

## **The King's Men's Shakespearean Repertory**

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My paper will focus on the immediately post-Shakespearean seventeenth century: the King's Men's repertory in the wake of Shakespeare's retirement, and specifically the plays written by Fletcher (and his co-authors) while he was principal dramatist for the King's Men. I will argue that the company was the first group to make Shakespeare "Shakespeare" and to imagine themselves in a specifically post-Shakespearean moment, for even after Shakespeare's death the company self-consciously cultivated a Shakespearean repertory style in order to provide continuity with their earlier drama. In this way, Shakespeare became a guiding ideal for the company as much as a former sharer, his descendants' works less derivative and more working within a specific house style.

Particularly, I plan to examine two moments in Fletcher's career. The first is the period 1620-22, in which Fletcher wrote a cluster of plays that were heavily influenced by *The Tempest*. I will argue that these plays served as a form of advance marketing for the First Folio, and constructed a particular image of "Shakespeare" that a reader opening to the first page of the Folio would immediately recognize. The second moment concerns the group of plays written by Fletcher (and Beaumont) for the King's Men from *Philaster* on. The influence of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragicomedy on Shakespeare has long been acknowledged, but I will argue that as Fletcher began to write for the King's Men before, during, and after Shakespeare's quasi-retirement in 1610, he cultivated a Shakespearean style, especially intrigued by the elder playwright's focus on active heroines. He increasingly incorporated this focus into his own plays, with the result that Shakespeare became a sort of diachronic collaborator as his style became the King's Men's repertory style.

## **"I'll tear your libel for abusing that word": Staging Sanitonella's Libelous Brief, Legal Advocacy, and Bastardy in John Webster's *The Devil's Law Case***

Lisa M. Barksdale-Shaw, Michigan State University

This paper submits that in Webster's tragicomedy *The Devil's Law Case* (1623), Sanitonella the law clerk's libelous legal brief serves as the central artery through which the fates of Leonora and her son Romelio fall. In this post-Shakespearean moment, this written evidence creates a narrative where the play may be read as unprecedented in its portrayal of a legal drama, notably steeped in church matters and uncannily instigated by "devil" women. While this Jacobean drama bears strong earmarks of Shakespeare's earlier tragicomedies, *Measure for Measure* and *The Merchant of Venice*, I note that Webster investigates libel in a way that advances, but complicates the representation of the early modern trial. In Webster's play, Leonora, her maid Winifred, and Sanitonella the law clerk collude against Romelio, and form a private, but depraved conspiracy to obtain vengeance for Leonora in a public bastardy trial court. Set against Shylock's civil bond and Antonio's warrant, this essay looks at how Sanitonella's collaborative, but libelous brief confronts concepts like the appearance of the legal brief, the practice of libel, and the implications for the ecclesiastical courts. While grappling with the manner in which Webster distinguishes his work from Shakespeare, the paper both draws on and builds upon the critical tradition, which has explored the treatment of evidence in the play. In her monograph *Law and Representation in Early Modern Drama*, Subha Mukherji critiques the notions of legal and theatrical realism, as she focuses on the representation of women in early modern drama in *The Devil's Law Case* (206-232). My analysis examines how the play devalues the trustworthiness of written evidence presented at a time where the early modern courts emphasized the reliability of such evidence, and demonstrates how documents intervene in this Jacobean society as vital legal vehicles when compared to the Elizabethan era.

**“This is the man, and this the revolution”: James Shirley’s *St. Patrick for Ireland* and Intertextual Allusions to *Cymbeline*, *The Virgin Martyr* and the English Civil Wars**  
Christina Carlson, Emerson College

This paper examines James Shirley’s *St. Patrick for Ireland*, initially performed at the Werburgh Street Theatre in Dublin, “the first Irish playhouse” in the years 1637-40. It was entered into the Stationers’s Register on 28 April 1640 and later printed by the bookseller Robert Whitaker. The play represents an intriguing example of multiple temporalities and source influence, which parallels the emphasis on “double time” that Philippa Berry and others have located in Shakespeare’s histories, tragedies, and Roman plays. Not only does the play re-imagine several important Jacobean plays, including the neo-miracle play of Catholic/Protestant conversion and martyrdom, Thomas Dekker’s *The Virgin Martyr* (published in 1622) and Shakespeare’s play of Roman origins and British/ Irish nationalism, *Cymbeline* (produced ca. 1611). It also uses these dramatic allusions as a way of commenting on the present topical moment, specifically the conflicts that led to the 1641 Irish Rebellion, which broke out on October 23 of that year.

**Tragicomedy in the wake of Shakespeare**  
Darlene Farabee, University of South Dakota

This essay examines tragicomedy in the immediate post-Shakespearean period to suggest that these plays develop the genre through stagecraft elements of the plays. Not surprisingly, tragicomedies of the early seventeenth century interact with and respond to other plays of the period. In some instances, echoes are discernably originating in Shakespearean plays: Robert Daborne’s *The Poor Man’s Comfort* (1617) includes a character crying out “My kingdom for a boat,” but other aspects of Daborne’s play more easily correlate with other tragicomedy elements from earlier Heywood or Dekker plays. Suzanne Gossett has pointed out how Middleton and Rowley’s *A Fair Quarrel* (1617) “recalls Thomas Heywood’s *A Woman Killed with Kindness* [1603] whose title plot concerns woman’s adultery and family honour and the second plot two friends who quarrel and duel to disastrous effect, until the rift is cured by the exchange of a sister.” Jane’s circumstance in *A Fair Quarrel* (contracted in marriage to one man and desired by her father to marry another) recalls Tormiella’s dilemma at the opening of Thomas Dekker’s *Match Me in London* (1611). Concentrating on the stagecraft elements of the large final scenes of tragicomedies from the period immediately following Shakespeare’s death, this essay traces interconnections between the plays to suggest some of the expanding possibilities of tragicomedy as a genre.

### Thomas Porter's *The Villain*: Critiquing *Othello* on the Early Restoration Stage

Caitlin McHugh, University of Minnesota

The early Restoration repertoire consisted of many pre-1642 dramas. Shakespeare, in addition to Jonson and Beaumont and Fletcher, was frequently adapted in this period. These adaptations and responses can serve as some of our first critical responses to the Bard, illustrating not only what these authors thought of Shakespeare, but also what they believed made a quality or successful drama on the Restoration stage. This paper explores Thomas Porter's *The Villain* (1662) as an example of such a response to Shakespeare's *Othello*. The little work that has been done on *The Villain* details how the play is indebted to *Othello*, but this essay will address Porter's play as a critical response to Shakespeare's work. What do we learn about Shakespeare from reading Porter?

In comparison to contemporary critiques of *Othello*, such as the one detailed by Thomas Rymer in his infamous *A Short View of Tragedy* (1693), *The Villain* shows evidence of addressing similar concerns. I argue that Porter's play seeks to remedy issues of improbability within *Othello*. In particular, I look at the susceptibility of certain characters to the villain's (Malignii's) suggestions, Malignii's motivations, and how he manipulates situations already in place, as opposed to constructing them from his own imagination. In doing so, I suggest that *The Villain* should be read as a piece of important criticism on *Othello*, and one that aligns with concerns raised towards the end of the century by Rymer. As such, Porter's little-studied yet hugely popular tragedy is a statement about what made a successful tragedy on the Restoration stage.

### The lost Shakespeare apocrypha

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What can we learn, if anything, from the posthumous attribution to Shakespeare of plays that are now lost? There is documentary evidence for six such plays in the form of Stationers' Register entries. Perhaps the best known are the three entered by Humphrey Moseley on 29 June 1660: "*The History of King Stephen*", "*Duke Humphrey, a Tragedy*", and "*Iphis & Iantha, or marriage without a man, a Comedy*". However, there is also a "Henry I" which was licensed as Davenport's in 1624 but later ascribed, with a "Henry II", to both Davenport and Shakespeare in 1653 (again, by Moseley, in the same group entry that includes "Cardenio"). Perhaps most intriguingly, something called "*Eurialus & Lucretia*" was explicitly listed under Shakespeare's name and accompanied by other plays known to be Shakespeare's when it was assigned to Robert Scott on 21 August 1683. Although the playtexts for these titles are no longer extant, as far as lost plays go, these titles are remarkably useful in their specificity. Can recovering the subject matter of these plays tell us anything about how Shakespeare was perceived in the Caroline and Interregnum periods? What about these stories – three histories, a tragedy, a comedy, and a romance – tempted Moseley and others to associate them with Shakespeare? And how useful is the author-centric term "apocrypha", insinuating as it does a hierarchy of values by applying to Shakespeare but not other playwrights, and by drawing arbitrary distinctions between a "canonical" lost play like "Cardenio" and the "apocryphal" (read, "unworthy") lost plays listed above?

**Influence, Imitation and Belatedness circa 1620: *The Two Noble Ladies* and Shakespearean/Fletcherian Tragicomedy**

Lucy Munro, King's College London

In this paper I explore the interactions between Shakespearean tragicomedy and drama of the early 1620s, focusing on a set of plays by Fletcher and Massinger and, in particular, on the anonymous play *The Two Noble Ladies and the Converted Conjurer*. *The Two Noble Ladies* survives in manuscript and was not printed in full until 1930; the manuscript describes it as a 'Trage-comicall Historie' and notes that it was 'often tymes acted w<sup>t</sup> approbation At the Red Bull in S<sup>t</sup>. Iohns Streete By the Company of y<sup>e</sup> Reuells'.

*The Two Noble Ladies* focuses on two women – the future saint Justina and Miranda, the Amazonian daughter of the Souldan of Egypt – and the magician Cyprian, also later canonised. Although often overlooked by scholars, the play is one of the period's most sustained engagements with the forms, tropes and techniques of Shakespearean tragicomedy. In its depiction of the Souldan's incestuous desire for his daughter and Cyprian's use of and, later, rejection of his magic, it adapts *Pericles* and *The Tempest* both directly and through the lens of contemporaneous appropriations of Shakespeare's plays by Fletcher and Massinger, such as *The Double Marriage*, *The Sea Voyage*, *The Island Princess* and *The Prophetess*. In the process, it also adapts tragicomic forms that were developing at the Red Bull through saint's plays such as Rowley's *A Shoemaker a Gentleman* and Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*.

Thus, *The Two Noble Ladies* is both belated and current, using its debts to other plays as a playfully creative stimulus. In particular, its combination of different forms of tragicomedy should alert us to the fluidity of tragicomic form in the early 1620s, the interactions between different playing companies and playhouses, the continuing relevance of amphitheatre dramaturgy, and the complexities of Shakespearean reception in the final years of James's reign.

## **Bad Form? : “Derivative” Drama’s Use of Shakespearean Typologies**

Rebecca Munson, UCLA

Shakespeare, too, was formulaic. His early plays in particular adhere to the conventions established by playwrights like Seneca and Terence, to say nothing of his dependence on the English popular tradition. In all cases, however, Shakespeare experiments with the established form, making it his own. I would argue that the professional playwrights of the late Jacobean and Caroline theater—writers like Massinger, Brome, and Shirley—attempted the same practice with Shakespearean formulae. What we judge to be their lack of success may, however, be the result of attempts to adapt material that had become increasingly recognizable not just from the stage (where it was still performed) but from playbooks that printed and circulated in large numbers. It was, perhaps, much harder to distinguish yourself or develop your own signature form with your father’s ghost stalking you at every turn. Thanks to the repertory theater and the ready availability of plays in print, spectators at the indoor theaters, highly literate members of the gentry, possessed fluency with Shakespeare’s plays from a standpoint previously impossible.

This paper contends that later professional playwrights attempted to make a virtue of necessity and used Shakespeare's plays provide a meaningful subtext and reveal an interpretive framework to audience members habituated to critical engagement with drama and attuned to potential parallels. It takes James Shirley’s *The Politician* (1639) as an example, arguing that the characters themselves are familiar with theatrical formulae which have migrated beyond the theater and have become a tool at the service of unscrupulous politicians.

Shirley’s play offers the audience two competing typologies for the King of Norway: that of Richard II (the exemplum favored by the scheming Gotharus) or that of Henry IV. Gotharus persuades the King that he is caught up in one narrative (the seizure of the crown by a rebellious subject) while he is revealed to the audience to be implicated in a different Shakespearean plot ending with the reconciliation of the king and his seemingly wayward son. The problem is not that Shirley's monarch aligns himself with a fictional character, but that he aligns himself with the *wrong* fictional character, misrecognizing his own precedent and believing himself part of a tragic narrative: an error in judgment that almost makes it so.

## **Philip Massinger and the Disguised Ruler in Caroline England**

Eoin Price, Swansea University

This paper will consider the way in which Philip Massinger – often described (and derided) as derivative – responds to the conventions of the disguised ruler play. Kevin Quarmby has traced the development of the genre in Elizabethan and Jacobean England but this paper explores the densely referential Caroline theatre in greater detail. I will focus on *Believe As You List* (1631) and *The City Madam* (1632) two plays which, in different ways, reshape the disguised ruler form. In the first, Massinger gestures towards plays like Marston’s *The Malcontent* and Sharpham’s *The Fleece* by dramatizing a deposed ruler’s attempt to regain power: the difference is that, unlike Altofront, Antifront, and numerous other deposed rulers, Massinger’s Antiochus does not return to power. In *The City Madam*, Massinger uses the disguised ruler structure familiar to plays like Middleton’s *The Phoenix* and Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure* but the decision to set his play in a household, rather than a dukedom, has important political implications. On the one hand, Massinger looks back towards earlier examples of the genre (by Shakespeare and others), on the other, he takes the form into exciting new territory.

**Matching London and Oxford: Massinger's *The City Madam* and  
Mayne's *The City Match***

Joanne Rochester, University of Saskatchewan

This paper will attempt to address three elements: the relationship of Jasper Mayne's 1639 comedy *The City Match* to Massinger's 1632 *The City Madam*; the connection between Mayne's play and the three plays staged for the 1636 visit of Charles and Henrietta Maria to Oxford; and ultimately the connection between the Oxford poets who produced these plays and the Blackfriars stage.

I'm starting from a suspicion that Mayne's play is a sendup of Massinger's: whether this is aggressive or affectionate is unclear. *The City Match* is an extremely derivative work, a patchwork of borrowings cobbled together from several Jacobean and Caroline plays; Mayne's use of *City Madam* has been noted by Bentley and by Massinger's editors, Edwards and Gibson, and all three see it as simple borrowing. However, Mayne's play often reads like a deliberate inversion of Massinger's: Massinger's hero is a citizen, Sir John, who fakes his own death and returns in disguise to unmask his younger brother's greed and hypocrisy. Mayne's citizens are easily bamboozled idiots who test their sons using exactly the same tools and are humiliated. This may be nothing more than Mayne restoring the usual pattern of city comedy -- youth and wit winning over age and wealth -- but there are enough deliberate echoes of Massinger's play, from preposterous disguises (Massinger's Indians; Mayne's 'strange fish') to living pictures (Massinger's statues; Mayne's paintings) to suggest that Mayne intends his audience to think of *The City Madam*.

Why he would want to do this is the larger question, and I hope to find an answer in the play's context. Mayne's play was originally written for the royal visit to Oxford in 1636 but was dropped from the program (which consisted of Strode's *The Floating Island*, Cartwright's *The Royal Slave* and Wilde's *Love's Hospital*). Instead *The City Match* was performed at Whitehall and at Blackfriars the following year; the prologues written for these performances suggest that the staging was commanded. I intend to examine the connections between the three plays staged at Oxford and *City Match*, and to look at the coterie surrounding its composition.

## ***Pericles and the Romance of Restoration***

Lauren Shohet, Villanova University

Abstract: This paper considers how *Pericles*, an inaugural but not enduring contribution to theatrical Shakespearean performances of the Restoration, helps us think about the Restoration itself in relation to romance. It argues that romance underwrites ways of considering relationships of past to present, memory to action, generic framing to historiographic import, that offer a set of tools for articulating what a “Restoration” might be, and how theater might contribute to it.

## **Breeding Ground in Fletcher and Massinger’s *The Sea Voyage***

Ameer Sohrawardy, Rutgers University – Newark

Massinger and Fletcher’s play, *The Sea Voyage* has most often been read as a gloss on Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. My paper suggests that an earlier Shakespeare play, *The Merchant of Venice* provides a differently illuminating point of comparison. Like Shakespeare’s play, *The Sea Voyage* explores continua between humans and animals and wonders what (if anything) differentiates species. Both plays consider humans and animals in terms of their respective physical traits and behaviors; and both plays wonder about the underpinnings of economic hegemony, given the malleability and tendentiousness of inter-species ‘boundaries.’ My paper will consider the ways in which *The Sea Voyage* takes its cues from *Merchant*, in order to efface the homonormative gendered stakes underpinning late-Jacobean proto-imperialist ambitions.

My paper offers a consideration of how one Shakespearean play, despite the fact that it was reportedly staged just twice within the seventeenth-century, might have carved a small niche for itself within English society. And that niche too, might have been possible because of cross-disciplinary thinking the likes of which we are just beginning to employ again today. I take this approach to suggest that Shakespeare wasn’t just source material from which later playwrights derived their plays. If Shakespeare and his contemporaries wondered if the restraints of heteronormative society kept human behavior precariously distinguishable from animal behavior, then later writers like Fletcher and Massinger wondered if proto-imperial enterprises dependent upon husbanding metaphors (of species of animals, plants, and human into, out of, and within the New World) could be re-thought using differently gendered identities.

We must consider that ‘adaptations’ like *The Sea Voyage* were more than just works indebted to Shakespeare. They urged late Jacobean ideas of gender and imperialism to seminal post-Interregnum works like Thomas Hobbes’ *Leviathan* and Margaret Cavendish’s *The Blazing World*.