

Abstracts for “Performance, Print and Politics in 1621 and Beyond”

1 Catherine Clifford (University of North Texas) “James I, Inigo Jones’s Banqueting House, and the New Politics: ‘Republicanising’ Subjects in 1620-22”

In a letter dated December 4, 1620, Girolamo Lando, the Venetian ambassador to England, remarked upon James I’s and the (then) Marquis of Buckingham’s reactions to the increasing popular support of English intervention in the Bohemia crisis. The King apparently spoke “wrathfully” about his people “becoming too republicanising”, and Buckingham echoed these sentiments: “Whoever gives rein to the people will make the King of Bohemia laugh” (*CSP Ven.* 1619-1621: 4 December 1620). At the same time that news of the Bohemian crisis began to gather steam in Britain, Inigo Jones was hard at work rebuilding James’s new Banqueting House at Whitehall, a replacement of the one that had caught fire in January of 1619. In spite of serious Crown financial difficulties that had contributed to a two-month delay in the funeral of Queen Anne, the building of the new Banqueting House was commissioned without delay. To James, it was not simply a functional house to use for courtly celebrations and ceremonies; it was the architectural representation of himself, a monument to his authority, divinity, and taste. Simply put, Whitehall needed the Banqueting House if Whitehall was to serve as James’s seat of power.

In this paper, I would like to explore the topical reasons for the king’s discomfort with “republicanising” subjects, and argue that these reasons stood in direct contrast to his commissioning of the new Banqueting House. For James, the magnificent building represented his power and smothered any concerns his subjects might have about his decision-making or policies. That subjects might still question him seemed impossible in the face of such a grand building. I will suggest here that the Banqueting House’s courtly debut for the annual Knights of the Garter feast in 1621 and its inaugural masque, Ben Jonson’s *Masque of Augurs*, epitomized this architectural symbolism and courtly isolation.

2 Lauren Garrett (University of North Carolina) “Slander and Demonic Subversion in *The Witch of Edmonton* and 1621”

David Nicol has observed that *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621) “argues that social forces encourage demonic intervention.”¹ This argument is given its clearest articulation when Dog offers this explanation to Cuddy Banks:

[. . .] Thou art never so distant
From an evil spirit but that thy oaths
Curses and blasphemies pull him to thine elbow,
Thou never tellst a lie but that a devil

¹ Nicol, “Interrogating the Devil: Social and Demonic Pressure in *The Witch of Edmonton*,” *Comparative Drama* 38.4 (Winter 2004-05), pp. 425-444. (442).

Is within hearing it; thy evil purposes
 Are ever haunted. But when they come to act,
 As they tongue slandering, bearing false witness,
 Thy hand stabbing, stealing, cozening, cheating,
 He's then within thee. (V.i.128-136)

I'm interested in isolating and examining one of these social forces, slander, as it functions within the play and England in the year 1621. The tragic plots of Frank Thorney and Elizabeth Sawyer begin with acknowledgements of community slander. This slander affects both the choices these characters make and the way other characters perceive and treat them, despite interventions by Edmonton's authorities. Far from the marginalized figures of witch and bigamist, King James too was plagued by slanders associated with The Spanish Match and the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, leading to a royal proclamation "against excesse lavish and licentious speech of matters of State."² Bringing this text and context together, I will examine perceptions of the power of slander, including its demonic potentialities, against law and authority.

3 Ed Gieskes (University of South Carolina) **"History, Comedy, Tragedy: Middleton's Intervention in the Genre System"**

So in story what's now told
 That takes not part of with days of old?
 Raynulp, *Hengist, King of Kent*

Rayulph Higden, author of the *Polychronicon*, opens Middleton's history play with this statement about novelty and innovation, suggesting that "fashions now called new, / Have been worn by more than you." Middleton has long been considered an innovator in terms of form and dramatic genre, but this choric moment suggests that that innovation has a complicated relationship with the past it, at least supposedly, breaks from. In this essay, I propose to read his plays *Hengist, King of Kent*, *Women Beware Women*, and *Anything for a Quiet Life* (all at least arguably 1621 plays) as evidence for a description of the generic system of the drama that sees the "new" taking part with "days of old." Both *Hengist, King of Kent* (a late "history play") and *Anything for a Quiet Life* (a "late" city comedy) have, at times, been characterized as untimely in terms of their genre. *Women Beware Women* hybridizes elements of city comedy and tragedy in ways that resonate with the history play, itself a hybrid form blending elements of comedy and tragedy. I hope to address and question that untimeliness and hybridity in my essay and to suggest ways they intervene in the dramatic field of 1621.

4 Eric Griffin (Millsaps College) **"The Changeling and the Geopolitics of Dramatic Appropriation"**

1621 brought the end of the Twelve Years Truce between Spain and the Netherlands, the historical signpost around which Middleton and Rowley organize the argument and the action of *The Changeling* (c. 1622-23). Notwithstanding the attempts of James I and England's

² "By the King. A Proclamation against excesse of lavish and licentious speech of matters of State," (London 1621).

emboldened Catholic party to revive dynastic ties between Britain and Spain, this ebbing of the *Pax Hispanica* brought a resurgence in the printing of Hispanophobic propaganda that may have surpassed the output of the Armada era. As significantly, this conjuncture gloried in the revival and republication of a number of Elizabethan and early Jacobean dramas, emblemized most demonstrably by the 1623 publication of the Shakespeare First Folio.

Setting *The Changeling* within these geopolitical and dramatic contexts, this paper will examine Middleton and Rowley's imbrication of Hispanophobic coding and Shakespearean intertexts. It will argue that by exposing the interior corruption at the idolatrous heart of an outwardly re-fortified Catholic Iberia, the playwrights valorize the Calvinist ideology of the play's "rebellious Hollanders," for which the factious English Parliament was urging support, even as they nostalgically appropriate Shakespearean iconography in support of a surging religio-political nationalism.

5 Tracey Hill (Bath Spa University) **"Translations: Middleton and the City, c. 1621"**

In the early 1620s Thomas Middleton's profile in London – both on and off the stage – was at its height. Within a few years he would be involved in some of the most notable late Jacobean plays, including *Women Beware Women*, *The Changeling* and that great cause célèbre, *A game at chesse*. My first 'translation' is that of Middleton from professional dramatist to being the first Chronologer of the City of London in September 1620. Middleton was an established civic writer who had worked on the annual Lord Mayor's Show from 1613; from 1619 he was to co-produce almost every Show until his death in 1627. He marked the commencement of this new post by producing a number of civic entertainments, published in 1621.

However, these were troubled times for the nation at large, as well as for the City that offered Middleton both work and status. If Parliament was preoccupied with political conflicts on the continent, the City had its own concerns to deal with. The livery company system, and by extension the City's whole economic and political authority, was under strain. In particular, two consecutive mayoral incumbents were to cause the City headaches: Francis Jones, Lord Mayor in 1620, dogged by debt, decamped before his term of office expired; then, in order to become eligible for the mayoralty his successor, Edward Barkham, underwent a highly controversial 'translation' from the Leathersellers, a minor livery company, to the Drapers, one of the Great Twelve.

My paper examines the PR job Middleton undertook for the City in the inaugural mayoral Shows for 1621 and 1622 and in the composite 1621 work *Honorable Entertainments compos'de for the Seruice of this Noble Cittie*. The texts of these performance pieces show careful negotiation of the reputation of the individuals ostensibly being celebrated, as well as of the City and its constituent bodies in challenging times.

6 Mira A. Kafantaris (Ohio State University) “Strangers in Our Midst: Staging Roman History and Queen Consorts in Philip Massinger’s *The Roman Actor* (1626)”

This paper examines Philip Massinger’s *The Roman Actor* (1626) through the lens of dynastic marriages, which increasingly became matters of public debate and downright opposition in the early Stuart period. I argue that the play stages the pressing concerns surrounding the failed Spanish match and the ensuing Anglo-French marriage treaty in 1624 for a large and mixed audience, and that the play ultimately feeds into the fear of Henrietta Maria’s influence over the new king in matters of religion, policy, and patronage even at outset of his reign. In pivoting his Roman tragedy around the arbitrary and tyrannical rule of Domitian Caesar, his lustful wife, and their downfall, Massinger not only capitalizes on the cultural stock of the classical past, but also addresses the anxieties about England’s new queen, the *fille de France*, Henrietta Maria, who insisted on a public acknowledgment of her Catholicism and retained her French entourage. I argue that the play’s depiction of Caesar and Augusta’s relationship, in which the tyrannical Domitian Caesar is destroyed because he is in thrall to the lustful, degenerate Domitia Augusta, was meant to parallel the relationship between Charles and Henrietta. To make this link, I relate the political dynamics of the play to the rhetoric surrounding Charles’s French match in this immediate micro historical moment.

7 Jonathan Kotchian (Georgia Institute of Technology) “Division and Unity in Burton’s *Anatomy* and Holyday’s *Technogamia*”

My paper explores some paradoxes of unity and division in Barten Holyday’s comedy *Technogamia, or The Marriages of The Arts* (first performed and published in 1618, revived for a court performance in 1621) by reading it against Robert Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* (first published in 1621). Burton and Holyday were contemporaries at Christ Church, Oxford, and in fact *Technogamia* was staged in the college’s hall just three days before Burton’s Latin comedy *Philosophaster*. Briefly put, I find in *Technogamia*’s metaphorical scheme a mirror-image of Burton’s project in the *Anatomy*. Each centers on a failure of organization: Burton’s hyper-categorized encyclopedia cannot account for the myriad and chaotic imperfections and incoherencies of worldly existence, while Holyday’s neat allegorical framework (most of the characters, such as Astronomia, Rhetorica, and Geographus, personify scholarly subjects) does more to reveal conflict than celebrate cooperation between fields. It turns out that you *can’t* really marry the arts, any more than you can successfully anatomize melancholy.

After showing how *Technogamia* participates in a Burtonian discourse of failed organization, my paper investigates how this literary-intellectual problem resonates also in the 1621 political sphere. To what extent can the problematics of division and unity in one context help us understand the other? I attend particularly to various contemporary uses of the word “division” and to how melancholic withdrawal (including that of Holyday’s Melancholio) was figured as a meaningful response to political disunity.

8 Lawrence Manley (Yale University) **“‘Heere will be a Masque’: The first performance in the New Banqueting House, 6 January 1621/22”**

On 6 January 1621/22, Inigo Jones’s recently completed New Banqueting House in Whitehall was scene to its first masque, “The Masque of Augurs.” Working with the formal conventions of Stuart court masques, and showing how Inigo Jones’s scenic designs were integrated with Ben Jonson’s script for “The Masque of Augurs,” my paper will explore the adaptation of “The Masque of Augurs” to its courtly occasion and to the needs of Stuart government and diplomacy. Performed in front of foreign ambassadors who had jostled for precedence at the event, the masque celebrated a number of Stuart policy triumphs – a treaty with Russia that would advance English trade against Dutch competition and, with the prospect of a marriage between the Prince of Wales and the Spanish Infanta, an alternative both to costly religious wars on the continent and to financial reliance at home on an increasingly obstreperous Parliament. On the morning of January 6, the very day the masque was performed, Parliament was dismissed. To members of the court gathered at “The Masque of Augurs,” Twelfth Night 1621/22 must have looked like a triumph for Stuart absolutism and for the irenic diplomacy of the king.

9 Clare McManus (University of Roehampton) **“Gunpowder Reformed: Performing Colonial and Religious Violence in 1621”**

John Fletcher’s *Island Princess* has its first documented performance on 26 December 1621 at Whitehall as part of a season of court performances running from 5 November 1621 to March 1622. The play’s stage history in fact begins 8 years earlier with a fire. The burning of the Globe Theatre during a 1613 performance of Fletcher and Shakespeare’s *Henry VIII* is revisited in 2.4 of *The Island Princess* as the citizens of Ternate watch their town destroyed by the gunpowder brought to Indonesia by Fletcher’s protagonist. The Ternateans, martyrs to the flames of religion and the pox, burnt by the fires of rebellion that ‘smother’ in their town (2.3.35) and by the ‘material flames’ of colonial technology (2.2.39) thus also embody the traumatic history of the public theatre and the King’s Men.

This gunpowder attack further appropriates the city theatre’s treatment of colonial violence. In particular, Fletcher reworks the firing of Tunis in Daborne’s *A Christian Turned Turk* (1612), overlaying it with English experiences in early modern Indonesia and - centrally - with verbatim echoes of the 1605 Gunpowder Plot. In staging this variation on the theme of fire as a colonial weapon, Fletcher reforms the 1605 Catholic conspiracy for the Whitehall stage through the prism of the European conflagrations of the early 1620s. In so doing, the Gunpowder Plot is rendered Protestant: it raises the memory of the moment in 1605 when it seemed that the Plot might give England a second Protestant Queen Elizabeth and looks to Elizabeth of Bohemia, the royal Stuart woman in exile. Working with Richard Dutton’s and Rebecca Lemon’s explorations of *Powder Treason* plays, my paper will explore *The Island Princess*’s staging of the encounter of Islam and Christianity as an intervention into the European circumstance of late 1621.

10 Rachel E. Poulsen (Edgewood College) “*The Wild Goose-Chase* and the Brother-Sister Dyad in Early Modern Comedy: Three Tropes of Sibling Affect”

Staged representations of the brother-sister relationship in early modern English drama appear most frequently in tragedy and tragicomedy, where domineering brothers seek to master a sister’s sexuality, commodify her body, and/or possess her incestuously. Plays of the period offer countless examples of a sister’s suffering under her brother’s control.

Such portrayals make the positive dynamics of brother-sister dyads in comedy all the more remarkable. These fall into one of three patterns:

- The brother and/or sister assume cross-gender disguise. Confusion arises from mistaken identities, though the siblings are eventually reunited, with erotic entanglements contained in the restored family unit.
- In plots of narrowly-averted incest, a brother and sister are embroiled in an incestuous relationship, avoided only through a miraculous revelation. Alternately, the pair feigns incest as a ruse, with no real risk of impropriety.
- In the rarest plot, a brother seeks a good match for his sister. He helps to arrange a happy marriage, and/or does not obstruct her success in pursuing a suitable husband.

The vast majority of positive sibling dyads take place in late Jacobean and Caroline comedy. Fletcher’s *The Wild Goose-Chase* is a prime example, in which DeGard poses as a suitor to his sister Oriana in an effort to turn the head of her beloved Mirabel. But even revenge tragedies begin to take a less cynical view of brother-sister affect. Massinger’s *The Duke of Milan* sidesteps the usual incestuous violence, instead pitting Francisco against the Duke as retribution for his seduction and abandonment of Francisco’s sister Eugenia.

What accounts for the more positive turn in dramatic depictions of brothers and sisters? What social factors may have been at work? By focusing on plays from and around 1621, I will offer some possible answers.

11 Claudia Ross (Wayne State University) “Man is never truly awake till he be dead!”: Using death in *Anything for a Quiet Life*

The political and religious upheavals in England in and around 1621 were reflected in the drama of the time in many ways. The title of Middleton and Webster’s play, *Anything for a Quiet Life*, sounds like something many inhabitants of London might have occasionally thought. The various references within the text to contemporary events which have been used to date this city comedy to 1621 suggest that it was very much a play of the moment that drew upon and referred to topical concerns. Although the idea of a city comedy conjures up sexual and monetary foolishness and entanglements in London, many of them also address the shifting socially constructed attitudes towards death (for example, Sir Walter’s “deathbed conversion” in *Chaste Maid of Cheapside*). *Anything for a Quiet Life* examines these attitudes in more depth than most such plays. What little literature there is on this play often discusses the weakness of the

resolution of the main plot because of the apparently abrupt change of character for Lady Cressingham. This paper will examine the ways in which this play not only explores different attitudes towards death but also resolves most if not all of its plot tangles through the use of death. Romantic disguises and trickery appear, but simulated death, threatened death, and a mutual homicide pact dominate in the final act of this play. Death was a significant part of London life in 1621 and this particular city comedy demonstrates that.

12 Sarah Wall-Randell (Wellesley College) “As mad as *Don Quixot*’: Reading Cervantes in 1621”

In 1620 Edward Blount published *The History of the Valorous and Wittie Knight-Errant Don-Quixote of the Mancha*, the first English version of Cervantes’ ironic narrative of chivalry, in two volumes. Volume 1, translated by Thomas Shelton, was a second edition (Blount had first published it in 1612), while Volume 2 was making its first appearance in 1620. Abundant references to *Don Quixote* in English texts from 1607 onward, both in print and in manuscript (including the phrase from Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* quoted in my title), demonstrate how widely it was known, both in Spanish and in translation, and Blount’s decision in 1620 to re-release Vol. 1 together with Vol. 2 suggests that his English translations were a commercial success. In this essay, I will examine the reception of *Don Quixote* among English writers specifically in the aftermath of the 1620 edition. I will chiefly consider two 1621 texts, Massinger and Fletcher’s *The Double Marriage* and Wroth’s *Urania*, and the ways in which they reflect their authors’ imaginative metabolization of the *Quixote*. Both the play and the romance are already recognized as having been influenced by Cervantes; my argument will suggest that the way in which their writers perceived *Don Quixote*—what kind of text readers in 1621 thought it was, what genre, how typical or unprecedented—has been incompletely understood. We now tend to see the *Quixote* as a definitive, aggressively satirical break from the romance tradition; I will contend that Massinger, Fletcher, and Wroth saw it as an evolution out of the older romance texts that it parodies as much as an attack upon them. In doing so I hope also to begin to ask some questions about the relationship between print romance and the playhouse in Jacobean England.