Skenè Texts DA - CEMP

Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes in England

General Editor Silvia Bigliazzi

• 1.1

A Feast of Strange Opinions: Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes on the English Renaissance Stage

Edited by Marco Duranti
and Emanuel Stelzer

Supplement to *SKENÈ. Journal of Theatre and Drama Studies*

ISBN 979-12-200-6188-9
ISSN 2464-9295
SKENÈ Theatre and Drama Studies
https://textsandstudies.skeneproject.it/index.php/TS
info@skeneproject.it

Dir. Resp. (aut. Trib. di Verona): Guido Avezzù
P.O. Box 149 c/o Mail Boxes Etc. (MBE150) – Viale Col. Galliano, 51, 37138

CEMP - Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes in England

The series of CEMP volumes offers studies and fully annotated scholarly editions related to the CEMP open-access digital archive. This archive includes texts pertaining to the genres of the paradox, of the paradoxical fiction, and of the problem, which were published in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and which are currently unavailable online and/or not open access (https://test-01.dlls.univr.it/teipublisher-cemp/apps/cemp-app/index.html). Our digital archive features diplomatic, semidiplomatic, and modernised editions of selected works, furnished with critical apparatuses and editorial notes, alongside related documentary materials, which, in turn, are relevant to poetic and dramatic texts of the English Renaissance. These texts provide fundamental testimony of the early modern episteme, functioning as a hinge joining widespread forms of the paradoxical discourse in different genres and texts and within the development of sceptical thinking.

The project is part of the Skenè Centre as well as of the Project of Excellence Digital humanities applied to foreign languages and literatures (2018-2022) Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at the University of Verona (https://dh.dlls.univr.it/en/).

Contents

Contributors

Silvia Bigliazzi is Professor of English Literature at Verona University, where she is the Director of the *Skenè Research Centre* devoted to drama and theatre studies. Her fields of interest include Renaissance poetry, literature and the visual arts, and translation for the theatre (co-ed. *Theatre Translation in Performance*, Routledge 2013). She has translated into Italian John Donne's poetry (Rizzoli 2012[2]), *Romeo and Juliet* (Einaudi 2012) and *Double Falsehood* (Rizzoli 2012), and, for the theatre, Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* (2016) and *Macbeth (*2016). On Shakespeare she has published two monographs (*Oltre il genere. Amleto tra scena e racconto*, Edizioni dell'Orso 2001; *Nel prisma del nulla. L'esperienza del non-essere nella drammaturgia shakespeariana*, Liguori 2005) and several miscellanies (*Revisiting the Tempest. The Capacity to Signify*, Palgrave 2014; *Shakespeare,* Romeo and Juliet*, and Civic Life*, Routledge 2016; *Shakespeare and Crisis. One Hundred Years of Italian Narratives*, John Benjamins 2020). In 2019 she published *Julius Caesar 1935: Shakespeare and Censorship in Fascist Italy* (Skenè). Her recent researches include: the reception of classical drama in the English Renaissance, the reception of Graeco-Roman paradoxical and sceptic traditions in the English Renaissance, and the study of the Italian novella tradition behind Shakespeare's plays. She is the co-General editor of *Skenè. Journal of Theatre and Drama Studies*, as well as of the series *Global Shakespeare Inverted* (Bloomsbury) and *Anglica* (ETS). She is the PI of the digital projects SENS (Shakespeare's Narrative Sources, Italian Novellas and their European Dissemination) and CEMP (Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes in England).

Fabio Ciambella is Research Fellow of English Language and Translation at Sapienza University of Rome. Previously, he was a Research Fellow of English Language and Translation at the University of Tuscia, Viterbo, and Junior Research Fellow at the same university. He received his European PhD in English Language and Literature from the University of Rome "Tor Vergata" (2015). His privileged fields of research include the relationship between dance and early modern and Victorian literature and language, historical pragmatics, corpus linguistics, and Second Language Acquisition, topics about which he has published extensively. In 2013 he published a book about dance in nineteenth-century England (from Jane Austen's novels to Oscar Wilde's *Salome*). In 2016 his PhD thesis was awarded by the Italian Association of English Studies (AIA) and his study about dance and the Copernican Revolution in Shakespeare's canon was published the following year. His latest book, *Dance Lexicon in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries: A Corpus-based Approach* (Routledge, 2021), is a corpus-based analysis of dance-related lexis in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. He is currently writing a volume on how to teach English pragmatics through Shakespeare (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). He contributes to the digital projects SENS (Shakespeare's Narrative Sources: Italian Novellas and their European Dissemination) and CEMP (Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes in England).

Francesco Dall'Olio is currently a postdoc fellow at Verona University. He obtained his MA in Philology and History of Antiquity from the University of Pisa, Scuola Normale Superiore, in 2013, and in 2014 the Scuola Normale's diploma. In 2019, he received his PhD in Philology, Literature and Linguistics from the University of Verona. Twice a visiting research fellow at the Gallatin School for Individualized Studies (NYU) as part of his PhD programme, he has extensively worked on the reception of Greek literature in the early modern age, with a focus on early modern English literature and drama. His publications include articles on Alexander Neville's translation of Seneca's *Oedipus* (2018), Thomas Preston's *Cambises*

(2020), and on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. A book-length study on the early modern English reception of Greek notions of tyranny is forthcoming. He contributes to the digital project CEMP (Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes in England).

Marco Duranti holds a PhD in Greek literature from the Universities of Verona and Freiburg i. Br. (2017) and is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Verona. His present research focuses on the reception of ancient Greek literature in early modern England. He has published articles and book chapters on Aristophanes' dramaturgy, Euripides' tragedies, with a focus on *Iphigenia Taurica*, as well as on the reception of Greek theatre in early modern continental Europe and England. He is the author of *"Ecclesiae et Rei Publicae": Greek Drama and the Education of the Ruling Class in Elizabethan England* (Skenè Texts and Studies, 2022). He contributes to the digital project CEMP (Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes in England).

Francesco Morosi is a post-doc fellow at the University of Pisa. He studied at the Scuola Normale Superiore and the University of California-Berkeley. His main interests are in the field of ancient Greek drama and its modern and contemporary reception. He has devoted most of his studies to Aristophanic comedy and to Aeschylean as well as Sophoclean tragedy. He also works on performance studies and is a theatre practitioner himself, as a dramatist and translator: recently, he translated Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* for Robert Carsen's production in the Greek Theatre in Siracusa (2022). He is currently working on the reception of ancient Greek and Latin comedy in Elizabethan and Jacobean England and on a commented edition of Aeschylus' *Eumenides*. He is part of an international project on the theory and practice of translating classics.

Beatrice Righetti is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Aosta Valley and a former doctoral student in Linguistics, Philology and Literature at the University of Padua. Her doctoral project deals with the reception of paradoxical writing and the *querelle des femmes* as regards the literary figure of the talkative woman in six-

teenth- and seventeenth-century England and Italy. Her main case study is the literary and theatrical character of the English shrew and the Shakespearean shrew in particular. She has published on Renaissance women writers and Shakespeare's plays, mostly *The Taming of the Shrew*, focusing on both the use of paradoxes and the relationship between metamorphosis, gender-based violence and power relations. She contributes to two digital projects directed by Silvia Bigliazzi ("Shakespeare's Narrative Sources: Italian Novellas and their European Dissemination", SENS; and "Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes in England", CEMP) and to "From Paradise to Padua" directed by Alessandra Petrina.

Emanuel Stelzer is a researcher at the University of Verona. He is the author of *Portraits in Early Modern English Drama: Visual Culture, Play-Texts, and Performances* (Routledge, 2019) and of *Shakespeare Among Italian Criminologists and Psychiatrists, 1870s-1920s* (Skenè Texts and Studies, 2021). Together with Silvia Bigliazzi, he has edited the volume *Shakespeare and the Mediterranean:* Romeo and Juliet (Skenè Texts and Studies, 2022). His articles have appeared in journals including *Critical Survey*, *Early Theatre*, *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, *English Studies*, *Notes and Queries*, *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, and *Skenè: Journal of Theatre and Drama Studies*. His main interests are early modern English literature and drama, textual studies, and theatre history. He contributes to the digital projects SENS (Shakespeare's Narrative Sources: Italian Novellas and their European Dissemination) and CEMP (Classical and Early Modern Paradoxes in England), of which he coordinates the early modern section. His work on William Sampson has earned him the *Huntington Library Quarterly* Centennial Essay Prize; he has also translated into Italian Philip Massinger's *The Picture* (Aracne, 2017) and John Milton's *Comus* (ETS, 2020). He is managing editor of *Skenè: Journal of Theatre and Drama Studies* and contributes to *The Year's Work in English Studies*.

Carla Suthren is a researcher at the University of Verona, working with Silvia Bigliazzi on the 'Early Modern English Choruses' database (Prin 2017). She received her BA and MSt degrees from

the University of Oxford (Magdalen College), and her PhD from the University of York in 2018. Since then, she has been a researcher on the *Crossroads of Knowledge in Early Modern England* project led by Subha Mukherji in Cambridge, and has taught at Cambridge and at UCL. She has published on Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia*, and Gascoigne and Kinwelmersh's *Jocasta*, and she is currently working on her first monograph, entitled *Tyrannous Passions: Shakespeare and the Renaissance Reception of Euripides*.

2. Staging Mock Encomia

4

Dramatic Appropriation of the Mock Encomium Genre in Shakespeare's Comedies

Beatrice Righetti

Abstract

Since Rosalie Colie's 1966 pivotal study on the Renaissance epidemics of paradoxes, scholars have tried to identify the classical origins and the early modern developments of this rhetorical tradition in both prose and verse literature. Still, few studies have discussed the dramatic adaptations of this rhetorical mode on the early modern English stage and, in particular, in the works of William Shakespeare, a dramatist most receptive to local and foreign rhetorical fashions. The present essay aims to fill this gap by focusing on a specific element of the paradoxical tradition, the mock encomium. In order to investigate the adaptation of the mock encomium to the theatrical dimension, this essay focuses on Shakespeare's comedies, and it aims to show not only the rhetorical compatibility between paradoxical praises and the dramatic fabric of Shakespeare's comedies, but also how such mock encomia can be studied according to their subject matter, speaker and dramatical framework. For what concerns the former, mock encomia address either a character (e.g. Katherine Minola, Rosalind) or a specific situation (e.g. cuckoldry, violence). The presence of a given subject matter is usually coupled with the presence of a specific speaker. Wealthy characters falsely praise each other, as Petruchio does with Kate in *The Taming of The Shrew*. Contrariwise, lower-class characters address specific situations: in *The Comedy of Errors*, the servant Dromio delivers a mock praise of his master's violence against him, while in *As You Like It* as well as in *All's Well That Ends Well*, Touchstone and the Clown respectively perform a paradoxical praise of cuckoldry. The dramatic framework also distinguishes between intentional and unintentional mock praises. The most complicated instance can be found in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where mock encomia can be read as either honest praises by the spell-bound *dramatis personae* uttering them (Lysander, Titania) or cruel jokes shared by the characters (Helena, Bottom) and the offstage audience. Further variations on this paradoxical feature are offered by the female leads in *The Taming of The Shrew* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, showing uncommon rhetoric abilities in performing 'reversed' mock encomia.

Keywords: Shakespeare; mock encomium; comedy; paradox; rhetoric

As will be considered in the next chapter, the paucity of studies on mock encomia on the early modern English stage goes hand in hand with the relatively little scholarly attention paid to this paradoxical genre in Shakespeare's dramatic writing.[1] One of the first scholars to partially downplay the role of mock encomia in both English Renaissance and Shakespearean dramatic texts, Alexander Sackton, defined mock praises not only as set-piece speeches with no specific dramatic weight in the early modern English theatre, but also as rhetorical features which are "not so prominent" in the Shakespearean corpus, where they seem "to be more completely assimilated to other forms of dramatic speech" (1949, 86).

Such little interest in the mock encomia genre seems at odds with its popularity in early modern England. After its decline during the Middle Ages,[2] the paradoxical genre of mock encomium regained its popularity in Renaissance Europe, where it aroused the interest of great Latin scholars.[3] Two exemplary works concerning mock encomia are Henry Cornelius Agrippa's *De Vanitate Scientiarium et Artium* (1524), which includes "A Digression in Praise of the Ass", and Desiderius Erasmus' *Moriae Encomium* (1509). In the following decades, the international popularity of the mock encomium genre led to a consistent process of translation and adaptation into regional and national vernaculars. In England, James Sandford translated Agrippa's work in 1569 as well as the purportedly French text which he entitled *The Mirrour of Madnes: or a Paradoxe Maintaining Madnes to Be Most Excellent* (1576), while Abraham Fleming translated Synesius' praise of baldness (1579). Eventually, also Ortensio Lando's *Paradossi* (1544) reached the English shores via Charles Estienne's French translation, readily translated by Anthony Munday in 1593. This appropriative process reached its peak in the original production of English mock encomia, such as John Donne's *Juvenilia, Or Certain Paradoxes and Problemes* (first published in 1633), which can be considered "the first group of

[1] But see Vickers 1968; Platt 2009; Bigliazzi 2011, 2013, 2014; Coronato 2014.

[2] For detailed information, see Knight Miller 1956.

[3] On the Inns of Court, see the introduction of the present volume and also Murphy and Traninger 2014 and Baker 2013.

paradoxes written by a major writer in England after Erasmus wrote *The Praise* in More's home" (Geraldine 1964, 60). The popularity of this literary genre is also testified by collections of classical and contemporary mock encomia as the one listed in Thomas Nashe's "Praise of Red Herring" in *Lenten Stuffe* (1599) and those collected in Caspar Dornavius' *Amphitheatrum sapientiae socraticae joco-seriae* (1619), which provides one of the most complete lists of paradoxical praises of that time and couples popular early modern original works, such as Daniel Heinsius' *Laus Oediculi*, Philipp Melanchthon's *Laus Formicae* and Willibald Pirckheimer's *Laus* or *Apologia podagrae*, with classical ones both in their original language and in translation. The popularity of mock encomia can also be appreciated in their more subtle influence on the early modern dramatic production. As investigated in Emanuel Stelzer's chapter in the present volume, they can be found in well-known plays, such as Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (1600) and *Satiromastix* (1602), Chapman's *All Fools* (1604) and Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* (c. 1604-5).

Given their popularity, it would be implausible not to find this paradoxical genre in the works of perhaps the most receptive playwright of his age, William Shakespeare.[4] Although not a student at the Inns, Shakespeare is known to have "enthusiastically and brilliantly adapted for the stage the schemes and tropes of the humanist masters" (MacDonald 2001, 48), which partially rely on the paradoxical practice of investigating pros and cons of arguments and the most uncommon opinions (Farley-Hills 1981, 164). Shakespeare's literary permeability to popular rhetorical modalities and his ability in adapting and developing them by means of his logical and linguistic sensitivity may be further confirmed not only by his taste for opposition and contrasts both in the dramatic structure and in the language but especially by the presence of paradoxical elements such as mock encomia in his plays.

For the sake of brevity, the present contribution investigates

[4] One of the first theatrical references to the word 'paradox' can be found in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* ("O paradox!", 4.3.249). Eventually, this word resurfaces in other four Shakespearean plays: *Hamlet* (3.1.119), *Troilus and Cressida* (1.3.185), *Othello* (2.1.150), and *Timon of Athens* (4.5.24).

the use and role of mock encomia in Shakespearean comedies only: *The Comedy of Errors* (1589), *The Taming of the Shrew* (1593), *Love's Labour's Lost* (1594), *Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595), *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598), *As You Like It* (1600), *All's Well That Ends Well* (1602), *Measure for Measure* (1604).[5] *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1600) and the tragicomedies *The Winter's Tale* (1610) and *The Tempest* (1611) are not included in this study as they do not seem to feature paradoxical praises, while *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1594) shows a passage in praise of a conventionally undesirable topic, that is, desert places, which however proves not to be paradoxical, but honest in intention (5.4.1-17).

The present analysis focuses first on those plays which feature mock encomia, conventionally described as inversions of the standard encomiastic genre which result in praises of unworthy subjects.[6] These are first investigated according to their subject matter. It will be seen that the gravity of the subject matter is usually linked to the social status of the speaker: wealthy and educated characters usually address complex notions, while lower-status ones tend to deal with baser topics. Likewise, mock encomia about specific characters usually do not cross social boundaries since high/low status characters mock only those with whom they share the same social class. The critical focus then shifts to the 'reversed' mock encomium, that is an attack or *vituperatio* which maintains a paradoxical shade since it is directed against a conventionally positive subject. It may be worth underlying the difference between Vickers's label of 'inverted encomium' and the 'reversed mock encomium' one: the former hints at the process by which a mock encomium is created, namely by inverting the logical extremes of the encomium, thus by praising something unworthy

[5] Quotations from *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* refer to Shakespeare 2007. All other plays here investigated refer to the respective Arden Third Series critical editions.

[6] In his 1542 translation of Erasmus' *Apophthegmata*, Nicholas Udall refers to paradoxical praises as "feigned argumentes of matiers inopinable, and suche are properly called declamacions and not oracions . . . So did Homere write the battaill betweene the frogges & the myce, Erasmus wrote the praise of foolyshnesse, an other the praise of baldenesse, an other of drounkenship" (326).

of praise; the latter reverses the mock encomium itself and acts like a *vituperatio* as it dispraises something conventionally worthy of praise (see Vickers 1968, 307). The present study aims to investigate the structural variation of conventional mock praises in *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Lastly, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are introduced as case studies to investigate the role of the dramatic framework in enhancing or undermining the paradoxicality of a given mock encomium.

As such, the present analysis problematises Sackton's claims regarding the little "prominence" of mock encomia in Shakespeare's plays and shows how the playwright introduced the paradoxical genre to the dramatic setting. In accordance with Allan H. Gilbert, who stated that "[p]aradoxes in the drama are obviously to be related to those occurring in the literature of the period" (1935, 537), this investigation also highlights the thematic and argumentative echoes between dramatic and non-dramatic mock praises. This analysis counters Sackton's description of Shakespeare's "assimilate[ing]" them "to other forms of dramatic speech" (1949, 86).

1. The Subject Matter in Shakespeare's Mock Encomia

In Shakespeare's eight comedies here investigated, paradoxical praises seem to consistently address abstract notions which range from philosophical to more humble conceits. *The Comedy of Errors* seemingly deals with the latter category as it embeds a mock encomium of violence on behalf of a beaten servant.

The play recounts the comical exchanges between two long-lost couples of twins: Antigonus of Syracuse and Antigonus of Ephesus and their servants, Dromio of Syracuse and Dromio of Ephesus respectively. In 4.4, Antigonus of Ephesus is arrested and lashes out against his servant, Dromio of Ephesus, who has not brought the money necessary for his bail. In fact, Antigonus has fallen prey to just another misunderstanding caused by commonplace exchanges of identity since he had unwillingly asked that money to his servant's twin, Dromio of Syracuse. Facing his master's customary violence, Dromio of Ephesus addresses it in mocking terms:

> I am an ass, indeed; you may prove it by my long ears. I have served him from the hour of my nativity to this instant, and have nothing at his hands for my service but blows. When I am cold, he heats me with beating; when I am warm, he cools me with beating; I am waked with it when I sleep; raised with it when I sit; driven out of doors with it when I go from home; welcomed home with it when I return; nay, I bear it on my shoulders, as a beggar wont her brat; and, I think when he hath lamed me, I shall beg with it from door to door. (30-40)

In referring to his master's habit of beating him, Dromio embeds in his speech a mock praise of physical violence which complies with paradoxical conventions as it finds positive traits in a stereotypically negative notion. Dromio starts by contextualising his long-term service to Antigonus ("I have served him from the hour of my nativity to this instant") and his pay back for it as "blows". Dromio is no masochist; a few lines earlier he explicitly stated: "I would I were senseless, sir, that I might not feel your blows" (26-7). His eight-lines praise of his master's violence thus results from a witty handling of the subject through irony and paradoxicality, which construe a mock encomium about physical violence as something worth receiving. As Dromio explains, his master's beatings protect him from heat or cold ("[w]hen I am cold, he heats me with beating; when I am warm, he cools me with beating;"), prompt him to action ("driven out of doors with it when I go from home") and "welcome" him home when he returns. Besides a caring attitude on Antigonus' part, violence is also defined as Dromio's "brat", possibly the visible outcome of his relationship with his master. The signs of Antigonus' violence on Dromio's body, however, may prove useful too as they may stand for his last resource to find a living when he will be dismissed from service ("and, I think when he hath lamed me, I shall beg with it from door to door").

The argumentative convention of finding positive traits in traditionally negative subjects is respected in all Shakespearean mock encomia on abstract notions. In both *As You Like It* and *All's Well That Ends Well*, comical characters address one of the most popular paradoxical themes, cuckoldry. Maria Cristina Figorilli inscribes this topic within the so-called *infames materiae*, namely

shameful conditions, and highlights its popularity in sixteenth-century Italy by mentioning mock praises about it by Doni, Grazzini (il Lasca), Nelli, Modio and Garzoni (2008, 37-8). These works rely on standard argumentative and rhetorical strategies of the paradoxical tradition, such as "ironical quotations from *auctores*, lists of topics, false etymologies, elements from onomastics and toponymy, burlesque inserts" meddled with "comical linguistic virtuosity" (37, translation mine). In early modern France too, writers and poets tried their hands at mock praises of cuckoldry, as it is the case with Belleau's *Petites Inventions* (1578), Rabelais' *Tiers Livre* (1564) and Passerat's *La Corne d'abondance* (1606).[7] This sub-genre seems to have peaked in England almost one century later in plays, as Chapman's already mentioned *Al Fooles* (1609), poems, such as the anonymous *Cornucopia or Pasquil's Night-Cap* (1612) and Samuel Wesley the Elder's "In Praise of the Horns" (1685), and songs, as the anonymous "The Horn Exalted" (1661).[8] In most of these works, the cuckold's horns are paradoxically turned into signs of abundance given the resemblance between his horns and the prodigious cornucopia, usually depicted as overflowing with flowers, fruit, and wheat.[9] Also, mock praises of female infidelity often consider the husband's horns as proofs of his generosity, which enables him to share with others not only his material goods, but also his wife. Possibly benefitting from the foreign development of this sub-genre, mock praises of cuckoldry feature both *As You Like It* and *All's Well That Ends Well*, although displaying different argumentative strategies.

In *As You Like It*, Touchstone admits that men's main obstacle to marriage is their fear of becoming cuckolds ("that [horns] is the dowry of his wife", 3.3.50-1). To overcome it, he shows how such dowry can benefit the receiver. With a paradoxical twist, Touchstone turns the cuckold's horns from a subject of *infames*

[7] It may be interesting to notice a literary connection between the Italian and the French developments of this sub-genre. Attributed to one "F.C.T.", *Le Monde des cornuz* is a French addition to the 1580 edition of Chappuys' translation of Doni's *I Mondi celesti*, a series of volumes dedicated to imaginary worlds. For further information see Tomarken 1990.

[8] Some of these and later titles can be found in Knight Miller 1956.

[9] For a more extensive discussion see Bruster 1990.

materiae to a sign of nobility and decorum. To do so, he explains how horns dignify those who wear them by means of everyday imageries:

> . . . But what though? Courage! As horns are odious, they are necessary. It is said: 'Many a man knows no end of his goods.' Right! Many a man has good horns and knows no end of them. Well, that is the dowry of his wife; 'tis none of his own getting. Horns? Even so. Poor men alone? No, no; the noblest deer hath them as huge as the rascal. Is the single man therefore blessed? No; as a wall'd town is more worthier than a village, so is the forehead of a married man more honourable than the bare brow of a bachelor; and by how much defence is better than no skill, by so much is horn more precious than to want. (3.3.47-58)

Touchstone first sets the paradoxical intention of his speech by equating a man's fortune with his horns by means of popular knowledge ("'[m]any a man knows no end of his goods.' Right! Many a man has good horns and knows no end of them", 49-50). To him, the cuckold's horns stand for necessary and magnificent ornaments which should become a source of pride for their bearer. To convey this meaning, he compares them to everyday images, such as the magnificent antlers of adult deers ("the noblest deer hath them as huge as the rascal", 51-2) and the prestigious walls that deck and protect wealthy cities ("a wall'd town is more worthier than a village", 52). The conclusion of his mock praise makes his point explicit: "the forehead of a married man [is] more honourable than the bare brow of a bachelor" (53-4).

Similarly, in *All's Well That Ends Well*, the Clown tries to downplay wifely infidelity as men's main reason for fearing marriage by showing how it could benefit the cuckolded husband.[10]

[10] A similar paradoxical argumentation can be found Middleton's city comedy *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (c. 1613). In 1.2, the knowing cuckold Allwit claims to thank his wife's lover since "h'as maintained my house this ten years, / Not only keeps my wife, but 'a keeps me, / And all my family; I am at his table, / He gets me all my children, and pays the nurse, / Monthly, or weekly, puts me to nothing, . . . / The happiest state that ever man was born to. / I walk out in a morning, come to breakfast, / Find excellent cheer, a good fire in winter, / I see these things, but like a happy man, / I pay for

By means of a farming metaphor, the dishonest wife is compared to a fertile field which is ploughed by her lover rather than her husband ("[h]e that ears my land spares my team and gives me leave to in the crop", 1.3.33-4). Still, this exchange is not something to be dreaded for it spares the husband from the necessary, though back-breaking activity of ploughing, which is carried out by his wife's lover, and leaves him to enjoy the crop thus produced. The Clown's main argument is further explained by a linguistic game on the word 'cuckold'. In claiming that "if I be his cuckold, he's my drudge" (34), the Clown relies on the etymological association between 'cuckold' and 'cuckoo', that is the bird which lays its eggs in the nests of other birds and leaves them to their care. By doing so, he compares the husband to the cuckold and the wife's lover to the weary host couple. In his view, it is the cuckolded husband who benefits the most from the extra-marital relation. As the host couple has to feed and protect the cuckoo's egg, so the lover eventually substitutes the husband in the demanding task of taking care of the wife's needs. In this light, husbands should be grateful for the salvific presence of a lover in their wife's life and greet him as "the cherisher of my flesh and blood" (34). As a result of the Clown's paradoxical reasoning, a traditionally negative situation as wifely infidelity turns out to be a wholly positive experience for the witty husband ("he that cherishes my flesh and blood loves my flesh and blood; he that loves my flesh and blood is my friend: ergo, he that kisses my wife is my friend", 34-6). This line defines adultery as a means to achieve domestic happiness rather than divorce. From a structural point of view, it seems to anticipate the result of the bed-trick played at Bertram's expenses: Helena takes advantage of an illicit situation – Bertram's extra-marital affair with Diana – to finally consummate and legalise her marriage with him by substituting herself with Bertram's would-be lover (see Iyengar 2003, 56). The same compliance to rhetorical and logical rules can be found in many other mock encomia on abstract notions uttered

---

none at all, . . . / O, two miraculous blessings; 'tis the knight / Hath took that labour all out of my hands; / I may sit still and play; he's jealous for me – / Watches her steps, sets spies – I live at ease; / He has both the cost and torment." (16-55).

by higher-status characters.

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, the shrew-tamer Petruchio relies on a mock encomium of poverty to explain to Kate the hidden reason of his rejection of both her newly-made cap and gown:

> Well, come, my Kate; we will unto your father's
> Even in these honest mean habiliments;
> Our purses shall be proud, our garments poor;
> For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich;
> And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
> So honour peereth in the meanest habit.
> What, is the jay more precious than the lark
> Because his feathers are more beautiful?
> Or is the adder better than the eel
> Because his painted skin contents the eye?
> O no, good Kate; neither art thou the worse
> For this poor furniture and mean array. (4.3.166-77)

Petruchio's mock praise follows a quite traditional argumentation in order to prove Kate how worldly goods do not determine someone's wealth. First, he downplays the role and importance of expensive objects by claiming that it is "the mind that makes the body rich" and not the other way round. Then, in order to underline how honour is not affected by the lack or presence of economic goods, Petruchio devises an apt comparison between honour and the sun, offers two examples from the natural world ("is the jay more precious than the lark . . . Or is the adder better than the eel"), and summarises his thesis with a conclusive remark ("neither art thou the worse for this poor furniture and mean array").

This structure is similar to that usually found in contemporary paradoxes on poverty, such as Munday's first declamation, 'For Poverty'. This focuses on proving the inconveniences related to wealth rather than on the difference between 'appearing' rich and 'being' rich ("[o]ur purses shall be proud, our garments poor"). In some passages, he seems to implicitly align with Petruchio as he mentions classical philosophers, politicians and poets as authoritative examples of how wealth is a weak signifier for intelligence and moral righteousness ("[t]o cal to memory the life of Valerius Publicola, Menenius Agrippa, as also the good Aristides,

who died all so poor, as they were faine by almes to be buried", Munday 1593, B1*v.*). Likewise, Petruchio's wise similitude between the sun and honour, which both pierce through any material they are covered with, seem to echo in Munday's mention of Seneca, who said "[t]hat the man is greatly to be commended, whoe prizeth earthen vessels as much as if they were of silver: but much more praise deserveth he, that esteemeth vessels of golde or silver no more when if they were of earth" (B3*r.*). Like the worth of a person, that of an object can be perceived despite the material it is made up of. Munday's paradox goes on by providing countless proofs of how any type of economic riches imply troubles and inconveniences: "horses of excellence" become "fantasticall beaste, night and day eating the goods of his maister" (B3*v.*), while "fair and sumptuous garments", as those desired by Kate, are turned into the objects of everyday care ("thou must so often rubbe, wipe, brush . . . to keepe them from spots and moaths") and emblems of "deep vanity" (B4*v.*). Like Petruchio's, Munday's paradox ends by firmly restating its thesis: "seeing from poverty springeth infinite profits and commodities, and from worldly goods, proceedeth nothing but unhappinesse" (D1*r.*). Similar resemblances in theme, structure and argumentative strategies between a Shakespearean character's and traditional mock encomia surface in other comedies too.

Love's Labour's Lost can also be useful in drawing comparisons between traditional mock encomia and Shakespearean adaptations of them. In 1.1, Biron depicts Ferdinand's quest for knowledge as destined to fail since it requires an endless and pointless pursuit of something that can never be fully grasped. As such, ignorance is preferable as it does not waste intellectual energies and eventually benefits who pursues it:

> Why, all delights are vain; but that most vain,
> Which, with pain purchased, doth inherit pain:
> As, painfully to pore upon a book
> To seek the light of truth; while truth the while
> Doth falsely blind the eyesight of his look:
> Light seeking light doth light of light beguile:
> So, ere you find where light in darkness lies,
> Your light grows dark by losing of your eyes.

> Study me how to please the eye indeed
> By fixing it upon a fairer eye,
> Who dazzling so, that eye shall be his heed
> And give him light that it was blinded by.
> Study is like the heaven's glorious sun
> That will not be deep-search'd with saucy looks:
> Small have continual plodders ever won
> Save base authority from others' books
> These earthly godfathers of heaven's lights
> That give a name to every fixed star
> Have no more profit of their shining nights
> Than those that walk and wot not what they are.
> Too much to know is to know nought but fame;
> And every godfather can give a name. (72-93)

Biron opens his *vituperatio* of knowledge, which can be thus read as a mock encomium of ignorance, by highlighting its counter-intuitive nature and eventual damaging outcome ("all delights are vain; but that most vain, / Which with pain purchased doth inherit pain", 72-3). The rest of his monologue is marked by the fertile comparison between knowledge and light/sun. The reliance on such an effective metaphor helps highlighting the similarities between its terms. First, the impossibility of pursuing knowledge through the intellect is compared with the child-like attempts at grasping a proper image of the sun by looking straight into it ("[s]tudy is like the heaven's glorious sun / That will not be deep-search'd with saucy looks", 84-5). Not only is this a time-consuming activity, it may also lead to serious consequences such as the loss of one's eyesight due to constant reading ("[y]our light grows dark by losing of your eyes"). Eventually, both activities, learning and sun-staring, would lead to the same meaningless outcome which has no concrete results ("[t]hese earthly godfathers of heaven's lights / That give a name to every fixed star / Have no more profit of their shining nights / Than those that walk and wot not what they are", 89-91). In the concluding lines of his monologue, Biron's critique to the learned habit of pursuing knowledge leaves room to a quasi-explicit praise of ignorance. In stating "[t]oo much to know is to know nought but fame" (92), he interprets in paradoxical terms the maximum expansion of one's knowledge as a cognitive contraction

which reduces the qualities of such learning to mere "fame", which may stand for superficial knowledge. In doing so, Biron also strips this intellectual task of its appeal: since extensive knowledge is comparable to fame, or ignorance, anyone can pursue and grasp it without much effort ("every godfather can give a name", 93).

Biron's tirade may echo one of the best-known mock encomia of ignorance of the time, namely Agrippa's *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum*. Like the Shakespearean character, Agrippa too conceives knowledge, namely "the Arts and Sciences", as "pernicious" and "destructive to the well-being of Men, or to the Salvation of our Souls".[11] He justifies his paradoxical claim by adding a reason similar to Biron's. As the latter highlights the impossibility of acquiring full knowledge ("[l]ight seeking light doth light of light beguile", 77), so Agrippa hints at the imponderable range of notions to be mastered in order to access such a level of knowledge and wisdom ("[t]he knowledge of all Sciences is so difficult, if I may not say impossible, that the age of Man will not suffice to learn the perfection of one Art as it ought to be", B3*v.*). Agrippa grounds his claim on religious writings as the Ecclesiastes, where knowledge is compared to the Sun like in Biron's speech ("[w]hich Ecclesiastes seems to intimate, where he saith, Then I beheld the whole Work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is wrought under the Sun; for the which man laboureth to seek it, and cannot find it", B3*v.*). This passage from Ecclesiastes is also present in Munday's *Defence of Contraries*. In "For Ignorance", Munday explicitly mentions the religious text by stating: "[a]nd these words agree with the saying of Ecclesiasticus: that wee should seeke after nothing, which surmounteth the capacity of our spirit" (E2*r.*). In all three authors too an attentive quest for knowledge seems to inevitably result in the paradoxical victory of ignorance. Biron mentions it in his closing reference to "fame" ("[t]oo much to know is to know nought but fame"), Agrippa defines it as the result of the dramatic events prompted by "Knowledge" ("this [Knowledge] is that hath extinguish'd the Light of Faith, casting our Souls into profound darkness, which condemning the Truth has mounted Error to a Throne", B4*r.*), while Munday almost links madness to

[11] Quoted here in the 1684 translation, 2.

it ("that the multitude of Sciences, and deepe knowledge in things, oftentimes puts a man beside himself, and carrieth him quite from all good sense", E4*v*.).[12]

Besides ignorance, Biron delivers a mock encomium on black beauty too. This topic was rather common at the time and in Shakespeare's production in particular. As well known, his *Sonnets* include almost thirty compositions on this subject, which are now referred to as 'The Dark Lady Sonnets' (127-54).[13] One of the most popular of them is Sonnet 130, "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun", which is characterised by a paradoxical praise of the poet's object of desire. While mock praises of ugliness were already quite common in early modern England,[14] those concerning black beauty in particular became increasingly popular in the seventeenth century, as is the case with the anonymous and undated "That a Black-a-moor Woman is the greatest Beauty; in a Letter to a Lady exceeding Fair", Thomas Jordan's *A Paradox on his Mistresse, who is cole Blacke, Blinde, Wrinckled, Crooked and Dumbe* (1646) and Herbert of Cherbury's posthumous *Sonnet of Black Beauty* (1665). In these texts, black beauty may have been praised by means of a patriarchal narrative already connecting ugliness and morality.

[12] Biron's and Munday's mock encomia also share the same cause-effect relation between knowledge and pain. As Biron states that "all delights are vain; but that most vain, / Which, with pain purchased, doth inherit pain: / As, painfully to pore upon a book / To seek the light of truth" (72-5), so Munday "that learning being (by this edict) driven forth of the sight and beholding of men, by the same meanes might be prevented the unhappinesse, that from thence dailye ensueth" (E4*r*.).

[13] Quotations refer to Duncan-Jones 2010; for an alternative view, see Edmondson and Wells 2020.

[14] Another instance of Shakespearean praise of ugliness can be found in *The Comedy of Errors*. In 3.2, Dromio of Syracuse compares the kitchen wench Nell's flawed complexion to a precious treasure: "[o], sir, upon her nose all o'er / embellished with rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, / declining their rich aspect to the hot breath of Spain, / who sent whole armadoes of carracks to be ballast at / her nose" (137-40). Besides Shakespeare's plays, mock praises of ugliness feature in Lando's *Paradossi* and consequently Estienne's and Munday's translations and Donne's 'The Anagram'. For further reading on this sub-genre in early modern Europe see Baker 2008 and Bettella 2005.

In the early modern period, the ugly female body was starting to be presented as "a stable, fixed, and knowable property" and celebrated for its "resistance to transformation, its immutability" (Baker 2008, 105). While fair women's appearance is transformed by time, sorrows, childbearing and fashions, ugly women's remain unscathed. Something similar can be said about light and black beauty. In Jordan's terms, the "changeless Hue" of the black mistress was considered a sign of her fixed nature ("[a]ll men's eyes / May trust thy face, for it brookes no disguise", Stelzer 2022). Unlike light-skinned women, the darker woman's inability to mask her physical appearance and, for extension, her morality turns her into a particularly useful image in conservative terms, "an easie booke/ Writen in plain language for the meaner wit", which defuse her agency as threat to the male subject (see Baker 2008, 106).

This socio-political shade is not to be found in Biron's praise of Rosaline's darker features. His encomium is anticipated by his bewilderment at feeling in love with her: "[w]hat, I! I love! I sue! I seek a wife! . . . A wightly wanton with a velvet brow, / With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes" (3.1.184-92). Although honest in intention, Biron's lines echo paradoxical writing in its argumentative structure and comical exaggerations. When confronted with contrary opinions, Biron reverses them and extricates from their negative terms some useful images for his praise. In 4.3, he develops a praise of Rosaline's blackness from the King's shocked comment on her physical appearance ("[b]y heaven, thy love is black as ebony", 243). Reworking the "ebony" image, Biron creates a startling encomium which, as seen, is immediately acknowledged as paradoxical by the King ("[o] paradox!", 250):

> Is ebony like her? O wood divine!
> A wife of such wood were felicity.
> O, who can give an oath? Where is a book?
> That I may swear beauty doth beauty lack,
> If that she learn not of her eye to look.
> No face is fair that is not full so black. (244-8)

This paradoxical argumentative pattern resurfaces as soon as Biron appropriates the King's following remark ("[b]lack is the badge of hell", 250) and uses its derogatory reference to praise Rosaline. As

the King mentions "hell" as the emblem of the negative connotation attached to blackness, Biron uses it to point in the opposite direction, namely heaven ("[d]evils soonest tempt, resembling spirits of light", 253). His exchanges with Dumain and Longaville follow the same rhetorical pattern and end with Biron's reference to a rather controversial topic which surfaced in mock encomia too, i.e. women's make up.[15] He motivates conventional fair beauty with the use of cosmetics, which Rosaline does not need given her natural perfection ("[y]our mistresses dare never come in rain, / For fear their colours should be wash'd away", 266-7).[16]

In one play in particular, however, Shakespeare strays from the traditional argumentative structure of mock encomia of unworthy people. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Petruchio's praise of Kate does not rely on the rhetorical convention of finding the bright side in the character's weaknesses. Referring to her frowns, he does not conventionally endorse them as effective means to discourage possible suitors and keep her chaste. Rather, he turns them into their opposite by positively depicting them as "morning roses newly wash'd with dew" (2.1.173). This process of replacing flaws with their opposite virtues is most evident at the conclusion of his unconventional courtship, where Petruchio wholly rejects Kate's

[15] See for instance Donne's paradox "That Women Ought to Paint Themselves".

[16] Biron's praise of Rosaline's darker features seems rather consistent with the conventional rhetorical structure of this paradoxical genre, as it may be exemplified by William Cornwallis' paradoxical praise of Richard the Third investigated by Francesco Dall'Olio in the present volume. In his work, Cornwallis aims to alter the king's infamous reputation and to do so, he interprets King Richard's negative traits in positive terms: his unpleasant appearance ("he was crook-backt, lame, il-shapen, il-fauoured", B1*v.*) is read as a sign of intellectual sharpness ("I might impute that fault to Nature, but that I rather thinke it her bounty: for she being wholly intentiue to his minde, neglected his forme, so that shee infused a straight minde in a crooked bodie, wherein shee shewed her carefull prouidence", ibid.); likewise, his ambition is readily justified as an act of love to his country ("[i]t is laid to his charge (as a maine obiection) that hee was ambitious, let vs examine the truth of this accusation. Was he ambitious, who was onely content with the limits of his own Countrey, who sought to bee rather famous for instituting of good Lawes, then for atchieuing great conquests? No", C3*r.*).

personality and transforms it into something more convenient. While Rosaline's darker feature are maintained as a characteristic of hers and re-interpreted as emblems of divine beauty, Kate's shrewish identity is erased and replaced with an opposite portrayal of hers which provides her with a new, unnatural social mask: "'[t]was told me you were rough, and coy, and sullen, / And now I find report a very liar; / For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous" (2.1.237-9).

These analyses of Shakespeare's adaptation of the mock encomia genre in his plays have highlighted a specific relation between the characters who utter such paradoxical praises and the topics they deal with. For what concerns mock encomia of abstract notions, low subjects are often addressed by lower status characters. In the previously mentioned passages, servants and clowns develop paradoxical praises of their master's beatings or of cuckoldry. As seen, in *The Comedy of Errors* Dromio of Ephesus explains the benefits deriving from his master's violent conduct ("[w]hen I am cold, he heats me with beating; when I am warm, he cools me with beating" 4.4.34-5), while in both *As You Like It* and *All's Well That Ends Well* the clowns highlight the positive side of female infidelity and describe the cuckold's horns as husbands' noble ornaments ("so is the forehead of a married man more honourable than the bare brow of a bachelor. And by how much defence is better than no skill, by so much is horn more precious than to want.", 3.3.55-8). Contrariwise, more refined topics are usually investigated by higher status characters. Petruchio, a representative of the merchant class, and Biron, a lord attending on the king of Navarre, address themes such as poverty, ignorance and ugliness in terms of black beauty which require more structured argumentations and may also suggest philosophical or esthetical implications.

While mock encomia about abstract notions seem to follow conventional paradoxical standards in their structure and argumentation and show a possible pattern between the speaker and the topic addressed, those about people are too few to allow such an analysis. As far as the latter are concerned, it can only be hypothesised that there is a connection between the speaker and the object of the paradoxical praise in terms of social standing. In *Love's Labour's Lost* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, Biron's paradoxical praise

of Rosaline's black beauty and Petruchio's mock praise of Kate's shrewishness do not violate social boundaries since the speaker and his interlocutor share almost the same social ranking: Kate is the daughter of a wealthy man and Petruchio of a respectable merchant of two renowned cities in the Veneto region.

2. Reversed Mock Encomia in *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*

While in some Shakespearean comedies mock encomia generally comply to rhetorical conventions, in some others they present variations in either their argumentative structure or intention. This is mainly the case of the reversed mock encomium and its use in three comedies in particular, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

As previously mentioned, the reversed mock encomium alters the conventional argumentative structure since it finds faults in something which is generally considered as praiseworthy. As such, it works like a paradoxical *vituperatio*.

In some comedies, the reversed mock encomium seems to follow its conventional argumentative structure, which aims to identify the negative aspects of traditionally positive attitudes or characteristics. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Parolles follows this standard as he utters a reversed mock encomium of, thus a paradoxical attack against, long-termed preserved virginity.[17] In sixteenth century Europe, the *carpe diem* motif was greatly

[17] In Renaissance Protestant England, the ancient Christian ideal of perpetual virginity progressively lost its appeal as women started to be considered almost exclusively in relation to their matrimonial status. While on the one hand, marriage was considered a "divine, natural and social institution . . . a natural state, found even in animals who possess neither a deliberative faculty nor freedom of choice" (Maclean 1980, 28), on the other, women were conventionally considered as more inclined to stray from virtue than men given their physiological and intellectual limitations proved by the humoral theory of that time. Hence the necessity "to move woman as quickly as possible from postpubescent virgin to wife and mother" and the complementary anxiety towards the unmarried – thus morally and socially unstable – virgin. For further readings on this topic, see Loughlin 1997 and Flather 2007.

successful and often intertwined with the classical image of the unplucked rose to comment on the need for women to lose their virginity at the right moment, thus in its prime. However, Parolles does not seem to fully embrace this literary tradition as it pushes it one step further in his paradoxical argumentation. The conventional exhortation in losing one's virginity relied on the basic principle that the more women waited, the more their beauty faded. Thus, it would have been increasingly difficult for those who excessively waited to find men still interested in plucking their virginal flower. In the Shakespearean comedy, Parolles shifts the female necessity to lose their virginity from a personal and aesthetic level to a social and political one. Developed in three separate speeches, Parolles' first two sections focus on the loss of virginity as a necessary social and political passage for women to be granted a legitimised role in society as both part of the marital institution and active members in the furthering and preservation of the species. His last speech only relies on the more conventional *carpe diem* motif which defines the loss of virginity as an "answer" to "the time of request" (156).

In the first speech, Parolles plainly states the gist of his paradoxical claim: "[i]t / is not politic in the commonwealth of nature to preserve virginity" (1.1.105-6). The connection with both the political, social world and the animal, natural one is fundamental to his reasoning and will be gradually unfolded in his speech. He then moves to highlight the resemblance of virginity with a negative quality, which is only when it is lost ("there was never virgin got till virginity was first lost", 107-8). By stating so, he proves the necessity for women to lose their virginity if they want to be acknowledged as such. Moving from this, Parolles concludes this first speech by explaining that preserving virginity may not be considered a praise-worthy custom since it is a virtue which must be eventually lost in order to be considered truly valuable ("by being ever kept, it [virginity] is ever lost", 109).

His second speech looks back to the natural order and the necessity of losing virginity to preserve the species. To prove his point, he compares virginity to suicide as one of the most feared acts for a Christian at that time: "[h]e that hangs himself is a virgin: virginity murders itself and should be buried in highways out of all sanctified limit, as a desperate offendress against nature." (114-

16). Relying on this religious image, Parolles strengthens his claim by pairing virginity with heinous sins and defines it as "peevish, proud, idle, made of self-love, which is the most inhibited sin in the canon" (117-18). In this light, clinging to it equates to willingly dwell in unorthodox, blasphemous conduct. This section ends with an economic metaphor which turns virginity into a commodity, whose worth depends on its timely loss ("[w]ithin ten year it will make itself ten, which is a goodly increase", 119-20).

Parolles' paradoxical reasoning seems to convince Helena, who finally questions him on how "to lose it to her own liking?" (122). Parolles devotes his third reversed mock encomium on virginity to this topic. Still, although he begins by recalling the more conventional *carpe diem* motif, he develops it in purely economical terms: "the longer kept, the less worth. Off with't while 'tis vendible" (124-5). To "answer the time of request", Helena needs to understand the importance of timing in losing her most precious quality to make the most out of it. To do so, he compares long-kept virginity with a low-quality good, namely a mature – and thus unappealing – French withered pear which loses its appeal if kept too long on storage and is left unsold and useless to its owner ("[m]arry, 'tis a withered pear: it was formerly better: marry, yet 'tis a withered pear. Will you anything with it?", 129-30).

A similar paradoxical tirade against the preservation of virginity was penned by John Donne in his *Paradoxes and Problems*.[18] In 'Paradox 12, "That Virginity is a Virtue", Donne states that the "perpetuall keeping [of] it . . . is a most inhumane vice" (3-4) for much the same reason mentioned by Parolles, that is its obstruction of the natural continuation of the human species. Donne makes this point clear in referring to reproduction as woman's main role and objective ("[f]or surely nothing is more unprofitable in the Commonwealth of Nature, then they that dy old maids, because they refuse to be used to that end for which they were only made", 36-9). Like Parolles, Donne acknowledges the implicit paradoxicality in preserving virginity for too long and refers to it in religious terms. If not lost at a convenient age, virginity may turn into vices such as "[p]eevishnese, Pride and Stupidity" (30-1). He strengthens his

[18] Quotations refer to Donne 1980.

claim by eventually defining long-kept virginity as "a vice far worse then Avarice [since] it will neither let the possessor nor others take benefit by it, nor can it be bequeathed to any" (87-90).

Like Parolles and Donne, Vincentio in *Measure for Measure* utters a reversed mock encomium in accordance with the argumentative tradition of this literary genre. In 3.1, he comforts Claudio, who was lamenting his unfortunate fate, by highlighting faults which relate to life rather than death. In reading between the lines, his speech can thus be considered a mock praise of death, a rather common genre in early modern English literature.[19] To do so, Vincentio first downgrades life to "a breath . . . Servile to all the skyey influences" and to the origin of man's problems and sorrows ("[t]hat dost this habitation, where thou keep'st, Hourly afflict", 8-11). His main objection against life lies in the contradictory realisation that in it "[l]ie hid moe thousand deaths; yet death we fear" (39-40). This claim resurfaces in his discussion of the lack of nobility and courage in life, which to him derives from an implicit and possibly irrational fear of death: "thy [life's] best of rest is sleep, And that thou oft provokest; yet grossly fear'st Thy death, which is no more" (17-19). Vincentio's comparison of life as a disguised death can be found in one of the best-known paradoxical texts of the time, namely Cicero's *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, first translated into English in 1534. There, Cicero affirms that "that whiche you call lyfe, is death" (1569, E7*r*.). Cicero's *Tusculanae* too may remind Vincentio's reasoning. Here, Cicero blames life for most of human suffering and highlights the role of death in restoring inner peace: "to lack is properly said of him which feels the lack. But there is no feeling in a dead man. No more therefore is there any lack in him" (Bigliazzi 2022). Likewise, he conventionally compares death to sleep in order to exemplify the naturalness and peacefulness of such a condition ("my death resemble sleep, which often without any trouble of dreams doth bring a man most quiet rest", ibid.).

In the previous instances, reversed mock encomia comply with the conventional argumentative structure which requires the identification of negative traits in generally considered positive

[19] See for instance Thomas Becon's *Prayse of Death* (1563) or the translation of Philippe de Mornay's *The Defence of Death* (1577).

subjects. This is not the case with the reversed paradoxical praise which is featured in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Here, Beatrice tries to find excuses to reject any man who means to woo her into the subjected role of wife. To do so, she applies the argumentation of the reversed paradoxical praise to any suitor she encounters. Thus, she widens the conventional subjects of the mock encomium, which traditionally feature positive concepts, to any subject whose amiable features she can substitute with negative ones without further argumentation. According to Hero's account of this paradoxical strategy, Beatrice finds no difficulties in emasculating a man if of light complexion ("fair-faced", 3.1.63) by comparing him to "her sister". With the same argumentative ease, she wittily downgrades a man of darker complexion in equally unpleasant terms ("[i]f black, why Nature, drawing of an antic, Made a foul blot", 65-6). This rhetorical strategy is used to question behavioural characteristics as well. To Beatrice, a talkative man is not a good match for his endless and possibly inconstant speech ("a vane blown with all winds", 66) and a quiet one is equally undesirable for his tiresome intellectual immobility ("a block moved with none", 67). Her indiscriminate application of the reversed mock encomium creates a logical paradox where any possibility leads to the same result, that is to her absolute rejection of any potential wooer.

Like the previous one on mock encomia, this section on reversed ones has shown how paradoxical praises either respect their conventional form or alter their argumentative structure or intention in Shakespeare's writing. While in *Measure for Measure* the reversed mock encomium follows traditional argumentation as it identifies the negative aspects of conventionally positive attitudes or characteristics, that is knowledge, in *All's Well That Ends Well* the reversed mock encomium shows stylistic variations in its conventional argumentation. As seen, Parolles' *carpe diem* invitation to women to lose their virginity relies less on the traditional motif of fading beauty than on the social implications of becoming a 'woman' and wife. Eventually, *The Taming of the Shrew* offers a reversed mock encomium which strays from its conventional argumentative structure since it widens its traditional subject, that is traditionally positive concepts, to anything the speaker can describe in negative terms and thus reject. The following section of this study shows

further variations of the mock encomium genre and argues that the presence of peculiar dramatic frameworks affects the readability of the mock encomium and eventually questions the honesty of its paradoxical intention.

3. Dramatic Frameworks and Mock Encomia in *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

The impact of the dramatic framework on the overall interpretation of the play and its mock encomium is first analysed in the last scene of *The Taming of the Shrew*, where Kate delivers her final monologue on male natural superiority over women. In this case the imaginative, and critical, context is fundamental in shaping the reading of her monologue as honest or paradoxical, and possibly subversive. These views have gradually been systematised into two main scholarly interpretative readings, which are usually referred to as revisionist and anti-revisionist.[20] The anti-revisionist critique interprets the play as a farcical rendition of traditional shrew-taming material and identifies Kate's and Petruchio's affinity with their habit of sharing wordplays. In this light, Kate's monologue is read in a rather literal way as the final piece of evidence of her newly acquired status of obedient wife and submission to Petruchio and the early modern status quo.[21] While the former interpretation strips Kate's speech of its paradoxical potential, the latter hands it back to her as it advocates Kate's aware and subversive use of rhetoric as a means to undermine patriarchal power. I argue that this reading is supported by structural and linguistic similarities between the last scene of the play and its dramatic framework.

In the Induction scene,[22] the Lord and his men stumble into a

[20] For the division between revisionist and anti-revisionist readings of *The Shrew* see Heilman 1966 and Bean 1980. In his analysis, Bean refers to the two oppositional readings and offers "a third way": to him, the play presents gender hierarchies and mutual affection between Petruchio and Kate which, however, is eventually read in terms of wifely obedience.

[21] For revisionist readings supporting Kate's honest praise of patriarchy see, for example, Boose 1994 and Blake 2002.

[22] *The Shrew*'s Induction has long been the subject of scholarly attention since it constitutes an important clog in the reconstructive process of the

drunken tinker named Sly and decide to prank him by making him believe he is a rich gentleman. To do so, the Lord instructs his men on how to behave towards the tinker and provides the Page with detailed indications on how to play his dutiful and obedient wife. His notes of conventional signs of female subjection mainly appear in the following lines:

> . . . [h]e bear himself with honourable action, such as he hath observ'd in noble ladies Unto their lords . . . with soft low tongue and lowly courtesy, and say 'What is't your honour will command, wherein your lady and your humble wife may show her duty and make known her love?' (Ind.1.107-15)

The Lord's instructions seem to resurface during the wager scene, where Kate responds to Petruchio's call with both "lowly courtesy" and "soft tongue" and gently addresses her husband with a variation of the Page's "[w]hat is't your honour will command", namely "[w]hat is your will, sir, that you send for me?" (5.2.101).[23] Similarly, the Page's conventional description of the husband-wife relationship in hierarchical terms ("[m]y husband and my lord, my lord and husband, I am your wife in all obedience", Ind.2.106-08, my emphasis) seems to echo in Kate's monologue, where she twice refers to her husband as "lord" (5.2.138-9; 147) and defines obedience as one of the main duties of a proper wife (5.2.153-4; 165). This display of traditional and comical subservience may lead to perceive a parallelism between the Page's and Kate's not only

play's textual history. Some scholars have underlined how it possibly derives from Tale Type 1531 ('Lord for a Day'), while others have focused on its presence in *The Taming of A Shrew* (1594), generally considered either a pirated copy of Shakespeare's play or an earlier comedy which may have been another source for Shakespeare's version. In the latter case, the Shakespeare's *The Shrew* and the anonymous *A Shrew* handle the Induction very differently. While in *The Shrew* it is present only at the beginning of the play, in *A Shrew*, it open *and* closes the comedy – besides appearing in three interludes throughout the play – as a proper meta-theatrical framework which comments on the love affair between the shrewish protagonists. For a detailed analysis, see Barbara Hodgdon's 2010 Arden edition of the play (esp. 23-8); Stern 2004 and Priest 1999.

[23] Shakespeare 2002, 134: "the disguised Page of the Induction prefigures the obedient and compliant wife which Katherina becomes in V.ii".

language, but also intention. In the Induction, the Page relies on such patriarchal conventions to carry out the Lord's prank and support his performance as Sly's obedient wife ("[m]y husband and my lord, my lord and husband, I am your wife in all obedience", Ind.2.106-08). Similarly, Kate's displays of subjection seem to respond to her lord's will, to Petruchio's need for an obedient wife. Like Sly, Kate may be rehearsing the conventional posture of female submission to support her societal role. In this light, her last speech may be read as a paradoxical praise of patriarchal rule since she is advocating for female silence while exploiting her traditional role of obedient wife to take centre stage and deliver the last monologue of the play.

The paradoxical interpretation of Kate's monologue as a mock encomium of patriarchal authority over women seems to be supported by linguistic cues which signal the existence of possible alternative readings:

> . . . [o]ur strength as weak, our weakness past compare,
> *That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.*
> 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. (5.2.175-80, my emphasis)

Referring to female natural inferiority, which women allegedly try to mask, the line "[t]hat seeming to be most which we indeed least are" may also recall the contrast between appearance and reality which frequently inhabits Shakespeare's plays. On a less literal level, then, this passage may suggest women's transformative nature which may allow them to feign excellent qualities ("seeming") when they have none ("which indeed least are"). Lexical ambiguity characterises Kate's following advice too. Her suggestion to fellow women of "vail[ing] your stomachs" may hide a subversive reading depending on the interpretation of the verb 'to veil'. If considered an alternative spelling for 'to vail', namely '[t]o lower in sign of submission or respect' (*OED*, *s.v.* "vail", v. 2b), then Kate seems to suggest other women to bend their will to their husbands'. In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature, the stomach, as well as the heart, often stood for the inward seat of passion and

emotion (see Spencer Kingsbury 2004, 78).[24] Thus, by 'vailing their stomach' wives would "be lowering their pride and acknowledging the greater and more fully developed physical strength of their husbands, thereby expressing their 'inner state in an intelligible fashion, revealing the disposition of the soul'" (ibid.). On the other hand, if 'to veil' is interpreted as "[t]o hide or conceal from the apprehension, knowledge, or perception of others", possibly also as "to hide or mask the true nature or meaning of" (*OED*, *s.v.* "veil", v. 4a), then Kate suggests other women to conceal their stomachs, thus their true passions and emotions, from their husbands in order to play the necessary role of the obedient wife; namely to "be most which we indeed least are". The ironical shade of Kate's submission to male authority can be also retraced in her conclusive powerful gesture of submission – that is, offering to place her hand below Petruchio's foot. This can be read as an exaggeration of pre-reformation wedding rituals, such as the Salisbury Manual, which prescribes that brides "prostrate . . . at the feet of the bridegroom" and "kiss his right foot".[25] Kate enhances the performativity of this gesture as she claims to be ready to "place [her] hands below [her] husband's foot", thus risking the pain of having her hands crushed by Petruchio's booted feet (see Spencer Kingsbury 2004, 77).

The paradoxicality of Kate's monologue is also suggested by specific elements of the dramatic framework, more precisely the other characters' reaction to her speech. Despite the conventionality of her message, most onstage listeners seem at least puzzled by Kate's unexpected change: Bianca and the Widow are left speechless at her words, while Lucentio defines her tirade "a wonder" (5.2.195).

The influence of the dramatic framework on the perception of a praise as paradoxical sometimes may be more a matter

[24] Spencer Kingsbury also recalls Elizabeth I's Tilbury speech, where the queen states "I may have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king," thus assuring that underneath her female physical appearance she owned behavioral traits traditionally identified as male.

[25] See Boose 1994, 182-4 and Spencer Kingsbury 2004, 77. For further references, see Howard 1904, 1, 306-7: "[t]unc procidat sponsa ante pedes ejus, et deosculetur dextrum; tune erigat eam sponsus". See also Wickham Legg 1903, 189-90 and MacGregor 1905, 36.

of metatheatrical perspective than scholarly interpretation. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* offers borderline cases of praises which can be read as either honest or paradoxical according to the character's or audience's perception of the dramatic context such encomia are framed in. In 3.2, Demetrius has been subjected to Puck's incantation and recants his affection for Hermia as he pursues and praises the virtues of Helena:

> O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
> To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
> Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
> Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
> That pure congealed white, high Taurus snow,
> Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow
> When thou hold'st up thy hand: O, let me kiss
> This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss! (137-44)

The comical introduction of the love filter motif creates a dramatic context which justifies *and* undermines the paradoxicality of the same passage. The afore-mentioned flamboyant praise loses its paradoxical shade when interpreted from the perspective of its spell-bound speaker. Demetrius is unaware of being a victim of Puck's love filter and as such he truly believes in the love he feels for Helena. Contrariwise, clear-headed Helena perceives Demetrius' words as odd and contradictory. Her reaction is a customary response to paradoxical expressions as they often elicit doubt and bewilderment ("[o] spite! O hell! I see you all are bent / To set against me for your merriment", 145-6).

The same mechanism can be observed in Titania's praise of Bottom, who has already been transformed into a hybrid, asinine figure:

> I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
> Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
> So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
> And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
> On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee. (3.1.99-103)[26]

[26] The same can be said for her praise of Bottom's fair appearance in 4.1: "[c]ome, sit thee down upon this flowery bed, / While I thy amiable cheeks

The dramatic context heavily influences the interpretation of these lines. Due to Puck's love filter, Titania truly loves Bottom's asinine figure and conveys no irony in her heart-felt praise of him. However, her perspective is inconsistent with that of other characters unscathed by the magic potion. Like Helena's, Bottom's reaction of amazement and perplexity at Titania's flatteries strengthens the paradoxicality of her praise ("[m]ethinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that", 3.1.104). In this case, spectators too may have perceived this passage as not only ironical but, more specifically, paradoxical since Titania's praise may have reminded them of the many early modern praises of the ass. As Harvey's 1593 *Pierces Supererogation* shows, this literary sub-category was rooted in classical texts and maintained its popularity well into the sixteenth century ("Aesops Asse no foole . . . Lucians Asse . . . Machiavels Asse", V3*r.*). One of the best-known praises of this kind is Agrippa's already mentioned "A Digression in Praise of the Ass" in his *De Vanitate*. There, Agrippa praises the animal's physical and behavioural traits by stating that it "lives by little food, . . . Of a clean and innocent heart, void of Choler, being at peace with all living creatures" (Aa4*v.*). Also, he recollects some of the authors and texts where the ass is mentioned and celebrated ("[n]either had Apuleius of Megara's Ass been admitted to the holy Mysteries of Isis, if he had not been turn'd out of a Philosopher into an Ass", Aa5*r.*). While these prose works are perceived as paradoxical because of the inherent oddity of their subject and argumentations, Titania's praise *may* be perceived as such according to point of view of the listener, thus to the dramatic framework.

4. Conclusion

As the present analysis has tried to show, the literary tradition of the mock encomium genre successfully reached the early modern English stage, where it was also adapted by Shakespeare to fit into his theatrical production. In the comedies here investigated, some paradoxical praises follow conventional rhetorical standards.

---

do coy, / And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head, / And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy" (1-4).

Petruchio's encomium of poverty and Biron's praise of ignorance offer potential parallelisms to contemporary paradoxical praises on the same subjects and share with them a similar argumentative structure and the same final aim. Conversely, some mock encomia may present structural variations, as it happens with paradoxical praises of conventionally unworthy characters where flaws are not traditionally interpreted as potential virtues as they are simply substituted with their opposites. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Kate's verbal aggressiveness is not re-interpreted in positive terms, but readily turned into its pleasant opposite ("gentle conference, soft and affable"). This technique does not comply with standard argumentative practices in the mock encomia tradition; however, it supports the final aim of such paradoxical praises as it commends characters who are generally not appreciated by others and thus counters onstage common opinion.

This investigation has suggested a possible interrelation between the speaker of the encomium and its subject matter. While wealthy and educated characters usually address complex and abstract notions, such as poverty or ignorance, lower status ones tend to deal with baser topics, such as cuckoldry. Both these categories, however, show the same degree of self-awareness when it comes to praising people. In this case, social boundaries seem to be respected since characters deliver paradoxical encomia only about those with whom they share a similar social standing, such as Petruchio does with Kate and Biron with Rosalind. The only exception is Titania's praise of Bottom. Still, I would suggest her praise does not violate social boundaries since her mockery is unwilling and, if it were, it would be uttered by a queen to someone of a lower status. The existence of such an interpersonal pattern should be tested on a larger range of texts which includes Shakespeare's tragedies and historical plays to be properly questioned and eventually proved. Further studies in this sense may help gain a better understanding of the existence of such a rhetorical practice and its role in Shakespearean production.

As shown by his use of mock praises, the presence of specific rhetorical variations, such as the reversed mock encomium or paradoxical *vituperatio* as well as that of borderline cases of mock encomia, offers just another proof of Shakespeare's renowned

mastery of rhetorical mechanisms. His use of reversed mock encomia, or paradoxical *vituperatio*, may speak for his ease in adapting to the theatrical dimension literary fashions which are usually to be found in contemporary texts, such as Donne's *Paradoxes and Problems* and the translation of Cicero's *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, as their introduction creates no evident rhetorical break from the dramatic fabric of the text. Far from being "not so prominent" (Sackton 1949, 86), mock encomia are also key to the characterisation of the protagonists of the play as they usually work as key rhetorical tools to define the speaker's intellectual and linguistic abilities. In *Love's Labour's Lost,* Biron's reversed mock praise or paradoxical *vituperatio* of knowledge reflects his wit and sharpness of mind, which will resurface in his later attacks against his enamoured companions. More poignantly, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Beatrice's tendency to "spell [men] backwords", that is to turn their virtues into flaws, proves a fine example of her rhetorical mastery which she often shows during her verbal skirmishes with Benedick.

In this context, however, the label 'mock encomium' may sometimes feel slippery when confronted with borderline adaptations. The difficulty in categorising Kate's final monologue in *The Taming of the Shrew* and Titania's and Demetrius' praises as proper mock encomia lies in their dependency on the dramatic framework. Kate's conclusive speech acquires a paradoxical shade thanks to some linguistic cues hidden in it and, mostly, to its echoing of the Lord's instruction on how to play the ideal wife in the Induction scene. Similarly, Titania's and Demetrius' praises of their beloved derive their paradoxicality from the character's place in the dramatic framework of the play. While the speakers perceive their words as honest and heart-felt, those characters who are not victims of Puck's incantation are aware of their paradoxical quality. In Titania's case in particular, the audience too is aware of the paradoxicality of her praise given its similarities with contemporary paradoxical encomia on the ass. The analysis of dramatic frameworks has proved central in determining the paradoxical quality of borderline cases of Shakespearean mock encomia. In this light, I hope future studies will cast more light on such a peculiar use of this genre in Shakespeare's plays, for example considering the tragedies and the histories. This may help

us understand whether this situation is a unicum in these two plays or whether Shakespeare's adaptation of the mock encomium genre is more often than not dependant on external, dramatic elements to be interpreted as paradoxical.

Works Cited

Agrippa von Nettesheim, Heinrich Cornelius. 1684. *The Vanity of Arts and Sciences by Henry Cornelius Agrippa, Knight*. London: C. Blount.

Baker, John. 2013. *Collected Papers on English Legal History*. 3 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Baker, Naomi. 2008. "'To make love to a Deformity': Praising Ugliness in Early Modern England". *Renaissance Studies* 22 (1): 86-109.

Bean, John C. 1980. "Comic Structure and the Humanizing of Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*". In *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*, edited by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Grayle Green, and Carol Thomas Neely, 65-78. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Bettella, Patrizia. 2005. *The Ugly Woman: Transgressive Aesthetic Models in Italian Poetry from the Middle Ages to the Baroque*. Toronto: Toronto University Press.

Bigliazzi, Silvia, ed. 2022. Modernised edition of *Those Five Questions Which Mark Tully Cicero Disputed in His Manor of Tusculanum* [John Dolman's 1561 translation of Cicero's *Tusculanarum Disputationum Libri quinque]*. London: Thomas Marshe. https://test-01.dlls.univr.it/teipublisher-cemp/apps/cemp-app/Ci.0002_0001_mod.xml (Accessed: 1 December 2022).

Blake, Ann. 2002. "*The Taming of the Shrew*: Making Fun of Katherine". *The Cambridge Quarterly* 31 (3): 237-52.

Boose, Lynda. 1994. "The *Taming of the Shrew*: Good Husbandry and Enclosure". In *Shakespeare Reread: The Texts in New Contexts*, edited by Russ McDonald, 193-225. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Bruster, Douglas. 1990. "The Horn of Plenty: Cuckoldry and Capital in the Drama of the Age of Shakespeare". *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 30 (2): 195-215.

Cicero. 1569. *The Booke of Marcus Tullius Cicero Entituled Paradoxa Stoicorum Contayninge a Precise Discourse of Diuers Poinctes and Conclusions of Vertue and Phylosophie According the Traditions and Opinions of Those Philosophers, Whiche Were Called Stoikes*. London: Thomas Marshe.

Cornwallis, William. 1616. *Essayes of Certaine Paradoxes*. London: Thomas Thorpe.

Donne, John. 1980. *Paradoxes and Problems*, edited by Helen Peters. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Duncan-Jones, Katherine, ed. 2010. *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. London: Arden Shakespeare.

Edmondson, Paul, and Stanley Wells, eds. 2020. *All the Sonnets of Shakespeare*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Farley-Hills, David. 1981. *The Comic in Renaissance Comedy*. London and Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Figorilli, Maria Cristina. 2008. *Meglio ignorante che dotto: L'elogio paradossale in prosa nel Cinquecento*. Napoli: Liguori.

Flather, Amanda, ed. 2007. *Gender and Space in Early Modern England*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

Geraldine, Mary. 1964. "Erasmus and the Tradition of Paradox". *Studies in Philology* 61 (1): 41-63.

Gilbert, Allan H. 1935. "Logic in the Elizabethan Drama". *Studies in Philology* 32 (4): 527-45.

Harvey, Gabriel. 1593. *Pierces Supererogation: or a New Prayse of the Old Asse*. London: John Wolfe.

Heilman, Robert B. 1966. "The Taming Untamed, or, The Return of the Shrew". *Modern Language Quarterly* 27: 147-61.

Howard, George Elliott 1904. *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*, 2 vols. London: Unwin.

Iyengar, Sujata. 2003. "'Handling Soft the Hurt': Sexual Healing and Manual Contact in *Orlando Furioso*, *The Faerie Queene*, and *All's Well That Ends Well*". In *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture*, edited by Elizabeth D. Harvey, 39-61. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Knight Miller, Henry. 1956. "The Paradoxical Encomium with Special Reference to Its Vogue in England, 1600-1800". *Modern Philology* 53 (3): 145-78.

Loughlin, Marie H., ed. 1997. *Hymeneutics: Interpreting Virginity on the Early Modern Stage*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press.

MacDonald, Russ. 2001. *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MacGregor, Duncan, ed. 1905. *The Rathen Manual: Catholic Church, Liturgy and Ritual*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society.

Maclean, Ian. 1980. *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and medical Science in European Intellectual Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Munday, Anthony. 1593. *The Defence of Contraries. Paradoxes Against Common Opinion*. London: Simon Waterson.

Murphy, Kathryn and Anita Traninger, eds. 2014. *Emergence of Impartiality*. Leiden: Brill.

Priest, Dale G. 1999. "Induction, Theatricality, and Power in *The Taming of the Shrew*". *Shakespeare Bulletin* 17 (2): 29-31.

Sackton, Alexander H. 1949. "The Paradoxical Encomium in Elizabethan Drama". *Studies in English* 28: 83-104.

Shakespeare, William. 2016a. *Much Ado About Nothing*, edited by Claire McEachern, Arden Shakespeare Third Series. London: Bloomsbury.

— 2016b. *The Comedy of Errors*, edited by Kent Cartwright, Arden Shakespeare Third Series. London: Bloomsbury.

— 2007. *Complete Works*, edited by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen. Basingstoke: Royal Shakespeare Company.

— 2006. *As You Like It*, edited by Juliet Dusinberre, Arden Shakespeare Third Series. London: Bloomsbury.

— 2002. *The Taming of the Shrew*, edited by Brian Morris, Arden Shakespeare Second Series. London: Methuen.

— 1998. *Love's Labour's Lost*, edited by H. R. Woudhuysen, Arden Shakespeare Third Series. London: Bloomsbury.

Spencer Kingsbury, Melinda. 2004. "Kate's Froward Humor: Historicizing Affect in *The Taming of the Shrew*". *South Atlantic Review* 69 (1): 61-84.

Stelzer, Emanuel, ed. 2022. *A Paradox on His Mistress* by Thomas Jordan. https://test-01.dlls.univr.it/teipublisher-cemp/apps/cemp-app/Jo.0001.xml (Accessed 1 December 2022).

Stern, Tiffany. 2004. "Repatching the Play". In *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, edited by Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel, 151-77. Basingstoke and New York.

Tomarken, Annette H. 1990. *The Smile of Truth: the French Satirical Eulogy and Its Antecedents*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Udall, Nicholas. 1542. *Apophthegmes . . . First Gathered and Compiled in Latine by the Ryght Famous Clerke Maister Erasmus of Roterodame*. London: Richard Grafton.

Vickers, Brian. 1968. "*King Lear* and Renaissance Paradoxes". *Modern Language Review* 63 (2): 305-14.

Wickham Legg, J. 1903. *Ecclesiological Essays*. London: de la More Press.