

"Dumbshow and choric narration, impresa and motto: Word and image in Wilkins and Shakespeare's Pericles", by Gabriel Egan

It is commonly asserted--for example, by John Orrell and Bruce R. Smith (Orrell 1983, 140; Smith 1999, 206-08)--that going to the theatre was primarily an aural rather than a visual experience in Shakespeare's time. In support of this are usually cited Hamlet's "we'll hear a play" (Hamlet 2.2.538¹) instead of "we'll see a play" (as we might put it) and such comments as "For yet his honour never heard a play", and "they thought it good you hear a play" (The Taming of the Shrew Ind.1.94, Ind.2.130). In fact these 3 expressions of drama as an aural event are unusual and there only 5 similar cases in the entire canon of English Literature from 1500 to 1700, and none are before the Restoration. In the same period there are 97 occurrences of visually-centered phrases such as 'see a play', so that 9 times out of 10 literary writers preferred to represent drama as a visual pleasure (Egan 2001a). We should avoid assuming that Shakespeare's habits were the norm: his 'hear a play' construction was new and would not be copied for half a century. Bearing this in mind, I intend to read Wilkins and Shakespeare's Pericles using Jacques Derrida's critique of phonocentrism in Of Grammatology, which traces the long-standing preference for aural signification for the articulation of truth. Derrida worked backwards from the speech-centered linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure to Jean-Jacques Rousseau to argue that the entire Western intellectual and philosophical tradition is imbued with phonocentrism:

Saussure takes up the traditional definition of writing which, already in Plato and Aristotle, was restricted to the model of phonetic script and the language of words. Let us recall the Aristotelian definition: "Spoken words are the symbols of mental experience and written words are the symbols of spoken words." Saussure: "Language and writing are two distinct systems of signs; the second exists for the sole purpose of representing the first" (p. 45; italics added) [p. 23]. . . . To be sure this factum of phonetic writing is massive; it commands our entire culture and our entire science, and it is certainly not just not one fact among others. Nevertheless it does not respond to any necessity of an absolute and universal essence. (Derrida 1976, 30-31)

An alternative to speaking is ostending, showing things, as practised by the Balnibarbian in Swift's Gulliver's Travels who carry on their backs all the items they might need in mute conversation (Swift 1985, 230). Meaning by showing is also used in the dumbshows of Renaissance drama. Shakespeare and Wilkins's Pericles is the only play in the Shakespeare corpus directly to use a dumbshow as one of its means of signifying (the one in Hamlet is part of The Mousetrap), and likewise no choric narrator in Shakespeare looms as large as Gower in Pericles. Measured in numbers of lines, most of the play is dramatic in the way familiar from Shakespeare and the plays of the period generally, using actors who impersonate the characters of the story, imitating their actions and speaking their words. But more than any other Shakespeare play, Pericles separates this composite form into its components: in dumbshow deeds are wordlessly enacted and in choric narration deeds are described but not shown. Derrida was particularly concerned with the primordially of writing, and for the domain of dramatic presentation Wilkins and Shakespeare seem to have explored that very primordially in Pericles and done so via a metaphor of biological reproduction that might appear prescient of neoDarwinist genetics.

The play's opening words, "To sing a song", initiate the theme of aural pleasure but soon lead to a complementary binarism of aural and visual pleasure: "To glad your ear and please your eyes" (1.4). The 'song' existed prior to Gower's telling of it, he claims, and he

is merely the medium through which it passes, but noticeably it has been pleasurable in aural form but efficacious as writing:

[GOWER] It hath been sung at festivals,
On ember-eves and holy-ales,
And lords and ladies in their lives
Have read it for restoratives.
(Pericles 1.5-8)

Gower places himself in the tradition of transmission that is at once textual and oral, but as Jeffrey Masten noted in his essay on the play (Masten 1997, 75-93), the role of Gower in respect of the story and his collaborators telling it "oscillates between singular ownership ('my rimes' [A2], 'my cause' [A2v]), collaborative production ('our sceanes,' 'our stories' [G2v]), and received sources ('I tell you what mine Authors saye' [A2])" (Masten 1997, 77).

In the opening scene Pericles, "drawn by report", is set between two visual stimulants: the almost-mute (and unnamed) daughter of Antiochus and "speechless tongues and semblants bloodless" of the previous suitors for the daughter of Antiochus (1.78-79). The deathly silence of the princes who failed to answer the riddle is the fate that Pericles must risk and Antiochus expects it to be persuasive without eloquence: "dead cheeks advise thee to desist" (1.82). Pericles gets the point and comments that "death remembered should be like a mirror | Who tells us life's but breath, to trust it error" (1.88-89), where "breath" means life and unreliable speech. Testing the presence of breath (hence life) with a mirror was a standard procedure, as at the end of King Lear, but used for its proper purpose by the eyes rather than the mouth the mirror stood for a perverted form of self-regard, as in Kent's epithet, "a whoreson, glass-gazing, superfinical rogue" (History of King Lear 7.16-7). In twentieth-century psychology, philosophy, and linguistics, the mirror has a special place in the construction of identity. Jacques Lacan identified as the 'mirror-phase' the period when the infant starts to learn of itself as an independent being unconnected with the rest of the universe, prompted by looking in a mirror or a parental eyeball. The reflection is perceived as another being with whom the infant merges and identifies, so there is an essential duality and reciprocity about identity at this point (Lacan 1977, 1-7). From an entirely different intellectual tradition, Mikhail Bakhtin argued that the pronoun 'I' is unlike any other signifier in that its signified is not available for viewing but rather is created by imagining what it would be like to see oneself as others see one, and this is essentially a process of authorship since we cannot be that other person and can only imagine him. Moreover, since perception is determined by the life-experiences of the perceiver, our own experiences determine the process of construction of an imaginary self: we might try to see us as a Martian would see us, but our view of what a Martian is like--a pre-requisite for constructing the Martian who views us--is determined by our past experiences. The Lacanian/Bakhtinian concern with the duality underlying identity-construction is preceded by Pericles when Cleon describes the decadent men and women of Pentapolis, "so jetted and adorned | Like one another's glass to trim them by" (4.27).

The play's textual transmission down to us is also apparently a combination of the oral and the textual. The only substantive text is a quarto of 1609 that is garbled in ways that New Bibliographers claimed are characteristic of a memorial reconstruction of a play by actors who took part in it. But in 1608, Shakespeare's apparent collaborator, George Wilkins's, published a prose novella based, it seems, on the play as performed. This novella is also, then, a witness to the early performances and editors have drawn on it to help solve in the play quarto. For the Oxford Complete Works, Gary Taylor in particular

made extensive use of Wilkins's novella to reconstruct what the play was like before the quarto's reporters garbled. Thus in the Oxford Complete Works text of the play, Pericles asks for and is given a stringed instrument upon going to bed after the feast; this a scene absent from the quarto. In Gower's Confessio Amantis and Twine's Patterne of Painfull Adventures Pericles and Thaisa sing and play instruments, whereas the quarto of Pericles has only a "wordless ritual of courtship" of dancing (Wells et al. 1987, 558). In defence of 'restoring' the scene of Pericles's playing music upon retiring from Wilkins's novella, Taylor pointed to the many and varied uses of music in the play: Thaisa's re-awakening, Marina's profession as a music teacher, the song sung to Pericles, the music of the spheres, "and the characteristic opposition of music and tempest" (Wells et al. 1987, 558). One might argue that when music is so pervasive in a play its omission can be as significant as its inclusion, which is the same principle that one could invoke to defend Q's version of the tournament scene where Simonides cannot interpret all the imprese, as we shall see. Moreover, as F. Elizabeth Hart argued, Cerimon calls for "rough . . . music" and a "Violl" when awakening Thaisa in the 1609 play quarto (Shakespeare 1609, E4r), and editorial emendation to "still . . . music" and a "vial" blunts the specificity of Cerimon's service to the goddess Diana of Ephesus (as distinct from Ovid's Diana), a Mother-figure whose worship was often clamorous (Hart 2000). Importantly, an Ephesian Diana connotes fecundity not chastity. In the light of Pericles's description of the daughter of Antiochus as a viol that may be played upon ill or well (1.124-8), the sexual connotation of Pericles's taking an instrument to bed should not be overlooked, and the failure of Marina's singing to rouse Pericles from his melancholic coma in scene 21 indicates that in his reception as much as his creation, Pericles is not simply Orphean. Marina's speaking voice, not her singing voice, wakes Pericles; this is a particular kind of phonocentrism that divides the Greek "u_xm-", which means both voice and sound (OED phon-).

In scene 9 the two media by which Pericles might have bewitched Thaisa are invoked in his denial of the accusation: "Resolve your angry father if my tongue | Did e'er solicit, or my hand subscribe" (9.66-67). The written text of the play script has no loving words or letters pass between Pericles and Thaisa, yet there is an implied courtship which must be in the form of actions, gestures, and looks. Thus Thaisa could honestly answer that, no, Pericles's tongue has not solicited nor his hand subscribed, yet something--about which the script is silent--has passed between them. In contrast to Pericles's reticence is Thaisa's verbal affirmation of her writing: "What with my pen I have in secret written | With my tongue now I openly confirm" (9.84-85). The Shakespeare plays repeatedly return to the matter of affirmation, of words by deeds and of writing by speaking. A parallel moment occurs in 1 Henry 6 when Gloucester responds to Winchester's destruction of a list of accusations against him with "although in writing I preferred | The manner of thy vile outrageous crimes . . . [I am] able | Verbatim to rehearse the method of my pen. (1 Henry 6 3.1.1-13). Clearly in operation here is the familiar suspicion of writing as a debased version of thought which is better represented in spontaneous speech, and Andrew Murphy argued that Derrida's critique of this should inform our understanding of the early printings' relation to the early performances of Shakespeare's plays (Murphy 1999).

Gower's status as oral purveyor of the story is repeatedly questioned in the play. In scene 5 he remains on stage after Pericles enters wet from shipwreck and apparently senses that his continued narration would be an encroachment on the domain of dramatic action: "And here he comes. What shall be next | Pardon old Gower; this 'longs the text. Exit" (5.39-40). The Oxford text's "'longs" marks an elision of the first syllable of "belongs", so Gower is calling what the actors do "the text". Masten, on the other hand, argued that the quarto's "long's" (Shakespeare 1609, C1v) might be an abbreviation of "long is",

meaning that he has no more text to read as chorus and must hand over to the drama (Masten 1997, 89); thus Gower calls what he has to say "the text". In either reading, attention is drawn to the shared border of the storytelling modes and both senses of the quarto's "long's" might be active at once, indicating the modes' common textuality. Gower returns at the start of scene 10 to introduce a dumbshow in which a messenger brings Pericles a letter that delights the pregnant Thaisa and causes the newlyweds to take their leave of Simonides. Gower's explanation necessarily requires divulging the contents of the letter, and we might well wonder why delivery of a paper message should be the subject of a dumbshow at all unless that mode's very unsuitability were precisely the point. Yet Gower insists that the means are chosen to suit the matter:

[GOWER]. . . what ensues in this fell storm
Shall for itself itself perform;
I will relate; action may
Conveniently the rest convey,
Which might not what by me is told.
(Pericles 10.53-7)

Gower's next chorus has more of this self-consciousness about his function in the drama and it is explicitly related to one of the major themes of the plays, sexual reproduction:

[GOWER] And cursed Dionyza hath
The pregnant instrument of wrath
Pressed for this blow. Th' unborn event
I do commend to your content,
Only I carry winged Time
Post on the lame feet of my rhyme,
Which never could I so convey
Unless your thoughts went on my way.
(Pericles 15.44-50)

Likening anticipated events to pregnancy is commonplace (hence OED expect v. 3e), but 'pregnant' has a variety of senses here. The OED records this usage as one of three archaic Shakespearian usages meaning "Apt to receive or be influenced; receptive; disposed, inclined, ready" (OED pregnant a.² 3d), and hence the murderer Leonine needed little persuading to the task. Thus we should not think that Leonine has been "Pressed" in the sense of compelled but rather he has been "engage[d] . . . with earnest-money for service" (OED press v.²). As Martin Wiggins observed, early seventeenth-century plays show a marked interest in assassins who do not go through with their tasks (Wiggins 1991, 128-47), and like others Leonine loses his resolve. The other major sense of 'pregnant' is "Of an argument, proof, evidence, reason, etc.: Pressing, urgent, weighty; compelling, cogent, forcible, convincing; hence, clear, obvious" (OED pregnant a.¹), which suits Dionyza's recapitulation of the reasons Leonine should go through with it: "Thou canst not do a thing i' th' world so soon | To yield thee so much profit" (15.55-56). Although the non-sexual uses of 'press' and 'pregnant' are active, together these words generate a sexual charge because, although the OED does not record it, Shakespeare used 'pressing' for what a man does to a woman, and what the couple does to the bed, during sex:

LUCIO Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death,
whipping, and hanging.
(Measure for Measure 5.1.521-2)

ROMEO Why, such is love's transgression.
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,
Which thou wilt propagate to have it pressed
With more of thine. This love that thou hast shown
(Romeo and Juliet 1.1.182-5)

[MERCUTIO] This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear
(Romeo and Juliet 1.4.92-3)

PANDARUS Amen. Whereupon I will show you a chamber
with a bed--which bed, because it shall not speak of
your pretty encounters, press it to death.
(Troilus and Cressida 3.2.203-5)

Dionyza's suborning of Leonine, then, is not only unmaternal towards Marina but also unnatural in feminizing him: she 'presses' and impregnates him with the seed of Marina's destruction. This is 'conception' in both its main senses. Such unmaternal behaviour makes perfect biological sense since Marina is not Dionyza's child and carries none of her genes. Competition between Philoten, Dionyza's daughter, and Marina is explicitly the reason for Dionyza's action. Having sexualized the securing of a murderer, Shakespeare shifts the pregnancy image to the telling of the narrative, the "unborn event" that Gower promises will ensue despite his own inadequacy as a medium ("the lame feet of my rhyme"). The play's unusual and self-conscious organization of its material is most precisely bound up with its theme of sexual reproduction.

When selling Marina to the brothel in Mytilene, the pirates verbally affirm that she is a virgin and hence highly valuable. Leonine had entertained the possibility that the pirates would rape Marina and abandon her, in which case he would have to kill her (15.149-51), but the abandonment at least did not happen. It may seem unreasonable to wonder whether Marina was raped by the pirates since her virginity is heavily stressed in the latter half of the play, but the means of telling the story invites us to consider just what constitutes our certainty about it. Whatever the combination of social and genetic imperatives underlying the prizing of female virginity in brides, and the situation is anthropologically complex, the value of Marina's virginity for the play's brothel-keepers resides at least partially in the guarantee of freedom from sexual disease, as implied by the Pander's observation that "The poor Transylvanian is dead that lay with the little baggage" (16.20-1) and Lysimachus's question "have you, that a man may deal withal and defy the surgeon?" (19.33-4). What the Bawd calls the "warrant of her virginity" (16.55-6), the certainty of it, seems to have no tangible existence--it is a verbal assurance from the pirates--yet it circulates at a high price, from Marina herself (presumptively) to the pirates, from the pirates to the brothel-keepers (via their agent, Boulton), and thence to the prospective customers. Boulton brags about his ability to be faithful in the verbal transmission of important information: "I have cried her almost to the number of her hairs. | I have drawn her picture with my voice" (16.90-1). To draw her picture with words is ekphrasis, which the Oxford Classical Dictionary calls "an extended and detailed literary description of any object, real or imaginary" (Hornblower & Spawforth 1996) but which is commonly used in the more precise sense summarized by Grant F. Scott as "a verbal representation of a visual representation" (Scott 1991, 301). In Scott's analysis, ekphrasis is a breaking of the boundaries between the sister arts and a making permanent of the ephemeral, and this is undoubtedly the condition of Boulton's description: a modern actor, whose body is

necessarily subject to decay, might well be hired according to how well he or she fits the text's apparent requirement for a beautiful Marina. The description written into the playscript is permanent whereas the bodies of generations of actors have been transitory.

Pericles engages in the debate about the sister arts and their capacities to convey truth, as does the opening of Timon of Athens, which shares with Pericles the apparent experiment with collaboration, something Shakespeare seems to have avoided for most of his career (Wells et al. 1987, 127-28). In the first scene of Timon of Athens a poet praises a painter's work, "I will say of it, | It tutors nature. Artificial strife | Lives in these touches livelier than life" (1.1.36-38), but the compliment is not returned. On hearing an outline of the poet's work the painter comments that it "would be well expressed | In our condition" (1.1.77-8), that is to say it were better done as a painting than a poem, and indeed has been: "A thousand moral paintings I can show | That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune's | More pregnantly than words" (Timon of Athens 1.1.91-3). Physical properties used for the impresse in Pericles and the painting in Timon of Athens must now (and perhaps had to then) derive from the verbal description in the plays' scripts, so ultimately writing is primary in the medium of drama.² The same is true of the mourning clothes, the actions of lamentation, and the false monument to Marina by which Cleon and Dionyza seek to conceal what they believe to be her murder. Pericles's response to seeing the monument is performed in a dumbshow that, as previously, Gower promises to make sense of for the audience: "Your ears unto your eyes I'll reconcile" (18.22). Gower has just said that his position in the work of art is liminal yet instructive: "I do beseech you | To learn of me, who stand i' th' gaps to teach you | The stages of our story (18.7-9). Gower repeatedly encroaches on the borders of the other media, relating the contents of a letter to Pericles and reading the epitaph on the monument to Marina, and he goes beyond simple explanation, commenting on the action and offering moral interpretation of the dumbshow in which the monument to Marina fools Pericles:

[GOWER] See how belief may suffer by foul show.
This borrowed passion stands for true-owed woe,
And Pericles, in sorrow all devoured,
With sighs shot through, and biggest tears o'ershow'red,
Leaves Tarsus, and again embarks.
(Pericles 18.23-7)

The "borrowed passion", Pericles's response to the deceptive spectacle of the monument, stands where there should be "true-owed woe" (since something terrible has befallen Marina), but at the same time this comment refers to the moment of performance since the actor playing Pericles is presenting a passion borrowed from his repertoire of acting talents and it constitutes, stands for, the truth of the impersonation. Done properly, Philip Sidney had argued, artistic representation (including dramatic impersonation) is its own kind of truth and not, as Plato had been understood by some, a botched copy or tawdry untruth (Sidney 1595).

Even borrowed, false, passion can be virtuous in the play, as with Marina's performances in the brothel. A prostitute must act a certain modesty that the customer overcomes and hence the drama/prostitution connection explored by Stephen Mullaney (Mullaney 1988, 135-51). Prostitution needs a particularly finely balanced performance:

[BAWD] Mark me, you must
seem to do that fearfully which you commit willingly,

to despise profit where you have most gain. To weep
that you live as ye do makes pity in your lovers. Seldom
but that pity begets you a good opinion, and that
opinion a mere profit.

(Pericles 16.112-7)

Mullaney's reading overstates the play's denial of the theatre/brothel parallels: ". . . the play's unwillingness to represent the highly theatrical transaction between an actor and an audience, whether prince before a populace or his daughter before prospective customers, marks an evasion of the economic and cultural roots of the popular stage itself" (Mullaney 1988, 145). Rather, the play makes clear the parallels, as Masten noted regarding the Bawd's instruction that Boulton cry Marina's features in the open street to attract customers (Masten 1997, 84), but which is all the more apparent in the performative aspects of the rehearsal and execution of a prostitute's duties:

BOULT (to Bawd) O, take her home, mistress, take her
home. These blushes of hers must be quenched with
some present practice.

BAWD Thou sayst true, i' faith, so they must, for your
bride goes to that with shame which is her way to go
with warrant.

(Pericles 16.119-21)

In relation to Marina's virginity 'warrant' was previously used in the sense of "Assurance given, pledge, guaranty" (OED warrant n.¹ 4b), but here it means "Command or permission" (OED warrant n.¹ 7a). Although not quite antithesis, this shift in meaning marks what happens when an individual turns from a buyer to a seller of a commodity: the former needs confidence in the condition of the goods while the latter is concerned with what he may do with them. Mullaney traced the increasing theatricalization of commerce in the period and the opening of a distinction between public and the private spheres of activity, fully developed in the Enlightenment, which arose from the division between "what a man does in business and what he does when retired or hid from public view" (Mullaney 1988, 146). But the distinction arose earlier than Mullaney allowed, since trade itself makes the same individual a buyer and a seller of commodities, and the two activities engender a fracture in any attempt to construct a persona based on 'rules of trades'. For Marx this was an important point since, to build a political economics on the 'labour theory of value', he needed to refute the common but false assumption that capitalists make their profit by selling things at prices higher than their respective values. Marx pointed out that while this can happen locally and temporarily, taking the long view the average prices of things must be their actual values. Were this not so, if things generally were sold at prices above their values, every capitalist's attempt to make a profit by selling would be frustrated by the inflated price to be paid for the raw materials (Marx 1899, 53). In the Bawd's analysis of the different 'markets' for sex, the brothel and the marriage bedroom are distinguished primarily by the fact that in the latter a woman is in possession of herself and may bargain freely and needs no shame, while the prostitute has to construct shame as part of the transaction. It is not clear if the Bawd means a newly-wed bride (whose vestigial shame might be real) or an archly-manipulative experienced bride who knows how to get more for her sexual favours, but in either case prostitution is a simulacrum of legitimate sexual relations. This is a Shakespearian use of shame absent from Ewan Fernie's otherwise comprehensive treatment of the subject (Fernie 2002).

As a regular brothel-goer, Lysimachus is well aware of the construction of shame and reluctance as an enhancement of the transaction and initially he interprets Marina's apparent incomprehension of her situation and his intentions as an exaggerated gambit to make more money: "O, you've heard something of my pow'r, and so | Stand off aloof for a more serious wooing" (19.88-9). Marina is indeed pretending to not know what he means, but not to titillate him but to reverse the relation and induce shame in him. Since reluctance is part of the frisson of prostitution for the customer, Marina's genuine reluctance can be misinterpreted; if it goes too far the customer may get angry, as Lysimachus does. Marina needs to cut through the contractual reluctance expected in this situation and convince him of her real reluctance, which is to say that she needs to step out of the theatrical convention of prostitution and provide a show of truth. The situation is further complicated by Lysimachus's ambiguous motives: is he really in the brothel for his own pleasure, or it is part of an undercover surveillance of brothels? For Philip Edwards the latter possibility can be excluded because the audience, whom Shakespeare seldom misleads, cannot be expected to make this assumption on the evidence given. But the lengths to which Edwards goes to justify Marina marrying Lysimachus at the end, comparing them to Angelo and Mariana in Measure for Measure, indicate how problematic is even a reformed Lysimachus; a modern audience is likely to decide he does not deserve her (Shakespeare 1976, 22-26). After all, although deeply moved by Marina's speech, Lysimachus leaves her in the brothel and anticipates the taking of her virginity: "A curse upon him, die he like a thief, | That robs thee of thy honour" (19.140-1). As with the show of reluctance, Marina's virginity is a condition that generates money in the overcoming of itself, and when too strong it is as much a hindrance to profit as when not present at all. The way to make Marina cease her eloquent resistance to her customers, Boult thinks, is to take her virginity so that she has no modesty to preserve (19.153-5). This is an all-or-nothing dialectic that affords no ground for moderation: virginity and all maidenly modesty must be done away with before the trade can commence. Appropriately enough, then, the Pander uses antithetical metaphors in giving the instruction: "Crack the ice of her virginity, and make the rest malleable" (19.167-8). Boult is instead persuaded to find Marina a teaching position in which she can impart the ability to "sing, weave, sew, and dance" (19.106) to other young ladies. Her achievements in the endeavours excite Gower to another phonocentric hyperbole, "Deep clerks she dumbs", and to Sidneian praise of her creativity: "and with her nee'le composes | Nature's own shape, of bud, bird, branch, or berry, | That e'en her art sisters the natural roses" (20.5-7). In a parallel moment in The Winter's Tale Polixenes counters Perdita's disdain for artful supplementing of nature with the argument that such supplements are themselves primordially natural: "So over that art | Which you say adds to nature is an art | That nature makes" (The Winter's Tale 4.4.90-2). In Pericles the argument about primordially natural is played out in the switching of modes of signification (narration, dumbshow, drama) to show that howsoever each appears suited to a particular kind of material, they are all essentially and primordially textual.

The final movement of the play Pericles is overtly phonocentric and, in contrast to the dialectic of Marina's virginity, median positions are found. Helicanus explains that Pericles's depressive avoidance of food is not absolute: he eats enough "to prorogue his grief" (21.20) by staying alive. Likewise his ears "are midway stopped" (21.38). Were Pericles entirely deafened he could not react to stimuli as he does in response to Lysimachus's greeting "Hail, royal sir. [Pericles shrinks himself down upon his pillow]" (21.31). Just as total starvation would end his suffering, so utter deafness would be self-defeating since he could not then ostentatiously ignore people and his condition might be mistaken for a senseless coma. Marina and her maid try singing to break through Pericles's melancholia, which is the kind of musical therapy that worked for Cerimon in an

analogous situation earlier in the play, but Pericles does not react. Once Marina speaks to him, however, she gets a response: "[He roughly repulses her]" (21.72), as the Oxford Complete Works (following John Dover Wilson) has it. Paralleling the beginning of the play, Marina sets Pericles a riddle in answer to his enquiry whether she was born "of these shores" of Mytilene: "No, nor of any shores, | Yet I was mortally brought forth" (21.92-3). Where the daughter of Antioch was almost silent and false, Marina is powerfully eloquent and true, but Pericles cannot at first tell by what quality he is convinced of her truthfulness: "thou look'st | Modest as justice, and thou seem'st a palace | For the crowned truth to dwell in" (21.109-11). This faith based on appearance fades and Pericles seeks satisfaction in words: "I will believe you by the syllable | Of what you shall deliver" (21.155). To be fair, there is distrust on both sides despite the protestations of belief in one another's claims:

[PERICLES] (To Marina) What was thy mother's name? Tell me but that,
For truth can never be confirmed enough,
Though doubts did ever sleep. MARINA First, sir, I pray,
What is your title? PERICLES I am Pericles
Of Tyre. But tell me now my drowned queen's name.
As in the rest thou hast been godlike perfect,
So prove but true in that, thou art my daughter,
The heir of kingdoms, and another life
To Pericles thy father. MARINA [kneeling] Is it no more
To be your daughter than to say my mother's name?
(Pericles 21.188-97)

Finally convinced, Pericles's hearing is refined beyond the mortal and he claims in his extreme joy to hear the music of the spheres (21.215). The force of Marina's question "Is it no more . . . that to say my mother's name?", however, is undiminished and the play appears to answer with a powerful affirmative.

For Thaisa, the sound and the appearance of Pericles are mutually confirmatory in an instant: "Voice and favour-- | You are, you are--O royal Pericles!" (22.33-4). He, however, remains unmoved by her voice or appearance: "What means the nun?" (22.35). Even after Cerimon's revelation and assurance, Pericles wants further proof--the jewels he placed in Thaisa's coffin--and a description will not do: "May we see them?" (22.45). As with the ending of Twelfth Night, material evidence (there, Viola's normal clothes) is to be presented to the senior male figure after the end of the play to substantiate a claim about the heroine's identity. In Pericles this is especially odd in the asymmetry it produces: Pericles does not know Thaisa by sight, yet she knows him despite his changed appearance of unkempt hair and neglect of washing. Pericles proposes finally to improve his appearance "To grace thy marriage day" (22.99), so even this might be deferred beyond the denouement. Once he has listened to "the nun" and seen her ring, Pericles declares himself convinced, "This, this! No more, you gods" (22.62), yet he continues to test her:

[PERICLES] I left behind an ancient substitute.
Can you remember what I called the man?
I have named him oft.
THAISA 'Twas Helicanus then.
PERICLES Still confirmation.
(Pericles 22.72-77)

Is it no more to be your wife than to say your substitute's name? So much for truth in the drama; in narration things are characterized differently. Gower's final speech summarizes the moral categories and claims that the bad are heard and the good are seen:

GOWER In Antiochus and his daughter you have heard
Of monstrous lust the due and just reward;
In Pericles, his queen, and daughter seen,
Although assailed with fortune fierce and keen,
Virtue preserved from fell destruction's blast,
Led on by heav'n, and crowned with joy at last.
In Helicanus may you well descrie
A figure of truth, of faith, of loyalty.
In reverend Cerimon there well appears
The worth that learned charity aye wears.
For wicked Cleon and his wife, when fame
Had spread their cursed deed to th' honoured name
Of Pericles, to rage the city turn,
That him and his they in his palace burn.
The gods for murder seemed so content
To punish that, although not done, but meant.
So on your patience evermore attending,
New joy wait on you. Here our play has ending. Exit
(Pericles 22.108-125, emphasis added)

After a series of false shows including a monument, an epitaph, and several dumbshows, Gower's choice of words is curious. Cleon and his wife are neither seen nor heard according to this epilogue, but sound, in the form of "fame", is the means to their destruction. More significant, however, is the epilogue's concern with dynastic progression. Two generations of Antioch are destroyed, as are two generations of Tarsus ("him and his"), while two generations of Tyre are preserved and single men are singled out for their supportive virtues of loyalty and charity. The downfall of Antioch and Tarsus can be understood through genetics, the former breaking the incest taboo (which exists to prevent inherited disease) and the latter suffering what zoologists call brood parasitism (as practised by cuckoos).

Incest, genetics, and collaboration

Unusually amongst dramatists of the period, Shakespeare mostly worked alone and long before Pericles he had written a scene of a lone imaginative creator describing the kind of self-division necessary for his work:

[RICHARD] My brain I'll prove the female to my soul,
My soul the father, and these two beget
A generation of still-breeding thoughts;
And these same thoughts people this little world
In humours like the people of this world.
(Richard 2 5.5.6-10)

Richard's lone creativity is hermaphroditic conception: a single individual takes the male and female roles in creation, a fecund ("still-breeding") activity leading to yet more creativity. Masten's argument that collaborative writing of plays was part of a larger

homoerotic culture of gentlemanly friendship is important for its rejection of "the restrictive and derogatory way" that critics have used collaboration to avoid ascribing to Shakespeare material they do not like (Masten 1997, 46), but collaboration may have engendered more anxiety in Shakespeare than Masten acknowledged; the above passage from Richard 2 is not discussed in Masten's book. Even if Richard's self-division into the male and female parents of his conception is not how Shakespeare thought of his own practice, it is hardly surprising that in a collaborative work such as Pericles he should explore the parenting of drama, and in particular its visual and verbal components. Elsewhere in Shakespeare, ekphrasis--verbal representation of visual representation--accompanies sexual anxiety (Egan 2001b).

In the play's biological analogy for dramatic creativity, Antiochus fulfilled in himself the functions of father and husband, which turning in upon themselves of familial relations made him, paradoxically, his own parent: "He's father, son, and husband mild" (1.111) and "both a father and son" (1.170). Marina performs a similar turning inward of family relations when she revives Pericles from his swoon, "Thou . . . begett'st him that did thee beget" (21.183), which is why their exploration of the evidence proving they are related continues so long after their initial acceptance of it; they must firmly establish their true relation to respect the boundaries it implies. The same anxiety is evident in the play's exploration of the boundaries implied by the union of drama's parents, speech and action. If these parents are in fact related, if both are really derived from primordial textuality (even though it does not seem so in performance), then their union is incestuous: words mate with more words. In place of the Platonic tripartite sequential relation of diminishing authenticity (Form, Real-Instance, Artistic-Copy), Sidney had argued that art could reach a perfection not available in reality: "Nature[s] . . . world is brasen, the Poets only deliuer a golden" (Sidney 1595, C1r). Derrida made a parallel argument for writing, although one subtly different in ways beyond the scope of this essay. To disrupt the Platonic sequence of diminishing authenticity proceeding Thought-Speech-Writing, Derrida argued that writing is already inside speech and indeed thought, or rather that the inside/outside binary is misleading: "Il n'y a pas de hors-texte", 'there is nothing outside the text'. In Pericles the primordality of writing is explored in relation to the practical processes occurring in the textual economy of Renaissance theatre, where speech and action might appear to be second- and third-order derivatives of pure artistic conception but are unavoidably textual.³

The words of a speech can be thought of as the siblings of the words written in the script, while the actions performed in execution of a stage direction can be thought of as the offspring of the stage direction's words. Biologically, sibling incest is as dangerous as parent/offspring incest because in either case the mates already share 50% of their genes, so the chances of harmful but rare recessive alleles meeting at a gene-locus, and so causing genetically-inherited disease, are much higher than is the case with distantly related mates. Genes that promote a taboo against incest will do better than others (because they are less likely to find themselves in a body weakened by inherited disease), and this taboo requires that individuals are able to recognize their close relatives in order to avoid having sex with them. When a genealogy is drawn as a family tree, the incest taboo operates to promote the fanning out of lines of descent, preventing the formation of closed loops of relative-sex which happen because a daughter, say, is both the offspring of her father, thus one level down the tree, and the mate of him, and thus on the same level as him. Such turned-inward lines of descent tend to be less fecund because the resulting children die before reproducing. A family tree of incestuous relationships would tend towards a denuded bough, its branches withering from sterility and disease. Pericles's sexual desire for the daughter of Antiochus is articulated in arboreal terms--"To taste the

fruit of yon celestial tree" (1.64)--and Antiochus calls her "this fair Hesperides, | With golden fruit" (1.70-1), which metaphor casts her as a living contradiction: the object of men's desire and that object's guardian. Incest makes for contradictory self-division and turning-inward, hence the daughter of Antiochus being simultaneously fruit and the guardian of that fruit, and Pericles (potentially) and Antiochus (actually) being parents of themselves. Pericles's device of a denuded bough green only at the top (the lower branches being dead) appropriately represents his avoidance of this evil. Antiochus calls Pericles a tree ("so fair a tree | As your fair self" 1.157-8) and Pericles fears that his life may be "cropped" (1.184). Moreover, Pericles thinks of himself as one of that topmost class in a hierarchical social structure that protects the lower branches: "[I] am no more but as the tops of trees | Which fence the roots they grow by and defend them" (2.30-1). The play's arboreal imagery carries this double sense throughout, of generational fanning out and of social order. As a top branch, Pericles fears that Antiochus, "To lop that doubt" (2.95) of his broadcasting the sin of incest, will cut him off; lopping means cutting off branches and other uses (such as cutting off heads or limbs) are figuratively derived from this primary sense. Like Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale, Pericles is concerned with the ability to recognize one's offspring to avoid incest, and thus despite the problems of category labels such as 'the Romances' or even the more neutral 'Late Plays' (McMullan 2002), these plays belong together. In the source for The Winter's Tale Pandosto unwittingly and extensively woos his lost daughter Fawnia and even threatens to rape her if she will not yield (Greene 1588, F4r-G3vr). Shakespeare attenuated but did not excise this in his version of the story: "LEONTES I'd beg your precious mistress, | Which he counts but a trifle" (The Winter's Tale 5.1.222-3). Incest also lies just beneath the surface of Cymbeline in the strong affection of Guiderius and Arviragus for their sister Innogen, which only her disguise suppresses: "Were you a woman, youth, | I should woo hard" (3.6.66-7).

My connection of textuality and sexuality in Pericles has ideas in common with Masten's reading (Masten 1997, 75-93) but parts from it most crucially on the motivation underlying the concern to establish identity. Masten drew on Marjorie Garber's linkage of paternity questions in the plays to the academic anxiety about the paternity of Shakespeare's plays (Garber 1987, 1-27), and commented that even after the recognition of Marina the play Pericles "continues to dwell on . . . 'the undecideability of paternity'" (Masten 1997, 87) because, Masten believed, the concern is primarily patriarchal: 'author' and 'authority' are indissolubly linked. Masten followed the chain of certainties about identity back to the document Pericles put in Thaisa's coffin, so "his position as patriarchal father, his position of authority--is thus guaranteed only by a text of his own character" and thus in a classic poststructural switch derived from Michel Foucault's notion of the 'author-function', "The daughter here begets the father; the text begets its author" (Masten 1997, 89). Masten explored the neat parallel with New Bibliographical study of the textual situation, which sought to establish Shakespeare's paternity by casting aspersions of immorality upon other agents including Wilkins and the printers (Masten 1997, 90-93). But the significant element that Masten omits is the phonocentrism of the textual hypotheses about the play's 1609 quarto, which enabled Taylor's extensive intervention to 'reconstruct' the play for the Oxford Complete Works (Taylor 1986; Wells et al. 1987, 556-60). In particular, Taylor argued that ". . . P. A. [Wilkins's novella The Painfull Aduentures of Pericles Prince of Tyre, published 1608] is a 'substantive' text of Pericles: a 'reported' text (like Q), one cast in the mode of a prose narrative (unlike Q), one contaminated by Twine (unlike Q), but a substantive text nonetheless" (Wells et al. 1987, 557), and so rather than one 'child' of the play-as-performed Taylor's method posits two at the same as supporting the thesis that it had two parents. Moreover, although P. A. "is obviously inferior to Q as an editorial

document, in one crucial respect it is superior: the author of P. A. is the man most likely to have been Shakespeare's collaborator in writing the play" (Wells et al. 1987, 557). But if Wilkins wrote the play with Shakespeare, why did he have to remember the text to make his novella, why could he not just copy what he had written for the King's men? Because, Taylor decided, the normal theatrical practices of the period required Wilkins to give up possession of his own papers in order to be paid for his work. Taylor's hypothesis depended on the assumptions that printers were eager for play manuscripts, that playing companies wanted to frustrate them, and that in the case of Wilkins the King's men had reason to be wary since he had already shown himself untrustworthy by selling a text of his The Miseries of Enforced Marriage for printing in 1607 (Wells et al. 1987, 558). Peter W. M. Blayney has since shown that plays manuscript were in fact not especially attractive to printers--most took more than 5 years to return the investment in printing them--and hence the hypothesis of surreptitious printing of 'bad' quartos is hard to sustain; the market on which it is predicated did not exist (Blayney 1997). Of course, some of Shakespeare's play did sell well, as evidenced by reprinting: four editions of Pericles and Romeo and Juliet and five of Richard 2, Richard 3 and 1 Henry 4 and were published by 1623. Far from denying printers access to their scripts, Blayney's argument and its development by Lukas Erne suggest that this mode of dissemination was actively sought by the King's men (Erne 2002). In the theatre-historical domain too, then, textuality encroaches on the origin point--early performance--preferred by the New New Bibliographers of the Oxford Shakespeare who were themselves revising the authorial-manuscript centered New Bibliography of W. W. Greg, R. B. McKerrow, Alfred Pollard, and John Dover Wilson.

An urgent question for the editing of Renaissance drama after New New Bibliography is how far we should treat a surviving textualization as a link with the primordial textuality which preceded the performed event rather than as a witness to that event, of which it is a second-order, debased, derivative. The problem may be insoluble since, as Masten observed (Masten 1997, 114), the Pericles's quarto title-page is typical in marking the intersection of two markets: one performative, "As it hath been diuers aad [sic] sundry times acted by his Maiesties Seruants, at the Globe on the Banck-side", and the other textual, "Imprinted at London for Henry Gosson, and are to be sold at the signe of the Sunne in Pater-noster row, &c" (Shakespeare 1609, A1r). But for all its admission that it follows performance ("hath been . . . acted"), the title-page of Pericles nonetheless insists that it actually is "The Late And much admired Play Called Pericles, Prince of Tyre". This is an unusual claim. Early sixteenth-century interludes by John Heywood were printed with title-pages claiming that the contents were plays (Anonymous [possibly Thomas Heywood] 1607; Anonymous 1598) and several of these printings continued into the Shakespearian period. Likewise an anonymous verse jest about Robin Hood was reprinted several times in the early decades of the sixteenth century and for a printing around 1560 "a newe playe" of about 200 lines was added (Anonymous 1560?). But play title-pages stopped calling their contents plays just as the professional London theatre started. Thomas Nashe's Lenten Stuff claims on its title-page to include "a new Play neuer played before" but is wholly a non-dramatic prose satire (Nash 1599) and likewise The Jesuits' Play at Lyons is a prose treatise, not a dramatic work (S 1607). Apart from the Tudor interludes, no extant drama before Pericles is called a "play" on its title-page. The link with interludes is significant because their title-pages frequently declare that the contents can function as the origin of a subsequent performance, in such phrasings as "Fieue may easely play this enterlude" (Fulwell 1568) and "to be plaid in May-games" (Anonymous 1560?), rather than, as is common with the drama of Shakespeare's time, purporting to be records of performances that have already happened ("as it was played"). Nonetheless, a group of recusant players under Richard Cholmeley's patronage toured in Yorkshire from 1606 to at

least 1616 using only printed playtexts for their repertory (Sisson 1942). When tried for sedition these players insisted (falsely, it turned out) that they had not strayed from the printed texts, apparently thinking that this gave them a kind of surrogate licence from the Master of the Revels who had licenced the original manuscripts underlying the printing. One of the actors reported that at Candlemas 1609-10 they performed "Perocles prince of Tire", which was undoubtedly the work of Shakespeare and Wilkins, and "Kinge Lere" which might have been Shakespeare's (his quarto was the most recent) but equally might have been the old chronicle history of King Leir printed in 1605. Like the interludes, then, the printing of Pericles was in its own time a textual record of early performances ("As it hath been diuers aad [sic] sundry times acted") and the textual origin point for other performances. The play's early theatrical history mirrors its theme that writing is at once the offspring of performance and its parent.

Pericles's impresa

Scene 6 of Pericles dramatizes the preparation for a tournament, including the presentation of imprese, devices painted on wooden pseudo-shields usually with accompanying words. Claire Preston showed that the relationship between an impresa's picture and its motto can be likened to the relationship inherent in a simile and to the narration of ostended events, which links this scene to the play's central concerns and its organization of materials (Preston 1992). Shakespeare himself wrote the text for a device painted by Richard Burbage for Francis Manners, sixth Earl of Rutland, to use at the tilt on 24 March 1613, the king's accession day (Rutland 1905, 494). Michael Leslie argued that, unlike the more familiar emblems, imprese are supposed to be cryptic; where the former speak of universal truths the latter seek to conceal their meanings, to be paradoxically recondite in a context of public display--a tournament--and so remain mysterious "from all but the most appropriate of readers" (Leslie 1985, 24). An impresa was the embodiment of the aristocratic spirit and epitomised its exclusivity, so Simonides's inherent nobility is demonstrated in his ability to translate the mottoes and make sense of them in relation to the images. As Inga-Stina Ewbank noted (Ewbank 1967, 429), the fifth act of another play of 1607, Middleton's Your Five Gallants, dramatizes young men revealing their unworthiness by failing to understand the Latin mottoes of the imprese they carry (Middleton [1608]). In the 1609 quarto of Pericles not all the mottoes are expounded by Simonides--the second, third, and fifth are left unexplained--but for the Oxford Complete Works Gary Taylor decided that "The ceremonial character of the occasion strongly endorses P. A.'s provision of a comment from the King on all six imprese" and so he imported to the play the interpretations provided in Wilkins's novella (Wells et al. 1987, 567). This decision was based on an opinion of the quarto's general poor quality, so the omissions are textual gaps to be made good editorially rather than significant interpretative failings on Simonides's part. The potential dramatic power of Simonides passing over in silence those imprese he cannot interpret is considerable and is preserved in the Arden2 edition of F. D. Hoeniger (Shakespeare 1963). In the play quarto Pericles's device is described in essentially the same words as in the novella, "A withered Branch, that's onely greene at top" and it has the same motto, "In hac spe viuo" ('In this hope I live') (Shakespeare 1609, C4v), although as Masten observed (Masten 1997, 82), Simonides's interpretation of it writes Thaisa into Pericles's aspiration: "He hopes by you his fortunes yet may flourish" (6.50). Alan R. Young pointed out that the entire tournament scene is not in Shakespeare's sources, although it has some elements from Sidney's Arcadia, and Pericles's impresa itself, although unlike the ones in Arcadia, is like Sidney's own (Young 1985, 454). The sources of the other knights' imprese are more certain, and Young lists them (Young 1985, 455).

A possible source for Pericles's device is a printer's device owned by John Wolfe and used in three books connected to Shakespeare. The device is McKerrow's number 226 (McKerrow 1913) showing a palm tree around the base of which crowd snakes and frogs, and John Jowett described Wolfe's use of it not merely to decorate his 'false prints' (books printed without licence and under fictitious imprints) of authors including Machiavelli, but also to assert that the works' detractors were envious croaking frogs (Jowett 1997). Among the books whose title-pages it adorned were Henry Chettle's Kind-Heart's Dream, Gabriel Harvey's Four Letters and Certain Sonnets, Especially Touching Robert Greene and Other Parties by Him Abused, and Robert Greene's Philomela, and Shakespeare probably knew all three⁴. The first flatters Shakespeare (Chettle 1593?, A4r), something his friends and colleagues would have told him, the second's title mentions those abused by Greene, as Shakespeare was, and the last contains the story of obsessively jealous Philippo who, as Charles W. Crupi observed, is reminiscent of Shakespeare's characters Othello and Leontes, the latter being openly derived from Greene's protagonist from Pandosto: The Triumph of Time (Crupi 1986, 94-95; Greene 1588). The palm tree in the device has the characteristic nodules on its stem which, to someone not familiar with the tree or wishing to see it afresh, look like the stumps of torn- or cut-off stems, and thus the whole has the appearance of an upright branch denuded of its leaves at the lower and middle part and green only at the top. Essentially the same image appears as the 118th in Whitney's A Choice of Emblems with an accompanying verse that makes clear the plant's association with "noble peers, and men of high estate" (Whitney 1586, P3v). Jowett pointed out that on the title-page of Harvey's Four Letters the commendation "To all courteous mindes, that will vouchsafe the reading" appears above the emblem and these words are repeated in the Epistle Dedicatory, and so "In true emblem style, the epistle provides the otherwise missing verbal elaboration upon the visual image and motto" (Jowett 1997, 99). Moreover, the device was used in a textual competition, a pamphlet war, between Harvey and Chettle that Jowett describes in terms fitting also for Pericles:

Ignoring its origin in false imprints, Harvey had dangerously raised the status of the emblem to that of guarantor of truth. The self-same image is now attached to a text that challenges Harvey's. In Chettle's book, the replicability of the printer's device as an indifferent and ornamental printed image taken from a piece of type that can be randomly transferred from text to text is exploited to undermine its value as a signifier. The recycled emblem both enforces and undermines all statements of authorial sincerity in Kind-Heart's Dream, including the statement that Greene's authorial name had not been stolen. (Jowett 1997, 101-02)

The textual history of the play Pericles is likewise characterized by struggle over authorial naming, and in particular the problem (as it has been perceived) of Wilkins's collaboration on the play, something none of the play's early printings' title-pages mention. Katherine Duncan-Jones suspected that the problem is not merely of modern critics' making but was something felt by his colleagues at the time, for whom ". . . the period of Shakespeare's association with Wilkins was a distressing deviation from his commanding role as the King's Men's leading playwright" (Duncan-Jones 2001, 209). An image used on book title-pages as part of a struggle involving those who made the earliest allusions to Shakespeare's professional habits (especially the incorporation of others' work) would be especially suitable for the play Pericles. Welcoming the knights back from the tournament, Simonides links aristocratic titling to another kind of inscription:

[SIMONIDES] To place upon the volume of your deeds
As in a title page your worth in arms

Were more than you expect, or more than's fit,
Since every worth in show commends itself.
(Pericles 7.1-5)

So, a simile derived from book title-pages was in the dramatist's mind 18 lines after the description of Pericles's *impresa*, which is reason to suspect that Wolfe's title-page device underlies the play's otherwise unidentified image of a denuded bough.

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¹Except where otherwise stated, all quotations of Shakespeare are from Shakespeare 1989.

²There is some evidence that plays were composed to take advantage of existing costumes, at appears to be the case with The Tempest (Saenger 1995; Egan 1997), but since nothing but the scripts have come down to us, the principle that written script conditions all else in performance applies at least to post-Restoration productions.

³From an editor's point of view there may well be need to treat a play's stage directions as less 'authorized' than its speeches, as argued in Wells 1984, 57-78. The reconciliation of this need to a poststructurally-informed textual theory is possible, but beyond the scope of this essay.

⁴The argument here is greatly indebted to private conversations with John Jowett, to whom I am most grateful.

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