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ABSTRACTS

Carlo M. Bajetta (University of the Vallée d'Aoste)

“More lines than is in the new map”: Modern and Ptolemaic Cosmography in *Twelfth Night*

In 1599 Edward Wright (1558?-1615), professor of mathematics at Cambridge, published *The Correction of Certain Errors in Navigation* (republished the following year as *Certain errors in navigation, detected and corrected*, London, 1610). This volume contained new mathematical tables and described a method to plan straight line routes on maps based on the Mercator system. Drawing inspiration from Ptolemy, Mercator had utilized coordinate geometry not only as a reliable foundation, but also as a tool for creating and implementing a mathematically coherent map. His famous projection not only facilitated navigation but also conveyed the concept of an inhabitable and interconnected Earth—which stood in contrast to the Classical Greek notion of four separate continents, where communication between their inhabitants was limited. This double attitude to Ptolemy’s cosmography also informed Wright ‘Chart of the World on Mercator’s Projection’ based his projection of a globe which his former associate and business partner, the artisan and mathematician Emeric Molyneux had cast in 1592. The map was attached to a limited number of copies of Hakluyt’s 1599-1600 edition of the *Principall Navigations*. This revolutionary, foldable map was the first of its kind in England and one of the first to mention Virginia in the early modern era. It quickly became famous: in *Twelfth Night* (1599-1602; probably 1601) Malvolio is described as one who ‘does smile his face into more lines than is in the new map with the augmentation of the Indies’ (III.2). This paper will explore the links between Hakluyt, Wright and Sir Walter Raleigh’s circle, as well as pointing to the fertile negotiation between modern and Ptolemaic cosmography which informs both their works and the imagination of Shakespeare’s time.

Silvia Bigliuzzi (Verona University)

Gendering Choric Threnody: Shakespeare Politics of Lament

The paper will discuss a few lamentation scenes in Shakespeare, from *Richard III* to *Romeo and Juliet* and *Julius Caesar*, against the backdrop of Greek choric threnodies, and their early modern reinventions (e.g. *Jocasta*), as well as Senecan drama (e.g. *Troas*) and medieval and early modern native plays in the classical tradition (e.g. *Lochrine*, *David and Bethsabe*). It will evaluate the transformation in the late 16th century of choral pieces from their medieval antecedents towards a new form of collective chorality and will discuss the performative, thematic, and symbolic impact of such changes upon Shakespeare’s development of a gendered politics of lament.

Francesco Dall’Olio (Verona University)

The Seat of Mighty Conquerors: Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* and the Influence of the Ancient Persian Empire Model

In the last decades, much has been written about the interest English Renaissance culture had for ancient Persia. Thanks to the reading of renowned ancient authors like Xenophon and Herodotus, the

empire of the Achaemenids had become an established and revered model of how to build and maintain an empire, an alternative to that of the Roman Empire. It was also, however, an ambiguous model: ancient Persia was seen at the same time as an ideal State, ruled by a sovereign who had been perfectly educated to fulfil that role, and a rich land of luxury, inhabited by a corrupted and cruel people, whose love for riches and luxury was insatiable. This double image of Persia made her the perfect background against which to set stories dealing with themes such as the construction of an empire, its desirability and the risks involved in it. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (1588-1589), from this point of view, is probably the clearest example of this trend. It starts with the titular character conquering the kingdom of Persia, replacing its current sovereigns and openly presenting himself as the real successor of great kings like Cyrus and Darius. Then, the path of *Tamburlaine* towards the creation of an empire, as well as the decline of his power in Part 2, is devised by Marlowe in a way consciously reminiscent of Cyrus the Great, as described by both Xenophon and Herodotus. The play thus becomes a sort of an adjourned version of the traditional Renaissance imagery of ancient Persia, exploiting both sides in order to explore more deeply what it takes to build an empire and the risks it entails for those who venture to do so.

Marco Duranti (Verona University)

Less Greek? A Reappraisal of Greek Scholarship in Early Modern England

In my paper, I wish to reappraise the extent to which Greek language and literature were known and studied in early modern England until about 1625. Previous studies have mostly focused on school and university statutes, records of book ownership, biographical accounts. While also discussing again those sources, my paper will approach the problem from a partly different standpoint. I will examine the English editions related to the study of the Greek language and/or literature and compare them with the continental editions. As regards the books containing Greek literary texts, two main groups will be distinguished: on the one hand, the books for educational purposes; on the other hand, the scholarly editions. After explaining this distinction and its relevance, I shall point out that there is a notable difference between the editions of Greek and of Latin literary texts. The presence of a much larger number of scholarly editions of Latin texts seems to imply that Latin was incomparably more common and more accurately studied than Greek. It seems unlikely that most students of Greek language went beyond a rather modest knowledge of the language.

Tania Demetriou (Cambridge University)

Much Ado about Greek Tragedy? Shakespeare, Euripides, and the *histoire tragique*

This paper approaches the relation between Shakespeare and Greek tragedy by looking at one of the main known sources for the Claudio-Hero plot of *Much Ado about Nothing*, Matteo Bandello's novella of "Timbreo and Fenicia", and its French rewriting by François de Belleforest. It considers the generic implications of the transition from novella to *histoire tragique*, in light of the French rewritings' key role in the reception of 'Bandello' in England. After exploring certain intersections between the early modern reception of Greek tragedy and the project of the *histoires tragiques*, it looks closely at the notable presence of Euripides in "Timbrée et Fénicie". It concludes by arguing that, out of all the proposed sources of *Much Ado*, Belleforest's rewriting of this tale is the one most likely to have led Shakespeare to Euripides' *Alcestis*, which it re-proposes as an intertext in the ending of *Much Ado*. This layering of texts seems to have resonated with the playwright for over a decade, since, in *The Winter's Tale*, he is thought to have returned not only to the same moment from *Alcestis*, but also to the same story in 'Bandello'.

Giovanna Di Martino (UCL)

Fragments and Fragmentation in Early Modern Drama

The present paper puts translation of ancient Greek drama back at the centre of the creation of drama in the early modern period. The relative freedom with which these ancient sources were adapted to their new contexts underlies a common strategy for dramatists of the period, that is: a practice of fragmentation, collage and recreation that substantiates the majority of the new plays produced at the time. Fragmentation is also the material condition in which we find much early modern drama and

theatre. In England, for example, if the majority of the plays produced before 1642 is lost without trace, a good 25% survives in fragmentary form: play titles, extracts or paratextual material testify to the period's rich performance culture. In Italy, too, in library as well as translation catalogues, we find the titles and, sometimes, material remnants of the performance culture thriving at the time and of the practice of cut-and-paste, collage, fragmentation that assisted the early modern dramatist in writing new plays as well as informed the scholar in translating these ancient sources with a view to performance. This paper will discuss the practice of fragmentation in the recreation of a strand of myth that was growing in popularity due to, amongst other things, Jean Saint-Ravy's translations of Aeschylus' tragedies into Latin: Orestes' revenge but, more importantly, the Furies haunting the hero for the matricide, which follows the story of Orestes' revenge. I will discuss the treatment of the myth in John Pickering's *Horestes* (1567), the lost play *Orestes' Furies* (or *Agamemnon*) by Thomas Dekker and Henry Chettle (1599), and a fragmentary translation of Aeschylus' *Eumenides* into the Italian vernacular before the end of the 16th century.

Evgeniia Ganberg (University of Cambridge)

“Defining” Deification: Thomas Heywood's *The Golden Age*

The first installment of Thomas Heywood's series *The Ages* has been received much more favorably by early modern audiences than by modern-day scholars. Performed 'sundry times' by Heywood's company, The Queen's Men, at the Red Bull, and then published in 1611, this epic dramatization of the beginning of William Caxton's *The recuyell of the historyes of Troye*, on which Heywood also modelled the first few cantos of *Troia Britannica*, is primarily remembered today for the sheer spectacle it would have provided when staged. On top of multiple fights and costume changes, the play's last scene depicts Jupiter's ascension into heaven on an eagle, a piece of equipment that, some suggest, could have been borrowed by The King's Men for their contemporaneous production of *Cymbeline*. There is, however, scope for discussion of *The Golden Age* beyond such Shakespearean connections. Taking inspiration from a printing error – the title page of most surviving copies of the play reads 'defining of the Heathen Gods' instead of 'deifying of the Heathen Gods', – this paper explores what it means to be(come) a god, according to Heywood. Teasing out how the dramatist responded to his sources' explanation of the origin of the pagan gods, I hope to probe into what the extravagant displays might obscure: Heywood's intriguing, perhaps, even subversive investigation of the complex relationship between people, rulers, and poets. How would the play's debate around royal succession resonate with its first audience which recently acquired a new monarch after years of uncertainty? How would the play's 'strange election' of Saturn (and, subsequently, Jupiter) be perceived against the backdrop of James I's absolutist policies? And what about Heywood himself, considering that the play opens with Homer claiming to have given the deities their 'divinity'?

Tom Harrison (independent scholar)

Plautine Influence in Thomas Tomkis' *Albumazar* and Other English Academic Plays

This paper takes as its starting point a piece of stage business in Thomas Tomkis' university comedy *Albumazar* (1614-15), in which the clown Trincalo demands a suspected thief show him the hands he is concealing behind his back: he asks to see first one hand and then the other, and, discovering both empty, his 'other hand'. The episode comes from Tomkis' most direct source—Giambattista Della Porta's *Lo Astrologo*—but academic audience would likely have recognised an echo of Plautus' *Aulularia*, which contains a similar scene with a hand-hiding thief. Plautus was no stranger to the Cambridge University stage: notwithstanding incomplete or missing records, there are over 20 identifiable performances of Plautus at Cambridge in the sixteenth century, with many more academic plays carrying traces of Plautine influence. With the *Albumazar* episode as a key example, this paper explores how Plautus' presence was felt on the English academic stage, not just through textual allusions but through stage action, hinting at a more comprehensive 'Plautine dramaturgy' that influenced the composition of university comedies.

Domenico Lovascio (University of Genoa)

The Failure of the Classics in John Fletcher's *The Mad Lover*

John Fletcher's *The Mad Lover* is a prime example of his tragicomic brilliancy, yet it has attracted relatively little critical attention. In particular, no scholars have dealt with the play's attitude to classical myth. The play is set in Cyprus, a culturally Hellenized island that was also known as the birthplace of the goddess Venus, and the masque that is brought on stage during the play to cure the General Memnon from his love madness draws heavily on classical lore, and chiefly on the myth of Orpheus, who is characterised both as a poet and musician and as a cautionary example of death as a potential consequence of love. Additionally, the play features a *dea ex machina* in the form of Venus appearing on stage and delivering an oracle. Fletcher demonstrates a characteristically deep level of knowledge and understanding of the classics, yet his use of classical mythology is not imbued with the reverential awe usually reserved to Greek and Roman culture by his contemporaries; on the contrary, he displays a significantly sceptical attitude towards them. As a matter of fact, the classically based masque fails to dissuade the character Memnon from committing suicide, and his brother Polydore is forced to devise a different, and entirely early modern, stratagem; Memnon rolls his eyes at Orpheus' attempts to influence him; and Venus' appearance on the stage does not advance the plot in any way, thus subverting the expected outcome of the classical device of the *deus ex machina*. This paper ultimately illustrates how *The Mad Lover* offers yet another demonstration of Fletcher's knowledge of the classics and, simultaneously, of his disenchanting engagement with them, which was noted and commented upon by Ben Jonson himself in a masque performed at court right after Fletcher's play.

Francesco Morosi (University of Pisa)

The Importance of Being Simple. Aristophanic Transformations in Thomas Randolph's *Drinking Academy*

Hey for Honesty, Down with Knavery is not Thomas Randolph's sole experiment with Aristophanic drama and its translation. This paper will deal with the least known of Randolph's Aristophanic works, *The Drinking Academy*. Based on the problematic relation between a poor and ignorant father (Simple) and his gullible son (Knowlitttle), and this latter's courting of Lady Pecunia, the play is set at the interesting literary and dramatic juncture between Aristophanes' *Wealth* and *Clouds*, as well as some contemporary Aristophanic receptions, such as Jonson's *Staple of News*. The paper will investigate Randolph's strategies in translation and adaptation, showing the relevant cultural implications of revitalizing Aristophanes in early modern England.

Yves Peyré (Emeritus Professor, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier)

Proserpine's Daughters? On Shakespeare and the Greek Romances

The accessibility of Greek prose fiction in the second half of the sixteenth century in England is well documented. Echoes of the Greek romances have been signalled in the novels of Lyly, Nash, and Lodge as well as in Greene's *Pandosto*, which is itself a source of *The Winter's Tale*, and the influence of Greek fiction on Sidney's *Arcadia* has been thoroughly investigated. In the first decades of the seventeenth century, when Shakespeare was composing his Late Plays, a renewed taste for the Greek novels encountered the emerging trend of Fletcherian tragicomedy, inspired by Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, itself at least partially inspired by Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. The thematic and structural convergence of Shakespeare's Late Plays with the Greek romances can be attributed to various types of literary influences as well as the fashion of the times.

This paper re-examines possible relations between Shakespeare's Late Plays and the Greek prose romances that were available at the time, mainly, but not exclusively, Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* and Achilles Tatius' *Clitophon and Leucippe*, versions of *Apollonius of Tyre*, and occasionally Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias*, a twelfth-century Byzantine text written in the style of an ancient Greek narrative.

Translations of Greek narratives into Latin, English and other European vernacular languages not only made these texts of the Second Sophistic accessible, they were also factors of transmission of themes borrowed from Greek classical poetry and tragedy, as it has been recently suggested. At the same time, the process of transmission produced a double level of transformation. Classical elements conveyed

by the Greek romances find themselves altered by their insertion in a different aesthetic form while early modern translators operate further changes in the very act of translating. This presentation will study a few examples of either indirect transmission or occasional convergence concerning the construction of femininity in relation to various aspects of textual self-referentiality and meta-textuality.

Jane Raisch (University of York)

'is it an interlude, or what is it?': The Puppet Show & Classical Reception in *Bartholomew Fair*

Scholars have long been puzzled by the puppet show that concludes Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*. Considered by an earlier generation of academics to be in distinctly poor taste, and thus largely left undiscussed, the puppet show has enjoyed greater attention in this century as an example of satire and burlesque. In this paper, I propose to examine the puppet show in *Bartholomew Fair* as a specimen of classical reception. Though directly a parody of Christopher's Marlowe's popular epyllion *Hero and Leander*, the puppet show also clearly takes aim at that poem's elevated classical material, jokingly transposing the narrative from Asia Minor to seventeenth-century London. In so doing, I suggest that the puppet show offers a surprisingly serious consideration of how dramaturgy and performance make classical material legible to public and 'popular' audiences. The questions raised by the play's characters about decorum, intelligibility, plot, etc. all serve to illuminate the mechanics of dramatic adaptation as a vehicle for classical reception. By at once radically reimagining the story of 'Hero and Leander' and staying true to its fundamental narrative contours, the puppet show invites a reconsideration of what constitutes ancient narrative and the role adaptation plays in both delineating and blurring such cultural boundaries.

Carla Suthren (Oxford University)

Buchanan's Euripides: The Politics and Poetics of the *Eidolon*

In *De jure regni apud Scotos*, printed in 1579 but composed in 1567 in defence of the revolt against James VI's mother Mary Queen of Scots, the Scottish humanist George Buchanan draws an analogy between the scenario of Euripides' *Helen*, in which the Greeks and Trojans 'struggled for ten years over her likeness [*simulacrum*]' while the real Helen was in Egypt, and contemporary 'headstrong tyrants' who 'cling to the false semblance of kingship'. This was not Buchanan's first demonstration of interest in Euripides. During his years teaching at a school in Bordeaux in the early 1540s, he provided a play in Latin each year for the boys to perform. For this purpose, he translated Euripides' *Medea* and *Alcestis*, and composed two original dramas, *Baptistes* and *Jephtes*, all of which were heavily influenced by Erasmus' translations of *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia in Aulis*. Recent work has stressed the political Euripides in these plays that Buchanan inherited from others (Crawforth and Jackson, 2019); I argue that the idea of the *eidolon* becomes central to Buchanan's Euripidean project. It unites his ideas on tyranny, exemplary (female) virtue, and translation itself.

William N. West (Northwestern University)

Tainted Love: Comedy and *Contaminatio*

Greek New Comedy was all but unknown to readers or actors of the English Renaissance, except as mediated by Roman translations and adaptations. Terence and Plautus explicitly distanced themselves from their Greek originals by splicing together plots or characters from multiple plays, in a process known as *contaminatio*. During the Renaissance, classicizing Italian and English playwrights continued this practice of "contaminating" one Latin play with others to come up with their own plays. One result of this ongoing project of *contaminatio* is the spectral presence of Greek names and settings in comedies that otherwise seem to have nothing especially Greek about them, for instance Machiavelli's *Clizia* or Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Another, perhaps, is the frequent double plot of English comedies. But in addition to these nominal or formal echoes, I will argue that practices of *contaminatio* in early modern comedies function as a kind of comedic content, which positively valorizes different kinds of hybridity or even cosmopolitanism—among them familial, cultural, and linguistic. Unlike many other early modern forms and modes of performance, the nostalgic backward glance of much classicizing Renaissance comedy celebrates the possibility of

bringing together different customs, peoples, and values into stable and happy—if not always harmonious or unified—community.

Susanne Wofford (NYU)

“His young flesh and golden head all mangled”: Dismemberment and Bacchic *sparagmos* in Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*

The prominence of figures of dismemberment in two of Shakespeare’s late Roman tragedies, *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, is striking, mysterious and not fully explicable by Plutarch’s *Lives* or other later non-dramatic sources. In the light of the important work of the past decade demonstrating the availability of Euripides’ plays in Latin translation and indeed in vernacular translations throughout the 16th century, this essay will present the case that this fascination may emerge in part from key Euripidean intertexts to Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*, and will argue that *Hippolytus* and *The Bacchae* underlie the treatment of dismemberment and self-scattering in these plays. The tragic closure in the two Euripides plays provides a complex double connection between the eroticism of ecstatic experience and the staging of human limitation and mortality. This essay will illuminate the effect of these Euripidean models of tragic closure in creating the ending of *Coriolanus*, and argue that a specifically Greek version of the tragic scenario shaped that play even as it is based in Roman history. For reasons of space, this essay will make only brief reference to *Antony and Cleopatra* which also refocuses the tragic *sparagmos* with a Euripidean lens, suggesting that erotic fulfillment can be achieved only through dismemberment (and death). Unlike *Coriolanus*, it also draws on the Euripidean recognition made possible by re-membering the body, in death and on stage, and adds Euripidean irony and tragicomedy to its tragic account of the failure and power of love. Indeed, in both these cases a mysterious fascination with dismemberment haunts the play and especially their endings.