Proceedings of the 31st Northern Plains Conference on Early British Literature

Edited by Michelle M. Sauer and Kyle Robert Moore

Image from Topographia Hibernica [Royal MS 13 B VIII, ff 1r-34v] by Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis), c. 1200. Here, a traveling priest meets and gives communion to a pair of good werewolves from the kingdom of Ossory (now County Kilkenny). [Image in Public Domain]

University of North Dakota
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Introduction: Ruminating on 30+ Years of the Northern Plains Conference on Early British Literature

Michelle M. Sauer

University of North Dakota[1]

The 31st meeting of the Northern Plains Conference on Early British Literature (NPCEBL) took place on the campus of the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, ND from April 12-13, 2024. It was a great pleasure to welcome friends and colleagues from across the Plains to my university. In the NPCEBL, every year, a core membership gathers to share scholarship, pedagogy, and fellowship. It has been a privilege to be a part of this group continuously (more or less) since 1994.

This was the first of these conferences I have hosted since 2003 when I was still employed by Minot State University (11th Conference). I have no idea if I will host again before I retire, but if so, I am certain it will still be enjoyable.

Back in 2003, Jay Ruud, the "founding father" of the conference, wrote to me in an email that his purpose was to: "initiate a network of scholars in the upper plains through the establishment of a small conference at which faculty from regional schools of the northern plains could meet and exchange ideas about teaching and research in [early] British literature." And for several years, participants did stick primarily to medieval and Renaissance British literature—the literature that, as Ruud notes, is "usually covered in the traditional 'Brit. Lit. I' surveys." But participants began pushing the envelope, proposing papers on non-canonical texts, on art and architecture, on Irish or Scottish literature, on Jane Austen and other late 18th century works, and on other topics related to, but not directly on, those traditional medieval and Renaissance subjects. Moreover, we began getting inquiries from non-literary scholars who brought with them new techniques and new theories.

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[1] Michelle M. Sauer is Chester Fritz Distinguished Professor of English and Gender Studies at the University of North Dakota and was 2024's Conference Organizer.

At the Business Meeting during this 2024 conference, we adopted the following new mission statement for the NPCEBL:

> Presentations may be on any topic related to early British literature, including modern reception, medievalisms, pedagogy, and the like. We consider early British literature to be inclusive of literatures not in English, those in colonized locations, those created by ex-patriots, and those related to Britain. "Early" includes the origins through the long 18th century. And finally, we welcome all Humanities disciplines to our table, not just languages and literature. (https://npcebl.org/)

This updated mission statement reflects both the traditions we have preserved over the years as well as the changing approach we have all taken to our beloved pre-modern literature. Over the years, we have seen some changes not only in membership—mostly due to retirements or relocations—but also due to changes in the profession itself. We have welcomed more graduate students as presenters, and even a few select undergraduates. There have been more female hosts and participants. Back in 2003, when I hosted the 11th conference, I was the first woman to independently host. Since then, there have been several others, though pre-modern literary studies are still dominated by male scholars. We have added virtual presentations to our slate, though we strive for as much in-person attendance as possible. We have expanded our scope from pre-1700 British literature to include the long 18th century, as well as Anglophone and Commonwealth literatures and even comparative World literatures. Presentations on medievalisms and modern day pre-modern callbacks have begun popping up. More presenters have begun incorporating images, manuscripts, and maps into their talks. I hope such expansions continue to expand our horizons and make our annual gathering continue to be viable for years to come.

This year, we had two keynote speakers. One, Natalie Grinnell, Reeves Family Professor in Humanities and Professor of English, Wofford College (Spartanburg, SC) delighted us with the in-person presentation, “Loving the Monster: Medieval and Modern Werewolf Romances.” The other, Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa, Professor Emerita, Shizuoka University and Research Fellow, Meiji University (Tokyo, Japan), engaged us with her virtual presentation, “Holy Holism and the Visions of Mechthild of Hackeborn & Gertrude the Great.” Grinnell’s lecture is reproduced in full here, but, unfortunately, Yoshikawa’s was committed to another publication, so we have only an overview of the excellent talk.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for all who assisted in the success of this conference. Brad Rundquist, Dean of Arts & Sciences, generously provided funding for the speaker as well as sharing his time with us at the welcome on Friday morning. Vice President of Faculty Affairs, Randi Taglen, joined us for a UND welcome at the plenary session on Friday night. The Department of English provided funds for all the programs and miscellaneous expenses. Visit Greater Grand Forks awarded me a generous grant that made possible the breakfasts and business lunch as well as the second keynote. Dean Rebecca Bichel offered the beautiful space within the Chester Fritz Library for our group to convene both in-person and virtually, and she and Brian Garrison also provided logistical, on-site assistance. Tracy Backstrom, Director of Alumni & External Relations, College of Arts & Sciences assisted with advertising and outreach. Chef John Cho at the North Dakota Museum of Art worked miracles with my limited budget. And UND Conference Services and UND Financial Services provided essential facilitation of registration and payments. Finally, my Conference Assistants, Kyle

Moore (PhD student) and Violet Ingeborg (MA student), were indispensable. I could not have successfully hosted without them. In fact, Kyle's generosity has extended to co-editing the *Proceedings*, for which I am appreciative.

Submissions were lightly edited for formatting errors and for obvious grammatical issues as well as consistent small grammatical issues (e.g., missing commas after opening prepositional phrases). Otherwise, they remain unmodified in content with the exception of the keynote pieces.

Schedule of Events

Friday, April 12

Session 1A: Shakespeare & Morality
Chair: Stephen Hamrick, Bemidji State University

Robert De Smith, Dordt University (emeritus)
New Testament Lear? Exploring the Resonances of Religious Language in *King Lear*, especially 1.1
Travis Knapp, Valley City State University
Between Sacrament and Secular: Penance in *The Winter's Tale*
Eric P. Furuseth, Minot State University
Are *Twelfth Night*'s Malvolio and *Measure for Measure*'s Lucio Necessary Sacrifices?

Session 1B: Exploring Chivalry
Chair: Amanda Watts, Minot State University

Brooke Froehle, Bemidji State University
Chivalry in Medieval Literature: A Transitional Thread
Shiva Mainaly, North Dakota State University
Arthurian Legend as a Backdrop and Blueprint for the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Pedagogy
Dominique Hoche, West Liberty University
The *Theatrum Belli* and Self-Fashioning in Christine de Pizan's *Feats of Armes*

Session 2A: Late Medieval Literature
Chair: Aimee A. Galloway, University of North Dakota

Christina Di Gangi, Dawson Community College
Lydgate and John of Salisbury: *Policraticus* and Antifeminism in the *Fall of Princes* and Beyond
Kyle Robert Moore, University of North Dakota
Pride and Penance: Sin and Hermitage in the Digby MS *Mary Magdalene* Play
Aaron Halverson, University of California, Davis
Star Wars: The Vernacularization of Astrology in Late Medieval England

Session 2B: Early Modern Adaptations
Chair: Samuel M. Amendolar, University of North Dakota

Stephen Hamrick, Bemidji State University
"Hamlet Always has his Skull": Yorick in British Sketch Comedy, 1972-2016
Liz Fisher, Bemidji State University
Influences and Evolutions of Early English Poetry on Modern Instapoetry
CoryAnne Harrigan, Simpson College
The Fury of Lady Macbeth

Session 3A: Materiality, Space, and Pre-Modern Ideologies
Chair: Peter Ramey, Northern State University

Korryn Plantenberg, University of Nebraska, Omaha
  The Ecosystem of the Home: The Domestic versus the Wild Spaces in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*
Amanda Watts, Minot State University
  The International Pharmaceutical Industry in the Court of Richard II
Michelle M. Sauer, University of North Dakota
  20th & 21st Century Anchorites: The Faithful & the Freaky

Session 3B: Early Modern Literature beyond Shakespeare
Chair: Robert De Smith, Dordt University

Bruce Brandt, South Dakota State University (emeritus)
  The Haunted Stage: Ghosts and Revenge in the English Renaissance Drama
Arthur Marmorstein, Northern State University
  The Tragedy of the Petty Man: 17th Century Dramatists and the Shadow of Shakespeare
Deanna Smid, Brandon University
  Apian Poetics and the Problem of Character: Insights from John Day's *The Parliament of Bees*

Session 4A: Language & Genre
Chair: Eric P. Furuseth, Minot State University

Peter Ramey, Northern State University
  The Digressions in *Beowulf*: A Reassessment
Judith A. Dorn, St. Cloud State University
  Mercurial Prose of the Restoration and Early 18th Century
Susan H. Wood, Midland University
  A Ballad of Redemption: *All's Well That Ends Well*

Session 4B: Historical Perspectives on Gender
Chair: Violet A. Ingeborg, University of North Dakota

Mark L. Patterson, University of North Dakota
  Transgender Identity and Inheritance in *Le Roman de Silence*
Christopher Lozensky, Minot State University
  Beyond Recognition: Intersubjectivity, Transformation, and Pedagogy in Four Breton Lais
Jonanthan Allan, Brandon University
  "An object of terror and delight": Penile Reading in *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* by John Cleland

Session 5A: Looking at Medieval Manuscripts
Informal Workshop with Michelle M. Sauer, University of North Dakota

Session 5B: Premodern Pedagogy
Chair: Susan H. Wood, Midland University

Coral Lumbley, Macalester College
    Medieval Wales in the Undergraduate Classroom
Shaun Stiemsma, Dordt University
    Using Perusall to Teach Early Modern Texts

Keynote 1
Natalie Grinnell, Reeves Family Professor in Humanities and Professor of English, Wofford College (Spartanburg, SC)
    Loving the Monster: Medieval and Modern Werewolf Romances

Saturday, April 13

Keynote 2
Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa, Professor Emerita, Shizuoka University and Research Fellow, Meiji University (Tokyo, Japan)
    Holy Holism and the Visions of Mechthild of Hackeborn & Gertrude the Great

Session 6A: Medieval Women & Christianity
Chair: Kyle Robert Moore, University North Dakota

Samuel M. Amendolar, University of North Dakota
    Agates as the Precious Stone of Jesus: Reconsidering *Ancrene Wisse* through Lapidary Traditions
Violet A. Ingeborg, University of North Dakota
    "nan nes hire evening:" Heterotopias and Virgin Martyrdom as a Queer Space in *The Martyrdom of Sancte Katerine*
Aimee A. Galloway, University of North Dakota
    Virginity in a Bottle: Portable Tabernacles within the Anchorhold

Session 6B: Gender in Premodern Literature
Chair: Mark L. Patterson, University of North Dakota

Larry Swain, Bemidji State University
    Hairdo and Sword-Wielding: The Old English *wundenlocc* and its Uses
Hannah Lewis, Bemidji State University
    Female Agency: Surprising Portrayals in Old and Middle English Literature
Jainab Tabassum Banu, North Dakota State University
    What Does Katherina Mean?: Reinterpreting Katherina's Last Monologue of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*

Session 7A: Politics & Conquest
Chair: Michelle M. Sauer, University of North Dakota

Ernst Pijning, Minot State University
    After Napoleon: Contra-revolutionary thought from Britain and the Continent
Robert Kibler, Minot State University
    Patagonian Giants in the Lands of Mist and Snow: Voyage of the HMS Sweepstakes (1671), Shipwreck of the HMS Wager (1741), and the Demythologizing of both Other and Self
Nasih Alam, North Dakota State University
    An Alien's Reading of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611)

Part I.

Keynote Addresses

Loving the Monster: Medieval and Modern Werewolf Romances

Natalie Grinnell[1]

Wofford College

One of the most popular poems in my undergraduate courses is the 12th century Breton lai, *Bisclavret* by Marie de France. Often identified as a variation on the Cupid and Psyche theme, Bisclavret tells the story of a man who disappears three nights out of seven, during which time he transforms into a werewolf. His wife, naturally concerned about his disappearances, persuades him to tell her about his shapeshifting, as well as the fact that he is only able to shift back to human form by putting on his clothes. Horrified to discover that she is married to a monster, the wife, with the help of a neighboring lord who is in love with her, steals her husband's clothing and then marries the lord. Eventually, the king encounters Bisclavret in wolf form, but because the creature kneels to him like a vassal, he recognizes it as more than a mere beast and brings the werewolf to court where he eventually encounters his former wife. Bisclavret attacks the wife, biting off her nose and mutilating her, but because he has been so well-behaved in the past, the king assumes he has good reason for his violence and tortures the truth out of the lady, forcing her to return the wolf's clothing, which allows him to regain his human shape.[2]

The most common interpretation of this poem is as a lesson about the nature of humanity, that nobility is defined by behavior rather than physical shape or even birth. Studies of the poem also linger on the relationship between the king and the werewolf as an illustration of the chivalric bond between king and vassal, as well as the misogyny of the trope of the deceitful and unfaithful wife.

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[1] Natalie Grinnell is the Reeves Family Professor of Humanities and Professor of English at Wofford College (Spartanburg, SC).

[2] Marie de France, *Bisclavret* in *The Lais of Marie de France: A Verse Translation*, ed and trans. Judy Shoaf (U. Florida, 1991-1996). https://people.clas.ufl.edu/jshoaf/marie_lais/.

Because *Bisclavret* is overwhelmingly the most read and taught medieval werewolf tale, and because it is rarely examined in the context of werewolf literature in general, the oddity of this poem is rarely scrutinized. This is not really a surprise: if there were such a thing in academia as "werewolf studies," it would be strange and diffuse field. As Willem de Blécourt points out: "…the werewolves of classical and medieval literature are studied by classicists and medieval literary historians, who in their turn rarely communicate with folklorists or witchcraft historians…[so that] the field [of werewolf studies] is fragmented and underdeveloped."[3] There are even quite a few medical scholars who have attempted to identify medical or psychological illnesses with such as porphyria, hypertrichosis, ergot poisoning, rabies, or hysteria[4] to account for "legends" of werewolves. Scholars of contemporary film, neo-gothic fiction, and paranormal romance, meanwhile, rarely examine the literary history of the werewolf or the ways that the concept and treatment of the creature changes over the centuries. In this talk, I provide a brief definition and overview of werewolf literature before focusing on a strange and compelling reverberation between medieval and the contemporary werewolf romances and the probable upheaval in gender roles that these texts signal in both eras.

What is a Werewolf?

The creature known in English as a werewolf has been consistently characterized as a brutal, cannibalistic, sadistic creature that uses a combination of force and disguise to prey on human victims. The earliest example is probably the tale of Lycaon which is referred to in Hesiod, as well as a number of other Greek and Roman texts. In Book I of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, for example, Lycaon refuses to believe that Zeus, visiting in disguise, is a god, so he decides to test him by feeding him the human flesh of a prisoner. Zeus recounts Lycaon's appalling behavior:

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[3] Willem de Blécourt, "Monstrous Theories: Werewolves and the Abuse of History," *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural* 2, no. 2 (2013):189, *JSTOR*, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/preternature.2.2.0188.

[4] Blécourt, "Monstrous Theories," 188-189.

> But not content with this, he slit the throat
> of a Molossian hostage with a sword.
> He boiled some of the half-dead limbs; the rest
> he roasted over flame. When served that dish,
> I hurled avenging bolts and crashed the roof
> down on his household—worthy of that master!
> Aghast, he flees into the silent fields.
> Trying in vain to speak, he howls. His mouth
> derives its rage from him. Craving the slaughter
> to which he is accustomed, he attacks
> the sheep. Now too he takes his joy in blood.
> His clothes transform to fur, his arms to legs.
> Though he becomes a wolf, he keeps some traces
> of his past form: he has the same gray hair,
> same eyes, same portrait of ferocity. (Book 1, lines 241-255)[5]

The punishment—Lycaon being transformed into a man-wolf—fits the crime, not only because of the impiety against the god and the violation of the duties of host towards a guest, but also because Lycaon's external shape is metamorphosed to reflect his behavior, which the ancient Roman poet considers to be literally inhuman(e).

In the early modern period, werewolves are absorbed into the persecution of witches, and their transformations become evidence of demonic possession or satanic bargains. Perhaps most infamously, according to an account printed in 1590, one Peter Stumpf confessed, under torture, to killing and eating at least sixteen people, including two pregnant women, whom he disemboweled in order to consume their fetuses. Also guilty of incest with his daughter, Stumpf claimed to have a belt which allowed him to transform into a wolf, in which guise he committed his horrific crimes.[6] Though separated by at least a millennium, Lycaon and Stumpf share a list of characteristics common to lycanthropes in Western history. They are human beings who periodically commit violent crimes, often including murder, mutilation, cannibalism, and sexual assault, particularly, though not exclusively, against women and children. When not committing their crimes, they are embedded in a community and have employment, shelter, and usually a set of friends and family. They, or the people around them, describe their episodic bursts of violence as metamorphoses into the shape of a wolf. For those who did not believe in physical transformation, lycanthropy was defined as a mental illness or possession by evil forces, and examples appear in both medical textbooks and early accounts of violent criminality using that designation. In 1974, a new term was created for such a person, and in popular culture as well as criminal science the term *lycanthrope* was replaced by *serial killer*.[7]

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[5] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Stephanie McCarter, (Penguin, 2022): 12-13.

The earlier assertion of *metamorphosis*, whether physical or psychological, explains behavior that some cultures consider inhuman and frankly evil as well as the episodic nature of the murderer's crimes, a consistent part of the definition of a serial killer, who differs from a spree killer because their murders take place in at least three separate incidents. When caught—by a god or the authorities—pre-twentieth century lycanthropes are themselves usually condemned to a permanent loss of their human shape. Lycaon is condemned to live out his life as a wolf; Peter Stumpf has flesh torn from him with hot pincers and his limbs removed and broken before being beheaded and burned at the stake.

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[6] "A true discourse Declaring the damnable life and death of one Stubbe Peeter, a most wicked sorcerer…Trulye translated out of the high Duch according to the copie printed in Collin," London, 1590. British Library, C. 27. a. 9. https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-damnable-life-and-death-of-stubbe-peeter-a-werewolf-1590.

[7] Behavioral Analysis Unit of the National Center for the Analysis of Violence Crime, *Serial Murder: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives for Investigators*, Federal Bureau of Investigation. Accessed 2023. https://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/serial-murder.

Medieval Werewolves

Only twice in Western literary history has the werewolf been portrayed sympathetically. The first takes place in a small group of romances from the high Middle Ages which includes not only Marie de France's *Bisclavret*, but also the *Lay of Melion* (c. 1200), *Guillaume de Palerne* (c. 1190), and *Arthur and Gorlagon* (c. 1385). These tales present the werewolf figure as a lesson in humanity and a (misogynist) exposure of female duplicity. One of the few writers who acknowledges the oddity of these texts in the history of werewolf literature is Peter Vronsky, who claims that: "Werewolves had been so rationalized and medicalized by the year 1000 that they became subject to a medieval type of 'heroin chic' romanticism in literature, in which / they were frequently portrayed as attractive, lonely, suffering, victimized, self-sacrificing, chivalrous heroes in fictional and mythological tales."[8] Of course, Vronsky is not only *not* a medievalist, his PhD is in criminal justice history and espionage, and from that point of view, medieval werewolves are extremely strange. Why would these poems deviate so severely from the traditional construction of the lycanthrope? Even Marie de France herself acknowledges the contradiction between the expected behavior of a werewolf and that of the character in her lai. *Bisclavret* opens with the following passage:

> Long ago you heard the tale told—
> And it used to happen, in days of old—
> Quite a few men became garwolves,
> And set up housekeeping in the woods.
> A garwolf is a savage beast,
> While the fury's on it, at least:

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[8] Peter Vronsky, *Sons of Cain: A History of Serial Killers from the Stone Age to the Present*. (Penguin, 2018): 92-93.

> Eats men, wreaks evil, does no good,
> Living and roaming in the deep wood.
> Now I'll leave this topic set.
> I want to tell you about Bisclavret. (ll. 5-14)[9]

Shoaf footnotes her translation with what has come to be the standard reading of these lines: "In introducing *Bisclavret*, Marie is, again, seriously teasing the reader: what terrible beasts these garwolves were! Cruel, wild man-eaters...[however] The horror the garwolf arouses in the introduction turns out to be irrelevant to this tale, in which the real horror is the woman who betrays the man she has loved."[10]

This explanation--that the poet is teasing the reader—is, in spite of its ubiquity, unsatisfying. Misty Urban has written with regard to Marie's lais that "…a discussion of [her] narrative moves ought also to observe the frequent commodification of the female body, the patriarchal regulation of sexuality, and the erotics of suffering, all of which demonstrate the many ways in which rape culture in so-called courtly literature coheres with present-day constructions on sex and gender."[11] As Urban intimates and in spite of the supposed lesson on the nature of humanity, Bisclavret contains the core elements of the darker werewolf stories, especially the mutilation of the female body and the episodic violence. And the same is true for the other medieval werewolf romances, as masculine violence is rationalized as the proper behavior of medieval noblemen.

Arthur and Gorlagon a fourteenth century tale in Latin contained only in the Bodleian Library's MS *Rawlinson B 149,* begins when King Arthur decides to kiss Gwenevere publicly without her permission, showing his disregard for her bodily autonomy and provoking her to claim he does not understand the heart of a woman. In the course of trying to prove her wrong, he ends up at the court of another king, listening the story of Gorlagon, a character accused of cannibalism and infanticide, but who is proven innocent in spite of the machinations of his wife. After hearing the tale, Arthur discovers that Gorlagon's wife is sitting at the table with them, her lover's severed head in a dish, crying as she kisses his dead face each time her husband recounts events of their story.[12] This scene evokes the cannibalistic feast set before the god in Ovid's tale, but here eroticized, as kissing and eating merge in the punishment of the weeping wife.

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[9] Marie de France. *Bisclavret*, 1.
[10] Marie de France, *Bisclavret*, 1, footnote 1.
[11] Misty Urban, "Sexual Compulsion and Sexual Violence in the Lais of Marie de France," *Teaching Rape in the Medieval Literature Classroom: Approaches to Difficult Texts*, ed. Alison Gulley (Arc Humanities Press, 2018): 138.

William of Palerne begins with a potential infanticide, avoided when a werewolf abducts the targeted child, who is raised by a foster family until he and his lover are forced to flee—again with help from the werewolf—into the forest dressed in bearskins. Eventually, the werewolf in this story is revealed to be the Prince of Spain, transformed by his jealous stepmother so that her son can inherit the throne. His behavior, like that of Bisclavret, proves his humanity and nobility, while exposing his inhumane treatment by a female family member.[13] Then there is *Melion*, whose hero is so hostile to female agency that he vows never to love any women who has ever loved a man before him; once he finds such a bride, the daughter of the King of Ireland, she helps him transform into a wolf so that he can catch a stag whose flesh she desires to eat, but then steals the magic ring and clothes he needs to return to human shape and runs off with a lover. He manages to collect a wolf pack to follow her, terrifying the entire countryside and killing both men and women before the king with 1000 hounds kills all of the wolves except Melion. He is only saved by the arrival of King Arthur at whose feet he kneels, revealing his inner humanity (in spite of the number of people he has just slaughtered). His wife is forced to restore him to human shape, and though the King of Ireland offers to let Arthur and his men kill and dismember her, Melion merely abandons her, having learned never to trust anything a wife says.[14]

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[12] *Arthur and Gorlagon*, ed. George Lyman Kittredge (Atheneum Press, 1903).

[13] *The Romance of William of Palerne,* ed. Walter William Skeat (EETS, 1890).

Of *William of Palerne*, Doryjane Birrer writes “Perhaps that’s what makes this romance an unsettling tale: when a werewolf can be a compassionate and humane friend, and a parent can be a malevolent and inhumane enemy, how can ‘humanity’ be identified or persuasively characterized within bodies that would be recognizably ‘human’?”[15] But I would argue that these tales try, and almost succeed, in integrating male violence into a chivalric ideal by displacing both the causes and the responsibility for such violence onto the female characters—the wives, lovers, mothers, and queens who suffer most obviously from the predations of werewolves and knights alike.

The intellectual and philosophical flowering in the twelfth century, what used to be called the twelfth century renaissance, was a time of transformation, and many of its works reveal a preoccupation with the stability and instability of masculinity itself. The appearance of the sympathetic werewolf tale is emblematic of this concern, as the familiar social structures of feudalism evolved and solidified into a class structure with its own ethical system. In literary form, this system is expressed in the development of the chivalric romance and its courtly love conventions.

In his insightful article, “The Chivalric Masculinity of Marie de France’s Shape-Changers,” Thomas R. Schneider notes that

> Marie’s portrait of the knight [ ] is complex…the men who embody it are presented in states of metamorphosis, often in ways that are disturbing to the unchanging women of the tales, yet with a paradoxical insistence on the continuity of their chivalric,

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[14] *Melion and Biclarel: Two Old French Werwolf Lays*, ed. and trans. Amanda Hopkins (University of Liverpool, 2005).

[15] Doryjane Birrer, “A New Species of Humanities: The Marvelous Progeny of Humanism and Postmodern Theory,” *Journal of Narrative Theory* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 218.

> masculine identity…[Marie] dramatically portrays the individual identity of the knight as able to endure through any form of transformation even as she narrates the violent instability involved in the experience of women navigating relationships with men in apparent, [and] even physical transformation.[16]

These tales are also written amid the series of religious wars that we now call the Crusades, wars which overtly identify masculine violence as not only permitted, not only virtuous, but holy. The werewolf, a hybrid creature, always male in the medieval romance, is just as violent as its classic predecessors and its early modern successors, but I believe that these stories attempt to reintegrate perpetrators of habitually violent crimes into courtly society, a society which, as a multitude of scholars have shown, is filled with violence, especially sexual violence, only superficially mitigated by the ideals of chivalry. The medieval werewolf—the serial killer of the Middle Ages—is eroticized at exactly the time when the hybrid figure of the courtly knight, violent on the battlefield, but tame and civilized at court, becomes the masculine ideal, at least in literary form, for noble behavior.

Twentieth-century Werewolves

I mentioned at the beginning of this talk that the Middle Ages is one of two times that this transformation of the werewolf from bloodthirsty beast into romance hero occurs. The second period begins at the end of the twentieth century with the rise of the paranormal romance, and, not coincidentally, third wave feminism. The sympathetic werewolf as romance hero reappears again almost immediately following the appearance of true crime serial killer narratives in the West, and it is specifically adapted by episodic genres that mirror the medieval romance, such as the novel *series*, some of which are more than fifteen books long, and episodic television. Unlike their medieval predecessors, the werewolf heroes of paranormal romance—which often include female werewolves—live in hierarchically structured packs controlled by an alpha male who uses physical and sexual violence to control its members—in spite of the fact that the theory of that this organizational structure exists in actual wolfpacks has been long discredited by ecologists and biologists. As L. David Mech notes, "This confusion appears to stem from early- and mid-twentieth century studies on captive wolves…[where] the unacquainted wolves formed dominance hierarchies featuring alpha, beta, omega animals, etc. In nature, however, the wolf pack is not such an assemblage. Rather, it is usually a family."[17] In direct contrast to these lupine nuclear families, contemporary werewolves are burdened by a violent, sexually restrictive society in which the characters are continually threatened by those "lower" in the pack order. As I have argued elsewhere, the "popularity of this organizational structure, even where it is scientifically invalid, appears to reflect a fantasy of (or sometimes a frustration with) human sexual violence and male hegemony."[18]

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[16] Thomas R. Schneider, "The Chivalric Masculinity of Marie de France's Shape-Changers." *Arthuriana* 26, no. 3 (Fall 2016): 25.

The contemporary paranormal werewolf romance, then, is steeped in a violent pseudo-biological determinism, exchanging the strength and supernatural abilities of the werewolf for a repressive social system in which the weak, including most female characters, must endure horrific violence in order to survive. In writing about romance novels, Alexandra Leonzini notes that "even prolonged psychological and physical abuse can be excused as foreplay by the reader, who, aware of the formulaic nature of the category romance and its guaranteed happy ending, knows that the story will conclude with a passionate declaration of love and happily ever after."[19] Sue Chaplin argues that "the liminal position of the female subject […] renders her especially susceptible to violent victimisation and paranormal romance repeatedly raises questions of scapegoating, sexual shaming and marginalised, traumatised femininity."[20] The admiration for the alpha male, the fantasy hero of these stories, is a fantasy of dominance and submission, and the characters accept behavior from these creatures that late twentieth-century activists were fighting to render repugnant, and often illegal, to the general populace.

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[17] L. David Mech, "Alpha status, dominance, and division of labor in wolf packs," *Canadian Journal of Zoology* 77 (1999):1196, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center Home Page, http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/2000/alstat/alstat.htm.

[18] Willow Conley and Natalie Grinnell, "The Queer Temporality of Gail Carriger's Parasol Protectorate," *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 34.3 (December 2023): 19.

Just as in the twelfth century, this reappearance of the werewolf as erotic subject occurs during an upheaval in gender relationships and definitions of masculinity, and the fight for equal rights for women has produced several kinds of backlash, including the creation of the *manosphere* an online community in which male participant spend time "slotting human beings, especially men, into the categories of alpha and beta (and occasionally zeta), based primarily on their perceived sexual and financial success [sometimes provoking] violence against culture in general and women in particular."[21] Because they use the same Greek-letter category markers as those that appear in fictional werewolf packs, the primarily female authors of paranormal romance are drawn in, linguistically, to the fatalistic and dangerous world of the incel, even as some allow their characters to challenge or dismantle these structure in their novel series.[22]

This construction is like the medieval romance because it attempts to integrate male violence into female erotic desire by presenting these hybrid creatures who are literally behaving according to their nature. Vronsky speculates that the rise of the serial killer in the twentieth century is a kind of mass trauma resulting from the violence of World War II, a "total war" in which even the supposed good guys collected body parts from those they killed in the Pacific and both participated in and witnessed mass murder in Europe.[23] The role of the media in the portrayal of the Vietnam War in the United States likewise exposed the viciousness of war is visceral way, so that for many masculine virtue was called into question. Second and third-wave feminism demanded gender equality, while governments required men to hunt and kill other human beings. I don't want to push these commonalities too far; scholars have made that mistake in past, conflating the medieval with the modern superficially, but I do think that regarding the erotic werewolf hero, the sympathy and love for the beast is symptom of crisis in gender in both eras.

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[19] Alexandra Leonzini, "'All the Better to Eat You With': The Eroticization of the Werewolf and the Rise of Monster Porn in the Digital Age," in *Exploring the Fantastic: Genre, Ideology, and Popular Culture*, edited by Ina Batzke, Eric C. Erbacher, Linda M. Hess and Corinna Lenhardt (Columbia UP, 2018): 278.

[20] Sue Chaplin, "'Daddy, I'm falling for a monster': Women, Sex, and Sacrifice in Contemporary Paranormal Romance," *Gothic Studies* 21, no. 1 (2019): 11.

[21] Natalie Grinnell, "The Challenge to Dominance Theory in Patricia Briggs's and Carrie Vaughn's Paranormal Romance Novels," *Femspec* 22, no. 2 (2022): 40.

[22] Natalie Grinnell, "Challenge to Dominance Theory," 58-59.

Moreover, if the twelfth century was obsessed with mutability, its werewolves remain mentally stable, regardless of their external shape. Not so for the twentieth- and twenty-first century werewolf. Here one can trace an evolution of internal dissociation that begins with the horror films and novels of the 1940s and 50s, in which the wolf-man evolves into the werewolf, infected with lycanthropy as a disease. This creature starts to understand his circumstances when he repeatedly awakens in unfamiliar places, with torn or missing clothing, and sometimes the taste of blood in his mouth. These fugue states are eventually replaced with the acknowledgment that the human in wolf form is a different persona, a violent cannibal. Soon the impulses of this inner wolf start to affect the werewolf even while in human shape, ruining relationships and causing serious changes in personality. By the 1990s, the contemporary werewolf may contain a fully-formed alternate personality, one with which the human personality can exchange information or even hold whole conversations.

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[23] Vronsky, *Sons of Cain*, 303-338.

For example, in Heather K. Carson's *The Witch's Wolf*, the protagonist's inner life describes a struggle between two personas, and an identification of character as a plural self: "She needed space and time to come to terms with the fact that she was our mate, but space was something my wolf couldn't understand. I was having a hard time grasping the concept too."[24] In another example, the female werewolf Anna in Patricia Briggs's Alpha and Omega series allows her wolf to take over her even while she is in human form so that it can help her endure the sexual and physical violence of pack members who abuse her, and she reflects that "under her skin she could feel that *Other*. She'd used the wolf to get through things her human half wouldn't have survived."[25]

If this sounds familiar, it's because it reflects the rise of different twentieth-century genre, the multiple personality (now called dissociative identity) narrative, a story that begins with Shirley Jackson's short 1954 novel *The Bird's Nest*.[26] Capitalizing on the success of the film version, *Lizzie*,[27] psychologists Corbett H. Thigpen and Harvey M. Cleckley released the well-known *Three Face of Eve*, in both book and film format in 1957,[28] though it was probably the publication of *Sybil* in 1973 that provoked the flurry of case studies, biographies and autobiographies of people with multiple personalities.[29] While psychologists and Dissociative Identity Disorder sufferers themselves were and are insistent that the various personalities are no more likely to be violent than the core or “out” persona, novelizations and films often emphasize exactly the opposite, from Eve Black’s attempt to kill her daughter in the film, to Sybil’s violently suicidal personalities acted out dramatically by Sally Field in the televised adaptation of that work, to the culmination, perhaps, in the *Minds of Billy Milligan*, in which author Daniel Keyes attempts to explain away the sexual violence of a serial rapist who famously used a DID diagnosis to plead insanity.[30] By the end of the century, the plural self becomes a standard characteristic for the literary werewolf, displacing violence even as it defines it as biologically driven or natural, thus upending the medieval stability of the masculine subject by splintering the werewolf both inside and outside.

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[24] Heather K. Carson, *The Witch's Wolf*. Fated Destinies Series, Book One (Blue Tuesday Books, 2023): 91. Kindle.
[25] Patricia Briggs, *Cry Wolf* (Ace Books, 2008): 34.
[26] Shirley Jackson, *The Bird's Nest*, (Penguin, 2014).
[27] *Lizzie*, Hugo Haas, dir, (Warner, 1957), 1 hr, 24 min.
[28] Corbett H. Thigpen and Hervey M. Cleckley, *The Three Faces of Eve* (McGraw-Hill, 1957); *The Three Faces of Eve*, Nunnally Johnson, dir, (Twentieth Century Studios, 1957), 91 mins.
[29] Flora Rheta Schreiber, *Sybil* (Grand Central Publishing, [1973] 2009).

There are, of course, a few exceptions to the dynamic I’ve described in both eras. In the Middle Ages, there is a brief story in Gerald of Wales’s *The History and Topography of Ireland* in which a werewolf approaches a priest because the wolf’s wife—who is also a werewolf--is dying, and the creature asks him to give her last rites. Intrigued, the priest follows the werewolf to his home, and after the werewolf briefly removes its skin to reveal the human being beneath, decides that these creatures are probably Christians capable of professing their faith, and he proceeds to perform last rites.[31] The marvelous tales in this collection are imbued with a social and political othering that renders many of the inhabitants of medieval Ireland uncivilized and dangerous, but the encounter with the werewolves works in direct contrast to other medieval werewolf legends, for the creatures are not merely humans trapped in the forms of beasts: they are devout Christians, living in what seems to be a loving marriage. There is no violence, masculine or feminine, and no apparent trauma about the hybrid form. The rare appearance of a female werewolf enhances the unusual nature of Gerald's story.

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[30] Daniel Keyes, *The Minds of Billy Milligan* (Bantam, 1995).

[31] Gerald of Wales. *The History and Topography of Ireland*, ed and trans. John J. O’Meara (Penguin Books, 1951): 69-72.

Similarly, there are a few female werewolves in contemporary romance who are simply unable or unwilling to behave submissively, no matter what the threat to their own safety. In Jen L. Grey's *Destined Mate* series, her protagonist, Callie, seems to speak for women who will simply not conform to the gender roles of the pack, human or werewolf. She recounts that "they wanted to scare me. They wanted me to feel weak. They wanted me to cower. That was what any good weak wolf would do—submit. But I was never able to, not even when it was in my best interest. My parents always scolded me, but something inside me refused to show weakness and would rather take the beating."[32]

Twenty-First Century Werewolves (Queering the Genre)

Grey's works, a self-published series from 2022 and 2023 is more typical of the twenty-first century than the twentieth, as the new century disrupts the tropes I've been describing, just as the early modern witch hunts ended the first wave of werewolf romance. The Me Too movement highlights the necessity of consent in erotic relationships, and contemporary werewolf romance responds by letting its female protagonists fight their way out of the hierarchy or even overturn it. Moreover, the development of the novel series defies the predictable formula of the stand-alone romance novel by replicating the episodic structure of medieval romance, so that while individual novels usually end with happy endings and an erotic resolution, the female protagonist grows and changes from one book to the next, unwinding the patriarchal structure and replacing it with a different definition of the werewolf pack. In Patricia Briggs' Mercy

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[32] Jen L. Grey, *Destined Mate* (Grey Valor Publishing, LLC 2023): 4, Kindle.

Thompson series, the rebellious Mercy Thompson cannot accept the sexism of a pack, musing that: "male werewolves treat their mates like beloved slaves. The thought set my back up...It was just a good thing I wasn't a werewolf or there would be a slave rebellion."[33] Perhaps because she is a coyote shifter, the daughter of the Native American god-trickster, Mercy is able to take on a leadership role in the pack without accepting its strictures, and she finds female werewolves such as Honey and Mary Jo, who accept the necessity of the dominance hierarchy, impossible to understand.[34] Carrie Vaughn's Kitty Neville challenges Satan himself during the course of disassembling the pack structure that subjects her to rape and abuse.[35] The works of these writers reflect the on-going struggle to balance the limited advantages women gain by supporting the patriarchy against the vulnerable position into which it ultimately places them. In the most optimistic of these stories, the hierarchy itself evolves away from patriarchy and beyond biological essentialism.

Finally, the transformative accomplishments of the LGBTQIA+ rights movement between Stonewall in 1969 and the Obergefell ruling that legalized same-sex marriage in the United States is reflected in the successful queering of the hierarchical pack structure in the most recent romances, freeing characters to create new kinds of relationships and to reenact the struggle for gender equality through evolving protagonists. I will provide just one example, that of Gail Carriger's steampunk series of novels, usually called the Parasol Protectorate.

This series of novels and novellas includes numerous gay, lesbian, and bisexual characters, and while the gendered expectations of society have enormous power over most of the human characters, the queerness among the supernatural community is both accepted and expected, partially because this fictional version of the Victorian era undermines the biological determinism of reproduction itself, since all werewolf reproduction is queer reproduction, performed when an alpha wolf is in a third shape, called Anubis form, a human body with the head of a wolf. Only while in this hybrid body can the alpha give the bite that kills the human and resurrects it as a werewolf. As I have argued elsewhere, "the hybrid wolf-man form represents fertility in a queered body, animal and human [while it] nods to another kind of alpha: the dominant sexual partner in the queer monster porn landscape known as the *omegaverse*, a landscape that defies the incel-dominated fantasies of the alpha male."[36] Leonzini describes the omegaverse as "a literary realm in which some stories posit societies in which biological imperatives divide people into wolf-pack based hierarchies,"[37] but unlike the toxic manosphere, the omegaverse includes gender fantasies of metamorphosis, particularly those in which one male character is able to impregnate another (usually called an *omega*). Like the characters in the omegaverse, Carriger's alphas "give birth with pain and violence, but [they do so] without a biological mating imperative"[38] and nearly always with full consent. Thus, the recognizable tropes of the historical romance—especially the requirement that the hero marry to produce an heir to his title and estate—are overthrown, and werewolf packs function without the controlling forces of sexual dominance and violence that constrain female members of such packs in other paranormal romance.

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[33] Patricia Briggs, *Blood Bound* (Ace Books, 2007): 94.
[34] Patricia Briggs, *Frost Burned* (Ace Books, 2013): 242.
[35] Carrie Vaughn, *Kitty Saves the World* (Tor Books, 2015).

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[36] Conley and Grinnell, "Queer Temporality," 15.
[37] Leonzini, "All the Better," 282.
[38] Conley and Grinnell, "Queer Temporality," 16.

Conclusion

The messiness of some of the most recent werewolf stories, which now includes whole categories of fanfiction on sites like *Archive of Our Own*, young adult novel series which present the genre's violence to younger audiences, and a plethora of "fated mate," novels for sale on amazon.com by self-publishing authors, may well reflect not only the splintering of traditional publishing in the twenty-first century, but also the ever shifting named categories of gender and sexuality available for discovery. While those resisting liberation from binary categories enforced by law and social taboo may be forceful in their attempts to demand a return to those restrictions, werewolf romance, a permutation of popular culture produced by and for the ordinary reader, reflects instead shifting realm of erotic fantasy and shows no signs of disappearing.

My argument here is that the lycanthrope is eroticized in Western literature at moments of societal gender crisis and in response to new fantasies and realities of containing or controlling male violence and renegotiating erotic and familial relationships. But if that argument is valid, if it is legitimate to argue that this has happened before, then one must also remember that the chivalric werewolf did not last; he was overthrown by demonic monsters like Peter Stumpf, gleefully slaughtered in what some early modern scholars call "the burning times" of Early Modern Europe and Colonial America. All werewolf literature is violent; it seems to be the nature of the beast. We must hope that the return of the werewolf as erotic subject is not followed or accompanied by the return of those who would burn down what they do not like or understand.

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Holy Holism and the Visions of Mechthild of Hackeborn and Gertrude the Great[1]

Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa[2]

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Editors' Note: Because Dr. Yoshikawa's keynote is published elsewhere, we asked her for an expanded abstract and a full citation, both of which she has kindly provided here. We would like to extend our thanks once again to her for sharing her work with the NPCEBL community.

My research and publications focus on medieval women's writing and their wider literary cultures, connected to women's visionary and contemplative lives. At the same time, I have been interested in the convergence and divergence of medical and devotional discourses in medieval culture, with insights into the period's holistic approach to wellbeing in which medical and religious cultures were in constant dialogue with one another. I have recently edited with my colleague *The Boke of Gostely Grace*, the Middle English translation of the *Liber specialis gratiae* written by Mechthild of Hackeborn (1241–1298) at the convent of Helfta in the late thirteenth century.[3] In this text Mechthild negotiates her own experience with disease with a broader application of medical knowledge as part of her narrative of mystical encounter with the divine.

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[1] This lecture is based on my essay entitled "Holy Infirmary and Holy Holism in the Conventual Life of Helfta," in *The Power of Words in Late Medieval Devotional and Mystical Writing: Essays in Honour of Denis Renevey*, ed. Rory G. Critten and Juliette Vuille (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming June 2025), pp. 25-42.

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[3] *The Boke of Gostely Grace: The Middle English Translation, A Critical Edition from Oxford, MS Bodley 220*, ed. Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa and Anne Mouron, with the assistance of Mark Atherton, Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2022).

In this lecture, I revisited the Helfta community in Saxony, and examined Mechthild's *Liber* alongside the *Legatus Divinae Pietatis* [Herald of Divine Love], written by Mechthild's younger colleague, Gertrude the Great (1256–1301/2), to consider their therapeutic epistemologies.[4] Exploring both the learned medical culture absorbed by the nuns and the liturgical, prayerful meditations in the conventual life that might contribute to spiritual health, I examined the holistic discourse embedded in these Helfta texts, the depth of the medical ideas and imagination they contain, and how the nuns at Helfta might become vehicles for the administering of spiritual medicine.

The convent of Helfta was originally founded at Halberstadt in 1229 by Count Burchard of Mansfeld and his wife Elisabeth, but it moved to Rodarsdorf in 1234 and finally settled at Helfta in 1258. Its primary purpose was to provide for nuns who wished to practice the Cistercian life. But since the Cistercian General Chapter of 1228 had decided to incorporate no new houses for women, the nuns of the community officially remained Benedictine. In this convent, Mechthild of Hackeborn spent almost the entirety of her life, and an account of her revelations, the *Liber specialis gratiae*, was compiled collaboratively by her sister nuns during the last decade of the thirteenth century.

In 1251, on the death of Cunegund of Halberstadt, the first abbess of the convent, Gertrude of Hackeborn (Mechthild's elder sister) was elected abbess in her stead at the age of nineteen, remaining in this position until her death in 1291. During Gertrude's reign as abbess, the community flourished, with notable residents including Mechthild of Hackeborn and Mechthild of Magdeburg (1207–1282), a former beguine who entered the community late in her life and dictated the seventh (and final) book of her work *Das fließende Licht der Gottheit* [The

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[4] Gertrude of Helfta, *Le Héraut* [*Legatus divinae pietatis*], *Oeuvres spirituelles*, ed. and trans. by Pierre Doyère et al., 5 vols, Sources chrétiennes, 127, 139, 143, 255, 331 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967–86).

Flowing Light of the Godhead] to some of the Helfta nuns, including Gertrude the Great. In the late thirteenth century, Helfta became a burgeoning center of learning and mystical spirituality, where all three women were involved in producing mystical texts that testify to this learning and document their spiritual experiences.

The monastery library housed many volumes, religious as well as secular, which facilitated the pursuit of the nuns' intellectual activities. They also had access to natural sciences and classic medicine absorbed through the writings of elite scholars. Daily life in Helfta, however, was never solely an intellectual and bookish pursuit, for reading, learning, and praying alternated with practical activities, as in other monastic orders. The proper performance of the daily choral recitation of the Mass and the *opus Dei*, of course, constituted the most important part of the monastic life at Helfta. References to the liturgy and music are prominent in the *Liber*, for Mechthild served the community as its chantress and instructed her sisters about Scripture, spiritual reading, and liturgical prayers.[5]

Significantly the *Liber* is peppered throughout with the accounts of Mechthild's sickness and her sorrowing over her inability to sing the daily Office. Her frequent use of medical imagery thus echoes her own life replete with physical sufferings; her final illness lasted three years. But, as is characteristic of late medieval devotional literature, the religio-medical tropes deployed in the *Liber* represent a convergence of medical and devotional discourses, grounded in late medieval convictions about the inseparability of body and soul. The idea of spiritual health, therefore, is prominent in her revelations, as Mechthild negotiates her own experience with disease, conveyed through an intricate interplay of eucharistic symbolism, popular piety, and the discourse of medicine.

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[5] *Boke*, Introduction, pp. 6-7.

As such, Mechthild’s experience of her sickbed becomes a threshold for mystical encounter with God. In her vision of Black Monday (Easter Monday), she uses the widespread concept of the *Christus medicus*: Christ tells her that he will act as a physician to cure her sickness and promises an inseparable union between her.[6] But Christ is not merely an authoritative physician. The suffering body of the crucified Christ is frequently a site of self-identification for Mechthild. Moreover, predicated upon this convergence of religious and medical discourses, Mechthild’s visions demonstrate her basic grasp of the theory and practice of Galenic medicine as well as her anatomical, pharmaceutical knowledge—all of which is embedded also in Gertrude’s *Legatus*.

By examining the religio-medical revelations that the two nuns had in their conventual life, I conclude that the therapeutic epistemologies of the Helfta community provide us with a new way of looking at this house, connecting the writings of its members to current work in the medical humanities. Exploration into the learned medical culture and the liturgical life in the convent uncovers how holy holism was pursued in this salutary community. Through the arresting medico-spiritual imaginary, medical theory and therapeutic practice are harmoniously integrated with the health of the soul to ensure the ultimate well-being of the community. As an equally important aspect, the nuns at Helfta were conceived as healers in their own right, a role that went beyond their more generally recognized one as assistants to clerical physicians. In emulating holy women venerated as healers by virtue of their privileged relationship with Christ, the nuns practiced works of mercy, simultaneously healing the body and healing the soul. Thus, the *Liber specialis gratiae* illuminates the ways in which Helfta flourished as an embodiment of holy holism in late medieval Saxony.

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[6] *Liber specialis gratiae*, I.19, in *Revelationes Gertrudianae ac Mechtildianae*, ed. Ludwig Paquelin, 2 vols (Paris: Oudin, 1875–77), II, p. 68.

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Part II.

Writing & Its Influences

Influences and Evolution of Early English Poetry on Modern Instapoetry

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“Poetry is dead.” “Poetry is a dying art.” “Poetry doesn’t matter.” These are all statements it seems like I’m hearing, or at least picking up the implications of, more and more often: *“What are you gonna [sic] do with a writing degree?”* Well, currently, I’m spending hours scrolling through the Instagram tag *#poetryisnotdead*, which has 7.8 million posts, and *#poetry*, which has 82.5 million. With just a couple examples of numbers like these, it’s safe to say poetry is not dead and it is not dying. And, as many of the comment sections of Instagram poems would suggest, poetry *does* matter, and it *is* impacting the people who read it — it just doesn't look the same as it did 500 years ago.

That being said, poetry is still *doing* what it did 500 years ago: poets are consistently evolving their writing to reflect the social, political, and emotional values of their time and culture. To quote the titular J.D. Salinger character in his short story, *Teddy*, “‘Poets are always taking the weather so personally. They’re always sticking their emotions in things that have no emotions.’”[1] This boy-genius, who claims not to understand poets, has just gotten to the core of their main concern. But while this may make it seem like poetry hasn’t changed, it’s important to note that it has—simply due to its existence in the digital world, which forces scholars to broaden their definition of poetry (one which is already so difficult to define). We know that poems rhyme, but not always. We know that poems have shape and line breaks, but not always. We know that poems are an expression of philosophy and emotion, sometimes applying meaning where it wouldn't normally exist. We recognize that poems are a conversation between the poet and their own mind. Michael Theune says that "the best poems very often include convincing, surprising turns."[2] Now, in the digital age, we know that poems are mutable, and, at least those of the digital variety, are multimodal.[3] Instapoetry, despite the criticism of whether or not it constitutes "real" poetry, displays signs of similar evolutions that were evident in the works of the Early English poets.

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[1] J.D Salinger. *Nine Stories*. (Little, Brown and Company, 2014), 182.

Before we dive into Instapoetry, we must first define the genre of digital poetry. Jeneen Naji describes it as "pieces of literature created solely in and experienced through the computer but also those works that began in print before moving to the digital."[4] Digital poetry must be accessed, read, and experienced in a digital space on some sort of technological device, but does not exclude poems which are first written on paper before being published online. Naji also says that "what is distinct about electronic literature as opposed to print literature is that it cannot be accessed until it is performed by properly executed code."[5] With this statement, Naji is asserting that the code itself — the software, the hardware, and the programming involved with any style of digital poetry — is an integral part of the text, allowing for a multidisciplinary approach to the study of digital poetry. Additionally, there are many styles of digital poetry, including but not limited to hypertext poetry, kinetic poetry, video poetry, generative poetry, Instapoetry, mobile app poetry, digital Ecopoetry and drone poetry, Virtual Reality poetry, and Augmented Reality poetry.[6] While these provide many opportunities for study, I will focus on Instapoetry.

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[2] Michael Theune. *Structure and Surprise: Engaging Poetic Turns*. (Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 2007), 1.

[3] Jeneen Naji. *Digital Poetry*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 2.

[4] Naji, 16.

[5] Ibid, 17.

[6] Ibid. (2021).

The term "Instapoetry" refers to a style of digital poetry that is specifically written to be shared on social media platforms like Instagram, Tumblr, and X (formerly Twitter). This style of poetry emphasizes brevity, honesty, and often tackles political and social topics. While the content is often very personal to the writer, it is also quite often broad, allowing for a high level of relatability. It is also characterized by its accessibility, visual aspects, and multimodality. Furthermore, Instapoetry inherently invites communication between the poet and the reader. When describing Instagram, Kovalik and Curwood explain that "the platform allows individuals to publish multimodal poems that consist of elements including text, images, filters, and hashtags. The poets may then receive feedback via likes, comments, or direct messages."[7] These distinctions alone demonstrate just how far poetry has come, even in the past few decades. However, Instapoetry's emergence exemplifies similar characteristics of Renaissance English poets and their work. From the works of Spenser and Sidney, to Shakespeare's sonnets, and even Lady Mary Wroth's poetry in discussion with the Petrarchan tradition, the evolving themes and perspectives on love and beauty have made their way to poetry today, where anyone can post visually appealing and often aesthetically pleasing poems on their Instagram page. Much like the Renaissance poets, Instapoets challenge social expectations by writing about their experiences with love, beauty, grief, domestic violence, social injustice, and more.

Like many Renaissance poets, Sir Philip Sidney spent a lot of time (or a lot of words?) dealing quite prominently with love and beauty. Regarding beauty, as Sherod Cooper notes, Sidney was particularly interested in style, specifically as it pertains to nature and art.

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[7] Kate Kovalik and Jen Scott Curwood. "Poetryisnotdead: Understanding Instagram Poetry within a Transliteracies Framework," in *Literacy (Oxford, England)* vol. 53 no. 4, 2019, 185-195.

> In other words, the end of art is to achieve the effect of nature, not untamed and wild nature, but nature as it appears at its most beautiful. Art, then, does not change nature into something different; rather, art attempts to epitomize natural beauty.[8]

Intentionality of appearance, to Sidney, is most beautiful when it seems unintentional, thus reflecting the beauty of nature. We might consider this "natural beauty," though, as Cooper stated, not a natural beauty that is wild or unkempt. It comes as no surprise, then, that Sidney's nature metaphors are derived from images that are commonly perceived as naturally beautiful. Nature, broadly defined, is an obvious constant in our existence as humans, and subsequently has been a constant muse for poets and writers. Sonnet 76 from *Astrophel and Stella* employs an extended metaphor of Stella's eyes as the sun.

> She comes with light and warmth, which like *Aurora* prove
> Of gentle force, so that mine eyes dare gladly play
> With such a rosie morne, whose beames most freshly gay
> Scortch not, but onely do darke chilling sprites remove.[9]

When gazing upon Astrophel, Stella's eyes, like the sun, give light and warmth. Her attention and perception of him are a necessity for life in much the same way that nothing living on Earth could survive, or even exist, without the sun. However, the poem takes a turn as

> Her flamie, glistring lights increase with time and place;
> My heart cries 'ah', it burnes, mine eyes now dazled be:
> No wind, no shade can coole, what helpe then in my case,
>   But with short breath, long lookes, staid feet and walking hed,
>   Pray that my sunne go downe with meeker beames to bed.[10]

In these lines, Astrophel is completely overcome with the perfection of Stella's beauty. Just as the day grows hotter at noon, so does Astrophel's agony at the perfection of the beauty before him. The eyes and the gaze of his would-be lover are so beautiful that he "burnes" and he can only hope that, in the same way temperatures become more mild in the evening, he might eventually be spared the torture that comes with being in the presence of perfection. As Kalstone asserts, in comparison to Petrarch's representation of Laura, "it is not that Sidney has drastically altered the roles of lover and lady. The mistress keeps her unattainable state, a fixed star; but there is less wonder in the poet's response, and his admiration has less power to reconcile him to his suffering."[11] In the case of Sonnet 76, Stella literally is a fixed star (barring the definition of her name, of course) as she is compared to the sun. But, even as she brings life, she also brings pain, and, while Astrophel admires his lover, he cannot "reconcile his pain," only wait for it to subside. Interestingly, in this sonnet, Astrophel has no control over the situation. Presumably, Stella is not intentionally hurting him; she simply arrives, and he is overcome with adoration of her natural beauty. Surely, his inability to react or control himself is a cause for pain. Luckily for Astrophel, when Stella does leave his presence, he'll be able to regain his composure. Sidney's portrayal of natural beauty and its effect on a lover is not an altogether surprising one. After all, how many poems dedicate line after line to calling a loved one their sun, around whom they orbit? The focus on the pain as a result of the loss of control experienced by the speaker, however, is a theme worth further exploring.

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[8] Sherod Cooper. *The Sonnets of Astrophel and Stella: a Stylistic Study*. (Mouton & Co., Printers, The Hague, 1968), 12.
[9] Cooper, l. 5-8.
[10] Ibid, l. 10-14.

Edmund Spenser dedicated many of his works to the topic of love, often in a neoplatonic context and with a wide variety of characterizations, but his poems are not lacking a loss of control in the face of love. *An Hymne in Honour of Love* opens with

> Love, that long since hast to thy mighty powre,
> Perforce subdude my poore captiued hart,
> And raging now therein with restless stowre,
> Doest tyrannize in euerie weaker part;
> Faine would I seeke to ease my bitter smart,
> By any seruice I might do to thee,

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[11] David Kalstone. *Sidney's Poetry: Contexts and Interpretations*. (Harvard University Press, 1965), 117.

Or ought that else might to thee pleasing bee.[12]

While this poem goes on to describe the history of Love and his achievements, as well as later praising Love, this opening is quite notable in that it immediately characterizes Love as the one with “powre,” not the speaker, whose heart is “subdued” and “captive.” The “raging” and “tyrannical” Love is a character with the ability not only to capture hearts, but to dominate them. This language may even be considered violent, especially as it causes a “bitter” pain within the speaker. Unlike Astrophel, who could only hope that his pain would eventually subside, the speaker of the hymn expresses a desire to “serve” and “please” Love. And while Astrophel is overcome by the beauty of his lover, the speaker in Spenser’s *Hymne*, though in pain and under the power of Love, knows that he can choose a course of action in this situation; he is willing to allow himself to remain under the control of Love, knowing that serving Love would ease his pain. A few of Spenser’s other works are in conversation with *Astrophel and Stella*, sometimes even elegizing Sidney. However, his characterization of love moves beyond the inability to control oneself and into the territory of acting while under the influence of love. Later, these themes would be expanded upon even further.

Shakespeare’s many sonnets most commonly explore the ideas of love, beauty, and time, or even some combination of the three, and challenge expectations of love and how it was perceived. Elaine Scarry posits that “Shakespeare did not live in a world where he was the only person speaking; the people in his world, above all those he loved, certainly had voices.”[13] This is, of course, in the context of uncovering the unnamed lover addressed in Shakespeare’s sonnet sequence. However, it opens the door for scholars to discuss not only the speaker-as-the-poet, but the inclusion of the voice of the lover, rather than simply their existence. Beyond the lover's voice, we know that Shakespeare was also concerned with immortalizing them in his poems, ensuring that their experience would not be hidden or forgotten. As explained by Scarry, "in Sonnet 106, Shakespeare says that the beautiful countenance of the beloved is present to the world's eyes not only in the sonnet he writes, but in the poetry of all earlier centuries whenever it struggled to describe the beauty of a woman or the loveliness of a man."[14] Beauty, then, is not just being struck by a lover's appearance, as Astrophel might have us believe. It is in language spoken and written, and one's beauty is foretold by those before who could not articulate their own perceptions of beauty.[15]

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[12] J.C. Smith and E. De. Selincourt. *Spenser Poetical Works*. (Oxford University Press, 1969), l. 1-7.
[13] Elaine Scarry. *Naming thy Name: Crosstalk in Shakespeare’s Sonnets*. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016), 7.

Furthermore, Shakespeare's sonnets about time assert that love and beauty transcend the one enemy that no one can overcome. Sonnet 15 closes with:

> Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
> Sets you most rich in youth before my sight
> Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay
> To change your day of youth to sullied night;
> And all in war with Time for love of you,
> As he takes from you, I ingraft you new.[16]

Although it is impossible to reverse the effects of time, which turns day (the literal day or metaphorical youth) into night (the literal night or metaphorical process of aging), Shakespeare, recognizing that life is only temporary, finds a way to win the "war with Time." It is language, or his use of it, that can keep the beauty and the voice of the lover alive forever, constantly being made "new" each time someone reads the poem. This immortalization of the lover is itself an act of love. While Shakespeare admires the beauty of his lover (much like Astrophel) and takes action while under the influence of love (much like Spenser's speaker), he builds on the tradition of poetic love and beauty by allowing it to be timeless, incapable of aging or dying.

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[14] Ibid, 13.
[15] Ibid, 13-14.
[16] Edward Hubler. *Shakespeare's Songs and Poems.* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959), l. 9-14.

Before we move back into discussing Instapoetry, we will look at a poet who takes the idea of love in another direction altogether. Enter Lady Mary Wroth, laying the groundwork for female Instapoets, who, centuries later, take up the mantle of self-expression and identity as it pertains to love in a world that looks significantly different than Wroth's. Much like the poets before her, Wroth utilizes vivid imagery and nature metaphors throughout her writing, but she does so to introduce the idea of the Petrarchan love tradition as one that is ultimately harmful and imprudent. In Song 74 from *From Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, Wroth uses the metaphor of flight to convey the fleeting and unfulfilling characteristics presented by Petrarchan love.

> Please him, and he straight is flying;[17]
> Feathers are as firm in staying,[18]
> Nor seek him, so given to flying.[19]

Flight is often used as a symbol for freedom; however, Wroth uses it to emphasize the fact that in Petrarchan tradition, the man has freedom while the lover does not. This freedom that he enjoys allows him to leave whenever it suits him as he is "so given to flying." While freedom would normally be considered positive, Wroth sheds it in a negative light as she emphasizes the fact that it is the man, not the woman, who has the freedom to choose to leave. Furthermore, Wroth begins the poem with the line "Love a child is every crying."[20] With the "love" Wroth mentions being, of course, the Petrarchan tradition, the use of the child metaphor serves to emphasize the immaturity of Petrarchan poetry. By opening the poem describing love as a crying child, Wroth immediately introduces the topic and establishes her own position. The metaphor returns in the second to last line, “As a child then leave him crying,”[21] bringing the poem full circle. Children are naturally immature, selfish, and require constant attention. By comparing the Petrarchan lover to a child, Wroth points out the character flaws he harbors, rather than containing any real “virtues.”[22] Not only does this metaphor condemn the archetype of the Petrarchan lover, it also condemns the immaturity of Petrarchan Poetry as a whole. Wroth masterfully dedicated not just one, but many collections of sonnets to her argument against Petrarchan tradition. Her use of natural metaphors and mastery of language ultimately created a powerful debate against the childishness, toxicity, and hypocrisy of Petrarchan poetry. This boldness of critique and experience is evident in today’s Instapoetry.

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[17] Lady Mary Wroth. *From Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*. l. 2.
[18] Ibid, l. 17.
[19] Ibid, l. 20.
[20] Ibid, l. 1.

Perhaps the most impactful aspect of Instapoetry is its accessibility. We don’t often take into account early influences when we study digital poetry, even though the influences are evident. However, readers and online audiences don’t need to be familiar with classical canon to read digital and instapoetry. They are able to read, relate to it, and enjoy it for a multitude of reasons. Not only is it accessible because of its seeming disconnect from early English poetry, it is accessible because Instagram is accessible and used by millions. Furthermore, Instapoetry has a heavy emphasis on visuals, with many poems being posted with aesthetically pleasing fonts, images that match the mood, or even simple drawings to compliment the piece. Additionally, many Instapoems deal with topics that are broad enough for many people to relate to them, making them digestible. For example, an Instapoem by Liz Fair reads:

> I was racing,
> because life is short.
> But now I’m tired,
> because life is long.[23]

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[21] Ibid, l. 19.
[22] Ibid, l. 15.
[23] @lizfair_ (Instagram, 2023).

This post has 195 thousand likes and 140 comments, in which users engage in discussion with each other, the poem, and the poet. The level of accessibility also allows for users to engage in participatory culture — interacting in a subcommunity that values creation and community engagement. Maria Manning explains that “in using Instagram to disseminate poetry, poets disrupt the traditional assumptions that poetry is an elitist form of literature. This is poetry gone viral, crafted to appeal to the aesthetic of the website and to its users as well as the way we consume media and information in this web location.”[24] This is just one example of how the style of Instapoetry alone has changed how poets produce and share their work, as well as who can read it.

Furthermore, Instapoets like Rupi Kaur, Nikita Gill, Atticus, R.H. Sin, and even those with smaller followings of just a few hundred, have taken advantage of the social media platform to share their writings about their perspective on love, and specifically their personal experience. It is this honesty of experience that sets Instapoetry apart from many other styles and forms of poetry. The reader almost always assumes that the speaker is the poet, which creates a perceived connection between the reader and the poet, allowing for a strong sense of empathy and relatability to occur, which is often reflected in the discussions of comment sections. Another poem by Liz Fair says:

> So before you curse the rose
> that pricked your finger,
> just remember:
> *the flower never hid her barbs.*
>
> It was your haste to have her,
> before you truly saw her,
> that left a scar.[25]

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[24] Maria Manning. “Crafting Authenticity: Reality, Storytelling, and Female Self-Representation through Instapoetry.” *Storytelling, Self, Society*, Vol. 16, No. 2. (Digital Storytelling, 2020), 263-279.

[25] @lizfair_ (Instagram, 2024).

This poem, like those of the modern *and* early poets, employs an extended nature metaphor to tell an entire story in just seven lines. The rose is both the beauty and the love of the speaker, with both a striking appearance and dangerous thorns. The lover, in their haste and desire, is the one who is hurt, but, the speaker argues, justly so. This is the nature of many Instapoems about love: nature images, often a tad clichéd, subverting expectations of love by stating a truth. This is not new. Each early English poet subverted such expectations, similarly, building on the tradition in a new way. Our modern Instapoets are carrying on the tradition, emphasizing individuality and healing, even within the pain that comes from love.

However, the criticism surrounding Instapoetry is mainly of the variety that it is not, in fact, good enough to be real poetry. The statements are too broad, the images too cliché, the reflections not profound enough. Even as social media platforms have allowed for the redefinition of poetry as a method of short-form communication, female Instapoets and their majority-female audiences are being regularly criticized for being too emotional and self-indulgent.[26] The issue here is the desire to silence voices, which is exactly why Instapoetry began to circulate. Certainly, it is not perfect, and maybe it doesn't perfectly fit our definition of poetry. But the definition of poetry is ever-changing and always has space for expansion. As Kovalik and Curwood assert, "With opposition to poetry apparent, yet widespread access to digital media evident, there is the potential to combine the two using online platforms to engage young people in reading, writing and critiquing poetry."[27] The potential of Instapoetry lies in its multimodality and in its accessibility. It appeals to young generations of students because they access moderately high levels of digital literacy at early ages and are comfortable with online spaces. Instapoetry is reflective of who they are and allows them to connect with poetry in a way they may often struggle to when studying classical canon. Synthesizing the two, rather than making one or the other obsolete, allows for a more complete framework of knowledge.

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[26] Naji, 32.

[27] Kovalik and Curwood, 2019.

We still hold the early poets in high regard, and, not to worry, higher still than the Instapoets. Regardless, Instapoetry has still proven significant in contemporary culture and impactful in the evolving world of digital poetry. Most interesting perhaps is the fact that modern Instapoets are actually continuing the evolutions of poetry started by so many early poets — building on the themes of love, beauty, and time, while at other times tackling social and political issues. It only looks different because these poems are being posted to Instagram. The influences of the early English poets on modern Instapoetry may be overlooked, but if you spend some time sifting through the accounts, posts, and hashtags, you'll find that the language and images — the sun, the sea, the stars, the moon, fire, flowers — are all heavily influenced by the metaphors of the most famous poets from centuries ago. As Jeneen Naji says, we must "encourage, remember and reinvigorate poetry, not to forget the print traditions of the past but instead to use them and draw on them to help build the future."[28] After all, the goal is not to silence poets or kill poetry. The goal is to create, to reflect, to converse, to grow, to love, to appreciate beauty — because #poetryisnotdead.

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[28] Naji, 15.

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"Here begynneth the descripcioun of thin Astralabie:"

The Rise of Technical Writing in English

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Introduction

Technical writing,[1] most simply defined as the genre of literature used to communicate complex or specialized information, is a nearly omnipresent form of writing in our current day. From the humble instruction manual to peer-reviewed, published scholarship regarding the results of supercollider experiments, technical writing's ubiquity and significance cannot be understated. Despite this, the history of technical writing in English remains unclear. While it certainly has ancient beginnings, the precise origins of technical writing in English are not known. Still, many scholars regard Geoffrey Chaucer's *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*[2] as the first example of technical writing in English. However, this view is not unanimously held. Other known examples of technical writing were composed contemporaneously, or even predating, *Astrolabe*. While Chaucer may or may not have been English's first technical writer, it is undeniable that, in the latter half of the fourteenth century, examples of technical writing first appear in England's vernacular.

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[1] The term "technical writing" is often used interchangeably with terms such as scientific writing, technical communication, or scientific communication. As scholars and professionals within the field of technical writing describe themselves as "technical writers," I have opted to utilize this term over the others.

[2] Geoffrey Chaucer, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, ed. by Larry D. Benson. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987. 661-683.

This sudden departure from Latin as the sole language of science in late medieval England,[3] and the potential significance of this change, remains unexplained. What scholarship that exists on the subject is scant and mostly concerns itself with Chaucer's *Astrolabe*. I intend to address this gap in existing research and to investigate why English technical writers chose to deviate from tradition and compose their works in the vernacular during this period. However, complicating matters is how broad "technical writing" is as a term. Even a strict definition that would exclude guides to etiquette, religious writings, or legal codes as insufficiently "scientific" would nonetheless still cover a diverse collection of topics ranging from astrological treatises to medical texts. To mitigate this issue, I will center my initial survey upon three astrological treatises all composed between 1380-1400. First, I intend to survey Chaucer's aforementioned *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, the most well-known and well-studied example of Middle English technical writing. I will also investigate *The Equatorie of the Planetis*,[4] a similar text to *Astrolabe*. It has received some scholarly attention, as it was once thought to be another astrological work of Chaucer's, but it is now believed to be written by an English monk named John Westwyk.[5] Finally, I intend to examine the lesser-known *Wise Book of Philosophy and Astronomy*,[6] a work that predates both *Astrolabe* and *Equatorie* by at least a decade, yet has received almost no significant scholarly attention.

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[3] David Banks, *The Development of Scientific Writing Linguistic Features and Historical Context*, (London : Equinox, 2008), 23.

[4] Geoffrey Chaucer and Simon Bredon, *The Equatorie of the Planetis*, edited by Derek J. de Solla Price (Cambridge: 1955). As I will discuss, the similarities between *Astrolabe* and *Equatorie* are such that it was assumed for years to be another work of Chaucer's. That is now known not to be the case. However, the version I currently have access to still attributes authorship to Chaucer, hence the current citation.

[5] Kari Anne Rand, "The Authorship of The Equatorie of the Planetis Revisited" *Studia Neophilologica* 87, no. 1 (2015): 25

[6] Carrie Griffin, *The Middle English Wise Book of Philosophy and Astronomy : A Parallel-Text Edition : Edited from London, British Library, MS Sloane 2453 with a Parallel Text from New York, Columbia University, MS Plimpton 260*, (Heidelberg: Winter, 2013).

While much of my deeper research is still in its preliminary stages, I have noted several recurring elements within the selected texts. Firstly, it is clear that each text is directed toward an occasionally specific, English audience. Secondly, these texts display both an awareness of and a desire to participate in a broader, international science. Finally, by reading these two points in conjunction with each other, I suspect that the intent of these texts is, not only, to educate their audience, but also to define an English identity alongside this international science. By studying these texts, and the broader surge of vernacular technical writing in late medieval England, I intend to demonstrate that they were, in fact, instrumental to the development of the English scientific tradition and, more broadly, the construction of a distinctly English identity.

Intellectual Context

However, before any study of technical writing in the Late Middle Ages can proceed, I must first define it. As previously discussed, technical writing is an incredibly broad genre that encompasses everything from instruction manuals to published scientific texts. Linguist David Banks, in a survey of historical examples of English "scientific communication," defines the genre primarily through grammar and other linguistic features. These features include the use of passive voice,[7] grammatical metaphors such as the nominalization of processes,[8] or the use of thematic structure to emphasize specific points.[9] Banks give little attention to defining "scientific communication" outside of these linguistic features, merely referring to it as a "scientific medium."[10] While such a definition is inadequate to describe the function or limitations of technical writing in any detail, the linguistic features identified by Banks nonetheless proves helpful in identifying what technical writing might look like.

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[7] David Banks, *Scientific Writing*, 25.
[8] David Banks, *Scientific Writing*, 13-15.
[9] David Banks, *Scientific Writing*, 10-13.
[10] David Banks, *Scientific Writing*, 195.

Banks' lack of specificity regarding what, exactly, technical writing *is* is not unusual. In scholarship on the historical development of technical writing in English, it is rare to see any serious attempt to discuss the purpose and limitations of the genre. Of all the linguists, medievalists, and technical writers I read who wrote about technical writing in late medieval England, only one, medievalist Sigmund Eisner, provides a definition of technical writing. He describes it as an informative genre that must be specific, that cannot be misunderstood, that it must define unfamiliar terms, and serve a pedagogical purpose.[11] Eisner's definition expands technical writing beyond Banks' "scientific medium," and matches the definitions used by technical writers within their own field.

Technical writing, as described by technical writer James W. Souther, is a field that emerged in the early twentieth century.[12] Its development as an academic discipline grew alongside business interests in employing technical writers,[13] and this practical edge within the study and production of technical writing is critical to a technical writer's description of their craft. Technical writing scholar Carolyn R. Miller contends that this practical "usefulness" of technical writing provides a "locus for questioning, for criticism, for distinguishing good practice from bad."[14] Technical writing, by its nature, must be useful to its audience for it to be successful. This sentiment is reflected in a 2007 textbook on technical writing, which defines any form of technical communication as a process to gather "information from experts and [present] it to an audience in a clear and easily understandable form." To this end, technical writing is both a presentation of complex information and a highly audience-specific genre.[15] Its fundamental purpose is to inform.

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[11] Sigmund Eisner, "Chaucer as a Technical Writer," *The Chaucer Review* 19, no. 3 (1985): 179-180.

[12] James Souther, "Teaching Technical Writing: A Retrospective Appraisal," in *Technical Writing : Theory and Practice*, ed. Bertie E. Fearing and W. Keats Sparrow, (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1989): 4

[13] James Souther, "Teaching Technical Writing," 7.

[14] Carolyn R. Miller, "What's Practical About Technical Writing?" in *Technical Writing : Theory and Practice*, ed. Bertie E. Fearing and W. Keats Sparrow, (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1989): 23.

Technical writing is an ancient literary genre, with examples dating back millennia. The aforementioned textbook on the subject contends that both the *Code of Hammurabi (c. 1750 BCE)* and Sun Tzu's *Art of War (c. fifth century BCE)* are examples of technical writing.[16] More relevant to this current study are the astrological treatises of the Middle Ages. These treatises, almost always written in Latin, were widespread. Many of them, such as two of Chaucer's likely sources for *Astrolabe*: *De Compositione Astrolabii (c. second century CE)* and *De Operatione Astrolabii (c. twelfth-thirteenth centuries CE)*, were translations of Arabic astrological treatises, whose influence over the development of medieval astrology cannot be understated.[17] Technical writing in English is frequently argued to have begun, as a discrete tradition, during the Early Modern period. While David Banks describes Chaucer as the first technical writer in English,[18] he also contends that Francis Bacon codified the tradition as the true originator of the form.[19] While Bacon's influence was indeed significant, Elizabeth Tebeaux instead insists that several—primarily economic and ideological—factors contributed to the rise of technical writing in the "English Renaissance."[20] Perhaps the most notable of these factors was the printing press, which

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[15] Sajitha Jayaprakash, *Technical Writing*, (Mumbai: Global Media, 2007): 16.

[16] Sajitha Jayaprakash, *Technical Writing*, 18.

[17] Sigmund Eisner, "Chaucer as a Technical Writer," 188. Persian astrologer Messahalla is the author of a few of *Astrolabe*'s sources: *De Compositione Astrolabii* and *De Operatione Astrolabii*.

[18] David Banks, *Scientific Writing*, 23.

[19] David Banks, *Scientific Writing*, 39-40.

[20] Elizabeth Tebeaux, *The Emergence of a Tradition: Technical Writing in the English Renaissance, 1475–1640*, (Amityville: Routledge, 1997): 9-13.

Tebeaux describes as a force that "empowered" all forms of literature in the Early Modern world.[21]

However, technical writing was composed in English more than a century prior to the advent of the printing press. As previously discussed, Geoffrey Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe* is regarded by many scholars to be the first example of technical writing in English. This claim was first made by William A. Freedman in 1961, who advanced the idea that *Astrolabe* meets many of the criteria sought for in "good" technical writing. Freedman—who was, at the time of writing, a technical writer himself—places significant focus on *Astrolabe*'s adherence to the "rules" of technical writing but is admittedly disinterested in discussing the historical context of his findings.[22] Nonetheless, Freedman would not be the last to claim Chaucer as English's first technical writer. Both Banks[23] and Tebeaux[24] advance this claim, though the latter mostly elides Chaucer's potential influence. However, this view no longer reflects the scholarly consensus. While *Astrolabe* remains an influential—if not the most influential—example of medieval English technical writing, it is now known that it was neither alone, nor the first.

John Hagge, technical writing scholar, was among the first to challenge *Astrolabe*'s status. He argues that Chaucer was neither the first technical writer in English, nor even one of the first.[25] Instead, Hagge describes a number of other works of English technical writing that predate the earliest known date of composition of *Astrolabe*. These include other astrological texts[26] and medical treatises.[27] Hagge goes so far as to claim that English's technical writing tradition can be traced back to the Old English period.[28] He cites Bald's *Leechbook (c. tenth century CE)* and Ælfric's *Grammar* as two examples of an Old English technical tradition. *Leechbook* and *Grammar (c. 998 CE)*, a medical text and grammar book respectively, are indeed remarkable texts. They are among the two oldest known examples of vernacular technical writing in European history.[29] While Hagge demonstrates that these texts are, in fact, examples of technical writing, that does not prove the existence of a coherent and continuous technical writing tradition that spanned the centuries between Ælfric and Chaucer. Indeed, in my research, I could not find a single example of vernacular technical writing produced during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries.[30] While Hagge offers no explanation for this gap, the break in the tradition of English technical writing is likely the result of the Norman Conquest. The Conquest, while certainly economically disruptive, also resulted in the generation of an "Anglo-Norman" ruling class distinct from the English. This class spoke Anglo-Norman, a dialect of Old French, and had a disdain for the "native-speaking" English who they excluded from government.[31] If the English technical writing tradition had survived the Conquest, it is likely that it would have been subsumed into the broader French tradition. Thus, while Hagge is not wrong in saying that technical writing has existed in English for centuries, in practice this is not the case. Vernacular technical writing reappeared in England during the latter half of the fourteenth century, a fact that has been identified by scholars like Daniela Dobos,[32] but has so far remained uninterrogated. It is unlikely that Chaucer, Westwyk, or the other, unknown, authors of technical writing in the fourteenth century considered themselves successors of Ælfric or Bald. Instead, as I will discuss, it appears that they were quite aware that they were doing something new.

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[21] Elizabeth Tebeaux, *The Emergence of a Tradition*, 4.

[22] William A. Freedman, "Geoffrey Chaucer, Technical Writer," *STWP Review* 8, no. 4 (1961): 14-15.

[23] David Banks, *Scientific Writing*, 23-24.

[24] Elizabeth Tebeaux, *The Emergence of a Tradition*, 184-185.

[25] John Hagge, "The First Technical Writer in English," *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* 20, no. 3 (1990): 269-270.

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[26] John Hagge, "The First Technical Writer in English," 273-275. Notably, Hagge's list includes *Equatories of the Planetis*, *The Wyse Boke of Philosophie and Astronomye, The Newe Theorik of Planetis*, and *The Little Ship of Venice*.

[27] John Hagge, "The First Technical Writer in English," 275-277. If single leaf medical recipes can be considered examples of technical writing, some examples could date to the thirteenth century.

[28] John Hagge, "The First Technical Writer in English," 278.

[29] John Hagge, "The First Technical Writer in English," 282-284.

[30] And neither can Hagge, with the sole exception of Byrhtferth's *Manual*, written in 1011, Hagge does not name a single text produced in this period. John Hagge, "The First Technical Writer in English," 285.

[31] David Rollison, *A Commonwealth of the People: Popular Politics and England's Long Social Revolution*, 1066–1649, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 42-44.

Project Description

A Treatise on the Astrolabe is believed to have been composed by Chaucer in 1391,[33] though its exact date of composition remains unknown. *Astrolabe*—ostensibly composed for Chaucer's son "Lyte Lowys[34]"—is a prose treatise concerning the operation of an astrolabe, an astronomical instrument instrumental to the practice of astrology in the medieval era. *Astrolabe* is carefully organized into five parts, each of which build upon the "theorikes" and ideas presented in the previous sections to ensure its reader understands the fundamental concepts of the astrolabe's operation before moving onto more complicated ideas.[35] While only the first two parts of *Astrolabe* survive to the modern day—assuming they were ever written—*Astrolabe*'s introductory section demonstrates that Chaucer put a great deal of thought into the organization of his treatise, even if it was never completed.

While modern scholarship has, for the most part, acknowledged the fact that Chaucer was not English's first technical writer, *Astrolabe* remains the most closely studied example of late medieval English technical writing. Peter J. Hager and Ronald J. Nelson, both scholars of technical writing, allude to the ongoing debate regarding who, exactly, the first technical writer was, but nonetheless declare that Chaucer was still "among the earliest of published technical writers in the language," and has much to teach modern students of the form.[36] Thanks to its prodigious author, *Astrolabe* has been the subject of study for recent scholarship done by those who may otherwise be entirely uninterested in any kind of technical writing. This includes scholarship that looks to put *Astrolabe* in conversation with Chaucer's poetry,[37] or otherwise "resituate it in its very Chaucerian-ness."[38] However, despite this unusual amount of interest, few scholars are interested in resituating *Astrolabe* within the broader context of technical writing of England in the period, despite Chaucer himself being quite aware of the ways in which *Astrolabe* is a departure from tradition. This nearly unexplored line of study is where I intend to center my research.

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[32] Daniela Dobos, "On Some Early Translations," 331.
[33] Simon Horobin, "The Scribe of Bodleian Library MS Bodley 619 and the Circulation of Chaucer's Treatise on the Astrolabe," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 31, no. 1 (2009): 118-119
[34] Geoffery Chaucer, *Astrolabe*, line 1, 682.
[35] Geoffrey Chaucer, *Astrolabe*, lines 65-108, 662-663.

To begin this aspect of the study, it is perhaps appropriate to give attention to *Astrolabe*'s sources, which Chaucer does not attempt to conceal. While he is clearly well acquainted with the operation of an astrolabe, Chaucer is also clearly aware of his own limitations. He relies upon both the works of scholars who have come before him as well as his own contemporaries. In the prologue, Chaucer credits the "kalenders" of "reverent clerkes, Frere J. Somer and Frere N. Lenne" as providing invaluable data for the "tables of longitudes and latitudes of sterres" for the probably unwritten third part of *Astrolabe*.[39] Somer and Lenne were both friars and near contemporaries of Chaucer. They both wrote calendars for Oxford during the 1380s, at most a decade before *Astrolabe*'s composition.[40] Chaucer also draws from sources outside of England, citing Arabic astrologer "Alkabucius,"[41] though he notably excludes Persian astrologer Messahalla whose treatises on the astrolabe—translated into Latin as *De Compositione Astrolabii* and *De Operatione Astrolabii*—was a significant source for Chaucer's own treatise.[42] Nonetheless, Chaucer still exhibits an awareness that his work is positioned in a global context of translation and circulation. He understands that the conclusions of the "Latyn folk," from which Chaucer derives his own treatise, "had hem first out of othere dyverse languages and written hem in her owne tunge, that is to seyn, in Latyn. And God woot that in alle these languages and in many moo han these conclusions ben suffisantly learned and taught, and yit by diverse reules."[43] In doing so, Chaucer makes clear his own intention to participate in this cycle of translation, but to do so in his native tongue.

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[36] Peter J. Hager and Ronald J. Nelson, "Chaucer's A Treatise on the Astrolabe: A 600-year old Model for Humanizing Technical Documents," *IEEE transactions on professional communication* 36, no. 2 (1993): 87.

[37] Michelle Brooks, "Rewriting 'Litel Lowys' in Chaucer's A Treatise on the Astrolabe," S*tudies in Philology* 119, no. 2 (2022): 209–232.

[38] Lisa H. Cooper, "Figures for 'Gretter Knowing': Forms in the Treatise on the Astrolabe," in *Chaucer and the Subversion of Form*, 99–124, (Cambridge University Press: 2018): 101.

[39] Geoffery Chaucer, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, lines 77-86, 663.

In the opening lines of *Astrolabe*, Chaucer declares that "This tretis...wol I shewe the under full light reules and naked wordes in Englissh, for Latyn canst thou yit but small, my litel sone."[44] This line, nearly innocuous without context, nonetheless demonstrates that Chaucer was quite aware that the traditional language of astrology was Latin, not English. This break from tradition is a conscious decision on the part of Chaucer, ostensibly[45] done for his son, but nonetheless situated in a broader context. Chaucer goes on to write that English will "natheles suffice to the these trewe conclusions… as wel as sufficith to these noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusions in Grek; and to Arabiens in Arabik, and to Jewes in Ebrew, and to Latyn folk in Latyn."[46] Chaucer argues here that language does not grant a work greater credibility. The "trewe" principles presented in *Astrolabe* are universally "trewe;" and indeed transcend language. While such conclusions may be clear to a more modern readers, Chaucer's need to highlight this idea suggests the idea was less familiar to his contemporary audience.

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[40] Larry D. Benson, "Explanatory Notes," *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987), 1095.

[41] Geoffery Chaucer, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, line 8.13, 664. "Alkabicius" is known to us as Al-Qabisi.

[42] Sigmund Eisner, "Chaucer as a Technical Writer," 188-194. Notably, Eisner claims that Chaucer not only translated Messahalla's work, but also expanded on it to meet the needs of his audience.

[43] Geoffery Chaucer, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, lines 33-39, 662.

[44] Geoffery Chaucer, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, lines 25-28, 662.

[45] There is some debate as to whether or not Chaucer had a son named Lewis. It is possible "Lyte Lowys" was a ward of Chaucer's, or is perhaps entirely fictional. Michelle Brooks, "Rewriting 'Litel Lowys,'" 214-215.

However, just who *Astrolabe* was intended for is unclear. While "Lyte Lowys" is the apparent subject of the treatise, Chaucer also spends several lines justifying his writing to unknown other readers, in one such passage declaring that:

> every discret persone that redith or herith this litel treaties to have my rude endityng for excusid, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes. The first cause is for that curious endityng and hard sentence is ful heavy at onys for such a child to lerne. And secunde cause is this, that sothly me semith better to written unto a child twyes a god sentence, than he forget it oyns.[47]

Chaucer's potential anxiety toward these readers thinking less of him for writing at a child's reading level is curious as it not only suggests Chaucer is aware of other readers of *Astrolabe*, but in fact expects them. This is despite the treatise being, ostensibly, written for his son. Medievalist Edgar Laird argues that this apparent discrepancy is because *Astrolabe* was never just intended to be read by his son, but a broader circle of Chaucer's friends and patrons among the English nobility. Laird further suggests it may have been an attempt to educate his readers, who may not have fully understood the various astrological metaphors Chaucer frequently made in his poetry.[48] While it is impossible to say with any certainty whether or not Chaucer intended

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[46] Geoffery Chaucer, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, lines 29-33, 662.

[47] Geoffery Chaucer, *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, lines 41-49, 662.

[48] Edgar Laird, "Chaucer and Friends: The Audience for the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*," The *Chaucer Review* 41, no. 4 (2007): 442.

Astrolabe to go beyond his immediate circle, it is clear that it was a very popular text in late medieval England. Thirty-three copies of the treatise has survived to the present day, which is more than any of Chaucer's works other than *The Canterbury Tales*.[49] I will need to study the circulation of these manuscripts in order to better understand *Astrolabe*'s mysterious audience. Clearly, there was a significant, enthusiastic, and wealthy audience for vernacular technical writing in this period, even if they have not yet been identified.

These mysterious, enthusiastic patrons is undoubtedly why Chaucer was not the only author composing astrological treatises in late medieval England. *The Equatorie of the Planetis* is another example of late medieval English technical writing, and was composed near contemporaneously to Chaucer's treatise in 1393.[50] *Equatorie*—a text which details the construction and operation of its own titular instrument—was originally thought to have been another work of Chaucer's, a claim which was not without controversy.[51] However, it was not until 2015 that Kari Ann Rand not only demonstrated that Chaucer did not compose *Equatorie*, but that it was instead composed by John Westwyk, a monk of Tynemouth.[52] Westwyk's text is far more utilitarian than Chaucer's, and lacks the musings on translation and language that distinguishes *Astrolabe*. That does not mean that *Equatorie* is a simpler text than *Astrolabe*. Indeed, its subject matter is quite complex and, like Chaucer, Westwyk is clearly aware of the intellectual landscape in which he wrote. While most of Westwyk's sources remain undisclosed, he does reference a “tretis of the astrelabie,”[53] and refers to a “radix Chaucer” in his astrological tables.[54] While it is impossible to say whether or not Westwyk was inspired by Chaucer’s vernacular technical writing to compose his own, it is clear that both Westwyk and Chaucer were members of an intellectual community of vernacular writers in the 1390s, and identifying Westwyk’s other sources may prove illuminating as to what texts circulated amongst this community. Nonetheless, it does not appear that Westwyk had the same level of success as Chaucer. *Equatorie* only survives to us as a single manuscript,[55] and I speculate that it may have been intended for more advanced readers than Chaucer’s more popular treatise though, as I shall discuss, *Equatorie*’s audience is even less certain that *Astrolabe*’s.

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[49] Simon Horobin, "The Scribe of the Bodleian Library," 109.
[50] Seb Falk, "Vernacular Craft and Science in *The Equatorie of the Planetis*," *Medium Aevum* 88, no. 2 (2019): 329.
[51] Jennifer Arch, "A Case against Chaucer's Authorship of the 'Equatorie of the Planetis,'" *The Chaucer Review* 40, no. 1 (2005): 59-61.
[52] Kari Ann Rand, "The Authorship of *Equatorie*," 15-18.

While not as popular, *Equatorie* is undoubtedly the best studied piece of English technical writing from this period other than *Astrolabe* itself. This is, entirely, thanks to its now disproven connections to Chaucer.[56] Despite this, *Equatorie* is still worth studying. Medievalist Seb Falk—one of the few scholars to analyze *Equatorie* after the identification of Westwyk as its author—argues that English was well suited to deliver *Equatorie*’s instructions to its audience. The flexibility of the language, as well as Westwyk’s capacity to briefly “code-switch”[57] to Latin in the manuscript, suggests that *Equatorie* was intended for an audience the author knew quite well.[58] This theory has some merit. Westwyk was a monk at Tynemouth, a small community of fifteen to seventeen[59]—possibly dissident—monks, three hundred miles removed from its mother house.[60] It is possible that he intended to educate his brothers in astrology in order to provide a hobby for them in their isolation. Alternatively, he may have had a wealthy patron. However, neither of these theories can be verified without further investigation into Westwyk and Tynemouth. As Rand's rediscovery of *Equatorie*'s author is less than a decade old at the time of writing, there is undoubtedly far more work that can be done.

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[53] Geoffrey Chaucer, *Equatorie*, line C30, 22. Seb Falk argues that, as there are no other known English treatises on the astrolabe, Westwyk must be referring to Chaucer’s treatise. Seb Falk, “Vernacular Craft and Science,” 338.
[54] Geoffrey Chaucer, *Equatorie*, plate XI, note 5v, 76.
[55] Kari Ann Rand, “The Authorship of *Equatorie*,” 15.
[56] Kari Ann Rand, “The Authorship of *Equatorie*,” 27.
[57] Seb Falk, “Vernacular Craft and Science,” 331.
[58] Seb Falk, “Vernacular Craft and Science,” 348.
[59] Kari Ann Rand, “The Authorship of *Equatorie*,” 19.

While *Astrolabe* and *Equatorie* both have received decent attention from scholars of Chaucer and technical writing, they are the exceptions. Other Middle English astrological treatises have not received this level of attention, despite being quite popular in their time. For example, I could not find any published scholarship dedicated to the *Wise Book of Philosophy and Astronomy*,[61] only a reference to it in Hagge's collection of Middle English technical writing[62] and Carrie Griffin's commentary on the printed copy I obtained for this study.[63] This is despite the fact that the *Wise Book* was among the most popular and circulated English texts in the Late Middle Ages, appearing in thirty-four manuscripts, one more than *Astrolabe*.[64] Furthermore, the *Wise Book* was circulated in England from at least the early 1380s,[65] predating *Astrolabe* by around a decade.

While much of the *Wise Book* is unremarkable, being little more than a description of the planets and their astrological influence on humanity,[66] its introductory lines are of interest. In them, it describes how this work is the product of the "wisest philosopher & astronomy þat euer was sethe the worlde was begunne," who lived in Greece. Also in Greece was a learned "Englische man" who "studied and compiled this boke oute of Grewe graciously into Englisch."[67] Just like Chaucer, the unknown author of the *Wise Book* locates their work in a broader intellectual tradition but still makes it a distinctly English product. Studying the *Wise Book* in greater detail—with particular focus on its circulation and reception in late medieval England—is critical to the success of this study. Simply put, why was the *Wise Book* so popular? Was it read by an interested audience as a horoscope, or was it utilized as a reference by trained astrologers? Answering these questions will require scrutinizing the surviving manuscripts, with a particular focus on who the scribes and potential patrons may have been, as well as what other works the *Wise Book* may have been included alongside.

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[60] Kari Ann Rand, "The Authorship of *Equatorie*," 21.
[61] Alternatively known as the *Wise Boke of Philosophi & Astronamye*, the *Boke of Astronomye & of Philosofie*, and the *Wyse Boke of Philosophie & Astronomye*.
[62] John Hagge, "The First Technical Writer in English," 275. This does not mean there is no scholarly discussion of the *Wise Book*, but further research is certainly necessary.
[63] Carrie Griffin, *The Middle English* Wise Book of Philosophy and Astronomy.
[64] Carrie Griffin, *The Middle English* Wise Book of Philosophy and Astronomy, xv.
[65] Carrie Griffin, *The Middle English* Wise Book of Philosophy and Astronomy, xliii.
[66] While we in the modern day may scoff at this as pseudoscience or magic, to the scholars of the Middle Ages these ideas were very much real.

Conclusion

Technical writing is a genre with ancient origins, but its origins in English remain unclear. When medieval scholars look toward works of late medieval, vernacular technical writing like *Astrolabe* or *Equatorie*, they tend to read them in isolation, or as part of a Chaucerian canon. However, these texts were not part of an isolated tradition. They were tools intended to educate, and part of a now obscured vernacular scientific tradition that existed in the period. Moreover, I suspect they were an attempt to participate in a global scientific tradition, one that their authors sought to be a part of as English speakers. By placing these texts in conversation with each other and looking at them as members of a both local and global textual community, I hope to shine a light on this unexplored aspect of English history. While technical writing has been derided by some medievalists as an uninteresting field of inquiry,[68] I argue that understanding the rise of technical writing is of critical importance. Here, in these texts, we can see some of the first glimpses of the English constructing a national identity and scientific tradition.

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[67] *The Middle English* Wise Book of Philosophy and Astronomy, lines 1-5, 2.
[68] Simon Horobin, "The Scribe of Bodleian Library," 109.

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Part III.

Religion & The Supernatural

The Haunted Stage: Ghosts and Revenge in the English Renaissance Drama

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This paper explores ghostly manifestations in eleven plays written and performed between 1592 and 1622. The first of these ghosts, the ghost of Don Andrea in Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy (1587 CE)*, is the only one with whom we engage in the same way as we do with the other characters in the play. Andrea remains visible to the audience throughout, as he and Revenge observe the play and comment on what is happening. We in the audience see him undergo changes in mood and perspective as the play proceeds. He happily looks forward to seeing his death avenged, he feels frustrated by the slow pace of events being orchestrated by Revenge, he is surprised and saddened that revenge for his death entails the deaths of his friend Horatio and his lover Bel-Imperia, and he eagerly looks forward to tormenting his enemies in the afterlife. Compared to later ghosts, Don Andrea is remarkably well-rounded.

Hamlet's father is the only other ghost into whom we gain deeper insight as the play proceeds. He clearly has control over his manifestations, appearing to the guards and Horatio on the battlements and yet remaining unseen and unheard by Gertrude when he appears in her private chamber. He adjusts his appearance to fit his surroundings, appearing in full armor on the battlements but wearing a nightgown when manifesting in Gertrude's chamber. That he chooses to speak only to Hamlet may suggest his belief that he can rely on Hamlet to fulfill his duty to his father. More clearly, although he considers Gertrude's relationship and marriage to Claudius to be a betrayal, he insists that his desired revenge does not include harm to her: "Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive / Against thy mother aught" (1.5.85-6). The explicit care he takes to exclude Getrude from Hamlet's revenge implies that he continues to care for her. This inference is confirmed in the closet scene when the ghost notes that "amazement on thy mother sits" and solicits Hamlet to comfort her—"to step between her and her fighting soul" (3.5.12-13). His response to Gertrude's distress reveals an unspoken emotional depth to this ghost.

Andrea and King Hamlet both desire revenge for their deaths. They differ in that Andrea is a passive pursuer of vengeance while Hamlet's father is not. Andrea has not asked for revenge, and he will need to do nothing except observe. Hamlet's father tells us that he is "Doomed for a certain term to walk the night, / And for the day [be] confin'd to fast in fires" (1.5.10-11). It appears that King Hamlet has chosen to utilize his nighttime freedom to seek out his son and assign him the task of revenge. Unlike what was seen in *The Spanish Tragedy*, the desire for vengeance is his, and not heaven's.

One aspect of *Hamlet*'s (1623 CE) ghost is utilized in George Chapman's *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois (1613)*. Busy was killed in the earlier *Bussy D'Ambois*, and in this play Bussy's brother Clermont must avenge his death. A Christian stoic, he is slow to act, and his delay is one of several parallels to Hamlet. Bussy's ghost appears at the beginning of act five, announcing to the audience that he has ascended "Up from the chaos of eternall night . . . To urge … justice" (5.1.1-5). After thus informing us of who he is, the ghost stands aside to hear and comment on a conversation between the Guise and Clermont. This moment echoes the scene between Hamlet and Getrude when the ghost appears in her closet. Clermont can see the ghost, but the Guise cannot.

Shortly thereafter, Charlotte appears to undertake the revenge herself, and Bussy's ghost reappears to tell her that the revenge must be Clermont's. Tamyra, Bussy's lover, then offers to embrace him, and he forbids it, explaining that "the ayre, in which / My figures liknesse is imprest, will blast" (5.3.48-9), This is a piece of ghost lore not seen in any other of these plays. Then, sending the ladies above to observe what will ensue, he announces that "The blacke soft-footed houre is now on wing, / Which, for my just wreake, ghosts shall celebrate / With dances dire and of infernall state" (5.4.55-7). Bussy's promise of ghosts in the plural is fulfilled, but with a bit of dramatic carelessness on Chapman's part. When Montsurry is slain, there is music and five ghosts appear and dance around the body. One is the ghost of Bussy, two are the Guise and his brother Cardinal, whom the observers did not yet know were dead, one is the King's brother Monsieur, who appeared early in the play and disappeared with no explanation by Chapman, and one is the ghost of Shattilion, i.e., the Admiral of Coligny, who was murdered in the St. Bartholomew day massacre on the Guise's orders, but who plays no role in either of the Bussy plays. Although Chapman seems to have had his eye more on French history than plot consistency in assembling his party of ghosts, the music and dancing was most likely appreciated by his audience. One thinks of Thomas Middleton's addition of song and dance to the witch scenes in *Macbeth* and the evident appeal of these insertions to the Jacobean and Restoration audiences.[1]

Other plays indulged in spectacular scenes involving numbers of ghosts. One such play is *Richard III (1633 CE)*. On the night before his decisive battle with Richmond, Richard is visited by the ghosts of everyone his has killed to enable his ascent to the throne. The thirteen ghosts enter one by one, and each in turn pauses by the sleeping Richard and calls on him to "despair and die." Then each ghost turns to the sleeping Richmond and tells him to "Live and flourish." Though they entered separately, each ghost remains on stage with the other ghosts, creating an impressive array of spirits which then simultaneously vanish. Their litany does not cause Richard's fall but is a harbinger of it.

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[1] Gary Taylor, co-editor of the *Oxford Complete Works of Thomas Middleton* (2007), is one of the major proponents of Middleton's hand in Macbeth. See especially Gary Taylor, "The Textual History of Macbeth," in *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*, Oxford University Press, 2007.

The appeal of these large gatherings of ghosts is also evident in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline (1611 CE)*. Near the end of the play. Posthumus, the play's hero, has been imprisoned by the Britons, who plan to execute him. Sleeping in his cell, he is visited by the ghosts of his family: his father, who died before Posthumus was born, his mother who died giving birth to him, and his two brothers, who have died in battle. These are not dancing ghosts. Their entrance is formal and ceremonial. The parents enter accompanied by music, and then their sons enter, also accompanied by music. They pray to Jupiter for Posthumus to be saved, and "Jupiter descends in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an eagle" and throwing a thunderbolt (s.d.5.4.93). Jupiter promises that all will be well and gives the ghosts a tablet to leave for Posthumus. The message on the tablet is enigmatic, and Posthumus finds it "a speaking such / As sense cannot untie" (5.4.147). As it turns out, the lack of clarity does not matter. No one besides Posthumus ever sees the table, and the play proceeds directly to its happy ending with no further reference to it. In short, the ghosts and the descent of Jupiter add an audience-pleasing spectacle to the play, and that is virtually their sole contribution. Ghosts, it seems, are fun to watch.

Cymbeline's ghosts are atypical. The ghosts who appear in dreams are usually there to reveal the dreamer's impending death. Shakespeare uses the ghost for this purpose in Julius Caesar. Brutus reports that Caesar has appeared to him on two separate occasions, first at Sardis and then at Philippi fields on the night before his death. Brutus demands of the apparition who or what it is, and Caesar tells him that he is Brutus's evil spirit come "To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi" (4.3.283). Though the ghost does not say so in so many words, Brutus understands that "his hour is come" (5.5.20).

While the ghosts discussed so far have spoken, if only briefly, ghosts often remain silent. No doubt the best known non-speaking ghost is the ghost of Banquo in Shakespeare's *Macbeth (1623 CE)*. When Banquo's ghost appears, Macbeth is terrified. Only he can see the ghost, though he does not understand this. Where Macbeth sees a full table, his guests and Lady Macbeth see an empty chair reserved for him. Banquo's ghost does not speak to Macbeth, but he threatens him and prefigures his doom by shaking his gory locks at him.

A similar silent ghostly threat is found in John Webster's *The White Devil (1612 CE)*. The play reflects the range of extravagant evils that the early modern English ascribed to Italy: a corrupt nobility and papacy, infidelity, plots, violence, and poisonings. Webster adds two ghosts to the mix. In his version of the story, the Duke of Bracciano is madly in love with Vittoria and she is receptive to his courtship. She suggests that Bracciano should do away with his wife Isabella and her husband Camillo, and he enthusiastically agrees. He arranges to have Isabella killed by kissing a poisoned portrait, and his henchman Flamineo breaks Camillo's neck and makes it appear to be a vaulting accident. More than one person pursues revenge for these deaths, and by the end of the play almost everyone dies a violent death. Ghosts figure in two of these deaths. The ghost of Isabela appears subtly to her brother Francisco. While he is contemplating vengeance, her ghost enters and briefly stands before him. She does and says nothing, and he attributes the vision to his own imagination. However, Bracciano's much more threatening ghost appears to Flamineo, throwing dirt upon him and holding out a human skull embedded in a pot of lilies. Like Banquo shaking his gory locks, Bracciano's ghost then leaves without speaking.

Another play with a non-speaking ghost is Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling (1622 CE)*. In the main plot. Beatrice-Joanna becomes engaged to Alonzo but then falls in love with

Alsemero. She therefore hires Deflores, one of her father's servants, to kill Alonzo. Deflores murders Alonzo as Beatrice-Joanna desires and then cuts off one of the corpse's fingers to steal the diamond ring Alonzo was wearing. The first appearance of Alonzo's ghost occurs during the marriage of Bearice-Joanna and Alsemero when the ghost silently appears to Deflores and extends the hand with his missing finger. Only Deflores can see him. The second appearance of the ghost comes while Deflores and Beatrice-Johanna are plotting to kill a maid who has slept with Alsemero to conceal Beatrice-Joanna's lack of virginity. The appearance is brief, and neither of the plotters sees or hears the ghost, but both are aware of an uncanny presence: Deflores asks, "Ha! What art thou that tak'st away the light" and Beatrice-Joanna says that "some ill thing haunts the house" (5.1.59-63).

If Middleton and Rowley offer a mere soupçon of the supernatural in *The Changeling*, John Marston's *Antonio's Revenge (1602 CE)* offers a full range of ghostly behavior. The first scene reveals that Antonio's father, Duke Andrugio, has been poisoned by the villainous Duke Piero. Now a ghost, Andrugio actively seeks revenge for his death. He first appears to Antonio in a dream and reappears when Antonio is praying at the foot of his coffin. The ghost calls for revenge and reveals to Antonio that he was poisoned by Piero. He also assures him that Antonio's beloved Mellida, whose honor has been besmirched by Piero, is chaste. Moreover, shades of *Hamlet*, he tells Antonio that the man who poisoned him is about to marry Antonio's mother, Maria. The ghost next appears to Maria and tells her the manner of his death. Antonio enters while they are talking and says that he has begun his revenge by killing Piero's son. Andrugio's ghost instructs Antonio to forgive his mother, who acted in ignorance, and to flee and disguise himself. Andrugio begins the fifth act by participating in a dumb show that pantomimes how the Venetian senators have condemned Piero. Shortly after this, the Ghost sits to view a masque during which Piero is assassinated.

The last of this collection of ghosts appears in Cyril Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy (1611 CE)*, a play perhaps best known for its ending in which the villainous D'Amville knocks out his own brains with an executioner's axe. The ghost is the ghost of Montferrers, who has been killed by his brother, D'Amville, to gain an inheritance. The ghost first appears to his son Charlemont in a dream announcing his death and the loss of Charlemont's inheritance. However, in a marked difference from other such apparitions, he warns son to "leave revenge unto the King of kings" (2.6.22). When Charlemont awakes, he asks the musketeer with him if he saw anything, and the soldier says no. Charlemont then persuades himself that what he saw was "An idle apprehension, a vain dream. The ghost responds by appearing to both men, and the musketeer shoots through it to no effect. The ghost approaches Charlemont, who apologizes for not believing in its warning. Not long after, Charlemont encounters and fights with D'Amville' s son, Sebastian, and is on the verge of killing him when the ghost intervenes, "Hold, Charlemont! / Let Him revenge my murder and thy wrongs / To whom the justice of revenge belongs" (3.2.32-34). The ghost of Montferrers appears one last time, telling the sleeping D'Amville that he is about to see the confusion of all his projects. D'Amville awakes to find that both of his sons are dead, and he kills himself with the axe he had intended to use to execute Charlemont. Montferrer's urging that providence will work its course is proven correct.

To sum things up, while the prevalence of ghosts in the drama of this time is surely not unrelated to contemporary beliefs in ghosts, the role of ghosts in these plays primarily reflects their entertainment value. People seem to have enjoyed seeing them. Plays such as *The Revenge of Busy D'Ambois* and *Cymbeline* utilize them almost entirely as musical and dancing interludes with rather tangential connection to their plot. Except for *Hamlet*, they tend to have little connection to Renaissance theology, and even *Hamlet*'s version of purgatory does not seem to go beyond still extant folk tradition. What ghosts mainly do is to act as harbingers of the villain's downfall, whether by actively facilitating a murderer's downfall or more passively pointing to the fact that his villainy will be repaid. Sometimes this assurance goes beyond mere inevitability. *The Atheist's Tragedy* assures us over and over that justice is in God's hand and that it will surely come. The most intriguing of such assertions in found in *The Spanish Tragedy*. In Kyd's play Andrea is assured that his death is being revenged, but no mortal is pursuing revenge for him. Hieronimo's play is designed to avenge his son, not Andrea. Revenge for Andrea exists in a world beyond this one. Kyd suggests that karma, or nemesis, is a force that does not require our desire or awareness.

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Between Sacrament and Secular: Confession in *The Winter's Tale*[1]

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Given the non-Christian setting of *The Winter's Tale,* it may seem unnecessary to disclaim that this is not a paper on crypto-Catholicism, and I am not advancing any claims about Shakespeare's beliefs. However, even the quickest glimpse into the play's scholarship points out the latent Catholic imagery amidst the "Syncretistic" combination of pagan, Catholic, and Protestant elements.[2] It is surprising, therefore, that despite the centrality of the play's themes of "repentance and renewal" or "grace and forgiveness," the role of confession or penance in this play is not more prominent, especially since confession is common topic in Shakespeare studies.[3] For anyone unfamiliar with *The Winter's Tale*, King Leontes gives into fears of jealousy, which leads to the death of his son, his daughter becoming an outcast, and the apparent death of his wife; sixteen years pass of him acting in "saint-like sorrow," at which point he is reunited with his daughter and wife.

For scholars who do recognize penance in *The Winter's Tale*, it generally takes three forms: one, it is so obvious and accepted that it does not merit discussion; two, the absence of a priest means that any act of confession must be secular and therefore not sacramental (Sara Saylor offers a great reading in this vein); or three – and I only saw this in an unpublished master's thesis – it's so heavily coded that Shakespeare must have written *The Winter's Tale* as an allegory for sacramental, read *Catholic*, confession.[4] So, while *The Winter's Tale* does not depict private auricular confession to an ordained priest who then dictates terms of penance, the language surrounding Leontes's penitential state clearly draws on a mythos of penance that other characters recognize and participate in throughout the play.

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[1] A fuller version of this paper is set to be published in *Shakespeare and Religion: Global Tapestry, Dramatic Perspectives*, edited by Margie Burns. Forthcoming: Vernon Press.

[2] E.g., Maurice Hunt, "Syncretistic Religion in Shakespeare's Late Romances."

[3] Listed themes come from the *New Variorum Shakespeare*, eds. Turner and Haas.

For context, I want to turn to the late-medieval understanding of the sacrament. Thomas Tentler's *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation* is perhaps the seminal work on sacramental confession. In his book, he outlines four elements that exist in the quest for forgiveness: contrition (sorrow for sin); an explicit confession; satisfaction (or appropriate penitential exercises); and absolution.[5] In other models, such as the Church of England's religious articles, contrition is combined with satisfaction, leaving a three-fold focus on contrition, confession, and absolution.

The Winter's Tale depicts all three parts of penance as described by the Anglican Church. Whether that penance is sacramental depends on two factors: one, the interpretation of Leontes's actions between the trial in Act 3 and the restoration of Hermione, and two, perhaps fundamentally, whether he is aided by a priestly confessor. Leontes's contrition is the most apparent element – and perhaps the most important, as Tentler argues that "contrition became the essential element for the penitent" over penitential exercises, though an "accent on sorrow and amendment" and a personal reformation of actions "flourish[ed] in the religious thought of the Renaissance."[6] More contentious are whether Leontes fulfils the obligations of satisfaction, and whether any characters fill the role of priest.

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[4] Saylor, "'Almost a Miracle': Penitence in *The Winter's Tale*"; Lara Schulenberg Smith, "'Pardon my great profaness': The Sacrament of Penance in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*."

[5] Tentler, 3.

[6] Tentler, 16 and 105.

Leontes immediately shows guilt and begins his daily practice of penitential sorrows as he works towards restitution. Though Leontes moves to continue the trial after ignoring the oracle of Apollo, who would be the closest stand-in to the Christian God, his recognition of error (*anagnorisis*) occurs upon receipt of the report of Mamillius's death: "Apollo's angry, and the heavens themselves / Do strike at my injustice" (3.2.143-144).[7] It is during these words that Hermione faints; Leontes's admission of wrongdoing comes *before* he believes his wife has died. Despite the non-Christian worldview of the play, Leontes's public confession of guilt and plea for forgiveness casts his future penance in an explicitly religious frame: "Apollo," he continues, "pardon / My great profaneness 'gainst thine oracle" (3.2.150-151). Significantly, Leontes's sorrow is recognized in religious terms by Cleomenes in Act 5 when he mentions the "saint-like sorrow" and by Camillo, who, in Act 4, identifies Leontes as "the penitent King" (4.2.6).

To move to satisfaction – the play explicitly engages with the term and the concept of satisfaction. In a simplistic interpretation, the play's partly happy conclusion suggests that Leontes's acts sufficiently satisfy his wrongdoing. The OED's definition is a useful starting point: "the performance by a penitent of expiatory and meritorious acts as atonement or punishment for sin; such acts, or such an act, as one of the parts of the sacrament of penance." While the performativity of penance has obvious relevance in discussing drama, it is also worth noting that Tentler and other scholars have identified public elements of penance that place it outside of a confessional.

Cleomenes's commentary may best epitomize the performative elements of satisfaction. At the start of Act 5, he says to Leontes:

> Sir, you have done enough and have performed
> A saint-like sorrow. No fault could you make
> Which you have not redeemed, indeed, paid down

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[7] All citations of *The Winter's Tale* come from the *Norton Shakespeare*, 3rd edition.

> More penitence than done trespass. At the last
> Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil;
> With them, forgive yourself. (5.1.1-6)

Cleomenes's references to penance draw on both religious and secular notions of satisfaction. The secular elements of satisfaction speak to the repayment of debts, which stresses the etymological concerns of doing enough to fulfill said debt.

I believe that the explicitly Christian language of Leontes's "saint-like" penance underscores his performance of reconciliation. The presence of the word *satisfaction* in the scene between Camillo and Leontes is the play's most interesting application of the term, as it establishes the initial confessor-penitent relationship. Their conversation takes on a religious tenor before the king gives into his deceptive thoughts:

> Camillo: Business, my lord? I think most understand
> Bohemia stays here longer.
> Leontes: Ha?
> Camillo: Stays here longer.
> Leontes: Ay, but why?
> Camillo: To satisfy your highness and the entreaties
> Of our most gracious mistress.
> Leontes: Satisfy?
> Th'entreaties of your mistress? Satisfy?
> Let that suffice. I have trusted thee, Camillo,
> With all the nearest things to my heart, as well
> My chamber-counsels, wherein, priestlike, thou
> Hast cleansed my bosom. I from thee departed
> Thy penitent reformed. But we have been
> Deceived in thy integrity, deceived
> In that which seems so. (1.2.227-241)

Until the "priestlike" relationship between Camillo and Leontes developed in the latter half of this excerpt, all connotations of *satisfy* here occupy secular concerns about Hermione and Polixenes. Leontes, in his state of delusion, uses the word in a non-sacramental way, punning on sexual infidelity. In his initial praise of Camillo's "priestlike" role, Leontes clearly draws on the language of absolution, especially since he departs from the confession as "Thy penitent reformed." Additionally, he later presses Camillo "if thou wilt confess" to his wife's misdoing and to "Say't and justify't," though Camillo refuses to slander Hermione (1.2.273, 278). In a dramatic irony, Camillo's actions speak to a clean heart befitting a wholesome priest; he implores Leontes to "be cured / Of this diseased opinion," counsel that falls on deaf ears (1.2.296-297). Troubling a straightforward reading of penance in *The Winter's Tale,* by the time the metaphorical veil has lifted from Leontes's face, Camillo has already departed Sicilia, temporarily leaving the penitent-confessor relationship unfulfilled.

In Camillo's absence, Paulina becomes Leontes's confessor. In the late-medieval model of penance, the confessor facilitated most steps of the sacrament: if the confession was not easily forthcoming, the priest would induce guilt through a series of questioning; the priest would hear the confession and impose penance; and, finally, he would offer absolution through the office of the keys. Without the sacerdotal presence, the efficacy and nature of the sacrament were lost, resulting merely in pious actions (Tentler xiii, 16-19, 66-67, 72-87). Paulina is no ordained priest, but her actions fulfill many of the same roles, especially in the ways she prods Leontes into feeling more guilt. If one reads as absolution the reunion of Leontes with Hermione and their daughter Perdita, whose very name draws upon the punishment for unrepentance, Paulina is present for all stages of Leontes's penance, having become, as one scholar phrased it, an "instrument of both punishment and pardon" in what another identified as Paulina's attempt to "exact repentance from an erring Leontes"[8] (Miller 636; Greene 10).

A close examination of the interactions between Leontes and Paulina highlights her fulfillment of the confessor's role. That is, she takes on the mantle of confessor, oversees absolution, and eggs on the penitent's guilt – even after Leontes freely makes his confession, the traditional stopping point of such priestly prodding. Paulina's first staged conversation with Leontes predicts the confessional role she will assume in that she names her relationship to the king shortly before listing his sin. After declaring that "He shall not rule me" (2.3.50) – a perhaps fitting, if unintentional, comment on ideal church-state relations – she implores him to listen to her words:

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[8] Nichole E. Miller, "Ambivalent Temporality and Penitential Eros in *The Winter's Tale,"* p. 636; Gayle Greene, "Women on Trial in Shakespeare and Webster: The Mettle of Sex," p. 10.

> I beseech you hear me, who professes
> Myself your loyal servant, your physician,
> Your most obedient counselor, yet that dares
> Less appear so in comforting your evils
> Than such as most seem yours[.] (2.3.53-57)

In stating her relationship to the king using the words hear and profess, Paulina emphasizes the orality and public nature of performing her duties. The identification as physician and counselor will later take on confessor-like roles as she delays the king from finding any comfort from his acted-upon evils. After Leontes tries to dismiss Paulina because she came onstage with his daughter, Paulina identifies Leontes's sin as a "curse," which, according to the OED is both vocal and irreligious (2.3.87). His sin here has two parts, false speech and a broken filial bond: "for he / The sacred honor of himself, his queen's, / His hopeful son's, his babe's, betrays to slander" (2.3.83-85). The fact that his sin is religious is heightened when Leontes admits that it is Apollo who punishes his injustice for breaking the oracle. Thus, Leontes's sins lead to contrition, as opposed to the lesser attrition.

In the aftermath of the trial, the play demonstrates most poignantly the relationship between the penitent and confessor and dramatizes what actions the penitent can undertake to work towards restitution, whether it be absolution, satisfying the debt of sin, or self-amendment.

As mentioned, Leontes needs no external motivation to declare his wrongdoings and ask forgiveness:

> Apollo, pardon
> My great profaneness ‘gainst thine oracle.
> I’ll reconcile me to Polixenes,
> New woo my queen, recall the good Camillo,
> Whom I proclaim a man of truth of mercy;
> For being transported by my jealousies
> To bloody thoughts and to revenge, I chose
> Camillo for the minister to poison
> My friend Polixenes[.] (3.2.150-158)

Going on, he praises the “minister” Camillo’s actions, whose “piety / Does my deeds make the blacker!” (3.2.168-169). Religious terms frame Leontes’s self-condemnation, as his sin profanation of the oracle further contrasts Camillo’s upright behavior.

Although Leontes becomes a willing penitent, desiring to be reminded of his faults and shame, Paulina takes what might be considered an unconventional, though efficacious, approach to spurring Leontes to penance. After condemning Leontes, she argues that no human acts can bring about restitution:

> But, O thou tyrant,
> Do not repent these things, for they are heavier
> Than all thy woes can stir. Therefore betake thee
> To nothing but despair. A thousand knees,
> Ten thousand years together . . . could not move the gods
> To look that way thou wert. (3.2.204-211)

One would expect a confessor to tell the guilty to repent, but Paulina, cognizant of the divine ordinance that has been wronged, talks of the apparent insufficiency of what Leontes can or cannot do, which Charles Frey argues “denies Leontes the power of effective repentance” (119). Leontes willingly accepts this brutal truth-telling: “Go on, go on. / Thou canst not speak too much. I have deserved / All tongues to talk their bitt’rest” (3.2.211-213). The close of this scene abounds in irony. Perhaps a callback to Paulina calling herself the most obedient servant because she speaks the truth (2.3.53-55), the attendant lords try to silence Paulina's condemnation. And while she admits a type a guilt in response to the boldness of her speech: "I am sorry for't. / All faults I make, when I shall come to know them, / I do repent. Alas, I have showed too much / the rashness of a woman" (3.2.215-218). Her words go unaddressed.

Nevertheless, Paulina shifts from confessing fault to address Leontes directly, marked in some editions by the stage direction "[to Leontes]," and her words push Leontes to action despite her telling him "Do not receive affliction / At my petition" and offering to substitute herself as a target of punishment before asking forgiveness (3.2.220-224). Unlike her later speeches, Paulina here focuses on the human-to-human offenses, making no mention of divine agents. Using a rhetorical flourish of *occupatio* by claiming "I'll speak of her [the queen] no more, nor of your children," she reminds Leontes of his guilt, which speaks to the duplicitous nature of her speech (3.2.227). She has no intention of removing the king's punishment, and Leontes willingly receives affliction. A straight reading of these lines goes against the typical confessional norms, but, since the end result appears to be satisfaction, they work in inspiring action. Leontes rejects Paulina's pity and admits preferring harsh truths: "Thou didst speak but well / When most the truth, which I receive much better Than to be pitied of thee. (3.2.229-231). Vowing to visit his wife and son's grave every day for the rest of his life, he asks Paulina to guide him in addressing his shame: "Come, and lead me / To these sorrows" (3.2.239-240). Though earlier he had asked Apollo for pardon, Leontes seeks no forgiveness with these words. His "shame perpetual" invites a continual state of penance. Leontes's exercise consists of visiting the grave – a visual reminder of his sin – and daily tears.

After this declaration of planned penance, Leontes and Paulina do not appear onstage again until 5.1, when Cleomones speaks of Leontes's "saint-like" adherence over the past sixteen years. As the play moves towards resolution, the inability of self-sufficient satisfaction comes to the fore. After hearing Cleomones's praise, Leontes admits the inability to forgive himself: "Whilst I remember Her and her virtues, I cannot forget / My blemishes in them, and so still think of / The wrong I did myself" (5.1.6-9). If penance leads to reformation, Leontes cannot move past the guilt, which Paulina continues to provide, leading the king to admit "thou strik'st me / Sorely to say I did [kill her]" (5.1.16-17). Thus, though contrite, the king cannot reach absolution on his own. Rebuking the advice for Leontes to remarry, Paulina argues that the king's penance is divinely sanctioned: "'Tis your counsel / My lord should to the heavens be contrary, / Oppose against their will" (5.44-46). Since part of Leontes's sin was defying the oracle, the restitution requires following divine orders, which, as Paulina reminds the audience a few lines earlier, demands "That King Leontes shall not have an heir / Till his lost child be found" (5.1.39-40). Viewed from a lens of contrition, Paulina keeps Leontes from attrition by reminding him of the heavenly nature bound up in penance.

In the final scene, when Leontes is reunited with his daughter and the others he has wronged, religious language abounds. One can mark a mood shift from the opening lines, where Leontes identifies "O grave and good Paulina, that great comfort / That I have had of thee" (5.3.1-2). She replies, "All my services / You have paid home;" bringing the reunion to her house is "A surplus of your grace which never / My life may last to answer" (5.3.3-4, 7-8). The pun on grace invites a Protestant interpretation of repentance, as grace is the divine element that helps with forgiveness. Moreover, Paulina's attitude suggests satisfaction is approaching or has already happened. In this culminating scene, Leontes has amended his soul; instead of absolution, he has fixed his erroneous ways. For this, Paulina, his confessor, rewards him by giving back his wife so that he can finally repair the relationships he damaged earlier. How fitting then, that Leontes's final speech of the play is devoted to Paulina, whom he joins in the promise of marriage with Camillo, his previous confessor, before asking her once again to lead them offstage. In this union of confessors, as it were, Leontes remains the penitent, asking “Both your pardons, / That e’er I put between your holy looks / My ill suspicion” (5.3.147-49). Thus, the religious bond between fellow humans remains present on the stage. Because it is through Paulina’s actions – whether magical or merely performative – that Hermione is “restored” to life, the final resolution of the play happens through human agency rather than divine intervention. In sacramental penance, the priest acts on God’s behalf through the office of the keys. While Paulina does not say she acts on behalf of the divine, she also does not deny superstitious powers. To Perdita and Leontes, she asserts that “then you’ll think – / Which I protest against – I am assisted / By wicked powers” and that “It is required / You do awake your faith” for the statue to move before asking those who think she will commit “unlawful business” to depart (5.3.89-91, 94-95). The ambiguity of these apparently resurrective powers leaves open the possibility of divine aid, but it is Paulina herself who brings the statue to life.

Ultimately, the language of confession, penance, and repentance permeates throughout the play as the characters must obey divine decrees. Whether one recognizes the sacramental references does not necessarily change the appreciation of the plot, but it does enhance the appreciation of the rich cultural milieu Shakespeare embraces on stage and in his writing. In a tale of redemption, he offers a religious reading for those who seek it.

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Exploring the Resonances of Religious Language in *King Lear*, Especially 1.1.

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This paper is dedicated to Dr. Andrew D. Weiner, my mentor and friend, who died from the complications of dementia this year. He now sees "the mystery of things."

A form of the word *dowr*y occurs seven times in Act 1, scene 1 of *King Lear*: As is his practice, Shakespeare uses the word in various forms—it's *dower* or *dowers* as a noun 4 times, and *dowry* once, in France's declaration regarding Cordelia, "She is herself a dowry" (1.1.246).[1] Shakespeare verbs the word in Lear's exclamation that Cordelia is "dowered with our curse" (207), and, finally, the word is "dowerless" in France's description of her (to which we will return). That form of the word shows up again in Act 2, scene 4 (218) in Lear's description of Cordelia's marriage. Indeed, in a play full of language that empties things out (full of "Nothing"), "dowerless" makes thematic sense. The word *less* occurs some 30 times in the play, and the suffix *-less* no less than 13 times.[2] In the opening scene, then, Shakespeare's deployment of the word *dowry* charts the progress (or regress) of the play's action, essentially from "several dowers" (44) to "Dowered with our curse" (206) to "dowerless" (260). Something has gone very wrong.

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[1] Shakespeare, *King Lear*, in David Bevington, ed., *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*. 5th ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 2004).

[2] As mentioned, *dowerless* occurs twice, *houseless* twice in close proximity and *eyeless* (ouch!) three times. *Needless, thankless, pitiless, comfortless* are among the words in which the suffix reminds us of what is missing or lost.

Besides reinforcing the downward spiral of the scene's action, the recurring references to marriage negotiations reminds us that Lear's grand plan at the opening of the play's action, an ill-advised one, is to orchestrate a ceremony which accomplishes a plan for succession but also completes a marriage contract for his youngest, and most beloved, daughter.[3] Lear, as we first see him, seems to be a man who believes that he is in control and that he is using his control for good.

It pretty much states the obvious to say that *King Lear* is about seeing. But in doing so, we are not just descending to cliché: we are instead laying open what for Shakespeare is, in this play and elsewhere, an insistent theme. "See better," Kent's arch but sincere advice to his king (1.1.159), can be applied to the characters but also to the audience. Mis-seeing—misunderstanding, misreading—is so persistent in this play that, in as much as the play is a reflection of life, this condition comes close to defining what it is to be human: we mis-see, we miss the point, whether through weakness, unkowingnness, or, most often, willfulness. The ugly pageant Lear contrives at the beginning of the play is just an early, crucial instance of someone demonstrating the lack of insight that leads to a lack understanding, both politically and domestically. Lear sees what he wants to see, fancying himself the arbiter of all things that he is not. What do we make of him—and of almost everyone in the play who has trouble reading the room? Are we—we humans I mean—lost in our unknowingness, or in our willful mis-seeing out of self-interest?

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[3] As Garber notes, James in his accession speech uses marriage imagery to reflect on the unity of the kingdom. In his accession speech delivered to Parliament 19 March 1603, James touts the "great blessing that God has with my person sent unto you," namely "peace within." Crucial to that peace, as he describes it, is "the union of two ancient and famous kingdoms," which he brings in himself. He declares, "What god has conjoined, then let no man separate." Quoted in Marjorie Garber, *Shakespeare After All* (New York: Anchor Books, 2004), 650). James's invocation of the marriage ceremony links the political and the domestic—the realm with the intimate—with a powerful image that may help us connect these themes in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, a play written, probably, in 1605. That the political and the personal converge in this play is not news—nor is the play's connection to contemporary discourse about the prospects of a united Britain. The audience's ears would be burning.

It seems that even Cordelia mis-sees or misreads. However, we interpret her initial response to Lear's request that she declare her love for him—gracious or stubborn or just naïve—she feels the need to correct and to assert her view of the world on Lear: "Daddy, that's just not how things work, and I know better." Cordelia does see her sisters well, calling out their overheated claims of love (100)—"I know you what you are," she later exclaims (273)—yet she is (too?) confident that she can alter her father's seeing as well. She thinks, based on her love for her father, that she can keep him under control. But her "I love your Majesty / According to my bond, no more or less" (92-93), which we might understand to mean that she loves exactly as one should (namely with a love deeply rooted in bond), quickly leads to "The truth then by thy dower!" (108).[4] Shouldn't we all wish for our legacy to be the truth, and nothing but? But it is

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[4] Raymond Himelick, tr. and ed., *The Enchiridion of Erasmus*, 1523 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), 81. Erasmus would suggest that Corelia is making the spiritual choice, not the fleshly one. In a fascinating passage, Erasmus illustrates the competing claims of flesh and spirit on the soul:

> You esteem your parents, you love your brother and your children, you are fond of your friend. Now doing these things is not so much a virtue as not doing them is abominable. Why should you, a Christian, not do what even pagans do by natural impulse—indeed, what mere beasts do? The natural action is not to be ascribed to merit. But suppose you have arrived at this situation, where either you must reject your feeling for father, suppress your love for your children, disregard your friend's goodwill—or offend God? Now what are you going to do? The soul stands at a fork in the road, with the flesh pulling one way and the spirit another.
>
> "God is greater than parent," says the spirit. "To the one you owe only your body; to the other, everything."
>
> "Unless you obey," says the flesh, "your father will disinherit you, people will call you unnatural. Think of the expedient; think of your reputation. God either is not watching your behavior, or He winks at it, or else He will surely be easily soothed."
>
> Now the soul is perplexed and wavering. She inclines this way and that, and she will become whatever she yields to. If, rejecting the spirit she listens to the deceiving flesh, she becomes one with the body; but if, spurning the flesh she is elevated in the direction of the spirit, she will be transfigured into spirit.
>
> Get used to examining yourself closely in this manner, for it is the great error of mankind not infrequently, to mistake the merely natural for absolute virtue. Certain

not always so.[5] I shall return later to one significant exception to misreading in Act 1, scene 1, and that is France, who is remarkably unfazed by Lear's assessment of his daughter.

We are made aware of the difficulty of knowing—of interpreting—in the opening lines of the play, one of Shakespeare's sidebar openings (like the guard's "Who's there?" in *Hamlet* or the bishops' scheming conversation at the beginning of *Henry V*). A close look at this sub-scene will help us see how Shakespeare introduces this idea—and also how he prepares us to consider the matters of marriage later in the scene.

Kent and Gloucester's opening conversation suggests a mood of uncertainty and of the difficulty of determining proper value and action: Kent's "I thought" (the first words in the play) and Gloucester's answering "It did always seem so to us" (1-3) alert us to what can and cannot be known. Worrying about "the division of the kingdom," an imminent action which they attempt to evaluate, Kent and Gloucester consider which son-in-law Lear "values most" (the words are Gloucester's), remarking that their "equalities" (the Folio says "qualities") make it impossible to determine.[6] But the conversation quickly veers to a consideration of sonship—one marked by legitimacy, value, and, if not dowry, what is owed to one's offspring.[7]

> passions—those outwardly rather respectable and masquerading, so to speak, as virtues—deceive the unthinking.

[5] Williams writes, "The idea that I can dispense or receive love without limit is both the most dangerous of fantasies and the most fundamental of truths; *Lear* is in part about the appalling difficulty of telling the difference between unconditional love as limitless benevolence demanding or earning limitless repayment and unconditional love as that which is always there in advance and never open to negotiation." Rowan Williams, *The Tragic Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 40.

[6] Gloucester's word *curiosity,* by which he means something like "close scrutiny" ("curiosity in neither"—note the negative—"can make choice of either's moiety,"6-7) anticipates Gloucester's son's use of the word in the phrase "curiosity of nations" (1.2.4), where he means the (for him) quaint custom of patrilinear succession. This connection anticipates the conversational shift to offspring.

[7] In this regard, Williams says tragedy is in part "about the never-achieved level of steady attentiveness that we owe to each other" (36).

What is to be noticed, beyond the worldly joshing about having a good time in bed (a worldliness[8] that has everything to do with what's wrong in Lear's world) is that this pair of powerful men is raising for us the issue of, well, issue. This is a topic that will be taken up in the scene with respect to daughters by means of dowry. We learn, in that early sub-scene, that "the whoreson must be acknowledged," that the value of a child may assessed based on the "good sport at his making," that affection goes where it will since Gloucester feels Edgar, his legitimate son and heir, is "yet no dearer" in his father's "account" than a vigorous, strapping love child. All of this talk should feel unsettling to an audience that knows illegitimacy is decried by the church and that proper marriage was, as the *Homily on Marriage* puts it:

> instituted of GOD, to the intent that man and woman should liue lawfully in a perpetuall friendship, to bring foorth fruite, and to auoide Fornication. By which meane a good conscience might bee preserued on both parties, in brideling the corrupt inclinations of the flesh, within the limites of honestie.[9]

Gloucester, in is self-satisfied worldliness, has gone far beyond the "limits of honesty."

In fact, the homily's description of the dangers of discord, which allows us to extend its meaning from marriage and family to the body politic, offers an analysis of what stands in the way of peace. The "principall craft" of the Devil, says the sermon, is to "bring in most bitter & vnpleasant discord." The sermon goes on to identify the source of that discord:

> For this folly is euer from our tender age growne vp with vs, to haue a desire to rule, to thinke highly of our selfe, so that none thinketh it meet to giue place to another. That wicked vice of stubborne will and selfe loue, is more meet to breake and to disseuer the loue of heart, then to preserue concord.

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[8] By worldliness I mean not so much a lack of morality so much as the notion that one chooses one's own way of life in the world, regardless of others.

[9] Homily on the State of Matrimony." From *The Second Book of Homilies.* 1571. *Renaissance Electronic Texts* 1.1. Ian Lancashire, editor, University of Toronto, STC 13675, *The Anglican Library*, http://www.anglicanlibrary.org/author.htm.

And here I ask a question: for an audience who heard this sermon on a regular basis, might they not be alert to self-love, evidenced in this scene, as the root of discord? And might they not apply that knowledge to the actions of the play?

Thus, it is with deep irony—except we don't know it yet—that after some rib-elbowing jokes about bastard sons and recreational sex,[10] the conversation makes a hard turn toward "legitimate" courtesy, love, and noble disposition. Gloucester introduces Kent as a "noble gentleman" and an "honorable friend." Edmund offers his "services" to Kent, who promises to "love" and to "sue to know" Edmund better. Edmund's "Sir, I shall study deserving" (28-31) puts a bow on this conversation. Do we wince at the easy, but not costly, expressions of mutual courtesy and commitment which these characters mouth? There are in the play, by my reading, no more crucial lines than Lear's plea to Regan, "Thou better know'st / The offices of nature, bonds of childhood, / Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude" (2.4.178-80). The little pageant of courtesy which begins the play, as perfunctory as it is it, anticipates this declaration. Lear scarcely knows what he says (he means, "you owe me"), nor how misplaced his trust is.[11] Yet the lines unmask, even in the irony of their context here, the true ethic of human connectedness based as it is on profound knowing and deep, even gracious, gratitude. Had Lear fully understood this, as we may, he could have heard Cordelia's "I love your Majesty / According to my bond, no more or less" (92-93) with quite different ears: I love you based not on debt but on mutual love; I fulfill my commitment to you because that is natural, good, and right. "Love is not love," she says, in essence. To push the point, perhaps that is what she finally says, and Lear finally hears, with her absolving phrase later in the play, "No cause, no cause" (4.7.85).

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[10] Does Edmund overhear? When he declares, "Now, gods [whom he doesn't believe in] stand up for bastards!" [2.1.22] is he responding to being the butt of some wry jokes?

[11] Lear's next lines, "Thy half o'th'kingdom hast thou not forgot, / Wherein I thee endowed" (181-82), reveal how transactional his notion of human relationships is.

I have suggested that the opening exchange among Kent, Gloucester, and Edmund has raised the topics of inheritance, familial commitment, and thus marriage. I have also noted how the word *dowry* rings like a bell throughout play's first scene, even charting the direction of its action. Indeed, the first use of the word comes in Lear's first extended speech: his "darker purpose" (36), by Lear meant to suggest secrets made plain (though we may worry), includes what he calls "a constant will to publish / Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife / May be prevented now" (43-46).[12]

Everything is going well as Goneril and Regan play the role laid out for them: flatter the old man and get what's coming to you. The degree to which we perceive the duplicity in their words, tone, or countenance as they claim, (Goneril) "Sir, I love you more than words can yield the matter" and (Regan) "I am alone felicitate / In your dear Highness' love" (55, 75-76), is difficult to judge. So is what is passing through Cordelia's mind. If her expression is as she is described later by an observer in the Quarto, "Sunshine and rain at once" (4.3.18), then she cannot hide her emotions.[13] Of course, she also speaks in asides which cue us in to her. Whether or not we pick up on these cues, we don't need to wait long for the train wreck. Mid-speech (rather like Claudius in *Hamlet*) Lear turns to Cordelia, making clear where this whole pageant has been going:

> Now, our joy,
> Although our last and least, to whose young love
> The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
> Strive to be interessed, what can you say to draw
> A third more opulent than your sisters'? Speak. (82-85)

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[12] "[C]onstant will" suggests that Lear has had this plan in mind all along, though as self-assessment it comes close to being a declaration of his being of sound mind and body. Since his elder two daughters are already married, we get a hint of Lear's preference for Cordelia in that they seem to have to wait on her marriage for the details of their dole. Of course, "future strife" is precisely what follows, so if we sense where this is going, we are now alert.

[13] I suppose one could argue that Cordelia's empathy is the effect of her suffering, but equally we might think of her as simply open and expressive.

So that's the game, huh? Isn't this a creepy speech? It begins in joy and ends in command. The father's talk of vines and milk (which remind us that we are negotiating lands as well as persons) evokes a bit too vividly for an old father the fertility and sensuousness of an intimate state. It's rather like the father of the bride making an off-color joke during the reception. And Lear makes clear the fundamental prejudice of these negotiations: Cordelia is invited to act out of self-interest and at the expense of her sisters. Later, Cordelia calls her sister's rhetoric a "glib and oily art" (228)—but she may well be experiencing her father's words here in the same way. Most interestingly, Lear calls Cordelia his "last and least." Lear means something like latest born and seeming least—the youngest and so seemingly least important. But the phrase evokes, for the alert audience, the New Testament truth that "the last shall be first, and the first last" (Mt. 20:16),[14] one version of the fundamental reversal of the gospel illustrated in the Beatitudes (the poor in spirit inherit the kingdom; the mourners are comforted) and in Paul's declaration that God's power is made perfect in weakness (Matt. 5:3-12 and 2 Cor. 12:9). We will come back to that one.

If Lear begins his ceremony as a marriage market—disposing land and daughters—when Cordelia fails to play along, Lear enacts a kind of failed marriage ceremony.[15] The audience is reminded of the moment in the ceremony when those present are asked if anyone "can shew any just cause, why thei may not lawfully be joined together, let hym now speak, or els hereafter for ever holde his peace."[16] Hold his peace Lear does not, dissolving both the grant of kingdom and marriage eligibility. Further, Lear swears off any relationship or commitment to her. I put it mildly. “Let it be so!” he declares, “Thy truth then be thy dower” (108). He swears:

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[14] See Mt. 19:30; Mark 10:31; Luke 13:30. I cite Scripture from *The Geneva Bible*,1602, ed. by Gerald T. Sheppard (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1989). I do so not to suggest that it is Shakespeare's exclusive source but because it is the version most likely to be in the ears of his audience.

[15] Something Shakespeare has done, to entirely different effect in *Much Ado*.

[16] I cite the 1559 form from Brian Cummings, Brian, editor, *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 157.

> By the sun, moon, and stars, declaring,
> Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
> Propinquity, and property of blood,
> And as a stranger to my heart and me
> Hold thee from this forever. (113-16)

Notice the last line echoes the marriage ceremony’s “from this day forward.” The unnaturalness of Lear’s disclaiming here is enhanced by the way in which it is a bleak travesty of giving away the bride. He gives her away all right but does not commend her to anyone. “Stranger to my heart and me” perhaps hits the hardest: you are alien to me—I never knew you, which, of course, is the worse since it is not true.

Lear’s “stranger” brings to mind Jesus’s teaching about the “least of these,” including taking in the “stranger” (Matt. 25:45, 35). The ethic invoked in this passage from Matthew has far-reaching implications for the play. The righteous, we are told, will be separated from the unrighteous (the sheep from the goats) according to their disposition to those in need:

> For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I thirsted, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in unto you.
> *I was* naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. (Matt. 25:25-26).

The play gives us moving exemplars of the hungry, the naked, the imprisoned, and if we see through the eyes of the passage (and eventually through Lear’s growing pity), we may begin to gain some perspective on our proper disposition toward others.[17]

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[17] As an example, Leah Marcus has connected the play’s Quarto reference to being played on St. Stephen’s Day, a day for hospitality. Leah S. Marcus, *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Readings and its Discontents* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1988), 148-59.

Lear returns to his disclaiming—continuing the theme of a failed ceremony—when he brings out Cordelia's suitors and turns marriage negotiations into a "how low will you go" sort of bargain. He says to Burgundy:

> Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
> Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
> Dow'r'd with our curse, and strangered with our oath,
> Take her, or leave her? (205-08)

It is a potent passage, with its key words—"infirmitie," "Dow'r'd," "curse," and "strangered"—ringing throughout the play. "[N]ew-adopted" conjures connection only to break it with "to our hate," while alluding ironically to Paul's claim that believers have been "adopted" through Christ into full "sonship" (Gal. 4:5).[18] Finally "Unfriended," which may or may not give modern students access to the play through their social media experience, is also disquieting. All in all, the "Take her, or leave her" speech suggests the worst kind of dowry negotiations—an inversion, even perversion, of how things ought to be.

The speech has Lear's desired effect on Burgundy, but a surprising one on France. In a play about seeing and believing (think Gloucester on the presumed precipice), France sees with the eyes of faith, to put it one way. He is not swayed by report; instead, he trusts what he already knows about Cordelia. That she should be valued as Lear claims makes no sense to him: "which to believe of her" he says, "Must be a faith that reason without miracle / Should never plant in me" (224-26).[19] France here uses the language of faith to suggest a counter-faith: "It would take a miracle to convince me that Cordelia is who you say she is." By implication, Cordelia is the miracle of his *true* faith, supported by reason. In this way, Shakespeare uses a confirming understanding of faith—the miraculous combined with reason—to suggest that France has it right. Andy Weiner, remarking on Lear's description of Cordelia as a "little seeming substance" (1.1.201), points out that Lear means she is a "little seeming-substance," i.e. worth nothing at all, whereby France sees her as a "little-seeming substance"—as only appearing worthless![20] Would that others in the play were not persuaded by their misapprehensions, were not blinded to what they should know.

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[18] Adoption into God's family through the work of Christ is a strong, and well-known, theme in Paul: see Roman 8:15, 23; Rom. 9:10; Ephesians 1:5. Shakespeare's audience is likely to hear "New-adopted" through the New Testament.

[19] The discourse on miracles is, pregnantly, extended when Kent, in the stocks, observes, "Nothing almost sees miracles / But misery" (2.2.168-69). In the same line, he mentions Cordelia, strongly associating her with the miraculous. Bevington's gloss on "Nothing" here—"Scarcely anything"—helps us connect this passage to France's declaration. Miracles do not shield us from misery. Weiner elaborates the theme of miracles.

Picking up the language of dowry ("She is herself a dowry"), France invites Burgundy to see Cordelia as he does—really, in a more subtle way than Lear, he emphasizes that Cordelia will bring nothing to marriage but herself—"Take her or leave her"—in that way clearing the path for himself ("Be it lawful I take up what's cast away"). When Burgundy demurs—like others in this play he is motivated by self-interest and by believing in appearances—France turns to Cordelia, echoing the language of betrothal and marriage, one that emphasizes the religiously inflected language of grace. He says:

> Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
> Most choice, forsaken, and most lov'd, despis'd,
> Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon,
> Be it lawful I take up what's cast away.
> [*He takes her hand*.]
> Gods, gods! 'tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
> My love should kindle to inflamed respect.
> Thy dow'rless daughter, King, thrown to my chance,
> Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France. (253-61)

Note here that the implied stage direction suggests the marriage service. In the form for marriage, the question "Who geveth this woman to be married unto this man?" is followed by this, "And the Minister receivying the woman at her father or frendes hands, shall cause the man to take the woman by the right hand, and so either to give their trouth to other…"[21] Viewers for whom the service is invoked may ponder the divergence from the proper ritual—this father is giving his daughter away, but not in the sense the form means. At the conclusion of this interchange, Lear does give the bride away with these words:

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[20] Andrew D. Weiner, "'Thy life's a miracle': Shakespeare and Faith in *King Lear*." Paper presented the Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference, St. Louis, MO, October 1996.

> Thou hast her, France; let her be thine; for we
> Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
> That face of hers again. Therefore begone
> Without our grace, our love, our benison. (266-69)

"Without" turns what should be a marriage blessing into the withholding of it, while at the same time touching on the play's theme of divestment and loss.[22]

I quote France's speech above at length to notice the notes of "chance," the invocation of the gods, and the remarks about the strangeness of human affection, which wants what is cast away. So, I don't want to over-spiritualize the speech. Still, France adds a few lines later, "Thou losest here, a better where to find" (265). The despised are favored, the forsaken are healed. So, yes, this speech begins to suggest Cordelia's status as a savior figure. The speech evokes Isaiah's suffering servant, the one "despised and rejected" who "was wounded for our transgressions" and "broken for our iniquities" (Is. 53: 3-5).[23]

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[21] Cummings, 158.

[22] We think of Cordelia's earlier response to Lear's demand for all her love:

> Haply, when I shall wed
> That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
> Half my love with him, half my care and duty.
> Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
> To love my father all. (100-04)

Here "take my plight" is prophetic, also modest; there is a note of happenstance, so important to the play, and Cordelia's "love . . . care and duty" nicely point to what Lear withholds. Cordelia's "Half" suggests that commitment can be measured but still strong, that love expands rather than simply being transferred. No wonder France loves her. But France's implied taking her by the hand also expresses strongly his intent to marry—to plight his troth.

[23] Here is the fuller passage:

The point I want to make here (and it's the last one) is that France's New Testament rhetoric of reversal adds a crucial note to the deep and enduring losses of the play. These are losses that should not be mitigated—a point made clear by Shakespeare's decision to leave behind the happy ending of his sources. Rowan Williams (relying on Nuttall) puts it this way: after Cordelia and Lear are reconciled in 4.6—Lear displaying penitence and Cordelia forgiveness and grace—"it is as though Shakespeare then says to the audience: 'I am now going to kill these two characters; will what they have said or seen still be true?'"[24] There are no easy answers to this question. But there is a grace note, if you'll pardon the pun, and it is France who sees it as others don't. The Apostle Paul, speaking about is own ministry, writes, "dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything" (2 Cor. 6:3-10). The end of this passage brings us back to France's speech. Later in 2nd Corinthians, Paul, describing God's response to Paul's pleading regarding an apparent life-long struggle (maybe even a disability), declares:

> And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect through weakness. Very gladly therefore will I rejoice rather in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in anguish for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Cor 12:9-10)

France sees richness when presented with poorness, and love when presented with despite—we might add, he sees power in weakness. This does not relieve anyone in the play from suffering,

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> He is despised and rejected of men: he is a man full of sorrows, and hath experience of infirmities: we hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely, he hath born our infirmities, and carried our sorrows, yet we did judge him as plagued and smitten of God, and humbled. But he was wounded for our transgressions: he was broken for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him, and with his stripes are we healed. (53:3-5)

[24] Williams, *The Tragic Imagination*, 40.

nor does it suggest anyone is redeemed through suffering, not on their own, anyway.[25] The Geneva Bible's "take pleasure" seems to sound a sour note, but isn't this, in some sense, what the audience does when presented with tragedy? We don't enjoy it exactly, but we are moved, warmed to humanity, all the while being broken. Or we are reminded of losses more intimate or more global, and so invited to know, feel, and—especially—empathize.

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[25] In the same book, Paul ascribes the power of weakness to Christ: "or ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he being rich, for your sakes became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich" (8:9).

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Part IV.

Class Conflict & Conquest

Is *Twelfth Night*'s Malvolio a "Necessary Sacrifice"?

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Shakespeare's comedy *Twelfth Night* (1623 CE) is in many ways like his previous comedies such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600 CE) and *As You Like It* (1623 CE) with young lovers who may not come together until the problems standing in their way are resolved by mysterious or disguised characters such as the fairies of A *Midsummer Night's Dream* and, in *As You Like It,* by Rosaline, a woman who dresses as a young man to manipulate her lover's decisions. In these two plays, there are many characters who behave foolishly, but most are more or less contentedly married at the end of the play or at least not clearly discontentedly wed. By contrast, one of the would-be lovers of *Twelfth Night* is the middle-aged Malvolio, steward of Countess Olivia's estate. "Steward" means he is the overseer of a great property. To understand his position, it is helpful to know that the title "Count" and the geographical term "county" are related. He is a man with important responsibilities who certainly can't afford to spend his days drinking and carousing like Olivia's uncle, Sir Toby Belch, and his asinine drinking buddy, Sir Anthony Aguecheek, who are also staying at the manor house, over the Twelfth Night holiday. Beyond that, Malvolio's temperament makes him very careful and conservative. Commentators have equated him with English Puritans who were a rising power in the early 1600s when this play was written. They were Shakespeare's enemies in that they disapproved of theater and would eventually shut down the theaters of England when they came to power in the 1640s. However, Malvolio is not a Puritan as such.

In an incident that firmly establishes the enmity between Malvolio and Sir Toby and his group, an angry Malvolio attempts to break up their noisy singing and carousing at 2:00 AM. All are angry, and the battle lines are drawn. Soon, Maria, the lady's maid to Olivia who will eventually become Sir Toby's wife, proposes a plan, saying that she can write a letter that will lead Malvolio to disaster. The trap is laid in the garden where middle-aged Malvolio likes to stroll and muse. Maria knows that he is in love with his young employer, Countess Olivia. Malvolio spots the letter laid out conspicuously, which seems to be addressed to him. Upon opening it he finds words of encouragement. It seems she craves him to be bold, "some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." (II.v.157), and that she longs to see him smiling and wearing yellow stockings, which should be cross gartered. Maria knows that yellow is Olivia's least favorite color and that cross gartering is abhorrent to her.

Malvolio follows the advice to the letter, and the subsequent scene of his humiliation is one of the most hilarious in comedy history. Olivia, thinking he must be insane, puts him in the care of Sir Toby who confines him do a room of near total darkness where he is psychologically punished. At the end of the play, with everyone else happy and engaged, Malvolio breaks into the scene furious and disheveled and cries out, "I shall have revenge on the whole pack of you!" (V.i.365) He then storms out never to be seen again.

Why is there no respite for the much-abused Malvolio? Is it that in Shakespeare's comedies there must be a scapegoat or at least a butt of the joke for the play to be really funny? Certainly, *Twelfth Night* is very funny, perhaps the funniest of Shakespeare's plays. Still, Malvolio's "gulling," or fooling is torturous. His comeuppance is so extreme that it nearly drives him mad. This hints at the agony that follow the mistakes of foolish older men like Lear and

Glouster in *King Lear* (1605 CE). Those tragic protagonists must suffer madness and die for their mistakes, and thus we can identify them as scapegoats in the tragic tradition that goes back to the Greeks and before. Important, but flawed, protagonists must die or be exiled to restore order and health to the community. Is Malvolio's demise necessary for the success of the comedy?

In Shakespeare's comedies, a common plot is that the father figure, the older authority who stands in the way of true love must be converted somehow to understanding or accepting the importance of the young lovers coming together as natural and right. The marriage or marriages that end the comedy mark the restoration of order to a disordered world. However, this is not so for *Twelfth Night*. The Malvolio subplot keeps more uncertainty in the play, an extra note of darkness and complication in a comedy world where unlikely events should, even must, lead to perfect, seemingly predestined romantic love.

Malvolio comes to confront the roisterers with what I think most people would consider a proper reprimand for people partying loudly at night when others are trying to sleep. However, it is *Twelfth Night*, the last night of the Christmas season, a time of holiday fun and a general loosening of the usual rules. After all, the play's subtitle is "Or What You Will" which suggests a freedom for characters to pursue their desires by imagining a different reality. Indeed, it might be pertinent at this point to suggest that the play does celebrate the breaking down of the social order to some extent. The two characters of high nobility, Duke Orsino and Countess Olivia, marry Viola and her twin brother Sebastian, neither of whom have noble titles. This class-bending pair of marriages between "gentles" and more common folk challenges tradition, but beyond that, Sir Toby marries Maria, the servant. These marriages at the comedy's end might suggest that Malvolio is not so far out of line when he imagines marriage with Olivia. Unlike the partner-appropriate marriages at the end of the other holiday comedy, *A Midsummer Night's*

Dream, this later holiday comedy allows for such unsettling elements and even suggests possible changes to a class-conscious English society, bursting with Renaissance energy and new ideas.

Related articles of particular interest make this case. In “Slander in an Allow’d Fool”: *Twelfth Nigh*t's Crisis of the Aristocracy,” Karin S. Coddon contends that at the play’s end, Malvolio’s rage and the songs of Feste especially the “strangely inappropriate closing dirge,” *The Wind and the Rain*, help us to understand the breakdown of hierarchical society, which leaves us wondering at the end of the efficacy of this supposed happy restoration saying, “If in *Twelfth Night* the aristocratic order is ostensibly reasserted in the pairings of Orsino/Viola and Oliva/Sebastian, the refusal of the play's closing to recuperate two of its most disorderly subjects—Malvolio and Feste—suggests rather less than a wholesale endorsement of the privileges of rank and hierarchy.”[1] Similarly, in “Malvolio’s Fall” David Willbern suggests that Malvolio’s desires reflect the human sexual drive that often lies at the core of romantic attachments of any kind, and which must be recognized as such in some way within such a complex comedy. When Malvolio chooses certain letters when reading the “love note” he seemingly construes the letters into graphic sexual words leading Willbern to suggest that “an aspect of Shakespeare’s distrust of romantic conventions underlies Malvolio’s spelling lesson…. I want to ask Andrew Aguecheek’s question once more. ‘Her c’s, her u’s, and her t’s: why that?’ Why, indeed? Why does Shakespeare so carefully embed this grossest of verbal improprieties in a play… *Twelfth Night* enacts an elaborate dance around a central core of carnality, which Malvolio’s unconscious cryptogram literally spells out.”[2] Willbern concludes that “At Malvolio’s fall we laughed all. Yet without the (scape) goat, there would have been no carnival to provide either the fall or the merriment attending it."[3] This suggests an interpretation that includes not only Malvolio's humiliation and ostracization from the various successful love stories that comically play out, but also hints that Malvolio is a general symbol for all men in their fallen state, Puritan or not. Thus, done in human weakness and desire, his end is a necessary inevitability. Edward Cahill suggests that the subtitle "offers an ambiguous but provocative addition to our understanding of the 'misrule' that was an important element of traditional Twelfth Night celebrations. 'Will' as in the subtitle 'What You Will' has been generally interpreted as 'volition' or 'desire,' so as to suggest that the logic of the play turns on wishful thinking rather than an objective reality."[4] However, it is only the main plot that embraces this illusion; the subplot leans more towards reality. Cahill continues, "whereas the main plot invokes a fantastical, almost timeless space, where an unchallenged aristocracy enjoys tremendous (if limited) emotional freedom, the subplot is more historically-specific, more obviously grounded in Elizabethan social relations: a reflection not of another time and place, like Illyria, but of England at the end of the 16th Century."[5] As a result, the characters in the main plot are not ultimately obliged to act in a world with real consequences, while Malvolio most certainly is. Following the moment he is taken to a dark room and psychologically tortured by Feste, Toby, and the others, he emerges after the terrible experience not as a changed man who has learned and earned his reward—a Shakespearean comedy marriage at the play's end—but rather as a wronged man swearing revenge on "the whole pack of you." This miserable fate thus undermines, if only partially, the comedy's happy ending.

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[1] Codden, “*Twelfth Night*’s Crisis of the Aristocracy,” 309.

[2] Willbern, “Malvolio’s Fall,” 89.

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[3] Willbern, "Malvolio's Fall," 90.

[4] Cahill, "The Problem of Malvolio," 63.

[5] Cahill, "The Problem of Malvolio," 63.

What has warranted all of this punishment for Malvolio? He has a puritanical code of ethics in his work. He cannot respect Feste's jokes and songs, which seem like nonsense to him. He also repeatedly clashes with Sir Toby, Olivia's fun-loving uncle, who has free run of the house. Their most serious confrontation occurs when Malvolio attempts to break up the aforementioned late-night party, and Toby retorts, "Dost thou think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?" (II.iii.97–9) It seems that Malvolio's puritanical attitude and traditional sense of class stand in the way of any kind of fun, and certainly any kind of romantic happiness. The burgeoning Elizabethan world may be one that opens up new opportunities for more people, but for those like Malvolio who lack the humanistic sensibility, permitting, say, a flexible understanding of the comedy of life, their hidebound conventional nature will eventually be their prisons of their own making. Thus, for Shakespeare's comedy to resonate properly, it follows that Malvolio must indeed be a "necessary sacrifice."

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After Napoleon: Contra-Revolutionary thought from Britain and the Continent

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Revolutions continued all over Europe and the Americas after Napoleon's final exile. Diplomats sent official dispatches home about the uprisings in their host country, about conspiracies in their own country and about revolutions everywhere else. Their writings reflected the ever-less censored newspapers: their emotions ran high, reacting to the dramatic changes that followed the French revolution.

This paper analyzes the correspondence of António da Silveira Pinto da Fonseca (1770-1858) viscount of Canellas, a Portuguese envoy named to the Court of the Low Countries during the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg) during the years 1828-1834.[1] He was named envoy by king D. Miguel I (1802-66; r. 1828-34), whose regime was not recognized by the governments of the Netherlands, France, Britain, Russia, and Austria. Only Spain, the United States, Naples, the Vatican, and Morocco recognized D. Miguel's regime, providing the Miguelist envoys with official diplomatic status.[2]

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[1] The viscount was a leader after the Revolution of Porto in 1820, when he chose the liberal side. He quickly changed to the "realist" side, and he pursued his opponents beyond Portugal. Canellas remained as an unrecognized emissary on the Spanish court and continued to correspond with that court against the will of king D. João VI. He came from a family of generals who tried to influence the political situation in Portugal between 1820-1826, according to António Vianna. Alexandre Cabral, *O General Visconde de Leira (Retalhos de História Contemporânea)*, (Lisbon: Livraria Levin, 1920) 107, 119-120; António Vianna ed., *José da Silva Carvalho e Seu Tempo. Documentos para a história contemporânea*, (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1891) 129-131.

[2] About the recognition of D Miguel I, see: Pedro Soarez Martínez, *História Diplomática de Portugal* (3rd ed.; Coimbra: Edições Almedina, 2010) 461-465; for Morocco see: Daniel Estudante Protásio, *2º Visconde de Santarém (1791-1856). Uma Biografia Intelectual e Política*, (Lisbon and São Paulo: Chiado Books, 2018) 141; it is possible that Prussia also recognized D. Miguel I. See: Gabrielle Paquette, *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions. The Luso- Brazilian World, c. 1770-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) 304.

During 1828-1834, the viscount of Canellas witnessed the invasion of Portugal by D. Miguel's opponents (leading to his ultimate defeat and exile), the July 1830 revolution of France (which brought Louis Philipe to power), the independence of Belgium in the same year, the uprisings in the United Kingdom and the passing of the Reform bills, the Polish insurrection against the Russians, the uprisings in Westphalia against the Prussians, and many similar unrests all over the Italian states. While doing so, he first stayed in Brussels and in Spa (a Southern Belgian resort town), fled via Rotterdam to London after the Belgium revolution broke out, moved to Geneva, and ended up in Genoa, Rome, and Naples.[3] His official correspondent was the Portuguese secretary of state, the viscount of Santarém, with whom he seemed to have a lukewarm relationship. Indeed, in a reply to the viscount of Canellas's early dispatches, Santarém wrote that: "As to what you wrote in your dispatch, in the future just simply send me the articles of local newspapers relating to Portugal."[4] Canellas did obey Santarém and added the French language newspaper articles but also continued to interpret them.

The ultimate recipient of the dispatches was not Santarém, but the king, D. Miguel I, as Canellas wrote that "I respectfully put in the hands of Your Excellency to put into the Royal Presence of the King Our Master."[5] Canellas was allowed to move from Brussels to Spa for the period of three months by king D. Miguel I. Canellas thanked Santarém for his services in the following words: "[I am] foremost thanking Yours Excellency [Santarém] for your generous mediation by bringing to the Feet of the Throne my most respectful gratitude for his allowance, which will help me to restore my health."[6] This showed Canellas' realization of the importance of Santarém's mediation, as well as his understanding of the king's absolute power, as Santarém was, by proxy, figuratively bending before the king's throne to thank him for his blessed decision.

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[3] Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo [ANTT], Ministerio dos Negocios Estrangeiros [MNE], Correspondência da Legação dos Países Baixos, caixa 813.

[4] "Em consequencia do que V.Ex.ª me escreve no penúltimo § do seu N.º 8 pode V.S.ª d'aqui em diante remeter simplesmente os artigos dos jornaes, que disserem respeito a Portugal." Viscount de Santarém to viscount de Canellas, Queluz Palace, April 25, 1829, Rocha Martins, ed. *Correspondencia do 2.º Visconde de Santarém*, (Lisbon: Alfredo Lamas Motta & Cª, 1918) 2:368-369.

[5] "Que respectuosamente levo as mãos de V.Ex.ª para subir à Real Presença El Rei Nosso Senhor" Dispatch viscount de Canellas to viscount de Santarém, Havre de Grace (France) March 2, 1829, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

Canellas and the like called themselves "realists" (precursor to conservatives), anti-revolutionaries (referring to the French revolution), and anti-constitutionalists. They were reactionaries who favored absolute monarchies, asserting that the king's total authority was based on divine right. Strengthened by the Holy Alliance and the Congress of Vienna, absolute monarchy gained adherents on the Iberian Peninsula under Ferdinand VII of Spain and D. Miguel I of Portugal.

Contestation of the right of absolute monarchy was paired with problems in the line of succession. In Portugal, D. João VI who died in 1826, had recognized his son, Pedro I as the emperor of independent Brazil. However, after his father's death, Pedro I also became king Pedro IV of Portugal.[7] To resolve this issue, Pedro negotiated with his younger brother Miguel that he should marry Pedro's underaged daughter, D. Maria da Glória. Maria da Glória would become queen Maria II of Portugal, Miguel would act as Regent; when she came of age, she would be crowned the ruling queen, and Miguel would become the king consort. As D. Pedro I had done in Brazil, he designed a Constitutional charter for Portugal, to which Miguel promised to adhere. However, Miguel did not keep to his promises: after he had sworn an oath to the constitution, local city councils acclaimed him absolute king of Portugal. Encouraged by this, Miguel called together a "traditional" Estates General (Cortes), where the three estates (nobility, clergy, and citizens) acclaimed him king. His opponents, calling themselves liberals and constitutionalists, supported their queen D. Maria II, who had remained abroad in Brazil, Britain, and France. They formed their own government, a Regency, which claimed one territory that had remained independent from the mainland: the island of Terceira in the Azores. Neither government received widespread recognition, and Canellas represented D. Miguel I in the Netherlands.

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[6] "Dividamente reconhecido ágeneroza mediação de V.Ex.ª della me sirvo ainda agora, para levar aos Pés do Throno os mais respectozos agradecimentos por esta Licença, de que muito carece a máo estado de minha Saude." Viscount Canellas to viscount de Santarém, Brussels, May 7, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[7] Dom Pedro I (1798 – 1834), known in Brazil and in Portugal as "the Liberator," was the founder and first ruler of the Empire of Brazil (1822–31, under the name of Pedro I) and was also crowned King of Portugal in 1826 under the name Pedro IV.

Even absolute monarchs needed advice. Portuguese diplomats were more than recorders: they provided their analyses and advice to the monarchs and ministers. Canellas followed this tradition, and every dispatch contained some analysis and promoted ideas on how to deal with internal and external problems. After arriving in the Low Countries, he explained that:

> this government [of the Netherlands] is the least interested in recognizing the legitimate rights of the King our Master [D. Miguel I]. The factitious usurpers [adherents to D. Maria da Glória] have acted very clever and have unfortunately well promoted their cause and have surprised the most true and enlightened ideas of his Majesty the King of the Netherlands, who represents the heart and soul of this country. The King of the Netherlands will not change his mind by any national or international influence, but the British government. [8]

Canellas used the "counter-revolutionary" language of the Miguelists, identifying his opponents as "usurpers" while basing absolute monarchy on "legitimacy." He admired king William I of the Netherlands for his exclusive control of policy (even though the nation had a constitution and two chambers of Parliament). He imagined that king William I would feel sympathy for D. Miguel I's rights to the Portuguese throne, and Canellas believed that king William's inclination towards Miguel's opponents, the "usurpers," was due to "undue influence." The sole way to overcome the king of the Netherlands's thinking was to convince the British government to recognize the rights of D. Miguel I. Canellas scheduled a visit with the British envoy. The outcome would mean much: if he was received either officially or confidentially, he then would be recognized by the whole Corps Diplomatique "who would visit him at first as a traveler and maybe later as a colleague."[9] However, he was not received by the British envoy and became very isolated in Brussels. Canellas sent an article from the Netherlands newspaper to Santarém, which depicted his situation as follows:

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[8] "que este Governo hé de todos os menos disposto a reconhecer os Legitimos Direitos de ElRey Nosso Senhor, à Coroa de Portugal. A grande habilidade e destreza com que se tem deridido aqui a facciosa uzurpação delles, conseguio infelismente o surprihender as mais rectas e mui esclarecidadas intençṍes de S. Magestade o Rey dos Paízes Baixos, que he a Alma e o Governo todos deste Reino, sem outra algũa influencia Nacional ou Estrangeira, a não ser a do Governo Inglez." Canellas to Santarém, Brussels, March 19, 1829, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

> He [Canellas] seems to hate his role as a secret agent of a horrendous tyrant [D. Miguel I] of whom Europe itself and all its governments have not even agreed on the legitimacy of his title, so that the viscount of Canellas has decided to leave this city while complaining about the cool reception by the king's ministers [of the Netherlands] and by the Corps Diplomatique. He [Canellas] will, one says, soon depart to travel through Europe. It is certain that his position has become untenable in Brussels where he lives with his two employees. He has only a small number of dishonorable friends who visit him or are visited by him only at night, as they want to avoid being known to have any relationships with him. [10]

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[9] "agora em que permitter ao dito Ministro de Inglaterra, o receber a minha vesita debaixo de hum caracter implicito ou confidencial. Este exemplo será seguido pelo Corpo Diplomatico, que principiarei então a vesitar como viajante, e logo depois talvez como Collega." Canellas to Santarém, Brussels, March 19, 2029, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[10] "On nous écrit de Bruxelles. Il paraît que dégoûté du triste rôle d'agent secret d'un tyran en horreur à l'Europe lors même que tous les cabinets ne seraient pas d'accord sur le plus ou moins de légitimité de son titre, le vicomte de Canellas est résolu de quitter cette ville où il a également à se plaindre de l'accueil qu'il a reçu des ministres du roi et du corps diplomatique. Il doit, dit-on, partir incessamment pour voyager en Europe. Il est certain que sa position n'est plus tenable à Bruxelles où il vit depuis plusieurs mois restreint a la société de deux aides-de-camps, et d'un très-petit nombre d'amis honteux qui le visitent ou ne sont visités par lui que le soir, et n'osent avouer les relations qu'ils entretiennent avec ce personnage, qui, du reste, ne paraît guère plus satisfait de son maître du public." *Courrier des Pays-Bas*, June 24, 1829, attached to Dispatch Canellas to Santarém, Brussels, June 26, 1829, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813. This newspaper was "Liberal", and its most famous editor was Louis de Potter, who was imprisoned, and played an important role in the Belgian revolution. It was the newspaper with the largest number of subscriptions in the Netherlands. For Louis de Potter and the Belgian revolution see: Rolf Falter, *1830. De Scheiding van Nederland, België en Luxemburg*, (Tiels: Lanoo, 2003).

Part of this was propaganda, showing the negative mood towards the Portuguese regime under D. Miguel I. There was absolutely no indication that Canellas was turning against the Portuguese government. However, it was obvious that he did not receive the status of a diplomat, and that other diplomats could not receive him since that would have constituted recognition of the Portuguese regime. Later he would move from court to court.

One of Canellas' tasks was to change public opinion, and that would be by means of the press. One of the articles in the liberal *Courrier des Pays-Bas,* described D. Miguel's actions in the following words:

> Massacres in Portugal. The Tiger of Lisbon [D. Miguel I] satisfied his ferocious appetite again by putting to their Royal death twelve new victims of "Legitimacy." The heart of even the most insensitive person will bounce when one contemplates the horrors and massacres committed under the umbrella of his most atrocious and revolting Machiavellian hypocrisy. [11]

Canellas could not leave this outright attack on his king's character unanswered. In the Royalist newspaper, *Journal d'Anvers et de la Province* a letter to the editor appeared:

> Should one believe that it is tyrannical to punish those who conspire against a legitimate government? According to the rebels and the liberal newspapers Don Miguel should be the only chief of government to whom it should be forbidden to repress complots to overthrow him. One is attacked; thus, he defends himself. [12]

After this recapitulation, the author compared Dom Miguel I with Louis XVI (1754-93), and those who did not support D. Miguel I with Robespierre (1758-94). All executions in Portugal were legitimized by the right to defend the legitimate monarch, D. Miguel I. These articles showed the importance of manipulating public opinion.

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[11] "Massacres en Portugal. Le tigre de Lisbonne vient d'assouvir encore sa férocité sanguinaire en envoyant à sa tuerie royale douze nouvelles victimes de la légitimité. Le cœur le plus insensible frémit en contemplant ces horreurs et ces massacres, rendus encore plus atroces et plus révoltants par l'hypocrisie machiavélique que l'on employa pour les mettre à exécution." *Courrier des Pays-Bas*, June 1, 1829, attached to: Canellas to Santarém, Brussels, June 8, 1829, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[12] "Croit-on que ce soit une tyrannie de punir ceux qui conspirent contre leur souverain légitime ? Selon les rebelles, et les journaux libéraux don Miguel serait le seul chef de gouvernement, auquel il serait interdit de réprimer les complots tramés contre lui. On l'attaque, il se défend." *Journal d'Anvers et de la province*, June 10, 1829, attached to: Canellas to Santarém, Brussels, June 19, 1829, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

The struggle over public opinion was conducted through newspapers and pamphlets, which Canellas coordinated to be distributed to all the main leaders.[13] The vast number of exiles and many former diplomats and officials under D. João VI, supported by the Brazilian government of D. Pedro I, were somewhat more effective than the Miguelist diplomats. Canellas himself could count on several allies: the Spanish ambassador (of king Ferdinand VII), the Portuguese consul in Amsterdam, and the honorary vice consul in Ostend, as well as his colleagues in London, while Paris coordinated their actions.[14]

There were many Portuguese exiles who had fled D. Miguel's regime for fear of persecution. Most ended up in Britain and France, but some had fled to the Netherlands, especially in the Ostend region.[15] There they regrouped to fight for the cause of D. Maria da Glória, and eventually they organized themselves as a regency. In these three countries, the Miguelist envoys protested their presence and any government support. This was also the case in the Netherlands, from where Canellas voiced his opposition to the gathering of exiles on transport to the island of Terceira. He could not do this directly but used the Spanish ambassador to petition the Netherlands secretary of state and king William I, who basically denied that the

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[13] The pamphlet was called *Legitime Portugaise* Canellas to Santarém, Brussels, January 22, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[14] Canellas to Santarém, Spa, June 24, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[15] See for instance: Canellas to Santarém, Spa, July 29, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813. For the British government's reaction to Portuguese exiles see: José Baptista de Sousa, *Holland House and Portugal. English Whiggery and the Constitutional Cause in Iberia*, (London and New York: Anthem Press, 2018).

Netherlands government was allowing any such transport to take place. Even though the protest was unsuccessful Canellas was able to receive a reply from the Netherlands' government.[16]

Similarly, there was the case of Portuguese consuls. Two consuls remained loyal to the Miguelists, and needed an official license, an Exequatur.[17] Officially, all trade to Portugal had to be licensed through the consul, so if the consuls were not recognized by the merchants, all their cargo could be confiscated. If it wanted to maintain their commercial relations, the Netherlands government had to give the consuls some type of status, thereby recognizing the de facto government of Portugal. These were small victories for the Miguelists, but they required much effort for little return. Sometimes a Miguelist consul was successful in protesting government policy. For instance, in Britain, a Miguelist consul was able to put sufficient pressure on the British government to stop the transport of exiled soldiers (of the Miguelists' opponents) to Terceira in the Azores.[18]

After a year, the viscount Canellas concluded that his stay in the Netherlands was not going to have any positive effect for D. Miguel I's government. "The recognition [of D. Miguel I] by this government depends completely on the governments of England and France, and on those of Russia and Prussia. Without recognition the Legation [embassy] here in the Netherlands is inactive, and against your Royal Dignity."[19] Canellas wanted to leave; indeed, he saw himself serving better as a general in Portugal fighting against any future invasion. "From retreat to my house in Canellas, I am always prepared to leave to fight the enemies of the Throne. Just like I did on June 16, 1808, against the French, and on February 23, 1823, and on November 22, 1826, against the revolt and usurpation of the Crown."[20] His wishes, however, were not fulfilled, and he remained abroad until the revolutions ended.

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[16] Dispatch Verstolk van Soelen, Netherlands secretary of state to Joaquin de Anduaga y de Siles, Extraordinary Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary, Spain, The Hague, November 10, 1829, attached to Canellas to Santarém, Brussels, November 13, 1829, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[17] Canellas to Santarém, Brussels, September 18, and October 2, 1829, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[18] De Sousa, *Holland House and Portugal*, 147.

[19] "O reconhecimento deste Governo conseguintemente dependendo absolutamento da Inglaterra, da França, e sobre tudo da Russia, e Prussia; ha de vir depois dos outros por si mesmo. Huma Legação Portugueza pois nos Paizes Baixos, alem de ter sido ocioza, será de mais á mais daqui em diante huma evidente derrogação da Dignidade Real." Canellas to Santarém, Spa (Belgium), June 16, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

The July 1830 revolution in France was greeted by Canellas with sheer disgust:

> Cruel fatality! The oldest Throne in the World: virtue and kindness personalized which occupied by the most beloved and august Family [the Bourbons]; it was protected by twelve thousand guards and a garrison of six thousand. It is so hard to believe! This Monarchy was lost to France in three days by thousands of misfits and workers from Paris.[21]

The people took power; the conservative Bourbon monarch Charles X was replaced by the duke of Orleans, Louis Philippe, who claimed to be a liberal. This meant that the new regime was far more likely to support the opposition to D. Miguel I. In Brussels, the *Courrier des Pays-Bas* saw parallels between France, Portugal and their own Belgian situation:

> From now on it [the revolution] will affect all peoples, including the Portuguese under Don Miguel. They were first seen as internal affairs, without spreading outward, without being worried about what happens abroad: if you suffer, it is your fault; if you are happy, don't view your happiness destroyed by way of conquest. Are you oppressed? Chase away and disarm your oppressors, did England believe. You cannot expect others [to help you], nor tyranny, nor liberty. … In our country [Belgium], we cannot expect to be like Portugal. … We will follow the French example with admiration. [22]

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[20] "No retiro da minha Caza de Canellas; aonde estarei sempre prompto a sahir para combater os Inimigos do Throno, como ja fiz em 16 de Junho de 1808 contra os Francezes; em 23 de Fevreiro de 1823, e em 22 de Novembro de 1826, contra a revolta e Uzurpação da Corôa." Canellas to Santarém, Spa, June 16, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813. Part of the reason for this was to deal with a family issue concerning his late son-in-law's daughter, and the "disgraceful" death of his nephew, the (first) viscount of Varzea. Canellas claimed to be the sole head of the family left. Canellas to Santarém, Spa, June 24, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[21] "Cruel fatalidade! O mais antigo Throno do Mundo: a virtude e a Bondade personalizada que o occupava, e repartia com a mais Amavel Augusta Familia; toda Ella guardada por doze mil Soldados das Guardas, e por seis mil da guarnição de linha; apezar de tudo isso, custa crer! A Realeza e a Monarquia foi disterrada de França, em tres dias, por alguns milhares da Canalha, fabricante de Paris." Canellas to Santarém, Spa, August 12, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[22] "Il en sera désormais de tous les peuples comme du Portugal à l'égard de don Miguel. Ils seront tous leurs affaires intérieures comme ils entendront, sans se répandre au-dehors et sans être inquiétés par le dehors. Si vous souffrez, ce sera votre faute ; si vous êtes heureux, n'essayez pas d'entendre votre bonheur par voie de conquête. Êtes-vous opprimes ? Chassez et désarmez vos oppresseurs, dit

Indeed, Belgium followed France's example a month after France, leading to its separation from the Netherlands. "The revolution" … "finally broke out in Brussels on king's birthday. It followed the usual swiftness and spirit for this revolutionary century in which we live."[23] Canellas fled through the anarchy in Belgium to "the loyal and sacred" Holland; in Rotterdam, he boarded a vessel bound for London.[24] Canellas was now even more worried for Portugal's future.

While in London, Canellas perceived parallels between the Belgian and Portuguese situations: nonintervention and negotiation:

> Without taking away from the noble and honorable character of Lord Wellington, and most of his most illustrious colleagues; his Administration was rather apolitical, and increasingly disrespectful towards Portugal. His administration had dictated the conditions to start negotiating with Portugal [about recognition of D. Miguel] and made this the basis for non-intervention, unlike the Belgians who had obtained so easily with a simple unfounded arrogance.[25]

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l'Angleterre. Vous ne devez attendre d'autrui ni la tyrannie ni la liberté." (…) "Dans notre pays, nous ne sommes pas dans une position à comparer à l'Espagne, au Portugal, a l'Italie" (…) "alors la France sera pour tous les Belges un objet d'envie", *Courrier des Pays Pas*, August 14, 1830, attached to: Canellas to Santarém, Spa, August 19, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[23] "Que a revolução, preconizada há muito tempo nos meus officios, e que todos os dias temia, como não cessei de informar a V.Ex.ª: arrebentou finalmente em Bruxellas na noite do dia 25, anniversario da festa do Augusto Soberano deste Reino; e que ella prosegue com a costumada pressa e ardor do revolucionario Seculo em que vivemos." Canellas to Santarém, Spa, August 28, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813

[24] Canellas to Santarém, Rotterdam, September 13, 1830. ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[25] "Sem deixar de fazer justiça aos honrados sentimentos e nobre Caracter de Lord Wellington, e da maior parte de seus Illustres Collegas; não posso com tudo dispensar-me de accrescentar: que a sua Administração foi plenamente impolitica, e demais a mais ingrata a respeito de Portugal. Assim como: que o actual Ministerio ipso facto relevando Portugal das condições que o precedente lhe havia imposto, habilita o Governo de El Rei Nosso Senhor a recomençar, e directamente todas as negociações; e fazella sobre as bazes da não interferencia, que o mesmo Potter tem obtido tão facilmente com huma simples malfundada arrogancia." Canellas to Santarém, London, November 23, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

In 1830 the conservative government of Wellington was close to recognizing D. Miguel I.[26] However, the victor of Trafalgar demanded one major concession from D. Miguel I: he had to pardon all his opponents. This he would not do. At the same time the British started to negotiate the future of Belgium together with the four big powers - France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Prussia - to prevent any major war from breaking out.[27] They forced king William I into a ceasefire and supported an independent Belgium with a constitutional monarchy. Canellas felt very uncomfortable about this outside intervention which would oppose the power of the monarchs everywhere in Europe, especially as "now this principle has been adopted by all the major powers."[28] The political situation in Great Britain would change quickly after that. Lord Wellington's conservative cabinet fell, and after new elections the more liberal Whigs took over the majority of Parliament with the Tories in opposition. Moreover, a whole new factor came into play when the Brazilian emperor, D. Pedro I, was forced to resign in favor of his underaged son, D. Pedro II, and moved to Britain and France with his daughter D. Maria da Glória. This gave a boost to the opposition against D. Miguel I. D. Pedro I could now count on more support from both the French and British governments.

Canellas understood that his role as envoy of D. Miguel I had been severely reduced. Moreover, his colleagues in Paris and London were also leaving.[29] He requested to go to Italy (Rome, Naples, Milan, and Genoa); some of these governments did recognize D. Miguel I as the legitimate ruler. Yet Canellas made sure that Santarém and D. Miguel I were well informed about the actions of D. Pedro, D. Maria da Glória, the government in exile on Terceira and their attempts to recruit soldiers and a navy to invade Portugal from the Azores. His secretary ended up in Paris, from where he wrote at least thirty-one lengthy bulletins describing, among other topics, the financing, recruitment, and organization of the fleet sailing from Bel-Isle, Brittany (France) to the Azores.[30]

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[26] Jorge M. Pedreira *et al*, *História das Relações Internacionais Contemporâneas. Portugal 1808-2000*, (Lisbon: Fondacion Mafre and Penguin Random House, 2023), 71, De Sousa, *Holland House and Portugal*, 119-122.

[27] On this see: J.S. Fishman, *Diplomacy and Revolution: the London Conference of 1830 and the Belgian Revolt*, (Amsterdam: CHEV Publisher, 1988).

[28] "Este principio hoje adoptado por todas as Potencias, e ainda há pouco applicado." Canellas to Santarém, London, November 23, 1830, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

[29] For the Count of Asseca in London see: De Sousa, *Holland House*, 139.

As a military man, Canellas must have been anxious sitting on the sideline. Time and again he pointed out how the Portuguese army and navy should be strengthened. D. Miguel needed to make sure that Terceira was conquered (D. Miguel's invasion failed). He pointed out that D. Miguel must secure the rest of the Azores (D. Pedro conquered them). The navy needed to be strengthened, as it had lost a major naval battle. Recruitment of a farmer's army was essential, as even though D. Miguel's army was much larger than D. Pedro's, it was defeated. When D. Pedro's army landed in and occupied Porto, it needed to be surrounded and defeated; however, while it was surrounded, D. Miguel was unable to defeat this army. D. Miguel I need to ally with Ferdinand VII of Spain to defeat D. Pedro's forces. Instead, the Spanish king died. His successor was not his brother D. Carlos (who was married to D. Pedro's and D Miguel I's sister), but his daughter Isabel II, leading to a similar civil war in Spain.[31] As Canellas wrote in one of his last dispatches "when the Salic law is abolished, there will be no peace in Europe, let alone Portugal."[32] The Salic law excluded women from the line of succession. After D. Miguel I's defeat in 1834 Carlos and he went into exile together.

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[30] The last bulletin was dated Paris, May 2, 1832, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.
[31] Angelo Pereira, *As Senhoras Infantas Filhas de El-Rei D. João VI*, (Lisbon: Editorial Nabor, 1938), 73-79; Pedreira, *História das Relações Internacionais*, 73.
[32] "Se a Lei Salica for definitivamente abolida, não há mais paz na Europa, e menos em Portugal." Canellas to Santarém, January 19, 1833, ANTT, MNE, caixa 813.

The viscount of Canellas' correspondence reads as a lonely man in exile. He stood by his anti-revolutionary principles, was loyal to his king, and advised him how to deal with the military and political changes that were taking place. While doing so, he went through many sacrifices: he was away from his family and professed to have medical issues because of the climate. He wanted to fight on the home front rather than to deal with people who could not be converted to his cause anyway. Even those governments who were "realist," like that of the Tory prime minister Lord Wellington in Britain, and the Bourbon king Charles X in France, would not recognize his government or openly support his cause. He saw the world going back to the times of the French Revolution as he divided up his opponents between Jacobins and Bonapartists: not obeying divine monarchs but believing in popular sovereignty. He supported the belief that the legitimacy of the absolute king D. Miguel I, was established through the Estates General (Cortes), and NOT through a constitution. All he wanted was to recreate the Ancien Regime. In the end, he went from court to court, replacing Miguelist envoys who had already given up, and ultimately reluctantly retiring back to Portugal after D. Maria II had become the universally recognized constitutional queen of Portugal, under the willing eye of the British government.

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The Ecosystem of the Home: The Domestic versus the Wild Spaces in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*

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In Victorian-era literature, nature is often portrayed as an active participant in the plot of a novel, play, or poem. At times, it serves as a narrative device that drives the story forward. The Romantics, in particular, began to imagine nature as a force that operates in unique and powerful ways, influencing humans in profound ways. From Coleridge to Byron, nature is presented as a constant presence, with the wild, dynamic ecosystem of the countryside explored in detail alongside the human condition. They identified the lodging of humans as a place, "most alienated from nature…and thus least capable of achieving ecological insight…"[1] The human and its space is not a part of nature and thus must make moves to go out into nature to connect to deeper emotions and experiences. Out of this literary tradition, many Victorian authors like Bram Stoker (1847-1912 CE), Thomas Hardy (1840-1928 CE), and Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892 CE), wrote to further engage with this narrative theme. These writers explored nature alongside the lives of humans but not within the lives of nature. Still, there were some who decided to subvert the expectations of nature as the only place of wilderness and instead explore other spaces in the Victorian imagination as a piece of nature. Emily Brontë (1818-1848 CE) chose specifically to engage with the homes of the British aristocracy revealing the wild reality of the English upper class through the subversion of the home as a representation of a British identity. She took strides in subverting the role of nature as a space located particularly separate from the human in literature and instead looked towards domestic spaces. In these domestic spaces, she used unexpected characterization and special concepts to create a terrain, similar to the nature expected by the Romantics, on which stories can unfold. Throughout the novel *Wuthering Heights* (1847 CE), Emily Brontë subverts the previous expectations of a high society home within the Victorian imagination. The space of the home imagined by the Victorian public held a level of comfort, stability, and a source of moral and national pride for Britain is in contrast to the danger of the wilderness and the general public. Brontë instead invites a closer and darker reality of an elite domestic space full of violence, conflict, strife contrasting a vague and neutral wild.

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[1] Andrew J. Hubbell. "A Question of Nature: Byron and Wordsworth." *The Wordsworth Circle*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2010, p 14. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24043681.

Emily Brontë and her sister Charlotte (1816-1855 CE) had a complex relationship with the various social classes. Born to their father, Patrick Brontë (1777-1861 CE), an Irishman who held multiple curacies in the north of England, Emily belonged to the middle-upper class. Her father was a strong advocate for a thorough education for all the Brontë children. According to Shulevitz's article on the Brontës' background, Emily grew into a young woman who briefly secured a teaching position in 1838 at Miss Patchett's school in Law Hill, near Halifax. However, she resigned after just six months, finding the experience exhausting.[2] She returned home to keep house for her aging father and family. Although a member of the middle class, Charlotte Brontë describes Emily after her death as "not naturally gregarious" with the peasantry in their community. Charlotte describes how "… she knew them: she knew their ways, their language, their family histories; she could hear of them with interest, and talk of them with detail…but *with* them, she rarely exchanged a word."[3] Throughout her career, Emily is described as writing about humans not “in relation to other human beings, or to human civilizations… but in relation to the cosmic scheme of which they form a part.”[4] Like a hawk looking from above at the relationships between mice, she noted the movements of the human soul with a separated objectivity that allowed all corners of the personality to be shown without a filter. In collecting this data from the population around their parsonage, Brontë understood intimately the human condition. Unlike, her sister who felt a more social relationship with others, Brontë had an inherent ability to see through the masks of society and instead, meticulously dissect people. The characters and story of *Wuthering Heights* reflect her perceptive techniques. Each of the main characters in the novel is repeatedly criticized for their almost *disgusting* realism, as noted in contemporary reviews.[5] The complex personalities and identities of the characters mesh and collide, creating an explosive domestic drama. However, this drama subverts many of the expectations associated with the elite upper-class Victorian domestic space, particularly through its refusal to conform to patriarchal and elitist notions of family. Instead, Brontë refuses to allow anyone to escape her ever-present, dissecting gaze. She exposes and represents each character as they truly are, with clinical and painful accuracy, regardless of who they may be.

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[2] Judith Shulevitz. "The Brontës' Secret." The Atlantic Monthly, vol. 317, no. 5, 6, 2016, p.38.

[3] Emily Brontë. *Wuthering Heights*. Edited by Alexandra Lewis, Norton Critical Edition, 5th ed., W.W. Norton & Company, 2019, 307.

In order to recognize the detailed subversion that Brontë performs it is important to situate the novel into its parts. First, in relation to the indoor domestic space, i.e. the home. As stated previously, the estate of the British Victorian families of the upper class had a special place within the imaginations of the general public. The Victorian home is the staple of piety, fidelity, and national identity and its families that reside in them conform to these strict social and political dynamics. But as Terry Eagleton states in his book *Myths of Power: A Marxist*

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[4] Lord David Cecil. “Emily Brontë and Wuthering Heights” *Early Victorian Novelists Essays: In Revaluation*, The Macmillan Press, 1934, 150.
[5] "Our Library Table." *The Athenaeum*, no. 1052, 1847, pp. 1324-1325.

Study of the Brontës, "One of *Wuthering Heights'* more notable achievements is ruthlessly to demystify the Victorian notion of the family as a pious, pacific space within social conflict."[6] Instead, of the imagined space of the home, Brontë explores the home in actual space, avoiding the nature of the moors in favor of a dynamic investigation of the space within the elite homes and thus their inhabitants.

The homes of the aristocracy are essential to the British national identity and perception of the self. Unique to Great Britain is the notion that the home is not just a place of independent residence, familial community, or landscape but also that the house itself is a representation of a country and people. Angela Miller, in her article "Everywhere and Nowhere: The Making of the National Landscape," discusses how "in Europe from the early seventeenth century on, the term landscape referred primarily to an aesthetic or representational order that was at least one removed from any actual place. Alternately wistful or utopian, this order lived in imagination only, remote from present pressures, a reminder of those things lost in the wake of historical change."[7] The British aristocracy's homes functioned as more than just familial residences; they were symbols of wealth and status, representing a larger social identity. Within these grand estates, hundreds of working-class individuals labored to keep the household running. Given the central role of class in shaping British identity, Brontë uses the dynamics of home and class to subvert the narrative space. In most depictions of power, the unseen and unheard labor of the working class remains in the background, overshadowed by the political and economic struggles of the elites. However, in *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Brontë refuses to allow the working class to fade into the periphery. Rather than positioning one class as the primary focus, Brontë levels the playing field, offering a strictly realistic portrayal of all characters.

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[6] Terry Eagleton. "Wuthering Heights", *Myths of Power: A Marxist Study of the Brontës,* The Macmillan Press, 2005, 106.

[7] Angela Miller. "Everywhere and Nowhere: The Making of the National Landscape." *American Literary History*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1992, pp. 207. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/489986.

In Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space*, he formulates his infamous "triad" of production: Spatial practice (perceived), Representations of space (conceived), and representational spaces (lived). During this creation of space, he notes specifically a Marxist perspective where those who are creating space are a ruling class. In expressing their ideals and beliefs, the spaces that they create are affected by a specific hegemony. Lefebvre defines hegemony as something "exercised over society as a whole… via human mediation: policies, political leaders, parties." [8] As a patriarchal society, the male-centric philosophical movement included the domestic space within a strictly male imagination. Identifying literary spaces as a place of subversion allows us to directly interrogate how the "code" of the domestic sphere is changed and transferred between spaces. When using Lefebvre's triad of space creation, there can be a direct investigation of how Brontë created literary spaces. The production of specific spaces can reveal the ways in which the constraint of status is addressed in the physical manufacturing of places and things.

The titular house, Wuthering Heights manor, is introduced through the primary narrator Lockwood as the ultimate picture of an old aristocratic domicile. Primarily personified as a sturdy building in the middle of the moors, its structure builds a helpful outline of the expectations of the family and the situation within. Lockwood describes the Heights as:

> Wuthering' being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmosphere tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather. Pure, bracing ventilation they must have up there, at all times, indeed: one may guess the power of the north wind, blowing over the edge, by the excessive slant of a few stunned firs at the end of the house; And by a range of gaunt thorns all stretching their limbs one way, as if craving alms of the sun.

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[8] Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Blackwell, p.10, 1991.

> Happily, the architect had foresight to build it strong: the nearer windows are deeply set in the wall, and the corners defended with large jutting stones. [9]

As a landmark of society bracing against the wild wind of the moors, it is easy to see the implications of the house as not just a place of residence but as an important representation of identity. The weathering away of the home being noticed when Lockwood "…paused to admire a quality of grotesque carving lavished over the front, and especially about the principal door, above which, among a wilderness of crumbling griffins and shameless little boys, I detected the date '1500', and the name Hareton Earnshaw."[10] Lockwood would have no way of knowing the grave housed the "last of the ancient Earnshaw stock"[11] as housekeeper Nelly Dean defined him. At this moment Lockwood walks into a home that once was the example of the pinnacle of the British aristocracy, but now crumbling and overgrown, the house seems to be falling into disarray. Still, as Nelly begins the story of the home, Brontë begins to outline the particulars of what the Heights was like in its prime. Unlike the expectations of the public, who would expect a home of piety, nobility, and honor, Brontë defines a domestic space that subverts the expectations of the Victorian imagination full of violence, and conflict.

Brontë subverts the specific expectations of the Victorian Upper-class family through almost every single character. One example of this is through the characterization of Catherine Earnshaw, later Linton. Although scholars have endlessly explored the character of Heathcliff in comparison to his social order, there is very little commentary on the character of Catherine on her own, and in comparison, to her social class. Catherine is defined early in the novel as being an exceedingly bad child as Nelly describes, "…she was never so happy as when we were all scolding her at once, and she defying us with her bold, saucy look, and her ready words; turning

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[9] Brontë, 4.
[10] Brontë, 4.
[11] Brontë, 52.

Joseph's religious curses to ridicule, baiting me, and doing just what her father hated most…"[12] Catherine from a very young age does not represent the docile and kind character of the ideal Victorian child in an aristocratic home. Instead of aligning with her perceived responsibilities, she instead indulges in her own wants and desires. Often these actions lead Catherine to be cruel towards the people around her. She identifies her own subversion from the norm in the pinnacle scene between Nelly and Catherine talking about Heathcliff where she admits, "If I were in heaven, Nelly, I should be extremely miserable.' 'Because you were not fit to go there,' I answered. 'All sinners would be miserable in heaven.'" Instead, of objecting to the title of "sinner" by Nelly, Catherine continues, "'I'm no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven…" Catherine loves Heathcliff, not for his physical attributes but because she states that "he's more myself than I. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same, and Linton's is as different as moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire."[13] Catherine knows that her very being is not appropriate for her class. In marrying Heathcliff, she would be "degrading" herself and thus being herself, she would be doing the same. Her true nature is not docile, or stereotypically "good" in relation to Victorian notions of morality. As David Cecil states in the chapter of his book *Early Victorian Novelists Essays: In Revaluation* in writing *Wuthering Heights,* Brontë defines the conflict of the novel not as "between right and wrong which is the distinguishing feature in the Victorian view of life" but as a reality where a moral battle, "does not come into her view." Catherine, as well as all of Brontë's characters, is "…implacable and irresistible as the elemental forces they resemble…"[14] The characters in her novel, like Catherine, are not meant to be defined as 'good' or 'evil' but instead as complex and human. This greatly subverts the expectations of the imagined Victorian home as the picturesque representation of British identity. If the landscape of Britain pictured in the novel is thus polluted by characters who do not represent the positives of the English identity, then there is room and to question and distrust the system. No longer can literary characters belong to the entire country because no one can reach the expectations of perfection. Still, Brontë does a more direct subversion of status in the house by introducing a space of violence and instinct.

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[12] Brontë, 34.
[13] Brontë, 63.
[14] Lord David Cecil. "Emily Brontë and Wuthering Heights" *Early Victorian Novelists Essays: In Revaluation*, The Macmillan Press, 1934, 149.

Before approaching Brontë's use of physical and emotional violence within the novel it is important to begin to define the Victorian expectations of violence within the household, especially in relation to the upper class. Heather Nelson asserts how in the Victorian era, "Most of the public, including activists, journalists, and politicians, asserted that marital abuse existed almost exclusively in the lower classes, but the same degree of abuse was actually prevalent in the middle and upper classes." Outside of the general public, "one subset of the population—fiction writers—countered this myth, using their texts to provide evidence of the proliferation of "consensual" physical, emotional, and sexual abuse in middle- and upper-class marriages." [15] Nelson identifies literary fiction as depicting a primarily "consensual" abuse, as the victims in the novels are subscribing to a belief where, "essentially all types of abuse—physical, emotional, and sexual (or "the marital rape exemption")—were legal…because of prior wifely 'approval.'"[16] Basically, the law states that the marriage contract supplies the husband with all capabilities of control and discipline over his wife. The marriage contract could be void if there is proof that the abuse showed 'cruelty'; this, however, was almost impossible to prove in any legal court.[17] In regards to the nature of abuse outside of the marital bounds, there is the expectation that children, like wives, were a part of the husband's estate and thus also property. And, much like the martial abuse statutes, there were very stringent laws which protected the rights of the abuser as the primary head of the household.

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[15] Heather Nelson. "'Nothing That She Could Allege Against Him in Judicious or Judicial Ears': 'Consensual' Marital Abuse in Victorian Literature." *George Eliot - George Henry Lewes Studies*, vol. 69, no. 1, 2017, 91, *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.5325/georelioghlstud.69.1.0089.

[16] Nelson, 90.

Within this dynamic of understanding domestic abuse, Brontë subverts the expectations of the 'appropriate domestic abuse' scenarios and instead engages with excessive violence that does not result from any ideas of discipline or order. Hindley Earnshaw, the master of the house for most of the novel, acts as a tyrant with a short fuse and no direct target in mind. This is not befitting of the expectation that abuse only occurs as a method of controlling the property of the head of the household. Brontë does not limit the abuse in terms of class or gender and instead shows a kind of violence that sweeps across the home and targets anyone it finds. This abuse is radically different from the Victorian expectations of 'acceptable' domestic violence and is used throughout the novel. Instead of providing order in chaos, this violence creates an area of tension and conflict that fluctuates through all of the members of the house. Although Heathcliff is often defined by most scholars as being the main issuer of violence, there are a multitude of examples of violence being performed by other members of the household.

Hindley Earnshaw, for years after the death of his wife, is abusive and violent to anyone in the house with no limit based on his 'ownership' of them. He instead enacts violence for the sake of pain, often under the influence of drink. Particularly, Nelly describes one occasion when Hindley was drunk and threatened her. As he attacked her, he shrieked, "But, with the help of Satan, I shall make you swallow a carving knife." When Nelly fought back from her attacker however, Hindley turned his attention to Hareton, his son, and when he screamed "As sure as I am living, I'll break the brat's neck,"[18] before throwing the child over the balcony where, by luck, Heathcliff just happened to be walking by to catch the child. This instance of extreme emotional and physical assault however is regarded as a product of his grief. Nelly describes how after his wife's death Hindley, "…grew desperate; his sorrow was of that kind that will not lament. He neither wept nor prayed—he cursed and defied—execrated God and man, and gave himself up to reckless dissipation."[19] Although Nelly seems to forgive him for his transgressions due to the grief, Brontë does not. The novel continuously shows the violence wrought by and upon Hindley in excruciating detail, with a rare connection to a place of grief or sadness. If the Victorian Home is a representation of England, then Hindley is a representative of its leader. Instead of a stoic and fair man who is influenced by logic, Hindley is a violent drunk who inflicts pain on his son, younger sister, and everyone else within his vicinity. Until his death, Hindley is consistently represented as a slave to drink and a master of extreme violence and turbulence. This violence is inappropriate as a representation of the landscape of the English identity. Again, Brontë leads us to consider, if the head of the household is a violent drunk, what does this mean for the state of the country?

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[17] Nelson, 92.

The space in which Hindley resides is a place of nervousness and the constant potential for violence which creates a house full of the same energy. Nelly describes how "The master's bad ways and bad companions formed a pretty example for Catherine and Heathcliff"[20] Who both began to exhibit violent behavior as well. The entire house seems to be flooded with violence, as Nelly tells a villager, "I could not half tell what an infernal house we had. The curate dropped calling, and nobody decent came near us…" [21] The space of Wuthering Heights is both created and governed by violence. Brontë constructs an environment filled with a constant sense of impending danger, where violence or attack could be lurking around any corner. Rather than offering comfort, the home becomes a landscape marked by physical and emotional brutality, affecting everyone within its walls. As the novel progresses, the entire estate becomes increasingly associated with the violence and anger that Hindley first embodied. Even after Catherines' marriage she still perpetuates the attitude of violence, when Nelly goes into town and expresses to other townsfolk that she is "…acquainted with the Earnshaws' violent dispositions, and Mrs. Linton caps them all. I may say this; it commenced in a quarrel. She was struck during a tempest of passion with a kind of fit."[22] The environment of the home, and by extension the people within it, is perpetually shaped by their interactions with each other and by the pervasive emotions that inhabit the place. Although Catherine marries into another home and is subsequently involved in the same practice of conventional proper society, her identity is still tied to the name and thus the space of the Earnshaws. Catherine, Hindley, and now the entire family name is saturated with violence and disruption. This imagination of the ultimate British identity is clouded by a family not just violent but also connected with nature and unconventional of the space of the aristocratic home.

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[18] Brontë, 58.
[19] Brontë, 58.
[20] Brontë, 52.
[21] Brontë, 52.

In rationalizing the violence within the domestic space, Brontë repeatedly portrays her characters as animalistic, transforming the home into an environment that seems more suited to housing animals than people. Rather than focusing on the moors and their wild, untamed nature, Brontë redefines the domestic space as one inhabited by characters whose behavior mirrors that of animals. In doing so, she consistently shifts the roles of the outdoors and the indoors: the home becomes an enclosure for these animalistic characters and their violent actions, while the wilds beyond remain distant, incoherent, and vague.

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[22] Brontë, 101.

Throughout the novel, there are many moments where the characters are shown to be animal-like or exhibit characteristics that highlight animalistic qualities. For example, Heathcliff is consistently described as growling like a dog. Yet, Brontë does not limit the animalistic qualities to one single class or character. As a child, Catherine reveled in and dominated through not the prospects of class and etiquette as expected of a young aristocratic woman, but instead through violent and animal-like posturing. During an early visit of Linton to the Heights in chapter eight, Nelly describes Catherine pinching her in secret. In wanting Linton to see the true nature of Catherine, Nelly cries out, "…you have no right to nip me, and I am not going to bear it!'"[23] The use of the term "nip" immediately provides a picture of a small animal, not a human. Catherine lashes out at Nelly in violence and anger: "'I didn't touch you, you lying creature!' cried she, her fingers tingling to repeat the act, and her ears red with rage."[24] Catherine is depicted as an animal asserting her dominion over Nelly and also defining Nelly as a "creature." Ivan Kreilkamp identifies in his article "Petted Things: Cruelty and Sympathy in the Brontës," the Victorian notions on the abuse of animals and especially how abuse of animals became not just "defined as particularly un-English but that it became defined as particularly English—or rather, particularly bourgeois English—to witness, with condemnation and sympathy, the spectacle of cruelty to animals."[25] Noticeably, the elite English identified the abuse of the animal as victims of the "unenlightened English people," mainly the lower classes who were regularly associated with sport like cockfighting and bullbaiting. It was the role and expectation of the

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[23] Brontë, 56.
[24] Brontë, 56.
[25] Ivan Kreilkamp. "Petted Things: Cruelty and Sympathy in the Brontës" *Minor Creatures: Persons, Animals, and the Victorian Novel*, 2018, 45.

English aristocracy to not just refrain from cruelty to animals but also to feel sympathy and contempt for others not doing the same. Brontë's language defines Catherine as not just facilitating the violence towards the perceived animal, Nelly, but as a creature in her own right. The lower class is perceived as animal-like but Brontë also reveals all the occupants as engaging in the wild dynamic of the house. The house acts as an enclosure of animals who engage in continuous posturing and signals of dominance.

In the case of the constant conflict between Heathcliff and Hindley, instead conflict between animals and humans their largest fight is described using animal qualities. In the chapter on "Wuthering Heights" from the book *Emily Brontë and Nature* by Enid L. Duthie, she discusses the particular use of animal imagery when analyzing Heathcliff in particular. She describes Heathcliff's childhood as being defined with a violence which "is based on a deep philosophical conviction of the violence which man shares with the animal world."[26] This violence results from a particular animalistic force based on instinct and self-motivation. Which later is turned into a more particular force of violence "…motivated by the deliberate will to wound as well as to destroy."[27] The fight between Hindley and Heathcliff in particular demonstrates how both are exhibiting the animalistic ideals of physical force and posturing. Like two male lions fighting for dominance, Hindley and Heathcliff, both have exceptional power. In the case of Heathcliff, his force is violent and physical due to his strength and size. While Hindley's force is produced through his ability to posture. They both exhibit a deep desire to hurt one another through physical means and Hindley is described as saying:

> And I'd be glad of a retaliation that wouldn't recoil on myself; but treachery and violence are spears pointed at both ends—they wound those who resort to them, worse than their enemies' 'Treachery and violence are a just return for treachery and violence!' cried

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[26] Enid L. Duthie. "Wuthering Heights." *The Brontës and Nature*, The Macmillan Press, 1986, pp. 231.
[27] Duthie, 232.

> Hindley…Damn the hellish villain! He knocks at the door as if he were master here already![28]

In a few sentences Hindley justifies his anger and his willingness to resort to violence, if necessary, as posturing of his current status of master. He calls out Heathcliff for not having the power that he has. Heathcliff however uses his unique and violent power to attack Hindley. Nelly describes it saying, “The ruffian kicked and trampled on him, and dashed his head repeatedly against the flags, holding me with one hand, meantime, to prevent me summoning Joseph.”[29] At the end of the fight, Heathcliff defeats Hindley through sheer force, yet both men are equally violent, angry, and animalistic. When compared to the expectations of the Victorian upper class, both exhibit animal-like traits. While Heathcliff’s violence may be anticipated, Hindley’s, as the master of the house and a representative of the British aristocracy, is shocking. Rather than engaging in a conflict rooted in issues of status, both men resort to a form of animalistic violence driven by brutality and instinct, rather than logical reasoning. Throughout the novel, all the characters act on raw instinct, pursuing their own desires and motivations without regard for reason or civility.

Alongside the relationships between characters, the physical place of the home creates a proto-ecosystem in which the furniture and placement of the home becomes a space in which the base instincts of the characters can unfold. In Summer Star’s article entitled “How to be a “Poet of Furniture”: Brontë’s Settle in *Wuthering Heights*”, she acknowledges the ways in which the novel surrounds “…structures of encasement, and their nesting effect. We go inside only to find another outside, and another, and another, always tempted and trying to get to the source but always flouted by another layer of mediation."[30] Like a forest with the trees creating layers of cover, the home has layers upon layers of walls, rooms and doors. The novel never provides any clear description of the floor plans of the Heights and instead implies a seemingly endless space, with potential dangers around every corner. Lockwood gives the only real description of the internal space of Wuthering Heights in the beginning of the novel. His descriptions provide a focus on the encased spaces of the house. For instance, in the sitting room, he describes the nooks and niches of the room alongside the dangers they may hold saying, "In an arch under the dresser, reposed a huge, liver-coloured bitch pointer surrounded by a swarm of squealing puppies, and other dogs haunted by other recesses."[31] Once entering the home, he is constantly cycled through more and more enclosed spaces, focusing on the kitchen, dining area, and of course, the infamous closet where the ghost of Catherine finds him. [32] Throughout each space, there is an unnerving tension that there is something around every corner. These dangers are not just the physical actuality of a literal animal like Heathcliff's dogs, but also the humans which depict a certain number of animalistic qualities as proven previously. Like the moors outside the house, full of animals and spaces of tension and conflict, those entering the Heights must lead with caution in order to avoid the temper of its inhabitants. This is even more important in relation to the entrapping environment of the home. As an endless maze of rooms and suffocating spaces, there is no clear way out, thus those inside the home are forced to stay and brave the environment of the domestic space.

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[28] Brontë, 136.
[29] Brontë, 137.

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[30] Summer Star. "How to Be a 'Poet of Furniture': Brontë's Settle in Wuthering Heights." *Victorian Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Social, Political, and Cultural Studies*, vol. 64, no. 4, 2022, 651. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mlf&AN=202329374946&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

[31] Brontë, 5.

[32] Brontë, 16.

Throughout the novel, the space of the outdoors is portrayed as a space of travel and not as its own separate entity. Unlike the house, which is the setting for the majority of the novel, the outdoors is explained only from the inside. Characters often only speak about the wilds but never venture into the wilderness as the novel's events carry on. Margaret Homans notes this lack of representation of nature in the text, writing that when, "the characters whose relations to nature would seem to be the strongest and the most important to the novel, [they] are never presented on the moors."[33] Homans supplies that this lack of representation of nature is to save nature's "primary" status in the novel. Instead, it is more likely that from a holistic approach nature is redefined to make a comparison to a new and contemporary domestic sphere that Brontë is introducing. Q.D. Leavies enforces the disconnection of Brontë from her contemporaries through the "misconception for which the novelist gives little excuse, is to attribute a mystique to the moor; the moor is not meaningful like Hawthornes's forests that surround the Puritan settlements in the wild, it is not even powerful over man's destiny like Egdon Health"[34] In comparison of *Wuthering Heights* to its contemporaries, the domestic spaces of Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights exist alongside the wilds surrounding the homes, Brontë instead does not discuss the wilds but brings the moors inside the home. The natural world is only ever an extension of the emotions and characters in the houses, not producers of action. Nelly describes the night of a horrible storm which also occurs the same night that Catherine unknowingly confesses her love when Heathcliff is hiding. Later, when Heathcliff is still gone, she describes how:

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[33] Margaret Homans. "Repression and Sublimation of Nature in Wuthering Heights." *PMLA*, vol. 93, no. 1, 1978, 9. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.2307/461816.

[34] Q. D. Leavis, 'A Fresh Approach to Wuthering Heights', from F. R. and Q. D. Leavis, Lectures in America (New York, 1969); quoted in the Norton Critical Edition of *Wuthering Heights,* 5th ed., W.W. Norton & Company, 2019.

> The storm came rattling over the Heights in full fury. There was a violent wind, as well as thunder, and either one or the other split a tree off at the corner of the building; A huge bow fell across the roof, and knocked down a portion of the east chimney stack, sending a clatter of stones and soot into the kitchen fire.[35]

The violence of the storm is described in relation to the house, and because of its effects on the space inside. There is no detailed description of the natural space by itself, nature is perpetually linked to the home. The turmoil felt within the home is mirrored over the moors surrounding the Heights. The character's feelings and personality also often affect the depictions of nature and its role in the story.

Brontë continuously uses nature as a marker of time or change in the characters. As the story shifts from Catherine and Wuthering Heights to her daughter Cathy and Thrushcross Grange, Nelly describes:

> A golden afternoon of August every breath from the hills so full of life… Catherine's face was just like the landscape shadows, and sunshine flitting over it common in rapid succession; But the shadows rested longer and the sunshine more transient, and her poor little heart reproached itself for even that passing forgetfulness of its cares.[36]

Instead of the detailed description of the late summer environment, Brontë again features the character and their being in connection to the natural world reflected around them. The physical nature is as vague and blurry as a backdrop, on which the story can unfold. Nature plays as a set that reflects the homes and the lives of the people within them. Besides just a vague expression of feelings, nature also acts as a set for the transformation and change of the story and characters.

Instead of the Romantic contemporaries of Brontë who personified nature as it's own character, nature rarely if ever caused events to happen to the characters of *Wuthering Heights*. Often, instead of an active force in the events of the stories unfolding, the natural world is only a grey space on which the characters can travel and be open to the vulnerabilities of the other homes around them. Imagine the homes of the novel as unique organisms all engrossed in their own ecosystem of characters, customs, and expectations, the outdoor space between them becomes a non-space. Again, like before, nature only has a place in connection to the people of the story. Nature thus is an empty and vague landscape free to be used and manipulated by the homes and people who surround it. As the narrative unfolds, characters travel between the settings of the home, but not in any specific or defined wilderness. Cameron Dodworth theorizes nature as a" ... void of vagueness is what the characters who leave the Heights and the Grange are forced to traverse, and their experiences in this vague realm of mystery are what transform them from the characters that they were when they left, to the characters that they become when they return."[37] Although Dodworth implies that the transformation is produced by nature, there is no active role by nature in the transformation. Instead, staying passive, nature takes a back seat to the homes and people on the moors who move between the houses and engage and disengage with others.

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[35] Brontë, 67.

[36] Brontë, 201.

Often characters are being 'caught' or 'captured' by others and brought to another home, with the natural world playing no part in the movement of the characters or plot. At the beginning of the story when Catherine and Heathcliff are sneaking on the moors, they discover Thrushcross Grange where on the porch of the home Catherine is caught by Linton's hunting dog; "The devil had seized her ankle, Nelly; I heard his abominable snorting. She did not yell out—no! She would have scorned to do it, if she had been spitted on the horns of a mad cow…A beast of a servant came up with a lantern, at last, shouting—"[38] The dog as only another animal of the household, is an extension of the home. Once Catherine is captured, she stays, "five weeks, till Christmas period by that time her ankle was thoroughly cured, and her manners much improved… that instead of wild, hatless little savage jumping into the house, and rushing to squeeze us all breathless, there alighted…a very dignified person…" [39] Catherine is *caught* and *changed* by Thrushcross Grange. The house and its ecosystem of people, expectations, and devices are forces of movement in the narrative, the space surrounding the house is not. Brontë reveals yet again the ways in which the nature of the novel only works as a backdrop of vague space in which the wild of the homes can move across and affect each other. Unlike, the Victorian contemporaries who were exploring the natural world as their own character and plot device, Brontë subverts expectations and limits nature in its narrative capabilities and instead provides the active movement to the domestic.

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[37] Cameron Dodworth. "The Mystery of the Moors: Purgatory and the Absence/Presence of Evil in Wuthering Heights." *Brontë Studies*, vol. 37, no. 2, Apr. 2012, 126. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi-org.leo.lib.unomaha.edu/10.1179/174582212X13279217752787.
[38] Brontë, 39.

The conversation that Emily Brontë invites rests in the subversion of the wilderness and the home. When we begin to reevaluate the spaces of importance in the landscape of the culture around us, there is an opportunity to begin to see the faults in them. When a system as broad and infallible as the Victorian British Aristocracy is questioned, often the barriers to a clear view of the problem seem unable to be changed. Only when radical subversion occurs, can there be an in-depth exploration of reality. Emily Brontë's subversion of the wilds and the domestic space allow for the aspects of the home to be shown bare to the public. Lockwood describes Wuthering Heights as having "…its entire anatomy lay bare to an inquiry eye…"[40] In this description of the space, there is no room for anything other than close analysis. Like Brontë herself, the quiet and perceptive girl, it is the duty of literary scholars to look closely not just into the characters and plot of the novel, *Wuthering Heights*, but also the space and nature of every part of the setting within. Brontë imports nature into the domestic and allows readers to imagine nature as more than the moors and begin to explore the domestic as its own landscape, there is an opportunity of rich and careful subversion within the novel that goes beyond just the surface. Although other scholars have identified the beginnings of the subversion of class within the characters, the very space of the text implies a new way to analyze the aristocratic household as akin to a wild ecosystem, and its inhabitants as akin to wild animals. Once the "infallible" system is flawed, this opens the door to a wider analysis of the overall system of power. The novel begs the question, if the very best of society are also the very worst, what makes them any different than the everyday citizen? If the system of power is built on the basis that some are better than others, then the systems of power need to seem so powerful and so untouchable that no one would even question a different existence. Instead, once those on the bottom of society recognize the top as not inherently better than themselves this leaves room for questioning and eventually for revolution. The entire space of the country is thus subverted, and there is no difference between the wild and domestic, nor the city and the country, and finally the rich and the poor. All people can be equal because all people can be bad.

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[39] Brontë, 41.
[40] Brontë, 4.

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A Ballad of Redemption: *All's Well That Ends Well*

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While researching the character of Parolles for this paper on *All's Well That Ends Well*, I was struck by some lines in the Epilogue: "The King's a beggar, now the play is done…" [1] That seemed strangely familiar, and when I looked it up, "The King and the Beggar-Maid" is a ballad alluded to by the character Don Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost*.[2] Shakespeare alludes to this work numerous times: The ballad is used in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (IV, 1 65), *Romeo and Juliet* (II, I 14), Richard II (V, viii, 80), and *Henry IV, part 2* (V, iii, 107), in addition to *Love's Labour's Lost*.[3] However, *All's Well That Ends Well* was not on the list. Not only that, but I confess I was unaware of the ballad as a whole: it seems that Edmund Burne-Jones did one of his most famous paintings on this tale of love at first sight, and that Alfred, Lord Tennyson, has a famous poem (1842) on the subject of African King Cophetua and his love for an ill-clad beggar.[4] Since this ballad had been dropped from the second edition of Childe (1858), I had assumed it was obscure (first edition was 1855). [5] It would seem not; I found it easily in Percy's *Reliques* (1765). The line in the epilogue reads, "The King's a beggar; now the play's done." Edmond Malone says that the lines are "sufficiently intelligible in their obvious sense, yet perhaps there is some allusion to the old tale of 'The King and the Beggar.'"[6] It is not obvious to ME that the king "IS" a beggar, unless he is asking for Diana's favor. Right before this, Helena has returned, apparently from being thought dead, and has accomplished the impossible labors mentioned in Bertram's letter, thus saving Bertram and Diana. It reads like the ending of one of the romances, really. So, my paper asks, if the King is a beggar now, who is the King? I have abandoned Parolles (who seems to be a beggar) for the time being.

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[1] William Shakespeare. *All's Well That Ends Well*. Epilogue, line 1. I have used the Arden Shakespeare as my main text.

[2] William Shakespeare. Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost,* I, ii, line 1551 and VI, I, lines 65-85.

[3] "The King and the Beggar-Maid," Wikipedia.

[4] Edmund Burne-Jones, *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid*. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "The Beggar Maid," Poetry Lover's Page.

[5] "The King and the Beggar-Maid," Wikipedia.

A quick search reveals that only Natalie Roulon has written on music in *All's Well*, and she has focused upon music being masculine (the war drum, etc); she does not discuss ballads except those alluded to by Lavatch. [7]

The play begins with Helena, a recently bereaved daughter of a doctor, suffering unrequited love for Bertram, the much higher class Count of Rousillion. In order to earn his notice, Helena goes to cure the King of France of a terrible malady. This results in her being allowed to select a husband from among his lords. Bertram, the chosen lord, does not seem to like his new wife and flees to the military. As a soldier, he chooses Diana, a resident of Italy where he goes with his unit. Bertram's action suggests Bertram likes Diana better than his wife (though he deserts both of them). Meanwhile, Helena has followed the troops to Italy in order to get Bertram back. She enlists Diana in her plan, taking her place when Bertram believes he is seducing Diana. Diana sides with Helena and her scheme because Bertram is an unlikable two-timer.

At the end of the play, Bertram must accept Helena, having lost his honor and been accused by Diana of breach of promise. Helena comes in (having been thought dead) and rescues

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[6] G. K. Hunter. Footnotes to *All's Well That Ends Well* by William Shakespeare Epilogue, np.

[7] Roulon, Natalie, "Music and Gender in *All's Well That Ends Well*." This article appears on-line translated from the French, and did not have page numbers.

Bertram (he cannot really be in trouble for deserting Diana if he was already married when he was professing love to her) and Diana (the King of France does not believe her) from disgrace. Bertram's last line, addressed to the King, "If she, my liege, can make me know this clearly/ I'll love her dearly, ever, ever dearly" has been variously interpreted. Either Bertram has been miraculously transformed, or he has capitulated to the power of Helena. Helena ends up like Queen Elizabeth: a powerful woman who can set her own path. She becomes more powerful than Bertram so that he cannot be in a position to reject her. Bertram is in a position of weakness, and must acquiesce. Roulon thus sees the end of the play as a problem.[8]

The ballad of "King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid" seems to have nothing to do with this plot, which is probably why no one has been much interested in the allusion (see appendix 1 for text of the ballad). In the ballad, the African king sees a beggar woman and falls in love with her. He says if he cannot have her, he will die. He seeks her out, brings her to his palace, and they live happily ever after. The ballad does suggest that class is irrelevant, so if that is why Bertram rejects Helena, the play is the anti-ballad. Going back to the King/Diana situation in the play, the example of King Cophetua might make more sense, but as the King of France only recently had been ready to send Diana to prison, that seems incorrect too.

The ballad is about the love of a king for a poor woman. But what if she did not like him? That is why rank, or status, is significant. In essence, a woman lowly born cannot say no (and why would she in a world where only money matters?); this is the situation put forth by Diana and Bertram. Diana has a dilemma before Helena shows up because she really wants nothing to do with Bertram. By taking part in Helena's scheme, Diana can be virtuous and the agent of Bertram's downfall. Secondly, the line in Shakespeare says the King IS a beggar, which is a role reversal. In the ballad, even though he is a King, he did not love women and saw nothing to please him till love at first sight with the beautiful beggar woman, but he does not become a beggar, or stop being a king.

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[8] Roulon, Natalie. "Music and Gender. . ."

This leaves us wondering if the ballad has any meaning in the Helena/ Bertram plot at all. While researching the ballad, I found two other songs. One is called “Beggar to a King” associated with the Big Bopper, being on his first, 1958 recording (see appendix 3). I was somewhat confused about this at first because there is another song, a Gospel song, known as “A King and a Beggar.” At any rate, this unintentional confusion about the text makes me wonder if all the songs derive from the Child ballad? Not a musicologist, I am not sure. However, the surprising discovery of these items has allowed me to have some different thoughts about the Child ballad and how Shakespeare may have seen the song.

Child ballads are collections of the oral tradition of the British Isles; in colonial America, many ballads had come over to the Appalachians and had morphed into somewhat different songs. While some very familiar songs may retain similar plots across time, the music might change. However, there are songs where the plot is changed significantly due to the very different environment of the Americas. This paper is not a source study, and I do not have proof that various persons did not pen these lyrics entirely without knowing any old ballads, but knowing the omnipresence of some of these songs, especially in the folk era around the late 1950s, it occurs to me there could be a link amongst them that I cannot prove. The songs I have found are as follows.

Text 1: "The King and the Beggar." [9] Though most ballads are part of oral tradition, several people claimed to have written this one. Shakespeare refers to it in plays definitely written prior to 1598, so it existed then or before. See Appendix 1

Text 2: Gospel song. "King and a Beggar": See Appendix 2, Version 1 & Version 2. I have 2 versions, the second of which seems more famous. The first words I have no song to go with; the second set are taken from music sung by The Britton Family (2018), Alvin Martinez (2021), and various other people. I am sure I have heard it before, too. Alvin Martinez, a Filipino preacher and singer, claims to have written the song. [10]

Text 3: Big Bopper (Hank Snow, George Jones, Rose Maddox): "From Beggar to King" See Appendix 3.

The song is kind of a classic for country singers now, and there are many recordings of it, listing Jiles P. Richardson, the real name of the Big Bopper, as the composer. [11]

In the traditional ballad, the African King is lonely and favors the ill-clad beggar woman. In fact, he, "cared not for women-kind"; the story is sort of a reverse "Venus and Adonis." Cupid comes and shoots King Cophetua with an arrow, and his first view is the beggar maid whom he decides he must have or die. The King invites the beggar woman to marry him, but first she must "shift thee cleane" by changing her raiment. The queen miraculously seems to be perfectly at home in her new station, "And she behaved herself that day/ As if she had never walkt the way;/ She had forgot her gown of gray …"(this also reminds me of Tennyson's writing in "The Lady of Shallott").[12] In essence, the King has been transformed into a good husband, having been in the past melancholy and possibly gay, and the beggar woman has been transformed into a Queen, despite her former gray rags. The unlikeliness of this ending is really not that far removed from the gospel song.

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[9] "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid." Percy's *Reliques*, The Ex-Classics website.

[10] "King and A Beggar," "SG Old-Time Gospel Music." Marmatt Music; Alvin Martinez, You Tube April 28, 2020.

[11] The Big Bopper, "Beggar To A"From Beggar To a Queen." Track 5 on Album, *Alone With You*. (1963) King," "The Day That Music Died," 2007; Hank Snow, "Beggar to a King" Single, 1961. SecondHand Songs; Rose Maddox, 1963 recording.

The gospel song "King and Beggar" is told in the voice of a beggar.[13] In this song, God befriends the downtrodden and makes them kings or queens in his own kingdom. While this gives a voice to the beggar (who says nothing in the ballad), it is the basic storyline of the ballad with a transformation into a religious parable. The beggar does the talking, and the king is God, who lifts up the beggar to be saved. The words "the King's a beggar now" (from the play) would only apply if the King of France was God, and he is assuredly not. In the play, we have four characters brought low: Parolles loses rank and respect because he loses the drum; Diana is "seduced" and abandoned by Bertram; Helena is humiliated by her husband's rejection; and Bertram himself is accused by Diana in front of the King of France. All the characters become low and are lifted up. All the characters are "saved" in a sense through mercy and grace of some other character, thus averting the apparent tragedies that seem on-course to occur. However, the agent of none of these would be the King of France. The saving of these characters in every case has to do with the intervention of mercy and truth—Lafew does not care to see Parolles starve; Diana gets truthful testimony on her behalf from Parolles and Helena; Helena is saved by her own miraculous deeds; and Bertram is saved by Helena. The Gospel song makes the witnessing of the beggar the centerpiece, while the play makes the revelation of miracles under the cross-examination of the King of France the method of lifting all of these people up to acceptability once again.

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[12] "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid." Text in Appendix 1.

[13] See Appendix 2.

The song “From Beggar to King” or “Beggar to Queen” (Big Bopper and Rose Maddox respectively) seems at first to be a religious song, but perhaps not.[14] In fact, the outline of Big Bopper’s song suggests the original ballad rather well: “ But you picked me up, an’ you kissed me sweet, / An’ you whispered, I’ll always be around. / You tore the rags from off my back/ And you placed a crown on my head./ Now you walk beside me because,/ Y’changed a beggar into a king.”[15] There is no mention of what kind of crown this is, etc. In Rose Maddox’s version, “ Then you picked me up and you kissed me sweet/ You changed a beggar into a queen/ Yes you took the rack from off of my back, and you gave me love to keep me warm/ Yes you picked me up and you kissed me sweet/ you changed a beggar into a queen…”[16] Like the ballad, this song may simply suggest the transformative power of love. I find the shift from rags to rack suggestive (the rack suggests more of a torture, and not just poverty). Also, making the beggar male (for the Bopper) and the main speaker is interesting, as that changes the storyline into something possibly more religious, while Rose Maddox’s version gives the beggar WOMAN a voice that she lacks (for the most part) in the original ballad, but also changes the tone of the story since the original ballad focuses on the king’s desire, frustration and sadness, and the gospel song focuses upon the gratitude of the beggar. This gratitude for love itself is the focal point of the Big Bopper AND Rose Maddox in their version of the Bopper’s song.

For the purpose of my reading, Helena, who is called “Queen” by Parolles (I, i, 104), is the beggar who becomes a “king,” as she is the agent of redemption for the fallen Bertram (and

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[14] See Appendix 3.

[15] See Appendix 3. Big Bopper.

[16] See Appendix 3. Rose Maddox

Diana, and Parolles, and the miraculous healer of the King of France). While I compared Helena before to the agent of temporal power, Queen Elizabeth, she is also like Jesus, a spiritual power, in that she cured the King. Also, she is also a mother. In the original tale retold from William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, she is the mother of twin sons. [17] She asks merely to stop being a cipher and be accepted as a wife, the Countess of Rousillion at the end of the play. In my mind, Helena is the King, the one who hands out redemption, favors, etc. In fact, Roulon supports this, saying, "Thus Bertram has no qualms about serenading a bashful Diana . . . but he will not be conquered by a bold Helen."[18] However, Helena can be seen as a folklore figure, and her powers representative of something beyond the male realm. She is a good, weird sister, or a female Prospero, or something; (my grandmother performed the role of Prospero in her girls' high school production of "The Tempest"; that too may influence my reading). So, if Helena is the King, is the King of France nothing? Is he, a beggar now, beholden to a woman for his life? Has his power been subsumed? Has all male power been cancelled, here? Perhaps so, and perhaps to good effect!

Shakespeare must have loved the ballad "The King and the Beggar"; he used it many times, and it foreshadows the unlikely endings he came to use in the late romances. Shakespeare's line, however, in this play is the opposite: the King's a beggar now. Perhaps in the sense of the play and the ballad, the King begs for the love of the woman. Perhaps that is the sense in which Bertram needs to accept his rescue. However, in the most radical sense, the King being a beggar is the sense of the gospel song: the King is Jesus being incarnated and walking the earth. In the traditional ballad, the King IS the desperate one, and like the King of France in this play, seeks a miracle (love of the beggar, or the fortuitous arrival of Helena to cure him), but this also suggests Helena's arrival that will save Bertram and Diana as well. Her "resurrection" is seen by Roulon as not entirely a happy event, but her miracle-worker status also makes her an "Orphic figure," and agent of an unexpected happy ending.[19] It goes along with the Petrarchan idealism mentioned by Mc Eachern.[20] It also echoes the myth of deliverance discussed by Northrop Frye.[21] Perhaps most clearly, the plot develops the "Protestant spirit" mentioned by Palmer and Field.[22] While the Bopper's song and the original ballad just talk about love as the agent of change, the gospel song attributes this miracle to Jesus alone. If the King is the beggar, at the end of Shakespeare's play, it means that the real "king" is Helena, and her miracles need to be seen as such. For Shakespeare, I think the Ballad "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid" may have contained both of these stories (a secular story of love, and a miraculous story of change) and that is why the song was so powerful to him.

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[17] G. K. Hunter, Appendix, 145-152.
[18] Roulon, paragraph 40.

I did find a picture book with a re-telling of the ballad written in 2022 by Wim Coleman.[23] In this version, the beggar woman, seeing the crown the King provides, runs away, and he must search for her in the streets. When the king finds her, she says he is unworthy of her, and says the crown is a burden she does not want. When the sad king asks where she will go, she says " I go where wretches starve and bleed/ And drink broth of stone; Where beds from cobblestones are made, / And shelter is unknown……And yet the world shall be my prize,/ For I will journey free…To every soul I hap to meet/ A blessing I will be."[24] The king says, "Yet let me come away with you,/ Unworthy though I prove. / Wherever in this world you go,/ I'll be your faithful dove. Although I but a pauper be/ With not a thing to offer thee--/ No nothing but my love. [25] At this point, the beggar woman gives him a ring, and they are beggars together. The authors acknowledged they "turn things around a bit."[26] Coleman and his wife, the illustrator, do not detail how they got this idea, but it would seem that they are influenced by Shakespeare in the form of a directive Helena and tough Diana to not let the King push the women towards materialism or good husbands as the sources of happiness in life. Ultimately, that is found in goodness itself. The last should become first, as in this modern re-telling of the ballad, where walking the life of the lowly is more important than crowns or riches.

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[19] Roulon, paragraph 20; 38.
[20] Claire Mc Eachern. "Introduction to *All's Well That Ends Well,"* 568.
[21] Northrop Frye. *The Myth of Deliverance,* 45-55.
[22] David J. Palmer and Clive D. Field, "Comedy and Protestant Spirit in Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well,*" 99; 102-104.
[23] Wim Colman. *The King and the Beggar Lady: A Love Ballad*.
[24] Wim Colman, 70-72.

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[25] Wim Colman, 76.
[26] Wim Colman, 83.

Appendix

Appendix 1: The ballad. "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid" (to tune of "My Jenny Strove…)"[27]

1. I read that once in Affrica
A princely wight did raine,
Who had to name Cophetua,
As poets they did faine:
From natures lawes he did decline,
For sure he was not of my mind.
He care not for women-kinde,
But did them all disdaine.
But marke what happened on a day,
As he out of his window lay,
He saw a beggar all in gray,
The which did cause his paine.

The blinded boy, that shootes so trim, (2)
From heaven down did hie;
He drew a dart and short at him,
In place where he did lye:
Which soone did pierse him to the quicke,
And when he felt the arrow pricke,
Which in his tender heart did stricke,
He looketh as he would dye.
" What sudden chance is this," quoth he,
"That I to love must subject be,
Which never thereo would agree,
But still did it defie?"

Then from the window he did come, (3)
And laid him on his bed,
A thousand heapes of care did runne

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[27] "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid,"; song tune is "I Often for my Jenny Strove: in the Traditional Tune archive website.

Within his troubled head:
For now he means to crave her love,
And now he seeked which way to prove
How he his fancie might remove,
And not this beggar wed.
But Cupid had him so in snare,
That this poor begger must prepare
A salve to cure him of his care,
Or else he would be dead.

And, as he musing thus did lye, (4)
He thought for to devise
How he might have her companye,
That so did ‘maze his eyes.
“In thee, “ quoth he, “doth rest my life;
For surely thou shalt be my wife,
Or else this hand with bloody knife
The Gods shall sure suffice.”
Then from his bed he soon arose,
And to his palace gate he goes;
Full little then this beggar knowes
When she the king espies.

“The Gods preserve your majesty,” (5)
The beggars all gan cry:
“Vouchsafe to give your charity
Our childrens food to buy.”
The kind to them his purse did cast,
And they to part it made great haste;
This silly woman was the last
That after them did hye.
The kind he cal’d her back againe,
And unto her he gave his chaine;
And said, “With us you shal remaine
Till such time as we dye.

“For thou,” quoth he, “shalt be my wife, (6)
And honoured for my queene;
With thee I mean to lead my life,
As shortly shall be seene;
Our wedding shall appointed be,
And every thing in its degree:
Come on,” quoth he, “and follow me,
Thou shalt go shift the cleane.
What is thy name, faire maid?” quoth he.
“Penelophon, O King,” quoth she;
With that she made a lowe courtesy;
A trim one as I weene.

Thus hand in hand along they walke (7)
Unto the king’s pallace;
The king with courteous comly talke
This beggar doth imbrace:
The beggar blusheth scarlet red,
And straight againe as pale as lead,
But not a word at all she said,
She was in such amaze.
At last she spake with trembling voyce,
And said, “O king, I doe rejoice
That you wil take me from your choyce,
And my degree’s so base.”

And when the wedding day was come, (8)
The king commanded strait
The noblemen both all and some
Upon the queen to wait.
And she behaved herself that day,
As if she had never walk the way;
She had forgot her gown of gray,
Which she did weare of late.
The proverb old is come to passe,
The priest, when he begins his masse,

Forgets that ever clerke he was;
He knoweth not his estate.

Here you may read, Cophetua, (9)
Though long time fancie-fed.
Compelled by the blinded boy
The beggar for to wed:
He that did lovers looks disdaine,
To do the same was glad and faine,
Or else he would himself have slaine,
In storie, as we read.
Disdaine no whit, O lady deere,
But pitty now thy servant here,
Least that it hap to thee this yeare,
As to that king it did.

And thus they led a quiet life (10)
Duringe their princely raigne;
And in a tombe were buried both,
As writers sheweth plaine.
The lords they took it grievously,
The ladies tooke it heavily,
The commones cryed piteously,
Their death to them was paine,
Their fame did sounc so passingly,
That it did piece the starry sky,
And throughout all the world did flye
To every princes realme.

Appendix 2: Gospel Song
"King and a Beggar"[28]

1.
A King met a beggar, on a lonely road one day,

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[28] "King and a Beggar" song text at Marmatt Music.

A strange occurrence took place as you will see.
The beggar fell down on his knees and cried oh pardon me.
I feel unworthy in thy presence to be.
Chorus
But the king looked at the beggar, and He said you've been set free.
Your sins are all forgiven, and now you're born into royalty.
And so the King and the beggar, walked off arm in arm you see.
That King was Jesus, the King of Kings, and that lowly beggar was me.

2.
He Who was rich, became so poor that a beggar rich might be.
The holy God, became the Son of man.
That we the fallen sons of men, the sons of god might be.
I can't explain it, God's wondrous saving plan.

3.
I never dreamed there as a pow'r that could save a wretch like me
Until that day, the King passed by my way
He placed His arms around me, and He said I'll be your guide
That guide is Jesus, the King of kings, He now walks by my side

Version more commonly reported:
"The Beggar and the King"[29]

1. What you see before, I've not always been
I once was so broken and battered by sin
The story that I tell you is such a marvelous thing
How love brought together a beggar and king.

Chorus: I traded for riches the rags of my soul
I gave him the pieces and he made me whole
I brought to him nothing, and he gave me everything
Oh he found the beggar and I found the king.

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[29] "The King and the Beggar" query on Name that Hymn.com; Alvin Martinez recording (2020). "The Beggar and King," Britton Family recording, 2018.

2. You say its just so hard for you to believe

All that I can tell you is that I agree
Of all the love stories this world's ever seen
There will never be another greater
Than how Jesus loved me.

Chorus repeat.
I traded for riches the rags of my soul
I gave him the pieces and he made me whole
I brought to him nothing, and he gave me everything
Yes I am the beggar, and he is the king.

At the "Name That Hymn. Com website, people were trying to recall the song, and from their comments, I cannot tell which one they mean. Though the words differ, the content is similar.

Appendix 3: "Beggar to King" (Big Bopper) "From Beggar to King"[30]
"Beggar to A King": Hank Snow version (Snow performed the Big Bopper's song, and it was on his record site that I located the tune that he sang on the record; I got the lyrics from the Big Bopper site; the tune was the same as what Rose Maddox performed).

I had sunk as low as a man could go,
The world had turned me down.
But you picked me up, and you kissed me sweet,
And you whispered,"I'll always be around."

1. You tore the rags from off my back,

   And you placed a crown on my head.

   Now, you walk beside me because,

   You changed a beggar into a king.

2. A beggar ain't got no shoes for his feet,

No coat to keep him warm.
But your arms will hold me and keep me warm,
You changed a beggar into a king.

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[30] Big Bopper (Jiles P. Richardson), "From Beggar to A King"

You changed a beggar into a king.[31]

Rose Maddox: "Beggar to Queen" [32]
I had sunk as low as one can go

Then you picked me up and you
Kissed me sweet
You changed a beggar
Into a queen
Yes you took the rack from off my back
And you gave me a love to keep me warm
Yes you picked me up
And you kissed me sweet
You changed a beggar
Into a Queen.

I have walked the streets with head bowed low
The sun for me would never shine
Then you came along intro my life
And changed a beggar into a queen.

Yes you took the rack from off my back
And you placed a crown on my head
Yes you picked me up and you
Kissed me sweet
You changed a beggar into a queen.

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[31] Hank Snow, recording reflected the words of the Big Bopper, to whom the song was attributed.
[32] Rose Maddox, "From Beggar to a Queen."

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Part V.

Gender & Empowerment

What Does Katherina Mean?: Reinterpreting Katherina's Last Monologue of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*

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William Shakespeare became a successful professional playwright in male-dominated Elizabethan England, where women were treated as "second-class citizens."[1] Despite this, Shakespeare portrayed several powerful and strong female characters who challenged stereotypical gender notions and emerged as revolutionary role models for women in Elizabethan society. It is difficult to judge Shakespeare's perspectives from a single point of view. As Harold Bloom writes, "Shakespeare does not let us see whether he himself prefers one side or the other." A single Shakespearean play can yield multiple layers of interpretation. In one reading, he may appear to be a misogynist who supported patriarchal dominance and male supremacy. In another, the Bard comes across as a witty feminist who not only ridiculed chauvinistic male attitudes but also exposed the flaws within the patriarchal structures of his society. Although the fate of his rebellious and revolutionary female characters is often predetermined, likely because his audience was largely male, Shakespeare still managed to shift the conventional lens through which Elizabethan women were viewed. Her empowering female characters often say what the patriarchy wants to hear, but their words carry a subversive rhetorical meaning. One such character is Katherina, also known as Kate, from *The Taming of the Shrew (1623 CE)*.

The Taming of the Shrew is a dramatic comedy which has long been read, analyzed, criticized and commented as a misogynistic and sexist play in which Shakespeare shows a more sophisticated and kinder way of taming a “shrew,” Katherina. Shakespeare wrote this play during the early phase of his writing career. It was published between 1590 and 1592 CE. Although at that time the country was ruled by one of the longest-reigning and strongest female monarchs, Queen Elizabeth I, women were underprivileged in society. In Elizabethan England, women were expected to remain under the authority of their fathers before marriage and under their husbands’ control afterward, as husbands were regarded as both “caregivers and sovereigns.” Felheim and Traci comment that “marriage [was] seen as a prime condition of society.”[2] After marriage, “a young woman became the legal property of her husband.”[3] Since she became “property,” she was treated as an object and commodity. Valerie Traub explains that a woman’s “position of inferiority required [her] to strive for four virtues: obedience, chastity, silence, and piety.”[4] Women who failed to meet these expectations were often labeled with derogatory terms such as “shrew” or “wild.”

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[1] Ware, *100 Things*, 84.

Critics claim that William Shakespeare adapted *The Taming of the Shrew* from a popular ballad titled *A Merry Jest of a Shrewd and Curst Wife Lapped in Morel’s Skin for Her Good Behavior* (c. 1580) in which the husband verbally and physically abuses his shrewish wife to tame her. It was widely popular because it represented a real condition found within Elizabethan society. William Shakespeare adapted the ballad in a more humane way. Here Petruchio—the husband—does not physically abuse his wife, Katherina. Rather he plays a psychological game with her. His method of taming Kate is like killing “poison with poison.”

Kate is labeled a “shrew” because she defies the conventional norms of the Elizabethan ideal of a virtuous woman. She is subjected to the process of being “tamed” by Petruchio, who is himself equally ill-tempered and impulsive, yet no one questions the need to tame Petruchio simply because he is a man. On the surface, it appears that Kate eventually submits. Even ChatGPT interprets her final monologue at face value when asked. It responds, "Katherina's speech reflects the internalization of patriarchal norms and expectations." This response reflects the voice of the dominant male interpreter in the world of AI. Therefore, to fully grasp the complexity of Katherina's speech, we need both a rhetorical lens and a solid grounding in historical context to uncover its deeper, potentially subversive meanings.

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[2] Felheim and T., “Realism in *The Taming of the Shrew*,” 100.
[3] Ware, *100 Things,* 87.
[4] Chowdhury, "Denaturalizing Shakespeare,” 22.

To introduce Katherina as she is portrayed in the play, she is the eldest daughter of Baptista and struggles to find a husband. This raises an important question: who qualifies as a marriageable woman in Elizabethan society? One of her suitors, Gremio, dismisses her by saying, "She's too rough for me."[5] Hortensio, another suitor, expresses his preference for a more submissive and conventionally ideal woman, saying, "…no mates for you / Unless you were of gentler, milder mould."[6] Both Gremio and Hortensio dehumanize Kate by calling her "hell" and comparing her to "rotten apples." Gremio even claims that only a "devil" would marry such a woman, asking rhetorically, "though her father be very rich, any man is so very fool to be married to hell?"[7] Their comments reduce Kate to an object of ridicule and danger, highlighting how deeply entrenched patriarchal ideals dictated who was deemed worthy of marriage.

All these derogatory labels are assigned to Kate by the male members of the male-dominated society. Ultimately, Petruchio, the son of Antonio from Verona, declares his intention to marry a wealthy woman, regardless of how unacceptable or ill-favored she may be. He candidly confesses to Hortensio, "I come to wive thee wealthily in Padua. / If wealthily, then happily in Padua."[8] Petruchio's statement reduces marriage to a financial transaction, exposing the commodification of women in Elizabethan society. When Petruchio expresses interest in learning more about Kate and her wealthy father, Hortensio reveals the truth, saying that Kate is "renowned for her scolding tongue."[9] In a society where "speech is a powerful weapon for women," those like Kate, who speak with clarity and conviction, are quickly labeled with derogatory terms such as "shrew," "wild cat," "hell," and "Katherina the curst." Despite these warnings, Petruchio, motivated by wealth, lies to Baptista and presents himself as a willing suitor for Kate. He even claims that he and Kate are perfectly compatible. Although the term "shrew" is gendered and not applied to Petruchio, he exhibits what Brown calls "a genuine shrewish nature under the guise of taming Katherine," as he "subjects Katherine to unnecessary humiliation and torture."[10]

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[5] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew,* 1.1.55.
[6] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew,* 1.1.60-61.
[7] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew,* 1.1.126-127.

As soon as Petruchio meets Katherina, he attempts to charm and console her with flattering words. Despite calling her "wild cat" and "Kate the curst," he also refers to her as "the prettiest Kate" and "Kate of my consolation." No matter what Kate says to Petruchio, he consistently reverses her words and dominates her linguistically, thereby asserting his control over her through language. However, Petruchio makes his intentions clear. He declares that he is born to tame Katherina, implying that it is a man's duty to "tame" an untamable, liberal, independent, and straightforward woman. He says:

> Thou must be married to no man but me,
> For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,
> And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate
> Conformable as other household Kates.
> Here comes your father. Never make denial—
> I must and will have Katherine to my wife.[11]

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[8] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew,* 1.2.75-76.
[9] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew,* 1.2.101.
[10] Brown, "Bianca and Petruchio," 165.
[11] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 2.1.261-272.

In Petruchio's speech, it is clear that he intends to strip Kate of her individuality and conform her to the role of a typical, "household" woman. By using the plural "Kates," Petruchio diminishes Kate's uniqueness and reduces her to a generic figure. The word "other" further infantilizes her, suggesting that she is to become like every other woman, submissive, conventional, and ordinary. His language reveals the process of "out-Kate-ing" Kate, as he attempts to erase her individuality. Petruchio even commands Kate not to deny his proposal in front of her father, asserting that he "must" and "will" have her as his wife, thus underscoring his possessive and domineering control over her.

As the wedding day approaches, Petruchio begins his taming process subtly and intentionally. He keeps Kate anxiously waiting for him, testing her temperament in the process. However, when Kate speaks her mind and expresses her feminist thoughts, Petruchio responds by outsmarting her. He then openly expresses his desire to master his wife, comparing her to both animated and inanimate objects, as if she is merely an object to be controlled. He says:

> I will be master of what is mine own.
> She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house,
> My household-stuff, my field, my barn,
> My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything.[12]

By depicting Kate as chattel, Petruchio ultimately attempts to impose the qualities he expects her to embody: "voicelessness, obedience, and usefulness." After their marriage, Petruchio takes Kate to his home and begins revealing his true, shrewish nature. He calls his servants and abuses them in front of her, further demonstrating his control. He orders "sweet Kate" to eat but then withholds food, depriving her of simple comforts like "mutton." He then leads her to their bridal chamber, where he forces her to sleep in poor conditions. In this way, food and sleep become tools of subjugation. If Kate wants comfort in her domestic space, she must ensure her own provision of food and rest. However, she finds herself in an even more hostile environment, where her husband does not take sexual advantage of her but tortures her psychologically and, subtly, physically. Since Kate has been labeled a “shrew,” Petruchio intensifies his own shrewishness to tame her. He confesses, “This is a way to kill a wife with kindness / And thus I’ll curb her mad and headstrong humour.”[13] Shakespeare exposes the cunning nature of patriarchy through this statement. In this system, a patriarch must subdue a woman by repressing her, either physically or ideologically. Katherina is presented as a strong woman capable of resistance, a woman whose “shrewishness has resulted from the cruelty and oppressiveness of a patriarchal society.”[14] Katherina is like a fish out of water, forced to navigate a world where she is stifled and controlled. She must seek ways to escape or adapt to this uncomfortable situation.

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[12] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 3.2.227-230.

Later, on the road to Padua, Petruchio subjugates Kate ideologically. He locates the moon and calls it “bright” like the sun. She conforms to it and says:

> Then God be blessed, it is the blessed sun.
> But sun it is not, when you say it is not,
> And the moon changes even as your mind
> What you will have it named, even that it is,
> And so it shall be so for Katherine.[15]

Finally, it appears that Kate has been tamed by Petruchio. If she does not fully conform to his way of thinking, she will face punishment such as torture, starvation, and deprivation of sleep. Thus, Kate is forced to submit. She must allow Petruchio to subjugate her both ideologically and linguistically to regain her voice. But does she truly mean what she says? On the surface, her words seem to show submission. However, to fully understand her rhetoric, we must look beyond the surface and examine the deeper, inner dynamics of her speeches.

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[13] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 4.1.189-190.
[14] Brown, "Bianca and Petruchio," 164.
[15] Shakespeare, The Taming of the Shrew, 4.5.21-25.

As Kate understands the gravity of her situation, she adopts a "survival-of-the-fittest" mentality. No longer the impulsive Kate, she has developed a more mature and strategic personality. Her submission speech, far from indicating mere compliance, reflects her growth and her tactical approach to seeking power within the household. By submitting, Kate secures a safer and more comfortable life for herself like better food, sleep, and stability. In finding this comfort zone, she also gains the space to assert her own form of empowerment. Through this subtle form of power, she can conquer her domestic environment on her own terms.

Michel Foucault writes, “power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localized here or there, never in anybody’s hands.”[16] In this sense, Katherina’s famous so-called “Submission Speech” can be interpreted ironically as her ultimate weapon of survival and her way of controlling the circulation of power. Kate begins as prey, but through her speech, she liberates herself. As Simone de Beauvoir suggests, “by renouncing the world, she means to conquer a world.”[17] Kate strategically positions herself at the center of power. She understands her audience and the dynamics of her situation perfectly. By delivering the famous “Submission Speech,” she takes control, captures the subject position, and becomes the center of attention. In this moment, Kate emerges as a rhetorician, using her words to assert authority within the domestic sphere as she asserts:

> Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
> Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee.
> And for thy maintenance; commits his body
> To painful labour both by sea and land,
> To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
> Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe.[18]

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[16] Chowdhury, "Denaturalizing Shakespeare," 26.
[17] de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex,* 483.
[18] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew,* 5.2.162-167.

She further says:

> I am ashamed that women are so simple
> To offer war where they should kneel for peace,
> Or seek for rule, supremacy and sway
> When they are bound to serve, love and obey.[19]

These lines reflect the language of submission to the patriarchy and embodiment of the traditional gender roles prevalent in the Elizabethan era. However, Kate's rhetorical strategy is more complex than mere compliance. By repeating these ideals, she understands how to manipulate the patriarchal audience and assert her dominance in a way that transcends mere submission. This speech is not just a surrender; it's a calculated move to secure control over her domestic environment by playing the role expected of her. She closes her speech, saying:

> Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
> And place your hands below your husband's foot:
> In token of which duty, if he please,
> My hand is ready, may it do him ease.[20]

These lines seem to mark the culmination of Kate's apparent submission, as she physically places herself beneath Petruchio's authority. "Vail your stomachs" refers to the act of bowing in deference, signaling a surrender of any resistance. However, as discussed before, Kate's submission may not be as literal as it appears. Her speech could be read as a strategic performance, where she uses the act of submission to position herself in a way that secures her power within the household. She now controls the audience's perception of her compliance. In this way, Kate may be demonstrating not just obedience but also a shrewd understanding of how to wield power within the confines of her society's expectations.

One interesting point to note is that Katherina delivers a long speech after quite a while of silence. She finally speaks, reclaiming her voice, and with it, her power and freedom of speech.

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[19] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew,* 5.2.178-181.
[20] Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew,* 5.2.192-195.

In doing so, she successfully overcomes her subaltern self. Katherina uses her freedom of speech so strategically that even the patriarchal figure, the shrewd Petruchio, cannot silence her. She proves that she is “capable of making a strong, safe, and happy place for herself.”[21] She takes control of her household, and even on stage, she commands the center and the audience's attention. Ironically, Katherina “transforms from a straight-speaking rebel into a subversive shrew”[22]. Her final words serve as a message to other women who have struggled to assert control in their own spaces. She exposes the absurd desire of men to be the lord and master of their wives when she declares, “thy husband is thy lord.” When Kate instructs women to serve in their domestic sphere, she reveals the men's expectation of domesticating women for their own gain. In the last three lines, Kate advises other women to place their hands below their husbands’ feet. The intended meaning behind her advice is that a wife’s hand is strong enough to bear the full weight of her husband. If she moves her hand, her husband will fall. In this way, a wife becomes the foundation of the family.

The submission speech “draws the audience’s attention to an ironic gap between what Katherina seems to be saying and the sincerity of her words.”[23] Thus, Shakespeare does not depict Petruchio as a true woman-tamer; instead, he allows Katherina to parrot a socially acceptable speech as a means of securing her freedom within the domestic sphere. After delivering her speech, Petruchio is impressed by her seemingly submissive behavior. Finally, Katherina achieves a peaceful resolution, confirming her ability to secure a sound sleep. Petruchio then calls, “Come, Kate, we’ll bed.”

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[21] Brown, “Bianca and Petruchio,” 178
[22] Brown, “Bianca and Petruchio,” 178
[23] Watcher, “Power and Gender in *The Taming of the Shrew*.”

While Katherina may not completely dismantle the patriarchal structure, she does, in a way, turn it on its head. Through her ironic submission, she subtly undermines the very system that seeks to subjugate her. By following the expected pattern of "submission," Katherina exposes the absurdity of the idea that women must be tamed and dominated.

William Shakespeare, while adhering to the societal expectations of the time, also provides a space for Katherina to shine as a character who, even within the bounds of her supposed submission, exhibits agency and power through her rhetorical speech. The male audience's satisfaction with Petruchio's apparent mastery over Katherina's rebellious nature can be read as a kind of superficial victory, while underneath, Katherina secures her own position within her household. The shift in focus to her as the central character who ultimately claims her space in the domestic sphere reflects Shakespeare's nuanced understanding of power dynamics and the complexities of gender roles.

Thus, Katherina, despite the apparent reinforcement of traditional gender roles, becomes a form of subversive empowerment. This complexity is part of what makes the play so fascinating. Katherina is both a victim of her time and a rhetorical strategist who says one thing but means completely the opposite.

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Girlish Salvation: Julian of Norwich’s Enduring, Profeminine Appeal

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What, demanded the culture of medieval England, is further from the hegemonic, elusive status of manhood than the stain of woman?[2] Why, insists the culture of the modern west, question those roles? Religiosity follows and reinforces that in which it was formed and forms: culture. Julian of Norwich answers the rhetorical whining of patriarchal control in her *Revelations of Divine Love* by depicting femininity as a fundamental aspect of the divine rather than a secondary, deformed afterthought. The elevating of femininity results in a text and theology that has an enduring impact and appeal to all readers who feel hampered by the feminine aspects of their body, status, or personhood.

At the age of 30, Julian fell deathly ill. After many days of sickness, during which she received extreme unction, she lost sensation from the waist down as well as the ability to speak. The local parish priest arrived to be present for her death and set the cross before her as a source of comfort for what all assumed to be her final moments. The room darkened as her vision began to fail, but the cross remained illuminated in what she described as, “an ordinary, household light.”[3] Thus, the first revelation began.

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[1] *Editors’ note: This paper was delivered at the 32nd NPCEBL in Aberdeen, SD, but was inadvertently left out of that issue, and therefore appears here.*

[2] When referring to “women,” “female bodies,” “womanhood,” and other related subjects throughout this essay, I am primarily addressing the experiences of those who are perceived as, assumed to be, and treated as women. The specific influence of personal identification with womanhood is, for the purposes of this piece, secondary. The same is true for “men,” “male bodies,” “manhood,” and similar terms. In this essay, “femininity” and “masculinity” are traits associated with, but not exclusively inhabited by, those who hold the aforementioned, respective experiences.

On April 30, 2024, city skylines across the United States were adorned with new, bright yellow billboards. The message, written in letters each well over three feet tall, read, “YOU KNOW FULL WELL A VOW OF CELIBACY IS NOT THE ANSWER,” and “THOU SHALT NOT GIVE UP ON DATING AND BECOME A NUN.”[4] After intensive backlash, the dating app Bumble apologized and retracted the ad campaign. Six months later, researchers from the Institute for Strategic Dialogue released a report on misogynistic activity tracked between November 4 and 6 across X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, Facebook, and Reddit. By November 5, they noted, on X alone, “a 4,600% increase in mentions of the terms ‘your body my choice’ and ‘get back in the kitchen,’” and that calls, “for the repeal of the [19th] amendment increased by 663 percent compared with the week prior.”[5] Similar trends, including clamours for rape squads, femicide, and other threats of violence towards women, were present across the internet and offline. In the same three-day period, Google Trends indicated a 700 percent increase in searches within the United States – as well as a 950 percent increase worldwide[6] – pertaining to the 4B movement, a campaign by South Korean women which is strikingly reminiscent of 1960s political lesbianism.

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[3] Julian and A.C. Spearing, *Revelations of Divine Love (Short Text and Long Text)*, trans. Elizabeth Spearing, Penguin Classics (Penguin Books, 1998), 45.

[4] “When Provocative Meets Problematic | Advertising Testing,” Cubery, accessed November 8, 2024, https://www.cubery.com/blog/ad-testing-bumble-anti-celibacy.

[5] Isabelle Frances-Wright and Moustafa Ayad, “‘Your Body, My Choice:’ Hate and Harassment towards Women Spreads Online,” *Digital Dispatches, Institute for Strategic Dialogue*, November 8, 2024, https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/your-body-my-choice-hate-and-harassment-towards-women-spreads-online/.

[6] “Google Trends,” Google, accessed November 8, 2024, https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=2024-11-04%202024-11-06&q=4B&hl=en.

4B, political lesbianism, trans-exclusive radical feminism (TERFism), and other similarly contentious campaigns for women's rights have all lost general favour as feminist movements. We can see more similarities in these alienating groups with overtly anti-woman efforts. For example, we can consider 4B's ties to Womad: a transphobic, nazi-affiliated organization; political lesbianism's homophobia; TERFism's transphobia; and each movement's rampant misogyny towards those who fail to meet the impossible standards for 'correct' expressions of womanhood. These factions feel more aligned with the motherhood movement of the 1880s than with any fundamental ideas of feminism. Feminism, unlike Bumble, accepts that there's a place for both voluntary celibacy and sexual liberation to serve as reclamations of autonomy.

Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Divine Love* are the earliest writings known to be authored by a woman in English. Little is known about its author other than the location of her anchorhold, the names of some of her benefactors, a secondary account by Marjory Kempe, and the sparce information divulged in her texts. Fervent attempts by medievalists and theologians have not unearthed many additional details. Her modern characterisation is complicated by the simplification of her theology to appease the sensibility of today's presentist reader who would prefer to paint a picture of this timelessly comforting anchoress, as Sarah Salih writes, as belonging, "more properly to the present than to the Middle Ages in which she happened to live and write."[7] Her theology becomes a, "phatic soothing, emptied of content [… where the] domesticated persona of Julian as an altogether cosier kind of single woman," is upheld rather, "than the enclosed career-virgin and learned theologian which she was."[8] However, it is precisely the false imagining of Julian that demonstrates how the inclusivity of her profeminine perspective is still essential for those societally maligned due to the 'other'ed status of their femininity or womanhood.

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[7] Sarah Salih, "Julian's Afterlives," in *A Companion to Julian of Norwich*, ed. Liz Herbert McAvoy (Boydell & Brewer, 2008), 217.

[8] Ibid., 218.

The secular and religious worlds' treatment of women as 'other' began long before Julian wrote, and that marginalisation has continued since. Misogyny doctrine and vile projections of male insecurity create barriers, but not insurmountable walls, in the lives and minds of women. It would be ahistorical to position women as mere incubators excluded from church, society, and power. Mysticism was one domain of Christian faith predominantly claimed by women within the medieval period. Yet, an oft indefinable, challenging line had to be adhered to in order to remain within the bounds of the teachings of the Church. Female mystics and theologians who were not careful to shape their public teachings to be in line with orthodoxy, or who were not deemed to be sufficiently reverent to the misogynistic structures to which they were beholden, were subjected to accusations of heresy and examination in ecclesiastical court, and even, perhaps, the crackling stake and hellfire. Movements like those of the beguines and anchorites were inseparably linked to women's autonomy. In his examination of the concerns surrounding beguines in the thirteenth century like Marguerite Porete – who was burned alive for her treatise, *The Mirror of Simple Souls* – Walter Simons explains that their participation in, "a religious vocation without permanent vows, which allowed the beguine to cross with relative ease the boundary between the secular and religious life,"[9] appeared duplicitous and disturbing. A beguine could leave a beguinage without trouble. Though anchorholds served as an unnerving measure of freedom and separation from patriarchal control, medieval society did not hold the same suspicions towards anchoresses that they did to beguines. An anchoritic life was one of fixed, eternal entombment: those few who did attempt at escape, such as Christina Carpenter, were returned to their cells.

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[9] Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565*, Middle Ages Series (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 119.

Some modern readers mischaracterise Julian as a radical medieval figurehead. In actuality, her works built upon those of fellow theologians and remain safely within the realm of accepted orthodox teachings. Much scholarly discussion surrounding the concept of Jesus as Mother has placed a heavy focus on Julian of Norwich. However, it is not of her invention, and women's access to autonomy has, for centuries, been far more perilous to the existing paradigm of control than the act of simply depicting the feminised Christ ever could be. Julian relies heavily on the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux who in turn oversaw what Caroline Walker Bynum calls the, "rise of affective spirituality and the feminisation of religious language."[10] Bernard of Clairvaux used, "'mother' to describe Jesus, Moses, Peter, Paul, prelates in general, abbots in general, and, more frequently, himself as abbot."[11] Still, the lived experiences of medieval women cannot be said to have improved due to the prevalence of female imagery in devotional texts at the time. Moreover, the existence of these feminised themes was not inherently positive as they were, "used [in Cistercian writings] to talk about authority (good and bad) and dependence (good and bad)."[12] Womanhood is inextricable from Christian faith, yet antifemininity is a key aspect of and struggle within Christian religiosity.

This contentious, self-defeating influence is evident when observing theologians' approach to Adam and Eve. Julian, in relaying her vision of the lord and his servant, does not indicate Eve's presence – and thus, her possibility of culpability is dismissed – instead, positing that Christ takes on the fall of humanity with Adam, so, "when Adam fell, […] God's son fell with Adam into the valley of the Virgin's womb."[13] Humanity's salvation, she argues, is from Adam's sin. Julian believes all, "strength and the goodness which we have come from Jesus Christ, the weakness and the blindness which we have come from Adam."[14] Julian does not acknowledge the potentiality of any goodness or weakness as originating from woman.

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[10] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, (University of California Press, 1982), 129.
[11] Ibid., 115.
[12] Ibid., 154.

In contrast, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), a believer of the Aristotelian assertion that female is but failed man, preached that, "the image of God is found in man, and not in woman: for man is the beginning and end of woman; as God is the beginning and end of every creature,"[15] paralleling the Apostle Paul's, "but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to use authority over the man: but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed; then Eve. And Adam was not seduced; but the woman being seduced, was in the transgression."[16] Whether, as some scholarship argues, this and other egregious instances of misogyny doctrine are post-Pauline interpolations, the content remains within the Gospel and provides ample fodder for antifeminine faith. Aquinas and Paul both argue that the inherited sin of Eve passes onto women particularly, leaving the few options of an entire sex to be dammed to hell, vowed celibate, or saved, "per filiorum generationem."[17]

Julian illustrates that it is through Mary that Christ begins, "his work very humbly and very gently,"[18] to become the divine mother. Christ is positioned as above men in Julian's work as his role for humanity encompasses all facets of relationship. He serves as divine father, mother, spouse, and creation. The patient, endless love he holds for humanity, is manifest in his maternal role:

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[13] Julian, *Revelations of Divine Love,* 121.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Thomas Aquinas and Kristen E. Kvam, "Summa Theologiae," in *Eve and Adam: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender*, 1st ed. (Indiana University Press, 1999), 230.

[16] A. Colunga and L. Turrado, eds., "I Timotheum," in *Biblia Sacra Vulgata* (Public Domain, n.d.), col. 2:12-14.

[17] Ibid., 2:15. *Yet she shall be saved through childbearing*.

[18] Julian, *Revelations of Divine Love,* 141.

> The sweet, gracious hands of our Mother are ready and carefully surround us, for in all this he does the work of a kind nurse who has nothing to do but occupy herself with the salvation of her child. […] he showed this in these gracious words, "I hold you quite safely."[19]

As is the reverent fear and respect he wishes humanity to hold for him:

> The fear which makes us quickly flee from all that is not good and fall upon our Lod's breast like a child upon its mother's bosom […] clinging to him with sure trust – […] everything contrary to this is either completely wrong or partly wrong.[20]

Julian overturns the precarious, demeaned position of womanhood in religion and society through her portrayal of those most precious moments of Christ's love as acts of maternal devotion.

Mary, as feeble human, becomes noble through her love of God. Her role in salvation mirrors the role of Christ as Godhead becoming feeble human through his love for humankind. Julian's insistence that "nothing that is made is above [the Virgin Mary] except the blessed Manhood of Christ,"[21] is an essential, profeminine piece of her theology, underlined by the image she firmly paints of a "meek and simple maid, young […] in the girlish form she had when she conceived."[22] If the pinnacle of human devotion was seen in the nature of "the littleness of her who was made,"[23] then those distinctly feminised aspects to her personhood serve as vital parts of true Christian belief. Since "the mother's service is the closest, the most helpful and the most sure, for it is the most faithful,"[24] or at least it is according to Julian. The Virgin becomes Theotokos, or God's mother, due to her deeply rooted, adoring faith; utter humility as a human beneath the Lord; and assuredness in his goodness.

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[19] Ibid., 144.
[20] Ibid., 163-164.
[21] Ibid., 46.
[22] Ibid., 46, 141.
[23] Ibid., 46.
[24] Ibid., 141.

Julian utilises allusions to domestic life, a feminised sphere, to emphasize the 'homely' (intimate, familiar, familial) relationship she understood God to have with humanity. The sacrifice, joyously and lovingly taken by Christ, according to A.C. Spearing, was, "not to step boldly on to the cross as a liberating warrior but to […] undergo the 'feminine' squalor of blood and water, herring scales and rain."[25] Along with the imagery evoking the extratextual home, Julian creates metaphysical spaces in the text, such as Christ's vaginal side wound, a "beautiful and delightful place which was large enough for all mankind."[26] God is defined as all-encompassing, in the manner of "clothing, wrapping us for love, embracing and enclosing us for tender love, so that he can never leave us."[27] And finally, her most famous image is of the hazelnut of existence held in her hand, itself a small, enclosed space. God, through Julian, becomes present even away from the church and anchorhold: his motherly influence follows into, and becomes, the world of women.

As the Middle Ages drew to a close, any autonomy women found in spirituality was increasingly viewed as a threat to the very fabric of society as "women as vessels of devotion and vessels of depravity were fast becoming virtually indistinguishable."[28] Johannes Nider described, in *Formicarium*, "an arc or trajectory between the witch and the saint,"[29] paving the way for texts such as Henrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger's *Mallium Maleficarum*. This work, published in the late fifteenth century (1486), manifested a, "terminus of a previously auspicious and vindicatory current in the assessment of female spirituality."[30] Movements like those of the anchoresses or beguines were rarely targets of the kind of fearmongering found in texts such as *Mallium Maleficarum*:

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[25] Spearing, *Revelations of Divine Love*, xix-xx.
[26] Julian, *Revelations of Divine Love*, 7.
[27] Ibid., 47.
[28] Dyan Elliot, "The Physiology of Rapture and Female Spirituality," in *Medieval Theology and the Natural Body*, ed. Peter Biller and Minnis A.J. (York Medieval Press, 1997), 167.
[29] Ibid., 172.
[30] Ibid., 173.

> German councils throughout the thirteenth century restricted the public activity of Beguines and strengthened their subordination to their pastors. Female mysticism, nevertheless, grew in power and authority from the twelfth century through the fourteenth, until many champions of orthodoxy feared it more than heresy itself. [...] After John XXII's attempts to extirpate them had failed, the Beguines were left largely in peace.[31]

Yet, whereas female prophets and visionaries were once seen as saviours in their own right, ushering in new and easier ways to please God and to reach heaven, now they were seen as instruments of damnation, easily swayed to the side of the devil, and willing to subvert even the holiest of men. Jo Ann McNamara remarks that women were increasingly criticised for, "their reliance on the individual penance outside the control of their confessor,"[32] in the fifteenth century, continuing that:

> In this spirit, female mysticism became irrelevant. Women could only validly receive illumination from priesthood and could not practice purgation except as prescribed by their confessor. […] By the end of the century, the marriage of the bride with Christ was giving way to the lurid image of frenzied women copulating with the devil.[33]

Thus, there were fewer revered, influential holy women like Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine of Siena, and Julian of Norwich whose voices were deemed worth hearing as the Early Modern period began.

Just as womanhood is defined and refined throughout the Middle Ages, manhood is also a shifting, historical social construction defined culturally, and thus individually. Or, in the words of Michael Kimmel, manhood is identified "in opposition to a set of 'others' – racial minorities, sexual minorities, and, above all, women."[34] The subjugation of the 'other' serves to promote an impossibly elusive, masculine ideal, "defined more by what one is not rather than who one is."[35] While many signifiers of manhood change over time, three core aspects have remained static in Christian western civilizations: wealth, literacy, and religiosity. In the context of the Christian faith, even though the feminisation of holy men and masculinisation of holy women were considered transformations of the self in dedication to God, the influence of a longstanding patriarchy within and outside of the church placed the feminine as a submissive, lesser form. Interpreting the word of God was a masculine, exclusive role within the church. In her dissertation, Alison More discussed ecclesiastical perspectives in the late medieval period. According to her, this era saw a "definite parallel between women and illiterate men: both were unable to receive the Sacrament of orders and […] therefore, were denied the active, masculine, sacramental role and remained perpetually passive, or feminine, in relation to the Eucharist and Confession."[36] Illiteracy, "barred [men] from the ecclesiastical hierarchy," and was, "portrayed as [acquired] through miraculous means,"[37] by female saints.

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[31] Jo Ann McNamara, "The Rhetoric of Orthodoxy: Clerical Authority and Female Innovation in the Struggle with Heresy," in *Maps of Flesh and Light: The Religious Experience of Medieval Women Mystics*, 1st ed, ed. Ulrike Wiethaus (Syracuse Univ. Press, 1993), 10, 22-23.

[32] Ibid., 25.

[33] Ibid., 25, 26.

Justification of entitlement to authority has been fabricated and maintained through the created notion of the ideal (hu)man: an unattainable standard set by those already in power as a means to ensure the continuation of their existing dominion. In a patriarchal society, the option of being deserving of power is inherently granted to men and those who embody masculinity in a way that serves the existing power structure. Femininity and masculinity are not exclusive to any gender, sex, or role and the degree of flexibility present in the minutia of hegemonic identity regarding gender allows a layer of freedom for individuals of the ruling class while tightening the leash for their subjects. No man can, or ever could, be a perfect example of manhood. The emasculation of men by the empowered incites men to antifemininity directed at themselves, other men, and women.

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[34] Michael Kimmel, "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity," in *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study,* ed. Paula Rothenberg (Worth Publishers, 2016), 59.

[35] Ibid., 63.

[36] Alison More, "Milites Christi in Hortis Liliorum Domini?: Hagiographic Constructions of Masculinity and Holiness in Thirteenth-Century Liège" (PhD diss., University of Bristol, 2004), https://hdl.handle.net/1983/59f7f55d-493b-4249-aac5-2b34410fcdaf, 232.

[37] Ibid.

Julian categorically refuses the temptation to define an 'other'. Instead, when she raises the feminised and female, the effect is to elevate the feminine in all readers. Her theological thought, as well as audience, is universal, even-Christian: focused on the common factor of love rather than divisions imposed by sex, expression, class, or other determinants of power. There is a near total lack of reference to her life, loved ones, or history in either text as to better share the word of God. She purposefully obfuscates herself, urging readers to, "stop paying attention to the poor being to whom this vision was shown, and eagerly, attentively, and humbly contemplate God;" insisting that she only serves as a vessel for God's desire for, "the vision to be generally known [and] to comfort us all."[38] Combined with her fervent testimony that God does not love her any better than he loves, "the lowest soul that is in a state of grace,"[39] readership easily may project upon and identify with Julian in all her vagaries.

Ongoing oppression is rooted in centuries worth of attitudes that people like Julian resisted. It is also worsened by radical ideologues like TERFs who exploit the fears of the marginalised to incite lateral violence. Those whose personhood is deemed secondary to the use their bodies have to others – be that sexual gratification, generation, or domestic labour – inherently protest that forced role when refusing the pull of 'othering' as Julian did. Her popularity is striking. The Anglican, Episcopalian, and Lutheran churches celebrate Julian's

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[38] Julian, *Revelations of Divine Love*, 53.
[39] Ibid., 54.

Feast on May 8, and the Catholic church on May 13. Posters, sweaters, daily planners, and jewellery decorated with her most classic line, “all shall be well,” are interspersed between crucifixes, personal bibles, “childless cat lady” stickers, and “Christianity has always been queer” phone cases on online storefronts. The burgeoning, openly queer, Christian audience, a growing community in Anglican and Lutheran churches, holds a particularly close kinship with Julian, and she is increasingly claimed as a queer Christian figure within these communities. Love as resistance is especially familiar to queer and nonconforming peoples, particularly in today’s world which positions queer love (of one another or one’s true self) as abominable, predatory, and sinful. Julian’s vocation, position as a religious mentor, and writings on her medieval visions are comforting to the modern reader, especially the marginalized reader, precisely because her few freedoms posed such a threat to patriarchal, patristic structures.

Julian’s *Revelations*, in creating a framework with the blessed qualities of the Virgin Mary to illustrate Christ as divine Mother, positioning domestic life as a holy sphere, and decentring the self apply profemininity in a universally-applicable context, thus allowing her experiences to remain relevant to continuing generations. While modern antifeminine feminist movements which prioritise alienation, exclusion, and the created ‘other’ fall out of favour and cultural consciousness again and again and again, Julian’s presence remains six centuries after her manuscripts were composed.

Julian chose to remain anonymous, leaving behind only writings that she may not have desired or expected to ever be disseminated outside of her immediate religious circle. Despite not setting out to author a protofeminist text, the endurance of Julian’s work is a testament to the necessity of theological works that elevate the feminine considering antifemininity in the church and patriarchal society at large. At the end of her long text, Julian mused that her writings were, "not yet completed" well over fifteen years after she had begun to compose them.[40] She found solace in the cyclical, endless nature of God, saying, "we had our beginning when we were made; but the love in which he made us was in him since before time began; and in this love we have our beginning."[41] Julian of Norwich's words have no need to be printed in three-feet tall letters on lurid, chartreuse displays. They are tremendous enough in their faded manuscripts, read aloud in book clubs, embroidered on tote bags, and comforting those who, like her, resist by choosing love above all else.

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[40] Ibid., 179.
[41] Ibid.

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Female Agency: Surprising Portrayals from Old and Middle English Literature

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It is perhaps a somewhat common misconception that English literature from the medieval period contains only misogynistic portrayals of women. In fact, while preparing to write this paper, I asked friends and family who may or may not be familiar with medieval literature what their baseline assumptions were, and over half of the twenty-two people I asked said they believed women lacked power in medieval literature, a belief that I myself had before I began my university studies. And while there are certainly many misogynistic representations of women in both antiquity and our current times, there is often a layer of power female characters hold in some medieval texts which, without closer thought and reading, can go unnoticed. Cultural contexts that we are not familiar with can also factor into missing or not fully understanding why women appear as they do. In order to demonstrate these nuances, I have decided to compare four portrayals of women from two different time periods: the Early Middle Ages pre-Norman conquest, and the High Middle Ages post-Norman conquest.

These time periods had vast differences– the early Middle Ages in England were defined by an Old English culture that valued the warrior and held up structures of vengeance and honor/shame, as well as syncretism between the pagan religion and newly arrived Christianity, whereas the High Middle Ages were defined by an Anglo-French culture that saw the influence of the Crusades and rise of chivalry and Christian asceticism. The literature of each period reflects these differences as well– the early Middle Ages saw Old English alliterative poetry and epics focusing on the devotion of a hero to their people, while the high Middle Ages saw the rise of the romance genre focusing on the devotion of a hero to the woman he loves. The differences in culture, genre, subject matter, and the understanding of a woman's role in society between the two eras will lead to varied portrayals of female characters, but I hope to demonstrate that even if the world these female characters operate within contain misogynistic systems, the authors of these texts craft powerful and intelligent women that either have a remarkable amount of agency within their stories or are supported in their lack of agency by the authors' critique of those misogynistic systems. Using the texts of *Beowulf*, *Judith*, and two lais by Marie de France, *Laustic* and *Lanval*, I hope to prove the assumption of misogyny wrong by comparing the depictions of female roles in court and marriage and the positive attributes that these female characters use to attain power across the two eras— and say that yes, medieval texts can have strong female characters, too.

First, how does the portrayal of female roles in court and marriage differ between Old and Middle English texts? In *Beowulf*, we meet several women whose importance to the story is largely because of their status as "peace-weavers." Peace-weaving was an Old English custom in which noblewomen would be married off to the leader of an enemy clan in order to unite two warring bands through marriage and eventually, lineage. At first glance, this representation appears reductive; in fact, many scholars traditionally viewed the women in *Beowulf* as relatively insignificant. This is understandable— as peace-weavers, women had no choice and were solely defined by their relationship to a man as well as their ability to bear children. However, we cannot only look at the misogynistic system itself. Instead, we have to ask if the author condones this practice and how they portray the female characters dealing with their situation. The reality of *Beowulf* is that the text often challenges the concept of peace-weaving, in the case of

Hildeburh, or shows characters using the power it does afford with intelligence and grace, like Wealhtheow.

Starting at line 1071 of *Beowulf*, we get an epic digression detailing Hildeburh's story, where she, a Dane, was married off to Finn, king of the Frisians. Later in her life, her brother, Hnaef, and husband, Finn, come to blows after treachery, and both are killed. Hildeburh is described as a "sad lady" in line 1075, and later the text says, "they bore that noble queen back to the Danes and led her to her people."[1] First, Hildeburh is depicted as noble for returning to her people, suggesting that the author prizes loyalty to kin above loyalty to the peace-weaving union. But secondly, this episode brings to light the failures of peace-weaving, and, one could argue, critiques the structure as a whole for placing women in a position of divided loyalties, as it is men who cause all the strife Hildeburh faces. Additionally, despite Wealhtheow's lack of choice in her marriage to Hrothgar, she has an incredible amount of political agency through that marriage, as she chooses to whom she distributes food, drink, and gifts, and the order in which that occurs. Throughout the narrative, her favor towards Beowulf is just as important as Hrothgar's– from lines 612-641, Wealhtheow honors Beowulf by giving him the mead-cup, thanking him for offering his service, and accepting his boast.[2] Only after Wealhtheow performs this custom does Hrothgar entrust his hall to Beowulf.

Not only does Wealhtheow possess political power, but also, she is keenly aware of it and understands how to properly fulfill the customs of her culture. When Wealhtheow is introduced, the text describes her as "mindful of customs" and "courteous."[3] Even if the author at times critiques the failures of peace-weaving, they also obviously value the women in the text who understand and perform their role well. Much of the *Beowulf* text's moral judgment of its characters lies in how well they can fulfill the social roles expected of them, regardless of gender. Because Wealhtheow clearly understands her role and exercises her power with grace, the author praises her and portrays her positively. We see this contrast later as Hygd, Hygelac's wife, considers her position and compares herself to Thryth, the most negative portrayal of a woman in this text other than the obviously monstrous mother of Grendel. Thryth is portrayed as needlessly cruel to the men who dare to look her in the eye and has them executed, which the text describes as "no queenly custom for a lady to perform."[4] However, she is reformed after her marriage to Offa and the text says she "used well her life while she had it."[5] Scholars have debated the meaning of this passage and how reductive it truly is, but in either case, Thryth obviously possesses a large amount of power and influence; she is only criticized initially because she does not use her power properly. Sebo and Schilling write that "the assumption of medieval misogyny has led to the positive aspects of [Thryth's] portrayal being ignored or dismissed as implausible, and the negative ones amplified. In fact, she seems to be a figure of great magnetism and authority, capable of causing great harm or great good."[6] While there may be some arguments that her marriage "tames" her or that her power is reduced by the end of her story, the argument that the author seems to be advocating for is that Thryth and all Anglo-Saxon queens are powerful, but they need to use their power appropriately, a lesson which applies to men in the text as well. Wealhtheow has clearly learned how to use her queenly status appropriately, and the author portrays her as respected by her people because of that status and power.

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[1] *Beowulf*, trans. RM Liuzza, in *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: Volume 1*, ed. by Black et al., (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2015), 69-111, line 1157-1159.
[2] *Beowulf*, line 612-641.
[3] *Beowulf*, lines 613, 615.

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[4] *Beowulf*, line 1940.
[5] *Beowulf,* line 1953.
[6] Erin Sebo and Cassandra Schilling, "Modthryth and the Problem of Peace-Weavers: Women and Political Power in Early Medieval England," *English Studies* 102, no. 6 (2021): 637-650.

Wealhtheow also exercises a large amount of political power, not only as cupbearer but also as advisor. After Beowulf kills Grendel, Hrothgar expresses a desire to adopt Beowulf as his son, but Wealhtheow intervenes and argues against it, saying “leave to your kinsmen the folk and kingdom.”[7] She knows that peace will be more readily maintained if Danish power is kept within the family and knows that Beowulf needs to keep his commitments to Hygelac. In this conversation, she has tangible political sway over Hrothgar’s decisions and argues for the proper social protocols and for her husband’s descendants. She is also living up to the author’s description of her mindfulness as peace-weaver by actively suggesting options that will keep the most peace and unity between the different tribes. In both Beowulf’s arrival to Heorot and the consequences after he defeats Grendel, it is Wealhtheow, not Hrothgar, whose political voice has the final say.

Although at first, it may seem that the women of Beowulf have no agency, both Hildeburh and Wealhtheow make active choices within the restrictions of their culture and are seen as honorable for making the most of their situations and fulfilling roles of power within court. Although peace-weaving is a societal expectation upon women with many failings, it is clear that male leaders had similarly tight, although different, cultural expectations, and that women were still able to exercise power and control within the convention, which the author praises and condones.

Moving into the High Middle Ages, views of court and marriage have shifted. In Marie de France’s *Laustic*, we meet three unnamed characters, an older, frequently absent knight; his wife, a presumably younger lady who is described as full of self-respect, and a younger knight, who lives next door to the couple. As the story progresses, we learn that this lady and young knight are in love and go to the window during the night to speak to one another in secret. A couple things are of note here. First, this is a typical plot for a medieval romance, a literary convention not present in earlier periods. Specifically, it is one of courtly love, where a married woman is attracted to a younger knight and although there is tremendous distance between them and they may never even speak, they fall madly in love to the point that they may die of a broken heart. Second, we have another female character who has likely had little choice in who she married, and is later portrayed in a somewhat adulterous relationship– both which could become reductive in their own way. After all, this sort of affair defies both the lady's loyalty to her husband and the knight's loyalty to his lord, and many other stories rebuke characters who dare to cross this line. So, how does *Laustic* treat its female characters that are placed within these conventions?

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[7] *Beowulf*, line 1179.

As mentioned earlier, the first description we have of the lady is that she "had a great deal of self-respect according to custom and usage."[8] Immediately, Marie characterizes her as faithful, despite her emotional attachment to the knight across the way. For all intents and purposes, she did remain faithful, because the text explicitly states that this relationship was never sexually consummated, saying "they could not be together entirely at their pleasure."[9] However, the mere action of going and talking at the window to another man is a threat to her husband, who is already depicted as overprotective in lines 49-50, where we learn that she is closely guarded whenever he is out of town. Later, when the husband kills the nightingale, which was symbolic of their love, he throws the body at her in a startlingly grotesque act. Her bloodied shift is a symbol that she is soiled and dirty due to the love affair in which she is engaging, but Marie does not condone the violent action and moral judgment of the husband. Instead, she writes, "in this he behaved most basely."[10] The lady's sadness is portrayed empathetically in the following lines, and toward the end of the poem, her lover places the body of the bird in a reliquary, signifying that their love was holy. Despite the blame seeming to lie with those in an adulterous relationship, Marie rebukes the husband, not the lovers, and treats the lady specifically with kindness and humanity.

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[8] Marie de France, "Laustic (The Nightingale)," trans. Claire M. Waters, in *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: Volume 1*, ed. Black et al., (Peterborough, Broadview Press, 2015), 234-237

[9] *Laustic*, lines 47-48.

Although the woman in *Laustic* certainly does not have much agency at all, it is fair to say that Marie de France critiques the practice of the May-December marriages in court at the time and has sympathy for the woman wishing for something better than her old and cruel husband. Instead of blaming her for her attraction to the young knight, the text recognizes the true kindness and love between the knight and lady, which is contrasted with the lack thereof from her husband, whose violence toward her is condemned by the text. Maybe the woman in *Laustic* is unable to access more agency, but the author would certainly like her to.

Beyond roles in court and marriage, how do female characters exercise power, and what attributes are viewed as powerful? In Old English literature, one will be far more likely to see women exercising power through their wisdom or political prowess than in Middle English literature. A stellar example of this comes in the Old English poem *Judith*, an adaptation of the deuterocanonical book of *Judith* from the Bible. Throughout the poem, she is referred to as "wise," "strong," "brilliant," and "brave." These characteristics inform her portrayal as a warrior, which a modern reader may not expect from such an antiquated text. However, although rare, it was not unheard of for women to become military leaders in this time, like the Old English leader, Æthelflæd. In the poem, Judith uses her intelligence to behead Holofernes, as noted in lines 103-112: “thus she won foremost fame as a fighter there.”[11] She then makes a speech calling troops to battle, mirroring male characters like Moses in the Old English poem *Exodus* and Beowulf in *Beowulf*. Although there is mention of her physical appearance, and Holofernes is clearly interested in her for sexual purposes, these are not the focal point of the text. Additionally, Judith’s intelligence is sharply contrasted with Holofernes’s foolishness throughout the poem. He is described as an “arrogant ring-breaker” and is portrayed as a drunk and a monster who is “sunk in wine-joy” and “roaring and ranting.”[12] The text takes its position firmly– the male leader is lustful, drunk, and incompetent, and the female leader is strong, wise, and capable. Judith’s gender is mostly irrelevant to her success; instead, what matters is her character. At the end of the poem, the Hebrew army gives all the war spoils to “the radiant lady,” recognizing her authority and positioning her in the role of a male hero or chieftain.[13] While Judith fulfills the obviously active role of a warrior, female characters like Wealhtheow also find their power in their customary roles in court, where they must use great discernment. For Old English literary ladies, wisdom is where they find their power.

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[10] *Laustic*, line 116.

This is not the case for women of High Middle Ages– instead they use their beauty and physical appearance to get what they want. In Marie de France’s *Lanval*, we meet an unnamed fairy queen who becomes the lover and patron of Lanval himself. Upon meeting her, the first description we get is of the costliness of her clothes– white ermine and alexandrine silk– but also that she “surpassed in beauty the lily or the new rose when it appears in summer.”[14] No mention is made whatsoever of her intelligence. Later, when Lanval is accused of propositioning and insulting the queen, the fairy queen arrives to acquit him. However, she does not give a logically persuasive speech on his behalf; instead, she basically says “he is innocent” without further reasoning. Yet the men still acquit Lanval, after they “had looked at her well and greatly praised her beauty.”[15] It is interesting to note that this story was written by a female author, one who would have been very aware of the power of her own beauty and sexuality over the men around her. Although it may appear that Marie is reducing the queen to her physical beauty, a deeper look at the text will show that the queen supported Lanval financially when the king ignored him despite his service, and her quality of leadership is far superior because of this. Because she possesses Otherworldly beauty, she uses it as a tool, for it is the only thing men see in her, even though she is likely more intelligent than they are, and most certainly a better ruler. And so, we see both beauty and intelligence across these female characters, but intelligence takes the forefront in Old English literature, whereas beauty does in the literature of later periods. Clearly, authors and society at large recognized the intelligence of women, at least noble ones, in the early Middle Ages, but with the arrival of chivalry and stricter Christian ideals as well as French court customs in the High Middle Ages, women were viewed through the lens of their beauty and purity in the romance genre and in daily life. This is arguably a more reductive and misogynistic ideal than existed in the early Middle Ages, so Marie de France’s subtle subversions of those values are doubly impressive.

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[11] *Judith*, trans. Stephen O. Glosecki, in *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: Volume 1*, ed. by Black et al., (Peterborough: Broadview Press: 2015), 118-126.
[12] *Judith,* line 24-25.
[13] *Judith*, line 340.
[14] Marie de France, “Lanval,” trans. by Claire M. Waters, in *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: Volume 1*, ed. by Black et al., (Peterborough: Broadview Press: 2015), 219-233, line 94-96.

Through examining these areas, it is made clear that although portrayals of women differ from the early to the high Middle Ages, certain authors manage to give their female characters an incredible amount of agency and power, even in the face of misogynistic ideals. That is not to say that none of this literature contains misogynistic elements from the author’s perspective, for example Beowulf's author probably would not have condoned Wealhtheow throwing off her marital duties and becoming fully independent from her husband. I am also not claiming that practices like peace-weaving or May-December marriages were positive for women. Far from it. Rather, it is valuable to recognize how authors worked within these constructs to portray women as people with both independent minds and brave spirits in spite of beliefs in their cultures to the contrary.

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[15] *Lanval*, lines 611-612.

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