sheppard: Who was Executed at TYBURN, November the 16th, 1724. By way of FAMILIAR LETTERS from a Gentleman in Town, to his Friend and Correspondent in the Country* was published by Joseph Marshall and J. Roberts. This epistolary novel narrates the life of Sheppard with considerable accuracy but eventually turns to a rather fantastic retelling of certain moments. The departure from historical accuracy is suggested in the frontpage of the book, as it features an altered quote from Thomas Otway's tragedy *Venice Preserv'd*. Compare the two excerpts:

> I've done a deed will make my story hereafter
> Quoted in competition with all ill ones:
> The history of my wickedness shall run
> Down through the low traditions of the vulgar,
> And boys be taught to tell the tale of Jaffeir. (Otway 1682, 47–48)
>
> I've done such deeds, will make my story hereafter
> Quoted in competition with all ill ones:
> The history of my wickedness shall run
> Down through the low traditions of the vulgar,
> And boys be taught to tell the tale of – Sheppard. (*Authentic Memoirs* 1724, 1)

The change of name and the plural form "deeds" might seem a minor alteration, but it in fact suggests a major change in the understanding of the Jack Sheppard character. By choosing to stylize Sheppard as Jaffeir, the tragic hero of Otway's play, the anonymous author of the *Authentic Memoir* deviates from the portrayal of Sheppard as a despicable criminal and ascribes some virtues to Sheppard's doings. The shift in the depiction of the criminal is also apparent in Sheppard's "suppos'd speech," fabricated final words that the author of the memoir thought fitting for the death of his hero. The speech opens with the line "Like Doctor Faustus, I my pranks have play'd," referring to the popular pantomime *Harlequin Doctor Faustus* (1723), emphasizing the theatricality of Sheppard as described in the *Authentic Memoirs* (*Authentic Memoirs* 1724, 70). The idea to write an entertaining piece of art rather than biography is further confirmed in the Letter VI of the *Authentic Memoirs*: "And as most of our modern poets have made it a standing rule, to dismiss their audience with something gay and airy, let the play be never so tragical and full of distress; I have put my invention on the wrack, to wind up my bottom after the same manner, and entertain you with something whimsical and novel" (*Authentic Memoirs* 1724, 74). Apart from the ironical description of the state of contemporary theatre, the author clearly states his ambition to produce a work of art that would have theatrical qualities. He continues with confessing his desire to create a sequel to the story of Sheppard's life: "My next project was, to give you a long narration of *Sheppard's* coming to life again, and (as most people thought he dealt with the devil) assert, his being seen with his gimlets, saws, and chisels, in a carpenter's habit, hard at work upon the *Triple-Tree*," but eventually decides to abandon this plan as it would be "all farce, and supernatural" and therefore a more fitting plot for the Italian opera (76). The bracketed mention of the popular belief that Sheppard was associated with the devil might again refer to the character's similarity with the character of Faustus. This Faustus, however, differed from the Marlovian academic, and merged with the ever-popular figure of Harlequin, coming from the lower classes, playing tricks on the wealthy.

The first theatre adaptation of the story of Jack Sheppard emerged shortly after his execution on November 16, 1724. Only twelve days after the hanging, Drury Lane theatre staged a new pantomime written/designed/created by their dance master John Thurmond entitled *Harlequin Sheppard. A Night Scene in Grotesque Characters.* The printed script of the pantomime was supplemented by another biography of Sheppard, repeating the well-known facts of his criminal life. Here the notion of Sheppard the hero is once again challenged, as Sheppard is compared to Alexander the Great, Caesar and Pompey Magnus. Thurmond is led to believe that the similarity between the quartet of historical figures stems from their untimely deaths, that were caused by the "envious people" (Thurmond 1724, 5). This hints upon the rivalry between various members of the London criminal underground, a theme later elaborated by John Gay in the *Beggar's Opera*, where there is rivalry between the characters of Macheath, Peachum and Lockit, who all run their own criminal businesses, profiting either from theft and robbery, denouncing people or bribery. Thurmond further restrains himself from analyzing the life of Sheppard, providing a background information on Sheppard that would introduce the character to the reader.

The plot of the *Harlequin Sheppard* begins with the titular hero's escape from the "Castle," a highly secured cell in Newgate Prison. The pantomime showcases Sheppard's prison-break, following the historical events, yet adding various slapstick elements – most notably the instruments which the hero uses for his escape, hidden in a pie. These scenes are followed by the scene on a street, where a procession of prisoners can be seen. Among the prisoners is another famous real criminal, Joseph Blake alias Blueskin, Sheppard's colleague, on his way to the court of justice, the Old Bailey. Suddenly "the music changes. Enter two people as from the Old Baily in surprize, one with a pen-knife in his hand, who makes signs that one of the prisoners had cut a man's throat. Immediately the prisoners re-enter, and Blueskin exulting, imagining that he has cut Jonathan Wild's throat effectually" (Thurmond 1724, 15). The story of Blake attempting to murder Wild, a double agent fighting against crime but also engaging in many illegal activities, is historically accurate, yet is only vaguely connected to the events of Sheppard's escape. Thurmond probably added the scene to the pantomime for its appealing characteristics, with Wild being one of the hated characters of London's public life as he brought many criminals to justice (Moore 2014, 265). The scene concludes with the first of two songs included in the pantomime, "Newgate's Garland," sung by the prisoners, who rejoice in the apparent death of Wild. "Newgate's Garland," which is sometimes attributed to Jonathan Swift, [2] is the work of John Gay, who wrote the text in 1724. As C. Winton suggests, the ballad is "a significant step on the way to *The Beggar's Opera*," both because of the pantomime's specific humor and the setting among the London criminals (Winton 1993, 75). The interconnectedness with *The Beggar's Opera* is striking especially in the third stanza, when Gay ponders on the corrupted nature of all professions:

> Knaves of old, to hide guilt, by their cunning inventions,
> Call'd briberies grants, and plain robberies pensions;
> Physicians and lawyers (who take their degrees
> To be learned rogues) call'd their pilfering, fees;
> Since this happy day,
> Now ev'ry man may
> Rob (as safe as in office) upon the highway. (Thurmond 1724, 17)

Here, many verses echo the famous songs and lines from *The Beggar's Opera*, most notably the opening air "Through all the employments of life," where Peachum mocks cheating lawyers and statesmen, and Air XI ("A fox may steal your hens"), in which Peachum sings "If lawyer's hand is fee'd, sir / He steals your whole estate" (Gay 2010, 29). The song was originally performed by Mr. Harper to the tune of "Packington's Pound," a melody later used by Gay for Air XLIII, "Thus gamesters united" sung by Lockit (Thurmond 1724, 16).

The plot of *Harlequin Sheppard* then continues by Sheppard's escape by coach and a highly satirical image of prison wardens confusingly looking for Sheppard, who is long gone. In quick succession, the audience witnesses Sheppard's burglaries, and his final arrest in a room in an alley house. The pantomime concludes with another song, "A Canting Song" sung by the character of Frisky Moll, Sheppard's mistress, who mourns the loss of her lover, blaming alcohol to be Sheppard's demise. The tune of the song is not specified, with Mr. Harper writing the lyrics characterized by the amount of criminal slang used to the point of Thurmond providing the reader of the printed edition with explanatory footnotes (22–23). The publication is supplemented by a drawing of Sheppard, sitting in his cell with shackles, fetters, and a big lock, dressed in a Harlequin costume – checkered suit, hat, ruff, and a half-face mask. This frontispiece is an allusion of the famous portrait of Sheppard in his cell, published alongside *The Narrative of all the Robberies and Escapes*.

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[2] See Moore 2014, 265.

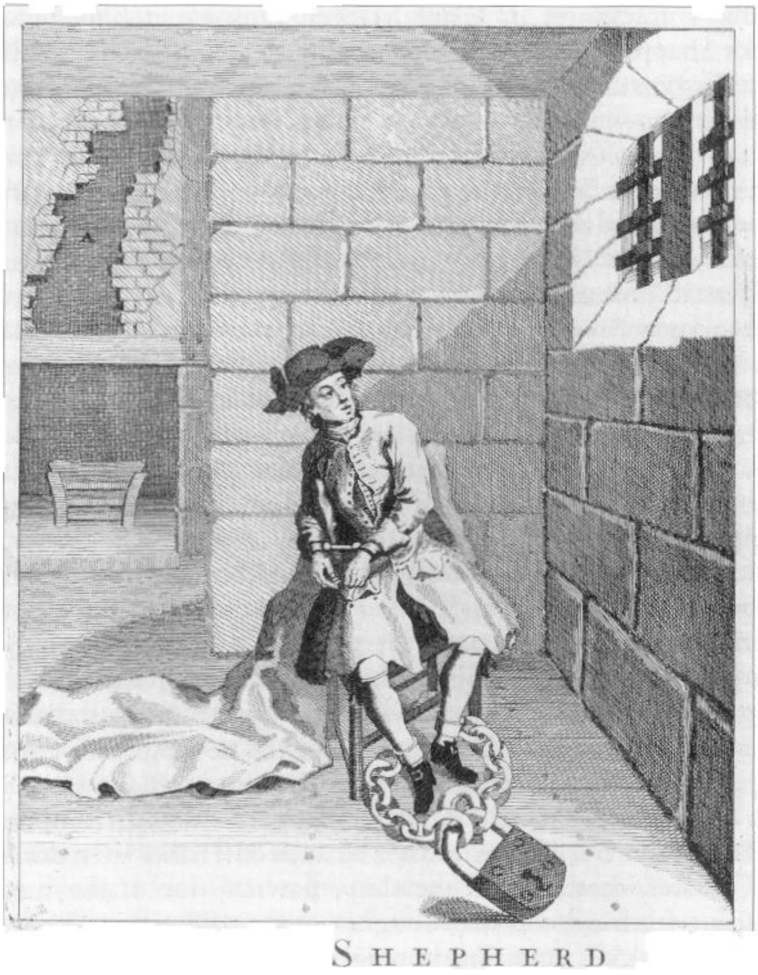

Figure 1: Jack Sheppard in his cell, letter A on the wall in the upper left corner marking the hole through which the prisoner later escaped. First published in Defoe's *A Narrative of all the Robberies and Escapes of John Sheppard* in 1724. (Source: en.wikipedia.org)

Harlequin Sheppard was performed seven times (premiered on November 28 and reprised on November 30, December 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26, 1724) at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane (*The London Stage*). After the first four December reruns, *The Weekly Journal or Saturday's Post* published a review, stating that: "[It] was dismiss'd with a universal hiss.—And, indeed, if Shepherd had been as wretched, and as silly a Rogue in the World, as the ingenious and witty Managers have made him upon the Stage, the lower Gentry, who attended him to Tyburn, wou'd never have pittied him when he was hang'd" (*The London Stage*). The performance on December 26 was shown "at the desire of several persons of quality," but it still was the last time *Harlequin Sheppard* was staged (*The London Stage*).

Despite the inconsiderable success of Thurmond's pantomime, the play emphasized an important movement within what O'Brien calls "urban mass culture to which the new phenomenon of entertainment appealed" (O'Brien 2015, 140). The general popularity of pantomimes with the character of Harlequin combined with the Sheppard-craze of the 1720s without a doubt seemed like a good entrepreneurial opportunity to Thurmond and the managers of Drury Lane theatre. What seemed like "a sign of degradation of traditional literary culture and the reduction of the theater's scope to mere spectacle and show," was also a step toward a certain theatre consumerist behavior, that would later continue with the quickly appearing ballad operas of questionable quality (140). The element of the harlequinade in *Harlequin Sheppard* is therefore only a marketing strategy as the pantomime contains only minor signs of the genre, most notably the physicality of the lead actor, who had to be able to perform various acrobatic tricks with the fetters and continuous escapes. Apart from this physicality, the pantomime does not possess typical signs of the genre, such as a double plot and other (Semmens 2016, 146). It was, nevertheless, the first occasion to present the life of Jack Sheppard on the English stage.

The character of Jack Sheppard appeared on the London stage again in 1728, shortly after the premiere and subsequent success of Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, which opened on January 29, 1728 in Lincoln's Inn Fields and "ran for a record sixty-two nights" in the first season (Gay 2010, vii). In August 1728, seven months after the debut of *The Beggar's Opera*, Thomas Walker's *Quaker's Opera* premiered in the Lee and Harper's Booth in Bartholomew Fair. Thomas Walker was an actor, famous for being the first performer of Captain Macheath. It is apparent that Walker wanted to use the popularity of the newly established genre of ballad opera for financial profit and had therefore decided to use the previously published but never staged farce *The Prison Breaker or The Adventures of John Shepard* (1725), which dramatized the life of Jack Sheppard, and combined it with tried and tested elements of *Beggar's Opera*, such as the portrayal of London lower classes, satirical depiction of law, and commentaries in the form of songs.

The plot of *The Quaker's Opera* focuses on the escapes of Sheppard as it was known from his biographies and *Harlequin Sheppard*, but it also adds a romantic subplot not unlike Gay's romantic triangle of Macheath, Polly Peachum and Lucy Lockit. Sheppard has two lovers as well, Molly Frisky (an echo of Thurmond's Moll Frisk) and Nancy Hackabout. Sheppard's love interests are, however, only short episodes showcasing the hero's low morals as he takes pride in having many mistresses and is quick to confess this to Hackabout: "However, my dear, I pity thee and am now going to another mistress like a fine gentleman" (Walker 1728, 36).

The handling of the issue of criminality is one of the most notable differences between the two ballad operas. The entire second act of *Quaker's Opera* deals with Sheppard's plans to rob a wealthy Welsh lawyer's house. This burglary is later presented onstage in a slapstick manner: when discovered by a Constable, Sheppard poses as the lawyer and eventually has his victim arrested. Notwithstanding the wit and cunning of Sheppard, the ballad opera concludes with his execution. Walker's Sheppard is an amalgam of two approaches stemming from the two influences the author used when writing the play. On occasion, Sheppard stylizes himself as a noble, intelligent criminal. In Act II, the character even compares himself to Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Louis Dominique Bourguignon Cartouch, the French highwayman stealing from the rich and giving to the poor: "Activity is the soul of business – Alexander! Caesar! Cartouch and Shepard" (28). The mentioning of Alexander and Caesar furthermore confirms that Walker was familiar with *Harlequin Sheppard*, as the two politicians were mentioned in the pantomime's introduction. The noble criminal Sheppard is then contrasted with the mere rogue Sheppard, who spends his days stealing and drinking with his accomplices. Walker does not fully adopt the satire of Gay's work, choosing not to focus on the political implications and allusions. This is particularly striking in the finale of *Quaker's Opera*, when Walker stays true to the historical events and has Sheppard hanged. The chorus then sings and dances to the tune of Purcell's tune "Britons Strike Home":

> *Rust.* Come, this affair is very happy for every body – honest people may sleep in safety now, therefore a little mirth will not be unseasonable. Come, let's have a dance. [*Dance here*]
> *Chorus.* AIR XXVI. *Britons Strike Home*
> Let us rejoyce! Revenge and justice assume their seat:
> Vice shall be punish'd, and virtue and virtue again be great!
> Sing, sing and rejoyce, sing, sing and rejoyce,
> Sing, sing with a general voice. (Walker 1728, 49)

In the world of Gay's opera, such justice would not be possible as his world is utterly corrupted, and the character of Macheath, despite being influenced by the life of the real Jack Sheppard, evades his execution in scene XVI of the third act as "an opera must end happily" as it must "comply with the taste of the town" (Gay 2010, 114). Walker's Sheppard, heavily influenced by the biography of the historical character, on the other hand, dies in accordance with the preceding Sheppardian writings.

The remaining features of *Quaker's Opera* do not relate to the main plot and mostly serve as comical parentheses or borrowings from Gay's text. Walker introduces several stereotypical characters such as a Welsh lawyer, Irishman, and the titular Quaker, who appears only at the beginning of the play, serving as a satirical image of a lewd, alcohol-drinking clergyman. The influence of *Beggar's Opera* is visible in the Prologue, where the Beggar in the Beggar-Player duo is exchanged for a Quaker, and in the conversational dynamics of Mr. and Mrs. Coaxthief, who were influenced by the Peachums and their constant nagging and quarrelling. The title of Walker's ballad opera therefore corresponds with the marketing strategy employed by Thurmond. As Thurmond relied on the popularity of Harlequin, Walker named his work in order to resemble the title of Gay's *Beggar's Opera* and was not particularly concerned with the Quaker disappearing in the first third of the play.

Similarly to *Harlequin Sheppard*, *The Quaker's Opera* did not succeed on the London stage. After its premiere in August 1728, it was performed five times with little to no success. Many scholars dismissed the work completely, claiming that it has "no wit" and is a mere imitation of *Beggar's Opera* (Kidson 1922, 78). Yet, Walker's reworking of the story of Jack Sheppard serves as a key witness to the period practice of borrowing from both literature and contemporary drama. Even though today only Gay's *Beggar's Opera* remains performed, it is important to perceive the English culture of the early eighteenth century as complex, and acknowledge the interconnectedness of various dramatic pieces and genres. Neither *Harlequin Sheppard*, nor *The Quaker's Opera* were of high quality, yet they presented the main character of the criminal Sheppard with attention to diverse characteristics, thus highlighting the changing taste of the public. The change in the understanding of the figure of Sheppard demonstrates the transforming social preferences of theatregoers, who in a matter of four years, were able to grow accustomed to both rogue criminal characters and the portrayals of the noble thieves.

In the transformations of the Jack Sheppard character, two tendencies can be observed. Firstly, it is the theatricalisation of the real-life criminal, that sprung from the popularity of Harlequin, who often stood at the wrong side of the law and performed acrobatic scenes, which J. Thurmond tried to utilize in his pantomime *Harlequin Sheppard*. Sheppard's prison breaks offered the possibility to showcase the performer's acrobatic skills, and his disdain for law and wit could be used for critique of the society and its structure. Furthermore, the figure of Sheppard harboured strong marketing potential. Similarly to the booksellers' attempt to use Sheppard's execution to promote the *Narrative of all the Robberies, Escapes, &c.*

of John Sheppard, Thomas Walker used the well-known character of Sheppard in the hope of creating a new popular ballad opera. After the premiere of Gay's *Beggar's Opera,* many started composing ballad operas with a wish to become equally successful. By making Sheppard the hero of the *Quaker's Opera,* Walker might have hoped to attract the audience's attention by using both the popular form of ballad opera and the criminal character, who earlier in the decade enjoyed certain popularity. Even though Walker's, and to an extent also Thurmond's, work of art did not ultimately succeed like their authors hoped, they nevertheless contributed to the transformation of the historical figure of Sheppard into a dramatic figure of a legendary criminal. Where Gay's Macheath functions as a predominantly thought-provoking, satirical character indirectly criticizing the political state of England, Sheppard's renditions present a popular folk protagonist whose aim was to entertain the audience. In theatre, Jack Sheppard represented the continuation of the comical tradition of country bumpkins, Pickleherrings and Harlequins. The Sheppardian figure was a powerful popular motif which, within a few years, inspired authors of pamphlets, farces, pantomimes and ballad operas alike, showing that rapid changes and genre adjustment were inherent features of the English popular theatrical culture of the early eighteenth century.

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DRESSED IN THE TRAPPINGS OF A SENTIMENTAL HEROINE: COSTUMING SHAKESPEARE'S JULIET ON THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH STAGE

Jessica Banner

Abstract

The popularity of *Romeo and Juliet* in the later part of the eighteenth century has been largely attributed to David Garrick's 1748 adaptation of Shakespeare's text. Not only was Garrick's version hugely popular when it debuted, but Garrick's script has proved to be the "most enduringly successful production of the play" (Berg 1989, 30). Not only does Garrick's adaptation significantly cut down the original text, in favour of adding pantomime and dancing scenes, but the character of Juliet is substantially altered. Garrick's Juliet is clad in the trappings of a sentimental heroine and is represented in the text as an opinionated and self-motivated young woman whose actions are driven by her own desires. In this article I will explore Garrick's refashioning of Shakespeare's tragic heroine, looking specifically at how changes were made to the dialogue and choices regarding the character's costume which recast Juliet in the trappings of a sentimental heroine. Charting the transformation of Juliet both on-stage and in the socio-cultural lexicon from tragic to spirited sentimental heroine, I will examine Garrick's adaptation in conjunction with images of Juliet produced by Anthony Walker and Ignatius Joseph van den Berghe looking specifically at the role of costume in communicating Juliet's newfound sentimentality. Ultimately, this essay will pose questions about the larger significance of Garrick's Juliet and her sentimental characterisation in conjunction with discussions of women in the public sphere.

Keywords

Eighteenth-century performance, sentimentality, gender, costuming, English literature, Shakespearean drama

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EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY Britons witnessed unprecedented growth in garment production. Moving away from a small-scale domestic model toward increasing mechanization and steadily growing fabrication of clothing for the middle classes. The commercial market during this period underwent rapid changes, as apparel and fashionable accessories were transformed from luxuries reserved for the elite classes into accessible accoutrements for much of the population. During this same period, women's participation in English drama and theatre also reached record-breaking heights. By stepping onto the stage, actresses[1] participated in a competitive economic marketplace (Nussbaum 2010, 26) where many of the period's most celebrated female performers often earned more than their male counterparts (43). Moreover, over the course of the long eighteenth century, actresses became cultural phenomena and celebrities. The success of actresses was not limited to the theatre, but rather extended to wider social trends in fashion and style. In the following pages I will explore the relationship between fashionable dress and performances of female identity, looking particularly at Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) in conjunction with David Garrick's 1748 adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet.* Drawing together both literary and staged iterations of female identity this investigation aims to examine the popularity of sentimental expression as it was imagined on the mid-eighteenth-century stage. Structurally speaking, this exploration will be divided into two sections. In the first I will briefly chart the importance of fashionable garments in constructions of female identity, looking at how ideas of fashionability were intimately linked to notions of women's social value. Here, I will draw upon sentimental literature in my analysis looking at how sentimental expression – particularly in conjunction with Richardson's *Pamela* – offers useful insight into the complex relationship between perceived female worth and a woman's choice of dress. In the second section, I will delve into an examination of Garrick's character of Juliet in his hugely successful adaptation of Shakespeare's classic. Charting the transformation of Juliet both on-stage and in the socio-cultural lexicon from tragic to spirited sentimental heroine, I will investigate Garrick's adaptation in conjunction with images of Juliet produced by Anthony Walker, Ignatius Joseph van den Berghe and Benjamin Wilson looking specifically at the role of costume in communicating Juliet's newfound sentimentality.

Generally speaking, over the course of the period, dress and fashionable garments were increasingly linked to discussions of female participation in non-domestic activities. By mid-century, debates about appropriate women's dress drew considerably more attention when compared to their male counterparts. Anne Hollander notes this divergence in women's and men's fashion and suggests that whereas women's fashion became increasingly complex and variable throughout the period, male tailoring became "not just simpler" but "even more aggressively simple as feminine modes became more fanciful" (1994, 77). Expanding upon this Hollander proposes that generally speaking, "the advance of restraint as a quality of male dress may well have been hastened, spurred by the extremity of ladies' fashionable excesses" (77) and as a result, sensible men were expected to avoid unnecessary adornment of their own garments "even if they liked it on the ladies" (77). Speaking to this divide between garments for men and women, Hollander highlights the gendered associations of fashion during the period which cast women as excessive, frivolous and fanciful in stark juxtaposition to their restrained and sensible male contemporaries. Hollander's summary of eighteenth-century fashion trends also gestures toward the ways that dress came to be a crucial facet of the socio-cultural lexicon and was used as a synecdochic stand-in for the female body in discussions regarding female participation in the public sphere.

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[1] The notion of the "actress" as social phenomenon which I am making use of here refers to what Felicity Nussbaum describes as the "second and third generations of actresses on the English stage from 1700 until the 1780s who recognized the exchange value of their labor and their potential for self-commodification" and as a result they "demanded remuneration commensurate with their talents" (2010, 11).

Reaching beyond the material bounds of the garments themselves, dress functioned as a central element in discussions of women's "proper" place in existing social hierarchies, and fashion became the distinct realm of female expertise. The anonymous author of *Man Superior to Woman* (1744) succinctly outlines the general association of women with fashion in his prefatory discussion of female intellect suggesting that "The more judicious part of our sex may perhaps think it dangerous to trust the *women* as judges of anything where Reason is concerned, on account of the weakness of their intellects, which seldom can reach higher than a Head-Dress" (1744, xiv). Here, the author not only dismisses women's capacity to possess reason and intellect on par with men's but does so by comparing female intellectual capacities to an implicitly superfluous fashionable accessory. In suggesting that a woman's intellect could reach no further than the height of her head-dress the author relies upon pre-existing associations of women with fashionable frivolity in order to make claims that women should be subordinate to men. The implication here is that because women cannot possibly possess reason beyond the realm of fashionable adornment their intellectual capacities are just as decorative and frivolous as their fashionable garments. Looking beyond the blatant misogyny that underpins these assertions, the author of *Man Superior to Woman* provides us with a useful starting point in this discussion as the assertions presented by the text illustrate the integral role of fashion and garments in discussions of female social participation in the eighteenth century. As the text continues, the author extends his initial metaphor proclaiming,

> If the business of the mind were nothing more than to contrive a Dress; to invent a new Fashion; to set off a bad Face; to heighten the charms of a good one; to understand the economy of a tea-table; to manage an intrigue; to conduct a Game at *Quadrille*, to lay out new plans of pleasure, pride, and luxury: the women must be owned to have a capacity not only equal, but even superior to us. (19)

Instead of focussing on a single item of clothing, in this passage the narrator extends dress beyond the material garment itself by linking both dress and fashion to other activities associated with polite femininity. Although the narrator acknowledges women's ability to surpass men in these domestic pursuits, the intellectual capacities of women are confined to the home. By linking dress, fashion and domestic pastimes to conceptions of women's intellect, the author of *Man Superior to Woman* underscores how these typically "feminine" activities allowed women to thrive within domestic parameters. Operating on the assumption that women were unfit to participate in male activities, which are implied to be all public activities not listed in the summary above, the author intends to undercut or call into question women's ability to participate more broadly in public discourse while simultaneously idealizing the role of women within the domestic sphere.[2] Moreover, in detailing the ways in which women generally excel in domestic activities like creating a new fashion, applying makeup, arranging a tea table and playing at cards, the text implicitly divorces these activities from their practical extensions in the public sphere. The narrator does not acknowledge that all the activities listed as the domain of the frivolous woman of fashion are inextricably linked to active participation in the commercial marketplace: the refreshments of the tea table must be purchased; the fabric for the dress was likely sourced and tailored by a professional; and the makeup, or its components, were acquired from a shop etc. By divorcing the activities of domestic femininity from their extensions in the commercial marketplace the text implicitly presents an idealised kind of femininity that is both superficially disconnected from and intimately connected to both domestic and commercial activities.

Literary discussions of proper social conduct for eighteenth-century women and the female body more generally were not solely limited to texts like *Man Superior to Woman*, but also formed a central aspect of the widely popular genre of sentimental literature.[3] Albert J. Rivero explains that sentimental novels utilized a “common language and style” to function as “machines explicitly and self-consciously manufactured to feel with” (2019, 3). Despite the fact that some of the most well-studied sentimental novels of the period were written by male authors (e.g., Samuel Richardson, Henry Mackenzie, and Laurence Sterne), a significant number of sentimental novels published in the latter half of the eighteenth century were written by women (2019, 4) such as Frances Burney, Anne Radcliffe, Maria Edgeworth, Charlotte Lennox and Charlotte Smith. Many of these texts by authors of both sexes focussed on the proper functioning of female bodies in the public sphere. John Mullan asserts that the sentimental body is more often than not a female body (1990, 61), a body whose “vocabulary is that of gestures and palpitations, sights and tears” (61). In Mullan’s estimation, “the vocabulary [of sensibility] is powerful because it is not spoken (but only spoken of); it is everything that punctures or interrupts speech” (61). Similarly, Paul Goring suggests that sentimental literature reflected the concurrent “preoccupation in British culture . . . with the human body as an eloquent object, whose eloquence arises from the performance of an inscribed system of gestures and expressions” (2009, 5).[4] He explains that sentimental novels participated in a larger social discourse which was “engaged in training the body” (5) and aimed to influence the appearance and function of female bodies in public spaces. To this end, sentimental fiction introduced a new type of literary heroine[5] whose sentimentality was inextricably linked to the "developing signatory system of politeness" (6). Sentimental novels played an integral role in cementing socio-cultural links between emotional expression and proper behaviour for eighteenth-century women, and moreover authors like Richardson and Sterne relied upon a "language of feeling for the purpose of representing necessary social bonds" (1). Mullan suggests that particularly in Richardson's novels descriptions of female virtue were "realized in the capacity to feel and display sentiments" (1990, 61), which was "not so much spoken as displayed" (61). Sentimentality as a visual, rather than verbal, expression functioned as part of the period's preoccupation with discerning how different bodies functioned in the public sphere and highlights the commonplace practice of scrutinizing these bodies and evaluating them against an ideal code of virtuous social conduct. What Mullan underscores in his remarks is that the desire for external markers of internal moral values, like virtue, were realized in the descriptions of sentimental heroines. Furthermore, the capacity of these fictional characters to express genuine and legible emotions – through a visual vocabulary of blushes, tears and sighs – was deeply influenced by contemporary concerns about female participation in the rapidly expanding commercial marketplace. In this context, it becomes evident that alongside the perceived power of expression allocated to the sentimental heroine, her body was subjected to tremendous public scrutiny.

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[2] Laura Mandell in *Misogynous Economies: The Business of Literature in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, building upon the work of scholars like Ellen Pollak, Mary Poovey and Margaret Doody, suggests that the idealisation of women was a common facet of literature during the eighteenth century. Mandell asserts that "the representation of ideal femininity [in literary texts] serves a social or economic or political function, that the middle class defines itself around" (1999, 22).

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[3] Rivero speaks to the tremendous popularity of sentimental fiction in his “Introduction” to *The Sentimental Novel in the Eighteenth Century* suggesting that sentimental novels “reached the height of their vogue in the 1770s and 1780s and were still popular in the 1790s,” and “by century’s end, sentimental novels were omnipresent in the British book market” (1).

[4] It is interesting to note that as with conduct manuals, here again in the case of sentimental fiction we run into the same paradoxical problem because as much as conduct manuals and sentimental fiction underscored the importance of female virtue and modest consumption – as integral to maintaining existing social hierarchies – these texts and their authors simultaneously relied upon these same systems of consumption and circulation that they sought to critique in order to sell copies of texts. Christopher Flint in “Speaking Objects: The Circulation of Stories in Eighteenth-Century Prose Fiction” clearly links the circulation of mid-eighteenth-century narratives to social and economic systems that emphasize the value of the text as an object of consumption (1998, 215). Similarly, John Feather in *A History of British Publishing* asserts that publishers and booksellers in the mid-to-late eighteenth century benefitted from a well-established system that despite its rapid growth was primarily stable (1989, 112). Continuing, Feather explains that in the “last quarter of the eighteenth century” the system benefitted from changing copyright laws which led to explosive growth in the reprinting of old texts (113). Not only did publishing benefit from legislative changes, but moreover from the relatively new phenomenon of self-improvement through self-education which flourished near the century’s end (118). Capitalizing on these systemic changes Feather asserts that “competition was rampant in a period of massive and largely uncontrolled economic growth” (117).

By focusing on the socially accepted functions of the female body outside the domestic sphere, a number of the hallmarks of virtuous femininity were subtly promoted by sentimental literature particularly in relation to discussions of middle-class consumers and working women. In Richardson's *Pamela*, concerns over the titular character's moral integrity are directly enmeshed in discussion around her clothing. Frequently, Richardson uses Pamela's garments as a means of illustrating her virtuous behaviour. For example, in a letter to her parents Pamela writes that she has been given "a suit of my late Lady's cloaths, and half a dozen of her shifts, and six fine handkerchiefs, and three of her Cambrick aprons, and four Holland ones" (1740, 11). Immediately following her description of the garments, she adds that "the Cloaths are fine silk, and too rich and too good for me, to be sure. I wish it was no Affront to him to make money of them, and sent it to you: it would do me more good. You will be full of fears, I warrant now, of some design upon me" (11).

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[5] Although this paper focusses on the role of sentimental literature in discussions about female social participation, it is important to note that the sentimental novel also advanced new male characters who functioned as sentimental or emotionally expressive bodies.

This early scene illustrates Pamela's comprehension of her own problematic social position – a poor servant who has nevertheless received a noble education – as a category that is externally communicated through her choice of garments. In noting that her "late Lady's cloathes" are "too rich and too good" for her, Richardson explicitly links her proper social function as a servant and working woman to her choice of garments. A few pages later in her parents' response to Pamela's letter they question her acceptance of the fine garments, and warn against sartorial pride: "what tho' the doubts I fill'd you with, lessen the pleasure you would have had in your Master's Kindness, yet what signify the delights that arise from a few paltry fine Cloaths, in comparison with a good Conscience?" (14). Pamela's parents go on to equate the "temptations" of fine clothes with sexual misconduct: "I tremble to think what a sad Hazard a poor Maiden of little more than Fifteen years of age stands against the temptations of this world . . . besure don't let people's telling you[,] you are pretty puff you up: for you did not make yourself, and so can have no praise due you for it. It is Virtue and Goodness only, that make the true beauty. Remember that, Pamela" (14–15). Structurally formatted in the familiar conduct manual style of epistolary parental advice, Pamela's letter to her parents and their response explicitly link discussions of Pamela's virtue to the garments she chooses to wear. Expanding upon Pamela's earlier reservations about accepting such an extravagant gift, her parent's response not only underlines the central role of garments in determining their daughter's virtue, but moreover Richardson's treatment of the common practice of rewarding servants with second-hand finery hints at a widespread "trickle-down" moral economy in which immorality and pride are bequeathed to the lower orders by their social "betters."[6]

The focus on Pamela's clothing in this section of Richardson's novel speaks to a much broader cultural discussion around the garments of working women where frivolous spending and extravagant dress was seen as a threat to the proper functioning of social hierarchies. What comes to the forefront in discussions of sentimental modes of femininity is that instead of operating as binary opposites – as conduct manuals and moralistic tracts purported – eighteenth-century conceptions of female virtue and duplicity are indivisibly intertwined. In this sense, sentimental fiction, drawing on the foundation established by conduct manuals, called for performances of female virtue through dress and behaviour that could be easily identified (and objectified) by the male gaze. As Marlene LeGates, Tassie Gwilliam and Jennie Batchelor to varying degrees demonstrate in their work, the catch is that heroines who performed these expressions of virtue were simultaneously questioned for the veracity of their claims. Here, both virtue and duplicity are to some extent performances of expected female behaviour that cannot be entirely severed from each other. At first, the interrelated nature of virtue and duplicity seems to act as yet another patriarchal trip wire where women were expected to conform to an unattainable standard of public social conduct. However, in refusing to read virtue and duplicity as respectively representative of depth and superficiality, as we might be inclined to do, we open the door to reading these socially engrained cues in such a way that is constructive rather than reductive for women in the public sphere.

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[6] The concerns of Pamela's parents reflect widespread concerns around the detrimental effects of vanity and extravagant spending particularly for eighteenth-century youth. For example, John Guyse in a sermon from 1728 reminds his congregation that "days of youth are, ordinarily, days of the greatest vanity" (10). Continuing, Guyse explains that "vain and defiling company, the pride of dress and of every new extravagant mode, merriment and jollity, cards and dice, intemperance, luxury, drunkenness, and debaucheries too often waste their precious time" (10). Guyse's concerns are similarly echoed seventy years later in Thomas Shillitoe's *To the Inhabitants of Great Britain* (1798) where he asserts that "with regard to luxury, if we take a view of the manner of life in which most inhabitants of the land indulge themselves, and particularly the trading part of this great and flourishing metropolis; such scenes of dissipation, extravagance, and wantonness appear, as are not les repugnant to the public welfare than to the dignity of the Christian name… How are the sober manners of our forefathers departed from!" (10).

During the same decade in which Richardson's *Pamela* was published, and amidst the heyday of sentimental fiction's popularity, David Garrick premiered his adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1748). Despite its success in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Shakespearean version of *Romeo and Juliet* was largely absent during the Restoration and in the first decades of the period. One of the few instances of the play's performance in this period was a short run in 1662 by D'Avenant's Company. The play was adapted by James Howard, and in order to please both audience members who desired a happy resolution and those who preferred the original's tragic ending, the script was made into a "tragi-comedy" that pursued different conclusions on alternating nights; where in one ending the lovers died tragically and on the other they survived (Berg 1989, 24). Samuel Pepys documents seeing this iteration of *Romeo and Juliet* in its first performance since the Restoration. In his *Diary* Pepys succinctly remarks that this version of *Romeo and Juliet* "is the play of itself the worst that ever I heard in my life, and the worst acted that ever I saw these people do" (39). Following this lackluster performance by D'Avenant's Company, there is a brief gap in performances of the play. In the prefatory remarks of the 1961 Cambridge University Press edition of *Romeo and Juliet,* editor John Dover Wilson explains that no rendition of the original Shakespearean play was performed for over eighty years (1961, 39). Continuing, Wilson disparagingly remarks that the Shakespearean script performed in the 1660s was "supplanted by a strange hotch-potch [sic] of garbled Shakespeare matter and new invention" (1961, 39) that he identifies as Thomas Otway's *The History and Fall of Caius Marius* (1679), which heavily borrowed from *Romeo and Juliet.* Despite being technically correct in his assertion that no rendition of the play was performed until the 1740s, Wilson misses the mark in his dismissal of Otway's adaptation. Although not a "true" adaptation of Shakespeare's work, Otway's play drew large crowds and continued to be popular for more than fifty years. Moreover, four years before Garrick staged his adaptation, Theophilus Cibber produced a heavily revised adaptation at the Theatre in the Haymarket which debuted on 11 September 1744 (Wilson 1961, 40). Although comparably less liberal with his adaptation, Cibber's version also contained some notable changes from the original and was similarly considered a great success (Berg 1989, 27). Even after Garrick's adaptation became the predominate text for the production in 1748, these earlier adaptations remained a facet of theatrical debates in the periodical press. Ultimately, the success of *Caius Marius* and Cibber's *Romeo and Juliet* not only emphasizes the mutability of Shakespeare's original, but also highlights how the themes of *Romeo and Juliet* were tremendously popular during the period.

Much like its predecessors, Garrick's version of *Romeo and Juliet* was hugely successful when it debuted, and unlike Otway's *Caius Marius*, Garrick's script has proved to be the "most enduringly successful production of the play" (1989, 30).[7] In his adaptation, Garrick made a number of substantial changes to the text, most notably by cutting down the dialogue in favour of adding in dance numbers[8] and pantomime elements (45–46). In the context of this study, the most important alterations in Garrick's *Romeo and Juliet* were those made to the character of Juliet. A review of Garrick's adaptation from *The Dramatic Censor* underscores the modifications made to Juliet, suggesting that Garrick "has taken very unusual, and very successful pains with his female character" (1770, 171). The reviewer finds this new version of Juliet to be a "most amiable lady; she is tender, affectionate and constant;

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[7] Berg continues to explain that "Garrick's text exerted enormous influence on the stage presentation of *Romeo and Juliet* for over a century and was used, with only very slight variations, as the standard text in performance until the 1840s; some of its innovations were still in use in the 1880s" (1989, 30).

[8] Playbills for Garrick's *Romeo and Juliet* often note that performances of the play would include a "minuet by Juliet and the leading dancer of the company" (Stone 1978, 142). The important addition of musical elements to Garrick's adaption is highlighted by George Winchester Stone Jr. who describes the first time Romeo and Juliet meet, "they had opportunity for unfolding themselves in their growing, youthful love by pantomimic action, in a location of prominence on stage against the background of dancers and soft music" (142).

possessed of liberal sentiments and delicate feelings; rather romantic in some notions, but justifiably so from age and situation of mind" (192). Emphasized throughout the review is the ability of Garrick's Juliet to articulate her emotions and take action as an active participant in the drama: she openly expresses her affection for Romeo when they first meet (177), is impatient to be married (174), delivers a passionate soliloquy (182), has an "expressive and affecting" discussion with the Friar (184) and most importantly is given the chance to react to Romeo's death (187). Unlike Shakespeare's original text, Garrick alters the death scene in Act Five, which is described in detail by *The Dramatic Censor*:

> nature is brought to her most critical feelings at the moment Juliet awakes, and her husband's affectionate transports, forgetting what he has done [drink poison], fills the audience with a most cordial sympathy of satisfaction, which is soon dashed . . . Her behaviour after his death, catching as it were his frenzy, and passing from grief to distraction, is a masterly variation in Juliet; what follows her paying the debt of nature, is judiciously contracted into a narrow compass; indeed we will venture to affirm, that no play ever received greater advantage from alteration than this tragedy, especially in the last act; bringing Juliet to life before Romeo dies is undoubtedly a change of infinite merit. The new dying scene does Mr. Garrick great credit. (187)

Above all, what comes to the forefront in the reviewer's remarks is that Garrick's Juliet is nothing short of a sentimental heroine.

Among the forty-eight main stage productions put on at Drury Lane in 1748 (the year Garrick's adaptation debuted), *Romeo and Juliet* was the theatre's most performed piece, occupying a "12 per cent share of the overall receipts" (Ritchie 2015, 382). By November 23rd of 1749 the rights for Garrick's *Romeo and Juliet* were bought by Covent Garden (Winchester Stone Jr. 1979, 160). Playing at both Covent Garden and Drury Lane Theatres in 1750, "*Romeo and Juliet* was the only show in London" (Ritchie 2015, 374). In what has subsequently been dubbed "The Battle of the Romeos" (388), Garrick played Romeo at Drury Lane in direct competition with Spranger Barry's portrayal of the same character at Covent Garden. Although this interesting moment in theatre history has been well documented by scholars and critics,[9] the majority of the coverage has focussed on the performances of Barry and Garrick as dueling Romeos. However, at the same time Garrick and Barry vied for success as competing Romeos, George Anne Bellamy and Susannah Cibber performed "dueling" (*Dramatic Censor* 1770, 192) versions of Juliet. Describing Bellamy and Cibbers' differing interpretations of Juliet, a review from *The Dramatic Censor* remarked that "One excelled in amorous rapture, the other called every power of distress and despair to her aid; Mrs. Bellamy was an object of love, Mrs. Cibber of admiration; Mrs. Bellamy's execution was more natural, Mrs. Cibber's more forceable" (192–93). Certainly, both women are commended for different aspects of their performance, but what comes to the forefront in this discussion of Cibber's and Bellamy's respective merits is that Juliet as a character was evolving from her traditional role as a tragic lover. Taken together, the sentimental facets of Garrick's revised text and the remarks on Bellamy's "natural" performance highlight how Juliet had been reimagined as a figure of sentimental expression.

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[9] Spanning a staggering 271 years, coverage of this event ranges from contemporary eighteenth-century coverage in the periodical press to Leslie Ritchie's 2015 article, "Pox on Both Your Houses: The Battle of the Romeos."

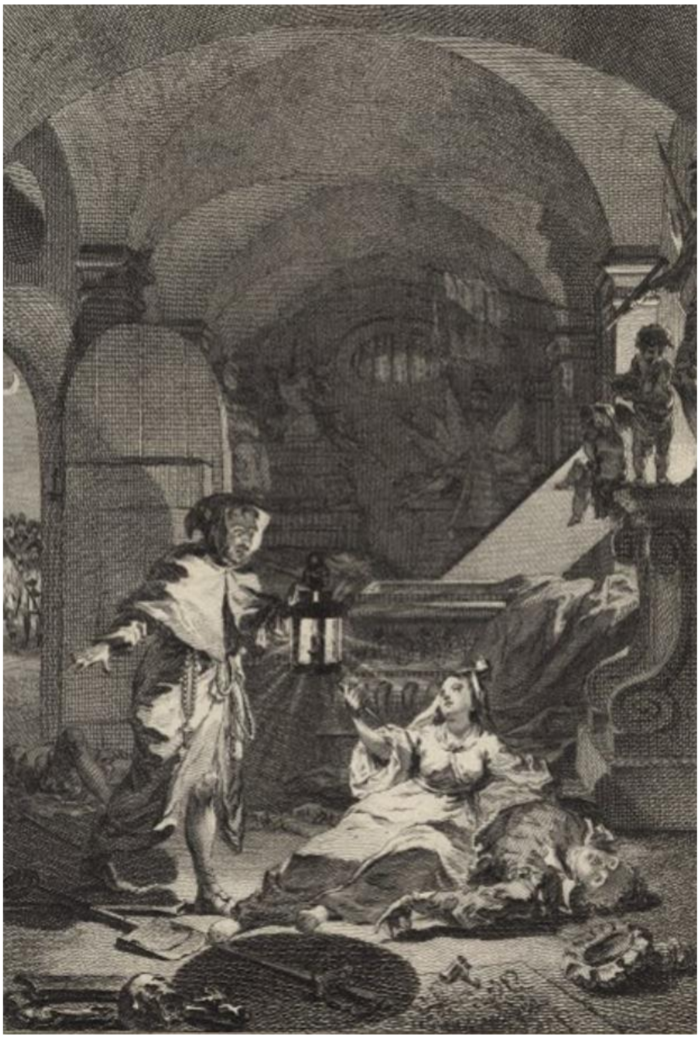

Figure 1: "Romeo & Juliet" (1754) by Anthony Walker, etching on paper. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

It is not surprising, considering the popularity of Garrick's adaptation, that Juliet quickly became an integral facet of the sociocultural lexicon. From mid-century onward the character of Juliet frequently appeared in the periodical press not just in the many reviews of specific performances, although those were certainly plentiful,[10] but as a cultural touchstone in discussions of sentimental expression. The cultural capital accrued by Juliet is highlighted in a letter "To the Printer of the Lady's Magazine" wherein the author, who identifies himself as a bashful and "dejected youth" (1773, 293), draws upon the associations of Juliet in a discussion of his "sincere and virtuous affection for a young lady" (293). Asking for advice from the magazine's readership in order to pursue his love interest, the writer constructs a discourse of courtship that highlights both his own morally upstanding behaviour and the virtue of his love. He implores "your fair correspondents whose hearts are susceptible to pity" to write to his "dear charmer, Juliet" (293) on his behalf. Referring to the character of Juliet in his call for relationship advice frames the narrative in terms that play into established romantic tropes which not only aims to engage readers, but moreover helps to communicate his emotional desires through the use of Juliet as an affective touchstone.

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[10] It should be noted that reviews of various iterations of *Romeo and Juliet* appear in a *considerable* number of general interest periodicals (i.e., publications that were not specifically devoted to the coverage of theatrical performances) like *The New Literary Review, The Bee; or Literary Weekly Intelligencer*

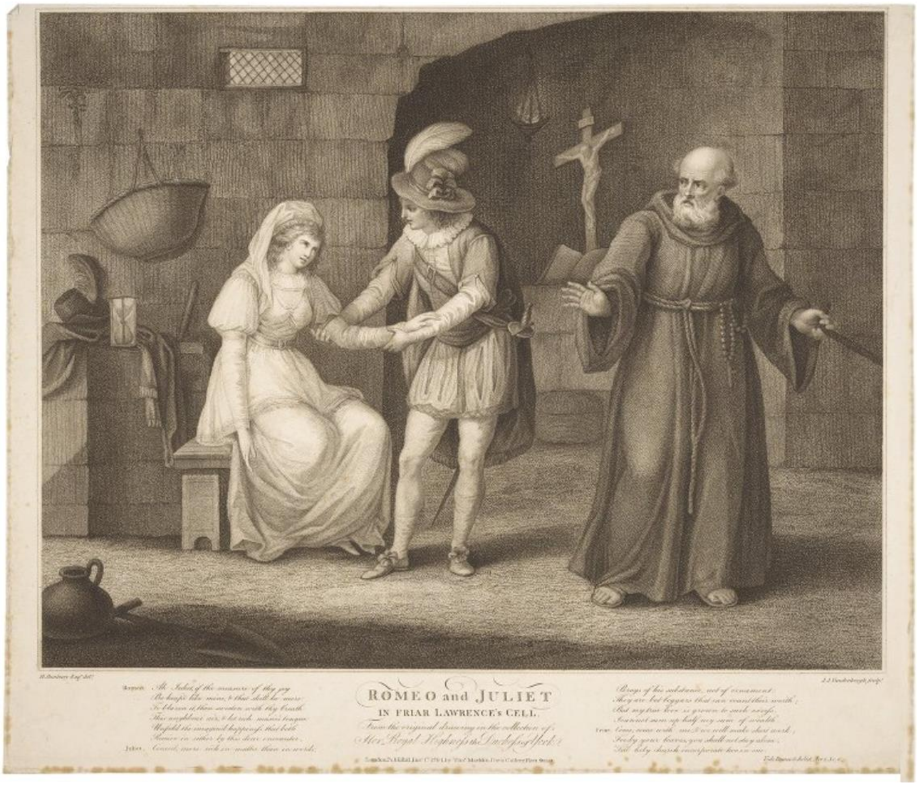

Figure 2: Ignatius Joseph van den Berghe. *Romeo and Juliet in Friar Lawrence's Cell* (London 1794). Folger Shakespeare Library: No. 29665. Used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

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and *The Universal Museum; or, Gentleman's and Ladies Polite Magazine of History, Politicks and Literature*.

Juliet's popularity was not limited to verbal descriptions and throughout the second half of the eighteenth century the character of Juliet was also frequently the subject of prints, engravings and paintings. Imagined by artists like Henry Bunbury, Benjamin Wilson, Francesco Bartolozzi, Anthony Walker, Robert Stands, Ignatius Joseph van den Berghe and John Opie, Juliet is similarly characterised as an eighteenth-century sentimental heroine. In two of these images, Walker's "Romeo and Juliet" (1754) and van den Berghe's "Romeo and Juliet in Friar Lawrence's Cell" (1794), both artists use Juliet's garments as external markers of her virtue and to convey genuine emotional expression (see respectively Figures 1 and 2). Walker and van den Berghe both clothe Juliet in a dress that features a natural silhouette,[11] which flows loosely around her body and is made of a light-coloured fabric. In both images, the dresses feature a modest collar, a small belt (at her natural waist) and wide gigot sleeves; all of which were elements of the widely adopted chemise-style dresses that were ubiquitously popular at the time and were considered to be the height of fashion when worn by notable aristocratic figures like Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire and Marie Antoinette. In contrast to the Walker's print, the position of her body (sitting upright as opposed to draped over the corpse of Romeo) in van den Berghe's image makes the details of Juliet's garments more easily discernible. Van den Berghe adorns Juliet's dress with slim-banded ribbons at the upper arm, shoulder and at the hem of a simple decorative apron which falls over the skirt. The apron-style detailing on the skirt was a popular feature of women's daywear in the 1780s and 1790s (Edwards 2017, 61), and in combination with van den Berghe's choice of a jockey cap[12] for Juliet's headwear he constructs Juliet as both a virtuous woman donning a natural silhouette *and* a woman of fashion. Although more evident in van den Berghe's work, both artists portray Juliet as a woman decked out in the latest fashionable trends, while also associating Juliet with a more "natural" style that enabled the body to move more freely (unencumbered by heavy fabrics and stiff corsetry) and allowed for the easy discernment of bodily cues. Much like Mullan identifies for literary sentimental heroines, Juliet's sentimentality is not spoken, but rather materialized by her costume.

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[11] Lydia Edwards in *How to Read a Dress: A Guide to Changing Fashion from the 16th to 20th Century* explains that one of the most popular styles of eighteenth-century dress (particularly in the later years of the period) utilized a "natural silhouette" (2017, 64), which featured "lightweight, easy-to-launder . . . materials such as muslin, cotton, poplin, batiste and linen" (64).

[12] It is interesting to note that in addition to being one of the most popular choices for eighteenth-century women's headwear, the jockey cap is often thought to be a predecessor to the late nineteenth-century "Juliet Cap" (aptly named after Shakespeare's heroine), which remains popular today as a choice of bridalwear.

In this way, Juliet, as imagined by both van den Berghe and Walker, adopts a number of the hallmarks of sentimentality identified by Pamela's letters to her parents as every item of clothing speaks to both a knowledge of fashionable trends, while remaining firmly in the realm of modest adornment (for example, Juliet's garments speak to her social position but are not showy, they feature some decoration but are not overly embellished, etc.) In so doing the character of Juliet carefully straddles the proverbial gulf between virtuous femininity and frivolous consumption. Although we are not privy to the character's internal deliberation around her choice of garments, as we are with Pamela, what is highlighted by the similarities of Juliet's dress in each image is that an external code for identifying virtuous femininity was woven into the fabric of her garments, which allowed audiences to instantly align characters like Juliet with socially condoned values for "ideal" expressions of female identity.

Not only does Juliet's dress facilitate the viewer's ability to interpret her movements and gestures, but moreover these descriptions explicitly connect the character of Juliet to the period's most popular sentimental heroines. In Joseph Highmore's widely reproduced painting of Pamela from Richardson's novel[13] (see Appendix Image 1) she is similarly clad in a light-coloured gown with demi-gigot sleeves, a small bonnet and a bodice that emphasizes her natural waist. Although Pamela's dress bears several hallmarks of mid-century style with its modified winged cuff sleeves[14] and in the rounded silhouette of her opulent skirts which appears to be composed of at least three separate panels of fabric,[15] it is reminiscent of the gowns worn by Juliet in both van den Berghe and Walker's images. Pamela is not the only sentimental heroine clad in this white flowing style, and in fact engravings of Arabella from Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote*, Henrietta from Lennox's *Henrietta* and Betsy from Eliza Haywood's *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* are all similarly depicted.[16] In examining the dresses of Arabella, Pamela, Henrietta and Betsy in visual images, it becomes evident that white (or light coloured) flowing dresses, with modified gigot or gigot sleeves, modest caps and small belts emphasizing the wearer's natural waist act as a visual indicator of the character's status as a sentimental heroine. Considered alongside the depictions of these other heroines, the representation of Juliet in both van den Berghe and Walker's images directly links Juliet to a series of well-established visual markers of sentimentality, casting her as a sentimental figure.

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[13] Highmore's depiction of "Pamela and Mr. B" comes from a series of 12 paintings based on Richardson's novel, which were created in a similar style to Hogarth's successful series of paintings like "A Harlot's Progress" (1732) and "Marriage A-la-Mode" (1745), and were widely distributed and copied into etchings and sketches by artists like Louis Truchy (British Museum, Curatorial Comments https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1847-0306-13).

[14] Winged cuffs are identified by Edwards as a staple of early eighteenth-century sleeves, and she notes that nearing mid-century they underwent several gradual changes that eventually gave way to longer and more flowing sleeves in lighter fabrics (Edwards 2017, 52).

[15] Multi-paneled fabric skirts were widely popular in the middle of the century and often replaced longer skirt trains that were popular in the early years of the century (Edwards 2017, 50).

[16] See Appendix Images 2, 3 and 4.

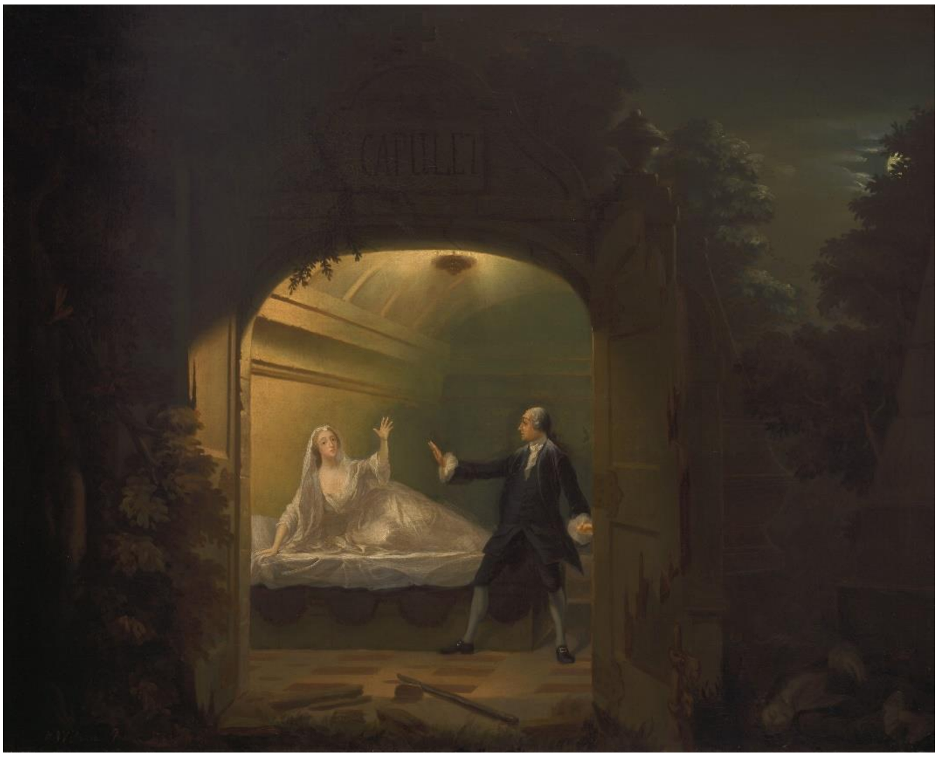

Figure 3: "David Garrick and George Anne Bellamy in 'Romeo and Juliet' Act V, Scene iii" (1753) by Benjamin Wilson. Held by the Yale Center for British Art, No. B1975.5.29.

Perhaps the most notable link between Juliet's sentimentality in the socio-cultural lexicon and performances of the character on stage is illustrated in Benjamin Wilson's painting "David Garrick and George Anne Bellamy in Romeo and Juliet" (1753), which captured their infamous 1750 run of the performance (See Figure 3). The image depicts Bellamy (as Juliet) in the process of waking up in the Capulet's tomb much to the astonishment of Garrick (as Romeo). Curatorial staff at the Victoria & Albert Museum[17] explain that Wilson's image accurately captures the staging of the performance with the lovers situated upstage centre in the Capulet's mausoleum. This unique glimpse into the staging of Garrick's *Romeo and Juliet* functions similarly to the other illustrations of Juliet from Walker and van den Berghe; however, in this instance the figure of Juliet is not solely a creation of the artist's imagination but is instead directly linked to Bellamy's performance. Wilson paints Bellamy in a light flowing gown and jockey cap that emphasize the movement of her body as she rises from her resting place. Painted in the same style as the depictions of Arabella, Pamela, Henrietta, Betsy and Juliet, Bellamy is represented by Wilson in the trappings of a sentimental heroine.

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[17] For additional information, see https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O84890/david-garrick-as-romeo-and-painting-wilson-benjamin.

Juliet's alignment with sentimentality in popular culture, when considered in conjunction with Garrick's re-imagining of the character as an opinionated and self-motivated young woman whose actions are motivated by her own desires (against the express wishes of her family), presents us with a complex character who refuses to fully comply with patriarchal expectations for female social participation, but at the same time is reimagined during the eighteenth century as a sentimental heroine. Drawing upon the cultural capital which so closely intertwined sentimental expression with virtuous femininity, Garrick is able to refashion Shakespeare's Juliet, and cloaked in the trappings of a sentimental heroine, she is able to take on a life of her own. Juliet, as initially reimagined by Garrick and reinterpreted by Walker and Van den Berghe, becomes a dually resonate figure who straddles the gulf between acceptable and deviant iterations of female expression. Taking the time to examine the relationship between sentimentality and performance illuminates the currents of cultural exchange between stage and page during the eighteenth century, but moreover draws our attention to the ways in which feminine expression in the public sphere was exceptionally complex and multifaceted, and encourages us to continue to challenge one-dimensional concepts of womanhood that seek only to perpetuate a very narrow idea of femininity.

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Appendix

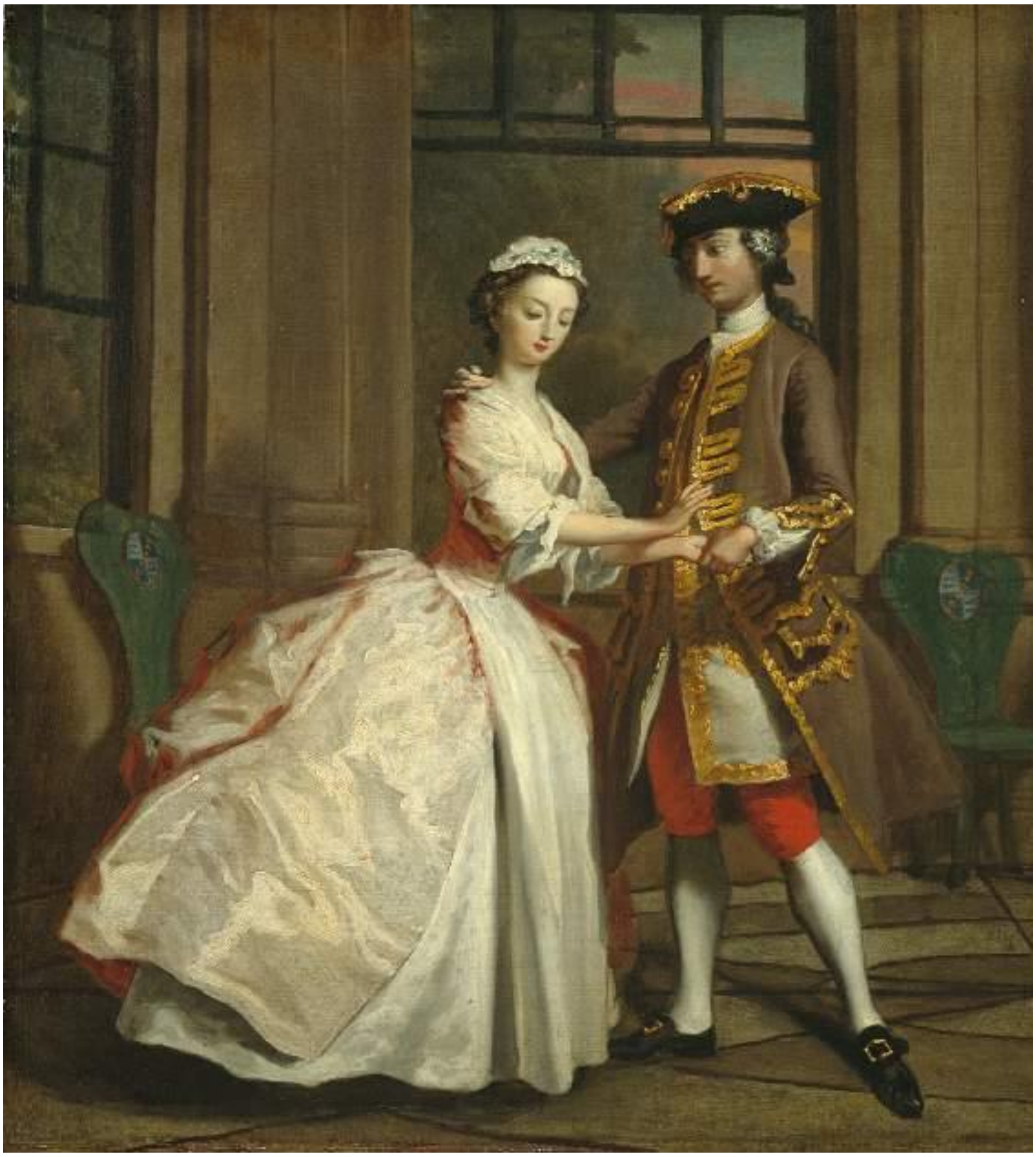

Image 1: "Pamela and Mr. B. in the summer house" (1743) by Joseph Highmore, oil on canvas. © Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

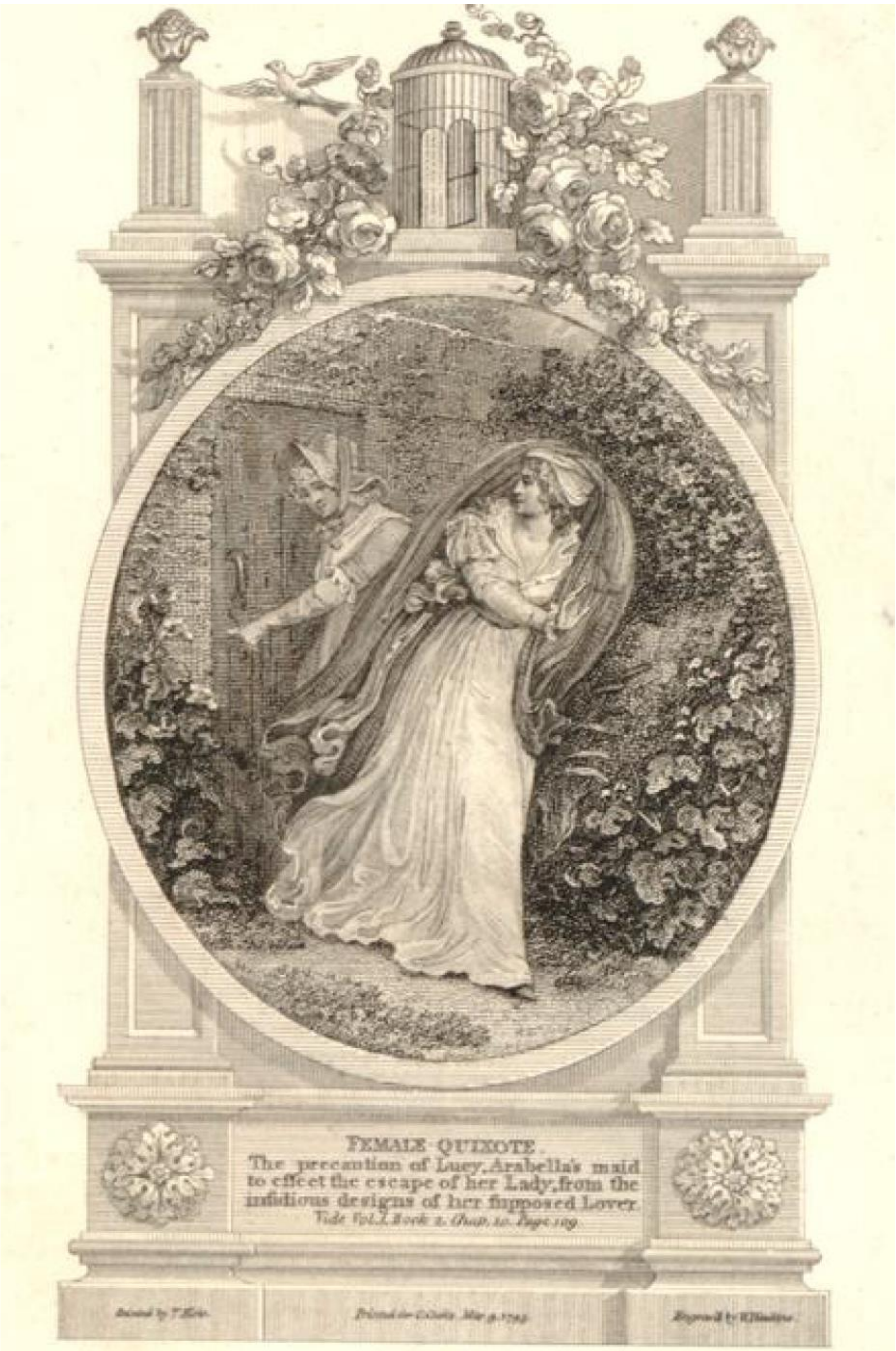
FEMALE QUIXOTE.
The precaution of Lucy, Arabella's maid
to effect the escape of her Lady, from the
inſidious designs of her ſuppoſed Lover.
Vide Vol. I. Book 2. Chap. 10. Page 129.

Image 2: "Female Quixote" (1799) by W. Hawkins after T. Kirk's painting for *Cooke's Pocket Edition of Select Novels*, engraving on paper. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

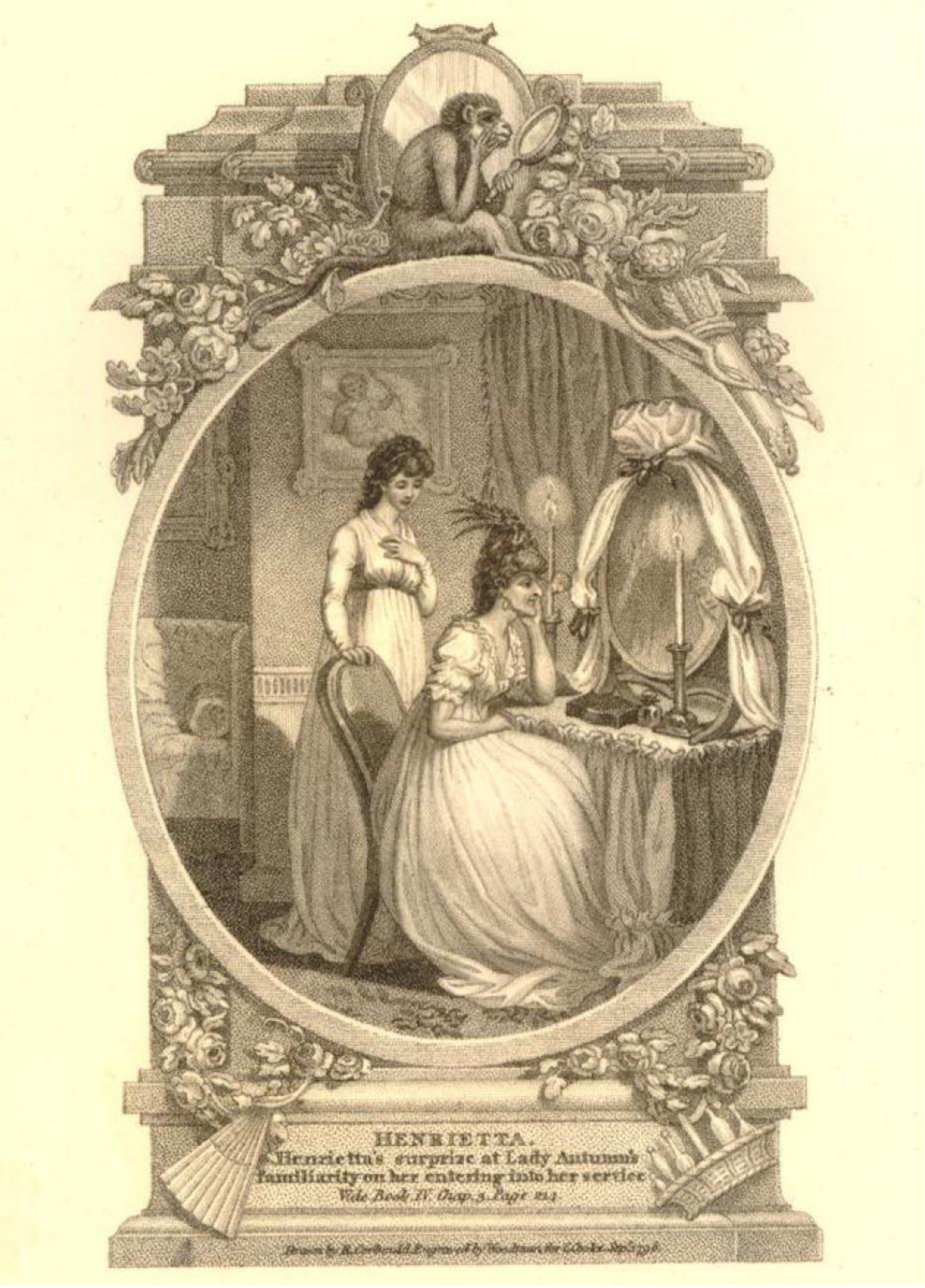
HENRIETTA.
Henrietta's surprize at Lady Autumn's
familiarity on her entering into her service
Vide Book IV. Chap. 3. Page 214

Image 3: "Henrietta" (1798) by Richard Woodman I after Richard Corbould's painting for *Cooke's Pocket Edition of Select Novels*, engraving on paper. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

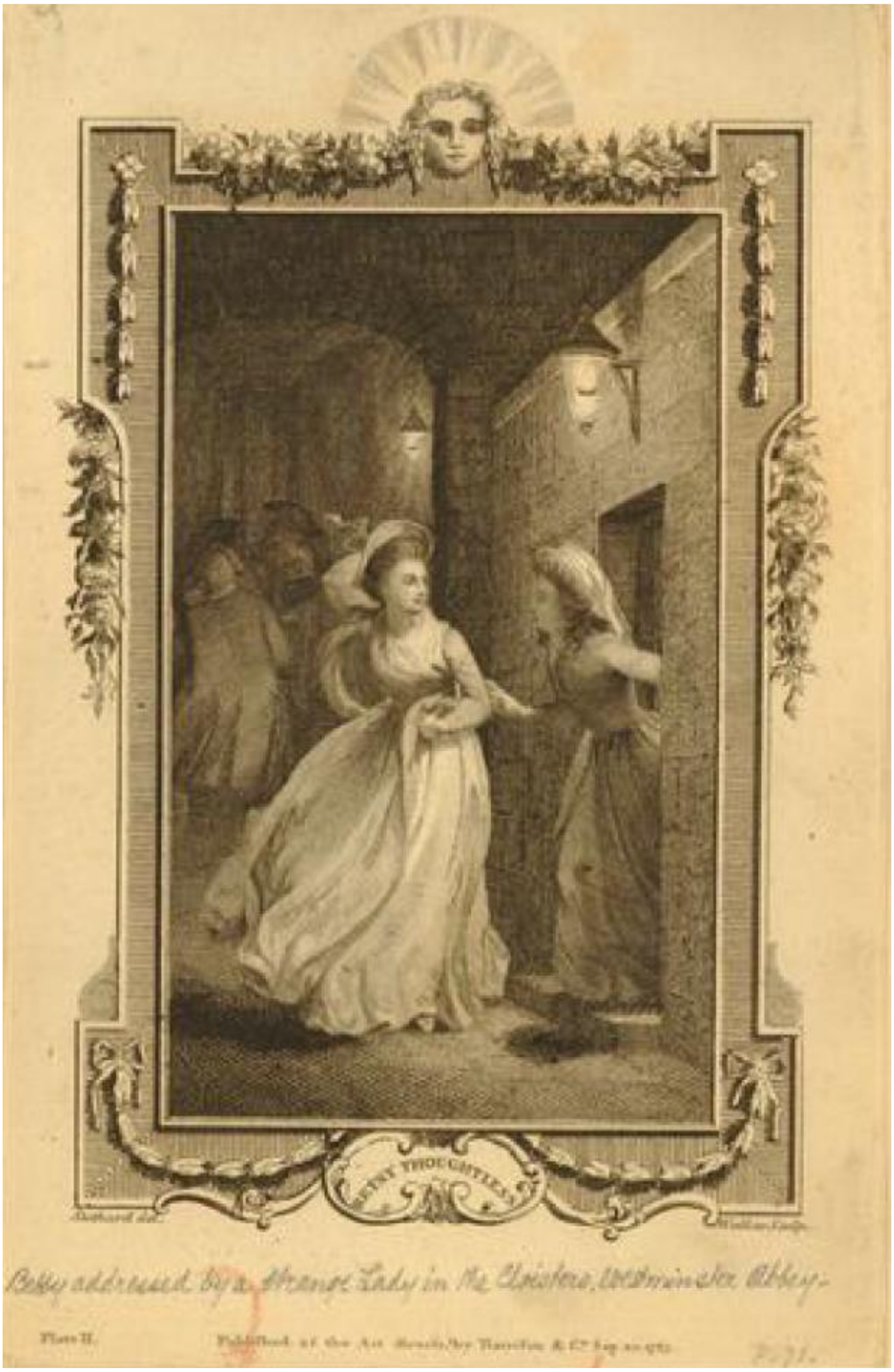
BETSY THOUGHTLESS
Betsy addressed by a Strange Lady in the Cloisters, Westminster Abbey.
Plate II.

Image 4: “Illustrations to Haywood’s ‘Betsy Thoughtless,’ for the *Novelists Magazine*” (1783) by James Heath, engraving on paper. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

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ACADEMIC NOTE

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MARRING THE PLOT: SUSANNA CENTLIVRE'S *THE BUSYBODY* AND THE CRITIQUE OF HETERONORMATIVITY

Laura Alexander

SUSANNA Centlivre's sentimental comedy, *The Busybody* (1709), her ninth and most popular play, introduces a typical figure of mirth, the fop Marplot, alongside the typically witty couples, Miranda and Sir George Airy, and the pair, Isabinda and Charles. Like Miranda and Sir George, Isabinda and Charles face difficulties from blocking authority characters, Sir Francis Gripe and Sir Jealous Traffick, but also from Marplot. As his name implies, Marplot unwittingly foils each character's plans several times, producing comedic mayhem. But his character presents a challenge to the typical formula of sentimental comedy and critiques the heteronormative dynamic of marriage that defined them in the early eighteenth century. The play does not point to the importance of marriage but to the idiosyncrasies of Marplot's character and his need for Charles. His homoerotic desire presents a radical alternative to heterosexual love and marriage. As Centlivre concentrates so much attention on Marplot, she shifts the focus from the couples that will inevitably marry to the challenges and desires of a darkly comedic figure attempting to subvert a normative system.

Secrets consume Marplot throughout the play, mostly as they relate to Charles. Centlivre envisions a different kind of desire that she explores in Marplot's character, or homo-erotic love. If Centlivre typically upholds conventional endings in her plays, she departs from convention in certain characters. There is a forced marriage and a trapped woman. And then there is another form of entrapment with Marplot, who obsesses over Charles even though he can never have him. *The Busybody* was not Centlivre's first play to deal with the problems of marriage; however, it is her darkest exploration of the tensions that compromised the heteronormative standards of the day.

Marplot's "chief pleasure lies in knowing everybody's business," (2.3) as he would "know every man's concern" (1.1) and "love[s] discoveries" (3.1), or gossip, a stereotypically "feminine" characteristic. Charles' "secret," or his secret amour, drives Marplot "stark mad" (1.1) to know and unravel. Described as Charles's "instrument," Marplot becomes a willing partner, anxious to do anything for his beloved. Charles tells Sir George that Marplot will "lend his money when he has any, run of errands and be proud on't; in short, he'll pimp for [him], lie for [him], drink for [him], do anything but fight for [him]" (1.1). And though Marplot, in Charles's words, has "a passionate desire to kiss" Sir George's "hand" (1.1), or to be known by a wit, it is Charles who most fascinates him. Marplot often contrives an "accident" (1.1) to prevent Charles from his love affairs with women, as Charles explains in Act One to George, who becomes frustrated with Marplot's blunderings.

At first obsessed with the town wits, Marplot only wants to know what the men about town do and say about him and each other; by the end of the play, however, Marplot loses interest in others. Marplot fixates on Charles and cares nothing for George's contrivances. He does not want to know George's secrets unless they help him to understand Charles better. In Act Four, when George *does* want Marplot to know his secret with Miranda, or one "of the party" (4.5), Marplot wants "to be let in to nothing" (4.5). Instead, as Sir George reminds the audience, "now has he a mind to be gone to Charles" (4.5). Marplot reiterates that he "never had more mind to be gone in [his] life" (4.5). He loses interest in every intrigue but his own love affair however remote the possibility of a real relationship with Charles outside of friendship.

Centlivre intends for Marplot to appear initially as a foolish fop, and she reinforces his stereotypical effeminacy, including his interest in the monkey, gossiping, and his appearance. But the play focuses on the hidden, deeper meanings to Marplot's love for Charles, whom he wants to "have an opinion of [his] courage" (3.3). Marplot's fixation with Charles's secrets and desires drives the plot in the latter half of the play. After almost ruining Charles's cover from Sir Jealous with his "bawling," Marplot desires to "oblige Sir George," but only that "it may be a means to reconcile [him] again to Charles" (3.3). The play takes a darker turn when Marplot suffers from several literal beatings for his inquiries. In Act 3, scene 5, Marplot pines to "have some comfort in being beat for [him]" (3.5), a desire for Charles to acknowledge how he has suffered for him.

While Marplot never offers a direct speech about his homoerotic desires, his attentiveness to Charles and the thwarting of the play's heteronormative love affairs gesture to an innate wish for a different outcome that includes an amorous relationship with Charles. Other characters and speeches point out his lack of interest in women. In Act Four, scene five, after Marplot mistakenly frustrates Miranda and Sir George's rendezvous, Miranda notes that Marplot "Converse[s] but little with our sex," or with women, since he "can't reconcile contradictions" (4.5). The Prologue to *The Busybody* was written by the playwright of *Tunbridge Walks* – a play that features a homosexual character, Maiden. In the Prologue, Maiden points to Marplot's inclinations for men.

Centlivre leaves Marplot's desires unrealized at the end; he never responds to Charles's marriage. Like Sir Jealous, Marplot claims he is "as happy as any" (5.4) when Sir George promises that he will receive his estate. But his desire for Charles remains unfulfilled and problematic because his character has become the dominant one by the end of the play. Centlivre constructs a social world that ends conventionally even as she critiques its surface marriages; she cannot resolve Marplot's obsession with Charles. Neither can she propose another happy alternative for Marplot's character. He seems to accept Charles's traditional marriage, but as Katherine M. Rogers and Richard C. Frushell have both pointed out, Centlivre defaults to perfunctory marriage plot endings, without intellectual scrutiny or philosophical speculation (Frushell 1986). It is the most unsentimental of sentimental comedies in the era (Rogers 1982, 100). The play's very mundane, routine ending is what allows Centlivre to refocus attention on Marplot's problem.

Centlivre presents a sympathetic and lonely figure in Marplot; she advocates for the tolerance of homosexual characters like him, even if she does not present radical alternatives to traditional marriage for women or gay men. Both, she suggests, are trapped in a system.[1] While Centlivre intended us to laugh at Marplot, she also meant for us to see in his character an outcast, a figure for our sympathy ultimately rather than ridicule. Marplot's beatings particularly cast a dark shadow on the superficial world of sentimental comedy. Perhaps, after all, the play advocates new modes of treatment beneath the comedic layers, including tolerance, and forces us to re-conceptualize the potential for homoerotic love in sentimental eighteenth-century comedy.

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[1] Centlivre also wrote a sequel that focuses mainly on Marplot in 1710: *Mar-plot: or, the second part of The busie-body*.

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INTERVIEWS,
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"WITH SEVERAL ENTERTAINMENTS OF DANCING": INTERVIEW WITH DANCE HISTORIAN MOIRA GOFF ABOUT DANCING ON THE LONDON RESTORATION AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STAGE

Anna Mikyšková

MOIRA Goff is a dance historian specialising in ballroom and theatre dance between 1660 and 1760, with a particular interest in dancing on the London stage. Her research in these areas occasionally extends as far as 1830. In 2001, Moira received a PhD from the University of Kent at Canterbury for her thesis "Art and Nature Join'd: Hester Santlow and the Development of Dancing on the London Stage, 1700–1737." Her book *The Incomparable Hester Santlow: A Dancer-Actress on the Georgian Stage* appeared in 2007.[1] Moira is also a rare books and special collections librarian. She was previously curator of British Printed Collections 1501–1800 at the British Library and her exhibition *Georgians Revealed* was held there 2013–2014. She has published many articles on dance history, and she writes a blog entitled *Dance in History*. Moira also researches, reconstructs and occasionally performs the notated dances of the early eighteenth century.

AM: When we look into the *London Stage* catalogue of London theatre programmes, there are regular references to dancing, some general, some very specific.[2] Yet theatre historians tend to focus on plays and operas. In comparison to acting and singing, how much of the theatrical evening was devoted to dancing? How had it changed throughout the period between 1660 and 1750?

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[1] Moira Goff, *The Incomparable Hester Santlow: A Dancer-Actress on the Georgian Stage* (Routledge, 2019).

[2] *The London Stage, 1660–1800*, edited by William van Lennep, Emmet L. Avery, Arthur H. Scouten, George Winchester Stone, Jr., and Charles Beecher Hogan (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960–1968).

MG: In London's theatres, relatively little time was given to dancing during each performance, but it often ran through the whole evening – notably in the entr'actes, but also within plays (tragedies as well as comedies). From the 1670s it was included in dramatic operas, a few of which survived in the repertoire well into the eighteenth century, and from the late 1710s dancing was an integral part of pantomime afterpieces. The lack of evidence about performances during the late seventeenth century makes it difficult to chart changes and developments before the early 1700s, but there was certainly more dancing in London's theatres following the opening of the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre in 1714. The surviving newspaper advertisements and playbills show that dancing remained an important feature of theatre performances into the nineteenth century.

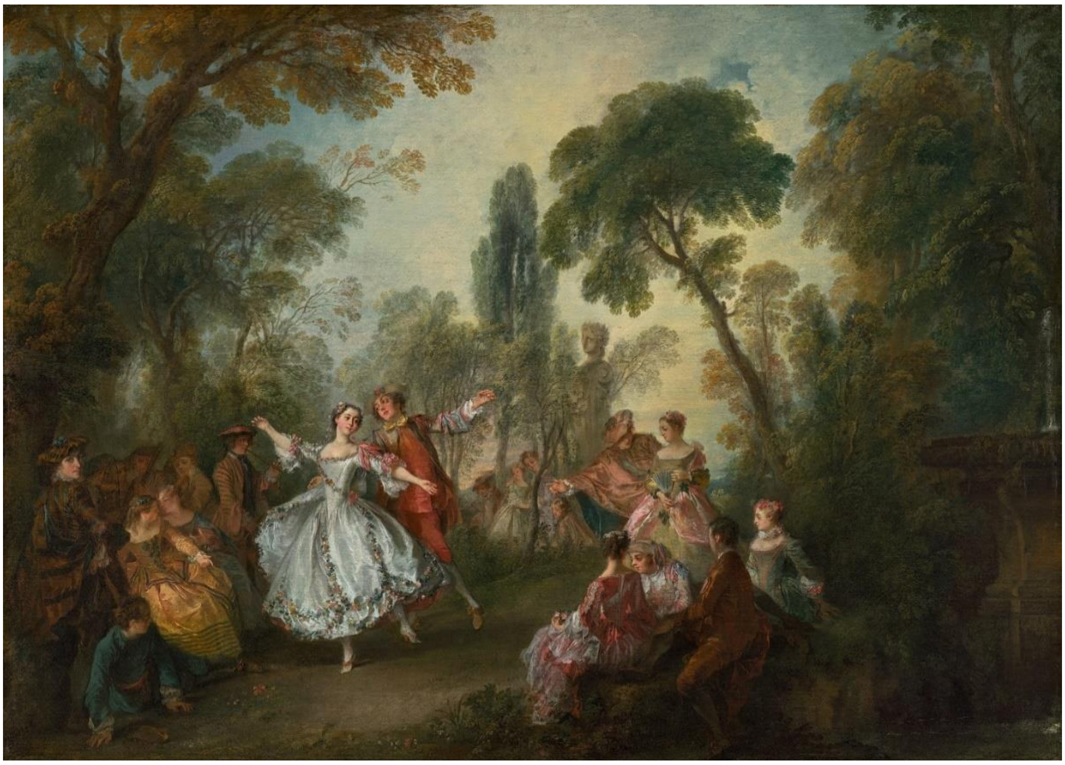

Figure 1: French dancer Marie-Anne de Cupis de Camargo, a ballet star of the Paris Opéra, painted by Nicolas Lancret in a stylized scene in a pastoral opera (c. 1730) (Source: commons.wikimedia.org)

What kind of dancing was actually taking place in the theatres? The French *baroque dance* or *belle dance,* which was a dancing style evolving at the court of Louis XIV, was becoming popular in England after 1700s. Should we imagine

an older form of modern ballet? Was there a difference between court and stage dancing in technique and type of dances?

"French" dancing, the style and technique developed in the *ballets de cour, comédies-ballets* and Lully's *tragédies en musique,* was probably first seen in London soon after the Restoration. In the 1670s there were several entertainments by French musicians and dancers at court and in the theatres, establishing "French" dancing on the London stage. By the early eighteenth century, it seems to have been the norm, but "English," "Scotch" and "Irish" dances were also given and these apparently used different styles and techniques, although we know little about them. Modern ballet is the descendant of "baroque" dance, and the two certainly share steps as well as a distinctive deportment, but the style and technique of baroque dance was very different – scholars/ practitioners are currently developing a variety of new theories about how it was performed. In his 1712 *An Essay Towards an History of Dancing* (see pp. 162–63), John Weaver was very clear about the difference between ballroom and stage dancing. He referred to the "peculiar Softness" of the former if put on stage and the "rough and ridiculous Air" of serious dancing if seen in a ballroom, as well as the greater use of jumping steps in theatrical dancing.[3]

What was the symbolic value of dancing in London theatres in the Restoration and later eighteenth-century period? Could we say that theatres gradually made the elite style of dancing, formerly associated with the court, available to broader audiences? How much did dancing contribute to or ensure the commercial success of the theatrical evening at that time?

Without more evidence for the Restoration period, it is difficult to be sure how dancing was developing at court and in the theatres. During the reign of Charles II, theatre audiences included many people who were close to the court, but this changed as time went on. I'm not sure whether we should characterise "French" dancing as a specifically elite style. I think that by the 1690s it must have been taught quite widely to those who could afford it (who were not necessarily from the highest ranks of society). London's theatres presented quite a range of dance styles – not only the "English," "Scotch" and "Irish" I have already referred to, but also dancing rooted in the *commedia dell'arte* which came to London in the 1670s through visits by Italian performers based in Paris. John Weaver, who was probably working as a professional dancer in London in the 1690s, reflects some of the range of dance styles to be seen there in his attempt to characterise the different genres of dancing in his 1712 *Essay towards an History of Dancing*. The extensive use of dancing in dramatic operas from the 1670s provides early evidence for its contribution to theatre profits. When John Rich opened the Lincoln’s Inn Fields Theatre in 1714, he gave particular emphasis to dancing because he could not compete with the drama offered by his rivals at Drury Lane and quickly found that dancing drew audiences. From the mid-1720s, the popularity of pantomime afterpieces took this further still.

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[3] John Weaver, *An Essay Towards an History of Dancing* (London: Printed for J. Tonson, 1712).

Would you agree that the growing popularity of the eighteenth-century afterpieces was, to a large extent, dependent on the popularity of dancing on stage? Can we say that the vogue in dancing paved the way for the emergence of English pantomimes?

Danced afterpieces were a natural development from the extended divertissements in dramatic operas, some of which held the stage throughout the eighteenth century, and the more elaborate entr’acte dances that began to emerge from the late 1710s. However, I think that the main driver for the emergence of the English pantomime was the *commedia dell’arte* entertainments given in the entr’actes. These “Italian Night Scenes” brought together comic dancing with mimed action, including the familiar lazzi, and added a thread of narrative. It is interesting that, while *commedia dell’arte* was at the core of the comic plots in most if not all pantomimes, at Lincoln’s Inn Fields the serious plot was performed by singers and at Drury Lane by dancers. The Drury Lane reliance on dancers was partly because the managers of that theatre gave primacy to serious drama and had little interest in music and singing.

That’s fascinating. Was there any particular reason why John Rich at Lincoln’s Inn Fields employed singers instead of dancers in the serious plots of his pantomimes? As you said, it was dancing that drew audiences after all.

John Rich was obviously looking to entertainments beyond drama, the tragedies and comedies that were the main attractions in London’s theatres, as he tried to rival Drury Lane. He also had an ambition to fulfil, for he wanted to establish an English form of opera, which could compete successfully against the Italian operas which were so popular with London’s elite. He set out his ideas in the dedication to the published libretto for *The Rape of Proserpine*, Lincoln’s Inn Fields Theatre’s popular new pantomime for the 1726–1727 season. Rich wrote of “Machinery, Painting, Dances, as well as Poetry” as additions that had been seen as necessary to the success of music in England. He must have been thinking of the elaborate dramatic operas of the late seventeenth century, which brought together drama with divertissements of music and dancing. Paradoxically, Rich turned to French opera for inspiration. *The Rape of Proserpine* drew on the libretto of Lully’s

1680 opera *Proserpine,* not least because like all French operas it made so much use of dancing. The influence of French opera can be traced in several of the pantomimes produced by Rich at the Lincoln’s Inn Fields Theatre.

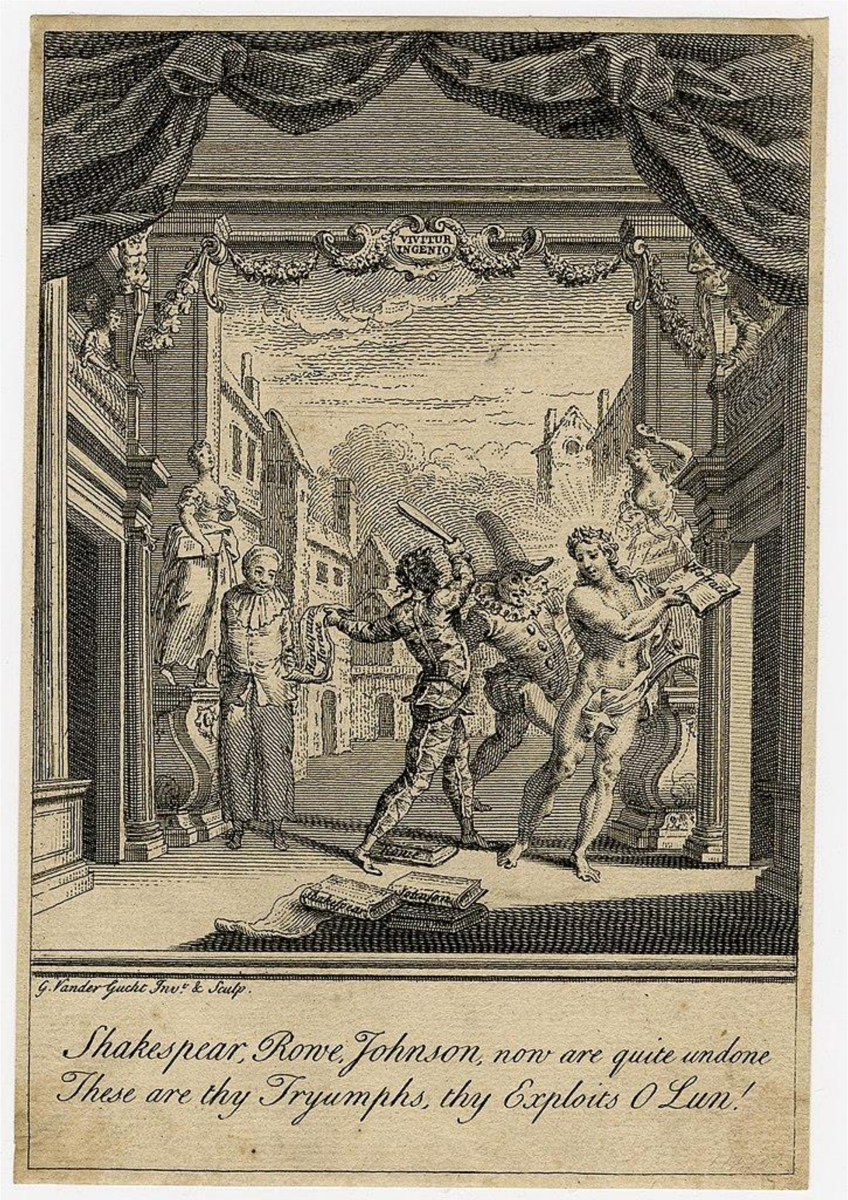
VIVITUR INGENIO
G. Vander Gucht Inv. & Sculp.
Shakespear, Rowe, Johnson, now are quite undone
These are thy Tryumphs, thy Exploits O Lun!

Figure 2: A satirical print (c. 1735–1745) mocking the popularity of British pantomime which competed with the traditional dramatic genres of the English stage. While Pierrot silently watches on the left, the figure of Punch is driving away Apollo, who is holding a book by Horace, with the assistance of Harlequin, who is waving his typical slapstick and holding a script “Harlequin Horace,” which refers to the verse satire *Harlequin Horace or the Art of Modern Poetry* (1731). (Source: commons.wikimedia.org)

As mentioned above, dancing played a crucial role in the late 1710s and 1720s pantomime. The serious plots based on Greek or Roman mythology are more textual and thus often preserved, but the comic, more improvisational subplots are usually not extant. Do we know what and how much dancing was taking place in pantomimes?

The surviving sources for pantomimes are generally very incomplete. Libretti and scenarios (written descriptions of the non-verbal action) were not always published and often little or no music is known to survive. We have no record of any of the choreographies. The two pantomimes of 1723, *Harlequin Doctor Faustus* (Drury Lane) and *The Necromancer* (Lincoln's Inn Fields), are almost unique in having detailed scenarios which allow close analysis of the action and show what dances were performed within them. In later seasons, John Rich's practice at Lincoln's Inn Fields was to publish libretti which give the words for the sung serious plots there but say little or nothing about the comic dancing. When Drury Lane turned to sung serious plots, it did the same. Some of the comic dancing in pantomimes may have been related to "French" dancing, as shown by the surviving choreographies for Harlequin (which include one published in London, performed by a dancer who was also a virtuoso performer in the French style).

Pantomime was also often promoted as "a new dramatick entertainment of dancing in grotesque characters." What was it exactly?

This description was first used for John Weaver's afterpiece *The Shipwreck; or, Perseus and Andromeda* given at Drury Lane in 1717. I suspect that the wording on the bill was Weaver's own and was intended to contrast the afterpiece with his *The Loves of Mars and Venus* given at Drury Lane the same year and described by him as "a New Dramatick Entertainment of Dancing after the Manner of the Antient Pantomimes." The "Dramatick Entertainment" refers to telling a complete story with individual characters, rather than a simple sequence of actions and dances by general types like Peasants or Sailors without a narrative. The "Grotesque Characters" are the *commedia dell'arte* roles, in the case of *The Shipwreck* Harlequin and Colombine, but also the other comic characters in the afterpiece. Weaver discusses these characters as part of his description of grotesque dancing in his *Essay*. He returns to them, but with a different interpretation, in 1728 in his *The History of the Mimes and Pantomimes* (see p. 56).[4]

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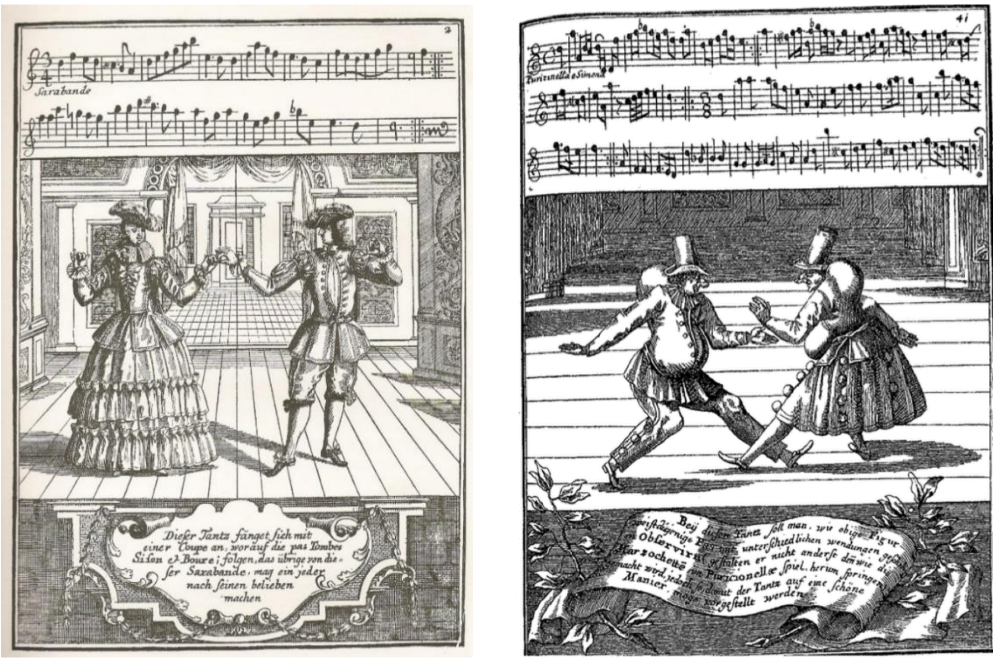
[4] John Weaver, *The History of the Mimes and Pantomimes* (London: Printed for J. Roberts, 1728).


Sarabande
Dieſer Tantz fänget ſich mit einer Coupe an, worauf die pas Tombes Siſon et Boure; folgen, das übrige von dieſer Sarabande, mag ein jeder nach ſeinen belieben machen

Figures 3 & 4: Prints from Gregorio Lambranzi's famous book of illustrations *Nuova e curiosa scuola de' balli theatrali* (*New and Curious School of Theatre Dancing*) printed in 1716 in Nuremberg. Two dancers on the left dance a sarabande, on the right two dancers perform a grotesque dance. (Source: commons.wikimedia.org)

In the early years of the eighteenth century, the Italian opera was frequently criticized in London because some critics saw it as a foreign import sung in effeminate language which corrupted the English taste, English music, and theatre tradition (a case in point is John Dennis's *An Essay on the Opera's, After the Italian Manner, which are to be Established on the English Stage: with some Reflections on the Damage which they may bring to the Publick* from 1706).[5] Were there instances of objections based on the artform's national origin in connection to the French dancing style or French dancers? Was French dancing ever viewed by the English as foreign in a negative way?

French dancers came to London soon after the Restoration in 1660 and in the 1670s were brought over from Paris to dance in entertainments at court as well as in the theatres. Evidence for their reception is lacking, but there seems to have been little serious hostility despite the political tensions between England and France.

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[5] John Dennis, *An Essay on the Opera's, After the Italian Manner, which are to be Established on the English Stage: with some Reflections on the Damage which they may bring to the Publick* (London: Printed for J. Nutt, 1706).

When the French star dancer Claude Ballon came to London in 1699, the main criticism was of the exorbitant fees he commanded. He got a mention in the anonymous satire of 1702 *A Comparison between the Two Stages*, as did his Paris dancing partner Marie-Thérèse de Subligny who followed him to London early in 1702. The first real violence directed against French dancers seems to have been the riot at Drury Lane in 1755, when audiences objected to Jean-Georges Noverre and his production of *The Chinese Festival* performed at the request of the actor-manager David Garrick (this was shortly before the beginning of the Seven Years War, when political tensions may have been running high). My guess is that by the early 1700s "French" dancing had been fully adopted both on stage and in the ballroom and the English did not really consider it (or even its French and European exponents) as foreign.

You wrote a book about a popular English actress and dancer named Hester Santlow. To what extent was her career unique? Do we know how many dancer-actors and -actresses were active in London between 1700 and 1750? What do we know about the training of dancers performing in London theatres? Was the social status of a popular dancer similar to that of a popular actor?

Mrs Santlow was not unique in being both a dancer and an actress for she had several predecessors, going back to the 1660s, as well as a number of contemporaries. She was unusual, however, as both a leading actress and the company's leading dancer with extensive repertoires in both genres which went far beyond those of other dancer-actresses. There were no true dancer-actors – although there were actors who regularly performed individual speciality dances, there were no actors who took both

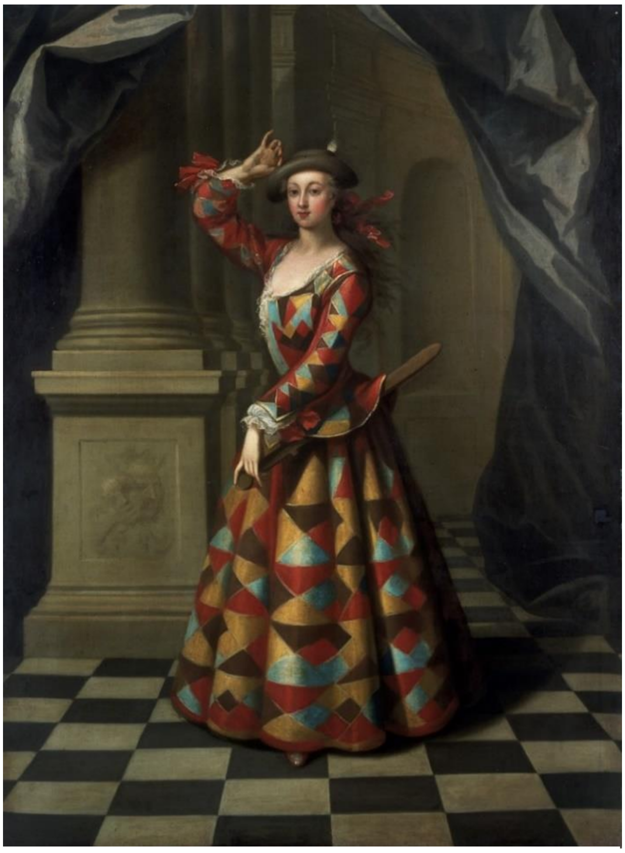

Figure 5: John Ellys's painting of the actress-dancer Hester Booth (neé Santlow) as a Harlequin Woman, c. 1722–1725. (Source: commons.wikimedia.org)

significant acting and important dancing roles. So far as I can tell, dancer-actresses were generally a phenomenon of the period 1700 to around 1735. From the mid-1710s, with the better information provided by theatre advertisements in the daily newspapers, it is possible to discern groups of specialist dancers within the theatre companies. They would appear regularly in the entr'actes as well as taking leading dance roles in pantomime afterpieces. There is much work to do before we can be sure who these dancers were and how many of them were active during the first half of the eighteenth century. Most professional dancers were trained for the stage by leading dancers in the theatre companies, although they may not have been formally apprenticed. We know very little about how they were taught the skills (and the repertoire) they would need, although the dance manuals and surviving notated dances provide some clues. The leading dancers in London's theatres were undoubtedly stars – visiting dancers like Claude Ballon in the 1690s and La Barberina in the 1740s could command fees well beyond those of the local leading actors. The evidence for their social status is contradictory and needs more research and analysis.

A considerable number of dances are extant due to the Beauchamp–Feuillet notation, which was the first comprehensible system of writing down dancing, and the English dancing masters became familiar with it after the turn of the eighteenth century and imitated the French style. Dances soon started to be published in that notation in England. What was the key significance of the notation for the history of dancing? Who were the consumers of the printed dances? Did only the dancing masters know how to read the notation, which would have advanced their expertise, or was the knowledge more widespread?

When Beauchamp-Feuillet notation was first developed, there was certainly a desire to preserve dances for the future. This benefits dance historians of the period today – without the notations we would have little or no information about choreographic practice in the early eighteenth century. At the time, notations gave dancing masters the ability to share dances more widely throughout Europe, advertising their work at the same time. Most of those purchasing notations were undoubtedly dancing masters – although the subscription lists in some of the manuals and collections show amateur (and some professional) dancers alongside the dancing masters. Dancing masters may well also have learned to write the notation, but it seems unlikely that many dancers would have bothered.

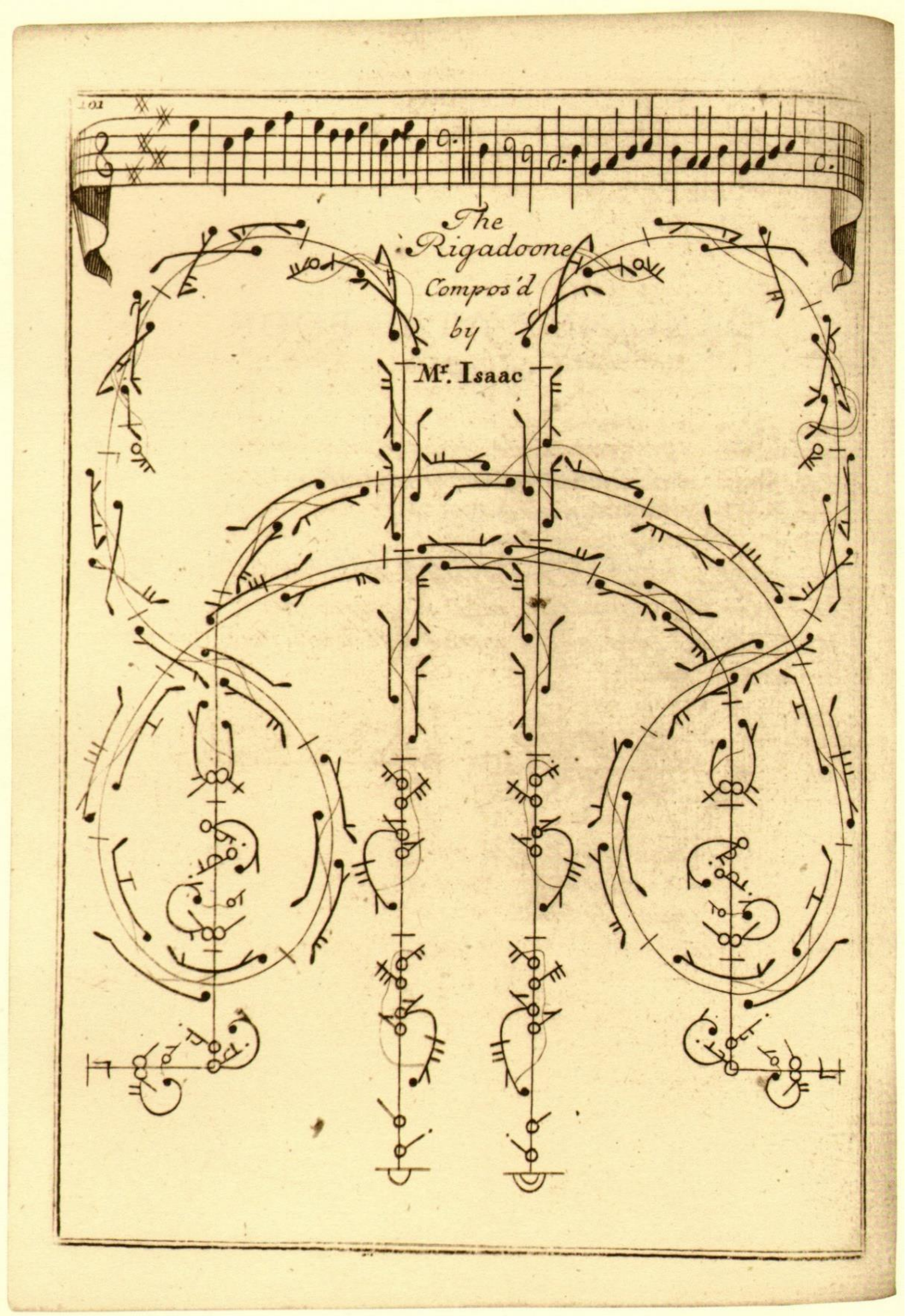
101
The Rigadoone Compos'd by Mr. Isaac

Figure 6: *The Rigadoon Composed by Mr. Isaac*, an English ballroom duet dance in the French style in the Beauchamp-Feuillet notation, c. 1721. (Source: commons.wikimedia.org)

You are not only a dance historian, but also a baroque dance specialist and practitioner, and in your career you have danced multiple dances that had been popular on the London stages in that period. Can the dances written in the Beauchamp-Feuillet notation be completely reconstructed, or are there things that you must add? How do you compensate for the lack of extant music?

The Beauchamp-Feuillet notations provide us with a great deal of information and it is important to pay close attention to every detail when reconstructing dances. That said, they do omit much essential information – for example, how high legs might be raised in *ouvertures de jambe*, how high (or how dynamic) *pas sautés* might be. Notated dances routinely omit arm movements, and body movements, for example *épaulement*, have often to be inferred. Ballroom duets may reasonably be danced with appropriate decorum, but there are few clues to the performance style of stage duets and solos. Thus, there is much the modern performer needs to add using other original sources as appropriate as well as imagination. In my work I want to portray the meaning of the choreography, I try to understand the original context for the dance (although this is not so easy for the "English" stage choreographies) as well as the skills and experience of the original performer. I also try to visualise how the choreography might have fitted into the stage space and how the dancer might have interacted with both the onstage and offstage audience. All but a few of the surviving notated dances have a top line of music on each page. In many cases there is a concordance which will provide at least a bass line as the basis for a musical arrangement. If not (most of the English ballroom dances have no such concordances), dancers are reliant on skilled musicians to write one. One of the frustrations of working with this repertoire is the lack of good recordings of the music which can allow us to explore a range of the surviving choreographies.

In your articles and on your website *Dance in History*, you frequently mention that dancing in the Restoration and eighteenth-century London theatres has been often neglected by theatre historians and even dance historians. What are the main pitfalls of such an oversight when we want to understand the theatre culture of that period?

As I said earlier, dancing was an integral part of the performances in London's theatres throughout the period 1660 to 1800 and well beyond. Most evenings offered a mix of drama, dance and music – genres that nowadays are usually given in separate venues – theatregoing in the eighteenth century was a very different experience from now. This influenced the audience's expectations both before and during the evening as well as their perceptions of the comedies and tragedies they saw. On stage, there was a shared culture of deportment and even gesture between the dancers and the actors – for the first, see Francis Nivelon’s *The Rudiments of Genteel Behaviour* (1737), while the gestures described by Weaver for *The Loves of Mars and Venus* are derived from rhetorical practice and thus closely linked to acting. There is also the question of money – dancing was key to the profitability of London’s theatres. These are all points that are worth exploring but that have escaped most theatre historians.

Do you have a favourite dance that was performed on the London stage in that period? How did the experience of dancing baroque dances inform your research?

My favourite dance among the notated choreographies is L’Abbé’s solo *Passagalia of Venüs & Adonis* for Hester Santlow, followed by his solo *Menuet* for her which is great fun to dance. Sadly, we don’t know exactly when and where she performed these – although the *Passagalia* may well date to around 1717 and the *Menuet* is likely to be earlier, perhaps around 1708. Reconstructing and performing them gave me a deeper understanding of her as a dancer, not only her technical skills (which were considerable) but also her performance style and the way in which she may have used the stage space available to her. Performing the *Passagalia*, which I did many times, brought me close to her in a way that academic research alone never could.

You were involved in the production of John Weaver’s narrative ballet piece *The Loves of Mars and Venus*, which was produced by *The Weaver Dance Company* at the Georgian Theatre Royal in Richmond in 2017. Are there similar projects that reconstruct dances associated with the London theatres of the eighteenth century?

The Weaver Dance Company was unable to attract the funding needed to fully recreate *The Loves of Mars and Venus*, which would have needed three professional dancers for the leading roles with at least twelve supporting dancers who could dance to a professional level. All would have needed to be trained in baroque dance style and technique. A small band of musicians would also have been required. The score (which does not survive) was recreated using existing music of the time, brought together and edited as appropriate. That work was done some years earlier than the Weaver Dance Company performances, as a private and unfunded venture. With a small amount of private funding, it was possible to engage three dancers and three musicians to present scenes from the ballet within a short play which explored Weaver's ambitions to produce his first "Dramatick Entertainment of Dancing" – as a way of celebrating the 300th anniversary of what I call "the first modern ballet." I now have little involvement with the UK early dance world, so I don't know if there have been any further such projects here. So far as I can tell, interest in these English stage works is growing elsewhere, but funding is always an issue when it comes to recreating dance works for which we have so little choreographic evidence and little or no music and which therefore remain more or less unknown to the wider public.

What is your current project? Is there something dance-connected that you are particularly looking forward to?

I have been working for some years on a history of dancing on the London stage covering the period 1660 to 1760. My blog *Dance in History* quite often deals with topics that are part of my research for that project and perhaps provides an idea of what I am trying to do. I am hoping to be able to complete my work on the period 1600 to 1714 by the end of this year and I will then consider whether to try and publish that as the first part of the longer study. I am also looking forward to returning to dancing in a studio and with others soon. My academic work has always been closely intertwined with reconstructing, recreating and performing the dances of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and I look forward to being able to continue with that as soon as possible.

Dr Goff, thank you very much for this interview and I wish you all the best in your future research as well as dancing projects.

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PRODUCTION REVIEW:
FROM PAGE TO ZOOM WITH LOVE AND MASKS

Hannah COWLEY: *The Belle's Stratagem.* Directed by Gaye Taylor Upchurch, performed by the Red Bull Theatre. Zoom live stream, 22 February 2021.

Sharon Wiseman

CAST
Letitia Hardy | Lilli Cooper
Doricourt | Santino Fontana
Old Hardy | Peter Jay Fernandez
Sir George | Touchwood | Chauncy Thomas
Lady Frances Touchwood | Jasmine Batchelor
Saville | Tony Jenkins
Mrs. Racket | Heather Alicia Simms
Miss Ogle/Kitty Willis | Lauren Karaman
Villers | Neal Bledsoe
Flutter | Aaron Krohn
Courtall | Mark Bedard
Silvertongue, etc. | Cecil Baldwin

HANNAH Cowley's 1780's popular comedy of manners *The Belle's Stratagem* places women and their romantic choices as the central element of the performance. During the discussion with the director Gaye Taylor Upchurch and cast members of the Red Bull Theatre production, the enthusiasm for the Zoom medium of live theatre is evident. The play is a live reading, although Upchurch clarifies that much directorial planning went into her approach, with storyboards and Zoom shaped boxes crafted to enhance the narrative. The play engages with themes of truth and deception, transferring to Zoom from live performance, and the actors inhabit their virtual spaces with enthusiasm. The play's language is witty and accessible; there are interesting interpretations of the familiar dilemmas of love matches set against the backdrop of this modern medium. The narrative is well paced and faces are adorned with masks before true selves are revealed within their separate Zoom spheres, connected and yet oddly separate. Zoom provides us with few distractions from the faces of the actors and their interactions, presented directly to us against the ephemeral backgrounds.

Noticeable is the lack of costume and the relative absence of props, as each actor inhabits a small space on screen with only the odd fan or book appearing for added authenticity and interest. The audience focuses almost exclusively on the faces and facial expressions of the actors, unlike the wider audience of a live production on stage. The Zoom performance offers a curious hybrid between live performance and a small screen adaptation. Actors are caught between the demands of the camera in terms of facial expression and emotion, contrasting with the different requirements of performance in live theatre. We are vividly aware of fleeting expressions, and as noted during the post streaming interview, viewing oneself in the corner of the screen remains distracting and compelling.

Hannah Cowley moved geographically between the country and town, and evidence of this aspect of the narrative is present in the play. The Touchwoods travel to the city, although as a former afficionado, George Touchwood is aware of the possible attractions to be paraded before his young and impressionable bride. Lady Frances requires a charismatic actor to convey the complexities of innocence, naivety and sexual experience of a married woman; not simply a country woman exposed to the dubious attractions of city life. The proliferation of metaphorical images of birds and cages associated with the lives of the women on stage are more striking through Zoom. Conceptually and visually, Lady Frances, for example, inhabits a small box on screen and the Zoom backdrops are indistinct and provide less dramatic impact than scenery on an open stage.

One issue of the medium, despite the skill of some of the actors, is the lack of dramatic potential. Each act carefully signals the scene or actors inhabiting the platform. This presents its own mix of hierarchical representation. The smaller parts move fleetingly across the screen and are often positioned in boxes below those of the central characters. This delivers a clear mode of storytelling, but it also inevitably apportions a level of importance to some characters over others, perhaps to the detriment of some of the smaller yet pivotal roles, such as Flutter, Old Hardy and Seville. Hannah Cowley allows her women to make their own choices however, even if they do so from gilded cages, or in this case, crafted boxes. Lady Frances may be a domesticated wife, but she is a willing one, and she breaks with tradition in appearing in public with her husband rather than without him.

Letitia, like Aphra Behn's Helena in *The Rover* and Shakespeare's Rosalind in *As You Like It*, chooses her own man, even though he has in reality been chosen for her. In Hannah Cowley's play, this is a past inconvenience rather than something unsurmountable. Letitia and Doricourt may be betrothed, but Letitia desires Doricourt's full attention and devotion. It is ironic that to do this she has to become somehow more and also less than herself. The play advocates disguise with appearances as merely a foil for the individual's particular choices. Lady Frances is not just a young wife in a gilded cage but a woman who genuinely loves her husband. The other characters are aware of this, even if Sir George is not. Doricourt is a man who has seen much yet experiences little, other than a sense of jaded ennui. His first impressions of Letitia are not favorable, as she fails to live up to his expectations based on his previous experiences. Letitia responds by creating personae of her own to bewilder and eventually bewitch her lover. The presence of Mrs. Racket is alternately maternal and sexually voracious throughout. She inhabits her role with a knowing smile and the flick of a fan. Mrs. Racket is the challenging character in the play, a sexually experienced widow, but not controlled within an inherently patriarchal system. She is free to encourage, plot and to advise as she sees fit. Her maternal presence holds the central strands of the plot together and this is reflected, intentionally or not, by her appearance in a box at the centre or at the top of the Zoom platform.

This highlights both the potential and the limitations of Zoom as a platform for live drama. We cannot escape the positioning of the Zoom boxes before us, nor can we see the physical interactions expected from a live performance. The actors are mostly impeccable in their reading of the play, but there are moments when we are left wondering exactly with whom they are conversing, as Zoom poses limitations on physical engagement and verbal interactions, situated as they are as characters in their designated boxes. The lack of physical movement can be frustrating for the audience and possibly for the actors. Only upper bodies are visible, so emphasis on facial expression and the movement of hands are accentuated, but even small facial movements are heightened. One notable instance of replicating action across the medium is the passing of a letter from one Zoom box to another. While this is skilfully done, it is hampered by the blurring effect created by the actions on screen. Asides are at odds within the small setting as the actors fully face the audience and not each other, yet a soliloquy by Seville is clear, direct and impactful for this very reason.

Lady France's town experience would be brought into greater relief if her journey had been more physically realised and visible to the audience. A larger cast with courtesans and servants would have added greater weight and emphasis to Sir George's concerns about his wife's constancy, threatened potentially by the temptations offered by city life. The Zoom medium also prevents the sense of a character built on the physicality of the actors. Letitia works hard with the use of facial expressions and hand mannerisms to convey the varied aspects of her role, but further possibilities with changes of costume and scenery and a greater sense of physical collaboration would convey some of these nuances of character very effectively. The Zoom backgrounds are often distractingly ephemeral, conveying little more than a vague backdrop. This fails to add much insight to the characters and their actions conveyed in performance. The use of an intermission, however, serves to remind us that we are in fact watching a live performance.

Zoom reduces the audience to solitary observers as the drama unfolds and we are not an engaged part of the dynamics of live drama. Hannah Cowley's play captivates, as she employs deception, various intriguing plots and disguises as well as successfully rejoicing in the fortunes of the united lovers at the end of the play. The Zoom presentation reveals that staging, costume and a sense of physical interaction become powerful parts of building character and adding dynamism to the performance on stage. However, the play's fast paced dialogue is highlighted by the absence of scenery with a contrastingly sharper focus on the faces of the actors. The boxes often move disconcertingly quickly, with no lead in via a stage entrance or dimmed auditorium lights. The movement between Zoom boxes also sets up an interesting internal dialogue with the viewers: who is the leading voice in each scene in proportion to the arrangements of the boxes on screen and who holds the power? Lady Racket is in turn matriarchically powerful, sympathetic, serious and mischievous, and this is achieved through the sense of her presence on screen. The masks work well within the limited parameters of the Zoom frames, simultaneously hiding and revealing the individual characters and their motivations. The doubling of Kitty and Lady Ogle seems to serve no true dramatic purpose other than to accentuate the mischievous similarities between the supposedly high-born woman and the willing courtesan. Letitia's engaging and enigmatic character gradually draws Doricourt inexorably to her, as he is both repelled and enthralled as intended. Costume is minimal but the black tops shared by Doricourt and Saville place them in accord as men searching for their ideal woman. The final section in the last act sees the cast united on screen in their Zoom boxes, displayed before us in a final act of resolution and gaiety, a reworking of the final curtain call at the end of a play.

The impact of the Zoom framing gives us, the lone viewer, immediate access to the words and expressions of the actors as if they are spoken to us, but not it seems, to each other. This is empowering and compelling but also detracts from the relationships between the central characters on screen, notably the courting couples. Doricourt's love for Letitia is expressed directly to us rather than to her, and the rapprochement between George and Frances is successful because we are aware of their established relationship. The backgrounds add some depth to the scenes but do not convey dramatic weight, nor can they be utilised by the actors. Occasional props are used with some success, notably the kissing of Lady Racket's hands in the first act and the exchange of a paper between Tony and Saville in the third act. Asides to the audience evolve into an open exchange, which adds an unexpected layer of openness and theatricality. Despite the lack of costume and staging, the central issue of disguise and identity remains the focal point of the play. Doricourt is a sophisticated man but ultimately remains the small boy entranced by a young girl to whom he is betrothed. George Touchwood is fearful for his wife's virtue, yet she adopts different masks across various locations and discards them for the one she values the most, that of the country wife. Lady Racket remains unashamedly independent but also switches between alternating facets of her personality. Saville, a foil to the charismatic Doricourt, is rewarded ultimately for his devotion to Lady Frances with a suitable facsimile, the sister of his former beloved.

Letitia has the last words at the end of a play inhabited by strong and decisive women, written by a woman and dedicated to another. Letitia details the happy outcome despite the "marks of softness" worn by the actors and pithily notes that men wear "vizers" too. Acting may inhabit the twilight space between truth, reality and appearance, but Hannah Cowley notes we all wear our own masks and disguises. The city has been reduced to a facsimile of wax in microcosm during the play, fitting to the small screen adaptation offered by the Zoom experience. The medium of Zoom removes many devices employed in stagecraft, but the characters remain vibrant and accessible, ironically perhaps more so as they are viewed privately rather than as a shared social experience. Yet as Letitia notes, we "wear our masks" from youth to old age and on stage perhaps we are no more than what "we appear to be," whether this is in a live theatre production, or as isolated participants in boxes on a Zoom platform.

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BOOK REVIEW

Matthew GARDNER and Alison CLARK DESIMONE: *Music and the Benefit Performance in Eighteenth-Century Britain.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2020.

Klára Škrobánková

THE phenomenon of benefit performance is peculiar. If one engages in British and Continental eighteenth-century theatre and music research, one can be sure to find multiple mentions of benefit performances. Nevertheless, finding a book dedicated solely to the phenomenon, explaining its context, regional variants, and genre transformations has been nearly impossible. The new publication *Music and the Benefit Performance in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, edited by Matthew Gardner and Alison Clark DeSimone, aims to fill in this gap, intricately introducing the British benefit performances.

The book consists of an introduction and twelve chapters grouped in five parts, focusing on networks and repertoires (Part I), benefits outside London (Part II), the public image (Part III), charity benefits (Part IV), and the audience (Part V). Despite this thematic division, the publication is also chronological. It begins with the establishment of benefits in the late seventeenth-century spoken theatre and concludes with the case study of Mozart's visit to England in 1764. The authors predominantly examine the benefit performances from a musical, and not only (evident) theatrical perspective. They combine the approaches of musicology, theatrology, and, in particular, historiography, to thoroughly describe commercial music-making, which grew so popular that it spread through the whole of Europe and North America.

The first and longest part, entitled: "Musical Benefits in the London Theatre: Networks and Repertoires," introduces all the major features of benefit performance: the pricing, marketing techniques, the audience, and places where the benefits were performed. Kathryn Lowerre's opening essay focuses on the theatrical and musical benefits at the turn of the eighteenth century. It pays particular attention to a few special benefits, which the author has supplemented with financial records thus illustrating the prices of the tickets and how they were distributed. Lowerre points out that the selling of the tickets sometimes resembled a popularity contest, with the actors peddling the tickets to their friends, patrons, and fans. Elizabeth Barry, the tragic actress, is first introduced here as an example of a performer who could negotiate the terms of the benefit performance in her contract. She profited significantly and pioneered the way for other artists who sought to improve their financial status. Barry is often mentioned throughout the volume as an actress handling her financial affairs well, yet the context stays the same, proving to be rather repetitive and not bringing any new information to the reader.

The following study by Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson analyzes London theatre benefits between 1700 and 1725, paying close attention to the musical elements in benefit evenings. The authors importantly notice that many benefit performances included a pantomime afterpiece, and that these evenings usually gained more attention than those containing only songs and dances. The emphasis on spectacle is a crucial finding that is further developed in subsequent chapters of *Music and the Benefit Performance in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, highlighting the motivation of the audience to visit benefit performances and the strategies of those organizing the benefit evenings. However, in Baldwin and Wilson's chapter, a significant problem in the publication emerges for the first time. When describing a certain phenomenon, for example the inclusion of comical scenes in the benefit performance, the authors list several actors or musicians who used this strategy to profit. To support their thesis, Baldwin and Wilson continue to provide a list of different artists and their strategies; a list of who went where and did what that spans rather many pages. This makes the reader wonder whether it would not be better to compile a list of benefit performances and dedicate more time to analyzing the strategy itself, without the never-ending list of occurrences.

This is by no means solely the case of this chapter. Robert G. Rawson's study of concertos and the instrumental benefits in early Hanoverian London suffers from the same issue. It is a pity, as Rawson's findings of the short-lived popularity of the satirical approach towards opera seria and the formal development of these satires are highly interesting and novel. They do not deserve to be somewhat lost in the many mentions of the actors' mobility and various staged genres. This is further accentuated by Vanessa L. Rogers's chapter about ballad opera development, which follows Rawson's article. Instead of listing all ballad operas that gained their popularity (or inadvertently failed) because of the benefit performances, Rogers chooses John Hippisley's ballad opera *Flora* and provides the reader with a thorough case study of the piece. Rogers's findings are a valuable contribution towards the study of Gay's *Beggar's Opera* and its effect on the theatrical life of the 1720s and 1730s London. Among the many fascinating findings, the author addresses the cross-dressed performances of *Beggar's Opera* and informs the reader that "the first cross-dressed version of the work was billed as 'The Metamorphosis of The Beggar's Opera for the benefit of Mrs Nokes,' 11 March 1730, at the Little Haymarket Theatre" (p. 96).

The next part of the book shifts its focus from London to the North of England and Edinburgh. In both chapters, the phenomenon of benefit performances becomes clearer as the setting outside of London, where the audiences were numerous and used to many forms of entertainment, enables researchers to see what a good marketing strategy was. Roz Southey examines the situation in Northern England, considering all the types of benefits: personal benefits and benefits for philanthropic or patriotic purposes. The author concludes that the music element was never as important as the element of appeal, which played a key role in the popularity of certain acts. The position of towns in the north had also played a role, establishing tour routes from London to Edinburgh or Dublin, adding to the complexity of the benefit organization.

The issue of patriotism and nationalism is further developed in Stefanie Acquavella-Rauch's chapter "Amateur Music-Making, Theatre Performances, and Benefit Concerts in Edinburgh." Acquavella-Rauch's contribution is one of the most valuable parts of the whole book, as it focuses on the not so often researched Scotland and the development of the theatrical culture under specific circumstances. One of the chapter highlights is the discussion of how the theatre-makers used to bypass the ban of "secular theatre performances" by embedding them into a benefit concert as a free rehearsal (p. 131).

Part three of *Music and the Benefit Performance in Eighteenth-Century Britain* on the public image and the benefits continues with the treatise of nationalism. In her chapter, Amanda Eubanks Winkler deals with the importance of the works of national composers when organizing a benefit performance, as the English music would often attract a larger audience. The popularity of Henry Purcell was even so immense that his music for the operas was performed during benefits, despite the popular belief that operatic music was not suitable for benefit evenings because it required intricate costumes, props, and other expensive set pieces. Contrary to Eubanks Winkler's essay on British national music, Alison DeSimone considers the impact of Italian music and travelling artists on the development of the benefit performances. DeSimone pays close attention to Margherita de l'Epine, who is mentioned throughout the book, and the effect her benefits had on accepting foreign, mostly Italian, artists.

The following part of the book turns to charity benefits, presenting a unique context in which the performances organized to support musicians and others in need were created. Tríona O'Hanlon shows how charity benefits were of huge aid in early eighteenth-century Dublin to those who were struck by the poverty crisis. She predominantly researches the situation in Mercer's Hospital but also takes into context other Irish cities, such as Belfast and Cork, concluding that the Dublin benefits brought sacred music by Georg Frideric Handel to the local audiences.

Matthew Gardner's chapter on the English oratorio in eighteenth-century London continues with the study of religious music and its position in the British society. Gardner also focuses on Handel, describing the influence the composer had on the creation of a link between oratorios and benefit performances, and significantly, on the promotion of the idea that biblical themes can indeed be presented on stage without being accused of sacrilege.

The book's final part focuses on the understudied topic of audience and its role in trendsetting. John Irving presents a case study of young Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's visit to London, mapping the successes and failures of Mozart's father Leopold in marketing the prodigy. This chapter illustrates the system of preparing a benefit evening extremely well and above all, provides an example of how the audience's excitement for novelty and variety dynamically changed over a short period of time. David Hunter's closing chapter then supplements the study of the audience with the selection of period letters and records that further develop understandings of the public reaction to the benefit performances.

Music and the Benefit Performance in Eighteenth-Century Britain is undoubtedly a significant addition to the research of British Restoration and eighteenth-century theatre. Even though the book explores one phenomenon, its chapters examine benefit performance from various perspectives. This provides a balanced study of the audience, popular subgenres, artists, and others. Even though the title promises an insight into the predominantly musical world, the publication significantly opens the door to understanding the performative lives of the eighteenth-century British Isles. The methodological approach towards the archive could indeed benefit from a better system that would utilize all contributors' apparent extensive archival research, but this is just a minor issue compared with the thorough, transcultural study of benefit performances.

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REVISITING RESTORATION PERFORMANCE CULTURE FOR THE SECOND TIME: RESTORATION ONLINE SYMPOSIUM #2, "THEATRE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS"

Filip Krajník

REACHING the third and final year of the Czech Science Foundation funded project "English Theatre Culture 1660–1737" (see Krajník et al. 2019), this past April our research team organised the second online symposium devoted to the long Restoration period and its performance culture, subtitled "Theatre, Society and Politics." In the same vein as our previous event (see Hájková 2021), the aim of the second symposium was to invite both junior and senior scholars from all corners of the world interested in early modern theatre and its social, cultural and intellectual contexts to encourage them to discuss their research and collaborate within a broader international community. The first significant outcome of the 2020 symposium (and the aforementioned research project) in this respect is the first 2021 issue of *Theatralia* journal, containing a selection of lectures and papers presented at our first online event. The present monothematic issue of *THEPES*, which primarily publishes works of postgraduate and early-career researchers, could be considered the second.

The "Theatre, Society and Politics" symposium was spread over two days (19 and 21 April) and chiefly explored the issues of religion, politics and identity (in the broadest sense) in relation to the English theatre culture of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Like in the case of the previous event, the online format ultimately proved to be felicitous as the symposium, again, attracted researchers and audience members from several continents who would have otherwise hardly met in person at one place.

The first day of the event opened with a plenary lecture by Adrian Streete (University of Glasgow, UK), entitled "Religion and Politics in William Lawrence's *News from Geneva, or The Lewd Levite* (1662)." An author of two volumes and a number of essays and book chapters on early-modern religion and its impact on the cultural sphere of the time, Streete presented Lawrence's manuscript play, otherwise virtually unknown to literary and theatre historians, focusing on the depiction of non-conformism in early Restoration drama. Streete maintained that, just like several other dramatic pieces written in the immediate aftermath of the Restoration, Lawrence's comedy partakes in the popular campaign of the time against Presbyterianism while drawing on a number of both biblical and non-biblical sources that circulated in England in the early 1660s (such as a series of ballads about a vicar of Chelmsford in Essex, who was castrated by a butcher for sleeping with the latter's wife). Like several of his contemporaries, Lawrence approaches the subject of religious (non-)conformity with a combination of criticism, satire, but also with glimpses of a more accommodating attitude. This was considered necessary by some to maintain the fragile stability in the country in the early Restoration period. Besides the ideological level of the play, Streete also focused on the way in which Lawrence envisions his non-conformists represented on the stage, including details such as large prosthetic ears and nose (possibly drawing on contemporaneous anti-Semitic tropes) and a specific nasal style of speech.

The first half of the seminar "Restoration Theatre, Politics, and Religion" that followed continued the discussion of Professor Streete's lecture, focusing on minor religious groups in the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century England and their dramatic representations. While David Fletcher (University of Warwick, UK) demonstrated how the issue of religious non-conformity provided an outlet for dramatic satire and stereotyping in the depiction of Quakers in the first two decades of the eighteenth century, Filip Krajník (Masaryk University, Czech Republic, and the present author) argued that the anonymous 1666 tragedy *St Cecily, or, The Converted Twins* is a rare case of pro-Catholic Restoration drama and that its author addressed the Queen-consort, Catherine of Braganza, in hopes that she would help to achieve toleration for the Roman Catholic minority in the country.

The second half of the seminar primarily addressed the political contexts of Restoration plays, although the issue of religion was not altogether absent from it. The opening presentation of the section, by Lauren Liebe (Texas A&M University, USA), demonstrated how John Crowne's adaptations of Shakespeare's *2–3 Henry VI* (c. 1680), although clearly set in the framework of anti-Catholicism that was not unusual in the middle of the Exclusion Crisis, offered a nuanced examination of the nature of kingship and the legitimacy of royal succession that was neither ostentatiously Whig or Tory. Both the first seminar and the first day of the symposium concluded with a paper by Laura J. Rosenthal (University of Maryland, USA). In her presentation, Rosenthal argued that Charles Sedley's *Bellamira* (1687), despite being an adaptation of a classical comedy by Terrence, confronts England's then current participation in the transatlantic slave trade, honing in especially on its royal governor, King James II, against whom Sedley had a personal grudge for seducing his daughter.

The second day of the symposium, devoted to "identities" on the Restoration and eighteenth-century English stages, opened with a plenary talk by Elaine Hobby (Loughborough University, UK), entitled "Performing Identity: Aphra Behn." Since Professor Hobby is one of the editors of the forthcoming *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Aphra Behn* (whose *Volume IV: Plays 1682–1696* was published earlier this year), she utilised her broad knowledge of Behn to demonstrate how the dramatist construed her female characters and their identities. Starting with the comparison of Behn's *The Rover* (1677) and its model, Thomas Killigrew's *Thomaso* (c. 1654), Professor Hobby argued that, despite the same name and other surface similarities, Killigrew's and Behn's Angellicas are fundamentally different characters, the latter being markedly more complex and more aware of (and more introspective and confused about) her sexuality and emotional life. Giving an overview of Behn's dramatic career, the lecture further showed how some of Behn's key female protagonists share these features of Angellica Bianca's – an observation also applicable to Behn's very last plays that premiered posthumously. Much to the pleasure of the conference delegates and audience members, at the end of her presentation, Professor Hobby announced her plan to write a new Aphra Behn biography after the completion of the *Cambridge Edition* in 2025.

The aim of the seminar that followed was to explore the issue of identities and how they were represented on the late early-modern English stage. Employing thematic and linguistic approaches, Fabio Ciambella (Tuscia University, Italy) demonstrated how George Powell, in his 1696 operatic adaptation of Fletcher's *Bonduca*, constructed gender and national identities of the play's key protagonists, Bonduca and Catarach, making them distinctively different from their Jacobean models. Gender and national relations were also the subject of the paper by Rogério Miguel Puga (Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal). Employing the concepts of imagology, Puga focused on Susanna Centlivre's three Portugal plays, showing how Centlivre used the image of a distant space in order to criticize the patriarchal European society and raise awareness concerning the lack of freedom that characterizes the female condition in the Continent and in Britain.

After a break, the issues of gender and gender dynamics in Restoration plays were further explored by Simran Dhingra (Jamia Millia Islamia, India). Focusing on William Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675) and William Congreve's *The Way of the Word* (1700), Dhingra discussed the double societal standards concerning male and female sexuality and the ways in which women, despite the boundaries imposed on them both inside and outside marriage, found ways to exercise their agency. Finally, Jessica Banner (University of Ottawa, Canada) analysed how David Garrick, in his popular version of *Romeo and Juliet* (1748), refashioned Shakespeare's tragic heroine into a sentimental one. Apart from textual alterations, the presentation addressed several contemporaneous images of Juliet (by Anthony Walker, Ignatius Joseph van den Berghe and Benjamin Wilson), showing the rôle of costume in communicating the sentimental mode of Garrick's Juliet. (An elaborated version of Jessica Banner's paper is published in the present issue of *THEPES*.)

In the lecture concluding the second day, as well as the entire symposium, entitled "'Commanding Eyes': Female Spectators and the Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Repertoire," Jean I. Marsden (University of Connecticut, USA) very aptly moved from the Restoration theatre stage to the auditorium and discussed the female experience of theatregoing in the period and the way in which female audiences shaped the theatres' repertoire in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In the first decades of the Restoration period, the picture of female spectatorship that we have is mostly filtered through (chiefly male) authors and playwrights, who were often obsessed with the idea of female modesty. Yet, in the first decades of the eighteenth century, an entirely different image appears to us – one of female theatregoers who actively participated in the theatre life and, rather than *performing* their identity, they *asserted* it through shaping the theatre and literary tastes of their period.

Although smaller than the first Restoration symposium, the "Theatre, Society and Politics" offered a wide selection of presentations that provoked lively and genuinely pleasant discussions. Once again, the seemingly impersonal character of an online event proved beneficial in bringing together scholars from diverse backgrounds who, nevertheless, shared the common passion for early-modern theatre culture and its various aspects. The organising team behind the symposium and the Czech Science Foundation project hopes to offer one more thematic online event in early 2022 that will mark the end of one research endeavour, but hopefully also a beginning of a much longer transnational collaboration among researchers of early-modern drama, theatre and performance.

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