

Routledge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture

1. **Stillness in Motion in the
Seventeenth-Century Theatre**
P.A. Skanize
2. **The Popular Culture of
Shakespeare, Spenser and Jonson**
Mary Ellen Lamb
3. **Forgetting in Early Modern
English Literature and Culture**
Leith's Legacies
Edited by Christopher Ivic and
Grant Williams
4. **Luce Irigaray and
Premodern Culture**
Thresholds of History
Edited by Theresa Krier and
Elizabeth D. Harvey
5. **Writing, Geometry and Space
in Seventeenth-Century England
and America**
Circles in the Sand
Jess Edwards
6. **Dramatists and their Manuscripts
in the Age of Shakespeare, Jonson,
Middleton and Heywood**
Authorship, Authority and
the Playhouse
Grace Ioppolo
7. **Reading the Early Modern Dream**
The Terrors of the Night
Edited by Katharine Hodgkin, Michelle
O'Callaghan, and S. J. Wiseman
8. **Fictions of Old Age in Early
Modern Literature and Culture**
Nina Tautou
9. **Performing Race and Torture on
the Early Modern Stage**
Ayanna Thompson
10. **Women, Murder, and Equity in
Early Modern England**
Randall Martin
11. **Staging Early Modern Romance**
Prose Fiction, Dramatic Romance,
and Shakespeare
Edited by Mary Ellen Lamb
and Valerie Wayne

Staging Early Modern Romance

Prose Fiction, Dramatic Romance,
and Shakespeare

**Edited by Mary Ellen Lamb and
Valerie Wayne**

This book is for our grandchildren,
Venice and Keala.

First published 2009
by Routledge
270 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016

Simultaneously published in the UK
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2009 Taylor & Francis

Typeset in Sabon by IBT Global

Printed and bound in the United States of America on acid-free paper by IBT Global.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark Notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Staging early modern romance : prose fiction, dramatic romance, and Shakespeare / edited by Mary Ellen Lamb and Valerie Wayne.

p. cm. -- (Routledge studies in Renaissance literature and culture ; 11)
Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. English drama -- Early modern and Elizabethan, 1500-1600 -- History and criticism.
 2. English prose literature -- Early modern, 1500-1700 -- History and criticism.
 3. Romances, English -- Adaptations -- History and criticism.
 4. Romances -- Adaptations -- History and criticism.
 5. Romanticism -- England -- History -- 16th century.
 6. Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616 -- Sources.
 7. Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616 -- Knowledge -- Literature.
- I. Lamb, Mary Ellen, 1946-- II. Wayne, Valerie.

PR658.R65573 2009

820.9'003 --dc22

2008035566

ISBN10: 0-415-96281-1 (hbk)

ISBN10: 0-203-88207-5 (ebk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-96281-0 (hbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-203-88207-8 (ebk)

Contents

Acknowledgments

iv

Part I: Continuities and Incongruities

1 Introduction: Into the Forest

MARY ELLEN LAMB AND VALERIE WAYNE

2 The Sources of Romance, the Generation of Story, and the Patterns of the Pericles Tales

LORI HUMPHREY NEWCOMB

2

3 "Asia of the One Side, and Afric of the Other": Sidney's Unities and the Staging of Romance

CYRUS MULREADY

4

Part II: Page and Stage

4 "A Note Beyond Your Reach": Prose Romance's Rivalry with Elizabethan Drama

STEVE MENTZ

7

5 *Hamlet* and *Euordanus*

GORAN STANIVUKOVIC

9

6 Reading the Book of the Self in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and Wroth's *Urania*

SARAH WALL-RANDELL

10

- Taylor, Gary, and MacD, P. Jackson. "Pericles." *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*. Eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor. New York: Norton, 1997. 556-92.
- Thorne, Alison, ed. *Shakespeare's Romances: New Casebooks*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Twyne, Laurence. *Patterne of Painefull Adventures*. London: Valentine Simmes for Widow Newman, 1594.
- . *The Patterne of painefull Adventures*. London: Valentine Sims, 1607.
- Vickers, Brian. *Shakespeare, Co-Author*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.
- Wayne, Valerie. "The Sexual Politics of Textual Transmission." *Textual Formations and Reformations*. Ed. Laurie E. Maguire and Thomas L. Berger. Newark: U of Delaware P, 1998. 179-210.
- Wells, Stanley. "Shakespeare and Romance." *Later Shakespeare*. Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies 8. New York: St. Martin's P, 1967. 48-79.
- Wilkins, George. *Painfull Adventures of Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. London: T. Plurfoot for Nat. Butter, 1608.
- Womack, Peter. "Shakespeare and the Sea of Stories." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 29:1 (1999): 169-87.

3 "Asia of the One Side, and Afric of the Other" Sidney's Unities and the Staging of Romance

Cyrus Mulready

At a crucial moment in his *Defense of Poesy*, Philip Sidney summons a magical horse. He does so in response to the question: "How then shall we set forth a story which containeth both many places and many times?" Sidney offers: "Again, many things may be told which cannot be showed, if they know the difference betwixt reporting and representing. As, for example, I may speak (though I am here) of Peru, and in speech digress from that to the description of Calicut; but in action I cannot represent it without Pacolet's horse" (244). Editors of Sidney's treatise have long noted that "Pacolet's horse" alludes to a figure from the French romance *Valentin et Orson*.¹ In the story (qtd. here from Henry Wat-son's sixteenth-century translation), a dwarfish enchanter named Pacolet fashions a magical wooden horse that allows him to travel throughout the world:

Every tyme that he mounted upon the horse for to goo somewhere, he turned the pynne [turned the pin] towarde the place that he wolde go to, and anone he founde him in the place without harme or daunger, for the hors was of suche facyon that he wente throughhe the ayre more faster than ony byrde coude flee. . . . (*Hystory* N4')

In the scene depicted in the following woodcut (Figure 1), two characters are flying over a castle on the back of Pacolet's magic horse to the wonder of the onlookers below.

Sidney's invocation of this flying wooden horse comes on the heels of his complaint that the English stage is "faulty both in place and time" (243): it disregards the unities associated with Aristotle. But his response also indicates the extent to which the world had changed since the time Sophocles wrote his tragedies, Terence his comedies, and Aristotle his *Poetics*. In a strange juxtaposition, Sidney brings the expanding world of global exploration, discovery, and commerce into conversation with neoclassical dramatic theory. The figure that he derisively suggests can bridge this gap, that can "represent" such fanciful globetrotting "in action," is Pacolet's horse. It is surprising, and clearly ironic, that Sidney, a theorist who rigorously

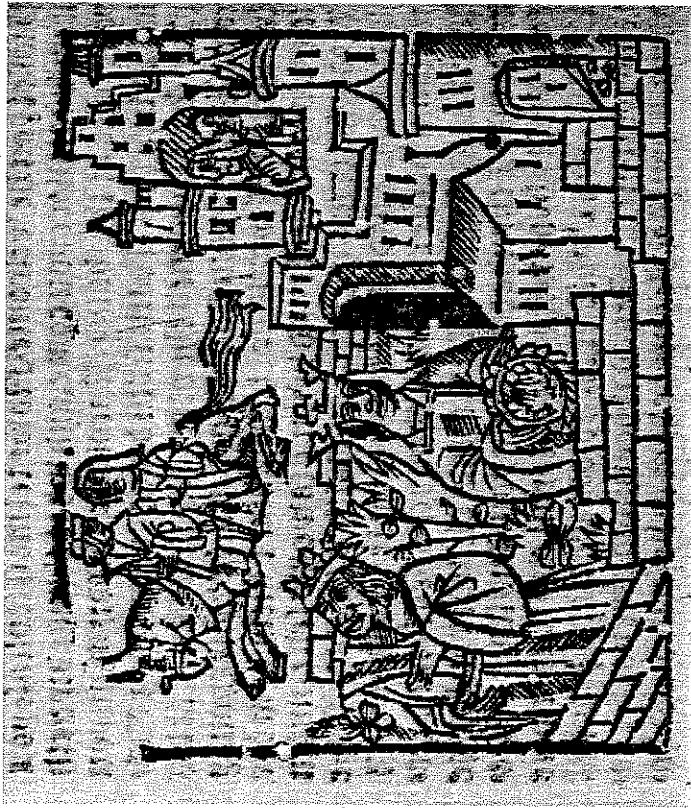


Figure 1 Woodcut from *The History of the two Valyaunte Brethren Valentyne and Orson*. (London, n.d. [1565?]), R4^r; by courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

defended classical drama and the stage's "excelling parts of poesy" (246), would mobilize a character so closely linked to romance. Why, then, would he invoke romance in his discussion of the unities? And why is Sidney, the author of *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, so dismissive of romance on the stage?

This chapter connects Sidney's concerns with dramatic unity in *Defense* to the advent of dramatic romance in the early English theater. Sidney's call to preserve dramatic unity came as a direct response to the increasing popularity of romance as a stage genre, the "dramatized romances" that Barbara Mowat has recently traced to the earliest years of the commercial theater in England (143).² My argument begins with a survey of these early plays and the evidence of their influence on early modern dramatic culture. I then look carefully at Sidney's objections to the stage and why romance, in particular, presented a challenge to his neoclassical vision of dramatic practice. The ease with which Sidney dismisses the question of representing "many places and many times" belies both the practical and

theoretical problems dramatic romance created. In translating the elements of romance narrative (travel to foreign lands, feats of magic, fanciful creatures), dramatists stretched the representational capacity of the stage. My argument then turns to the impact of the period's expanding geography on stage representation. With Sidney's citation of "Peru and Calicut," I argue, we see the extravagant geography of an expanding world affecting both the matter and the form of the stage. Finally, I consider how one of the representative plays of the genre, Thomas Dekker's *Old Fortunatus*, shows the defiance of the popular theater against dictates like those of Sidney. The audience's taste for extravagant geography and genres prompted playwrights to move beyond the generic and formal restrictions of neoclassical theory. Sidney's call for dramatic unity, I argue, ultimately proved hopeless against the mounting demand for plays that gave audiences representations of an expanded world.

Modern criticism of dramatic romance has been directed almost exclusively at Shakespeare's "late plays," which the Victorian critic Edward Dowden first categorized under the rubric of romance.³ Dowden's alignment has had remarkable longevity, as critics and editors to this day rely on the term to group together *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, and *Pericles*. But it is important to note that Dowden's criteria for grouping these plays were that he saw them as exceptional in the Shakespearean and early modern dramatic canon. That is, they constituted a category because they did not fit, for Dowden, under the genres established in the first folio; Shakespeare wrote them "in his period of large, serene wisdom" (403). Following Dowden, romance is still largely regarded today as a *Shakespearean* category.⁴ With my attention to Sidney and dramatic tradition before Shakespeare, I thus seek an alternative genealogy for the genre of "romance" in early modern drama: one that begins not with Coleridge, Dowden, or even Shakespeare, but with a group of plays from the sixteenth century that attempted to represent England's broadening horizons.

"THIS PLAY MATTER": THE EARLY DRAMATIC ROMANCE

Despite its limited treatment of the subject, Sidney's *Defense* remains one of the most cited and anthologized documents in early English theatrical history and theory.⁵ One would be hard pressed to find a treatment of English Renaissance attitudes about genre, dramatic decorum, and unity that does not somehow allude to Sidney. But we also hold on to the notion that Sidney's condemnation of English drama was, as T. S. Eliot put it, among the "lost causes" of Elizabethan criticism.⁶ So there remain gaps in our understanding of Sidney's dramatic criticism and particularly his concerns with unity and genre. While we remember his rejection of "mongrel tragi-comedy" and commentary on the infelicity of mixing

"hornpipes and funerals" (244), we have lost sight of the relevance of the *Defense* to early modern dramatic culture in these now well-worn phrases of Sidney's treatise.

We might take Sidney's citation of *Valentine and Orson* as a mere turn of his estimable wit: because of the popularity of this romance and numerous allusions in French, "Pacolet's horse" became "a proverbial equivalent for extraordinary speed" (Dickson 218). Only rarely have critics considered that Sidney was, in fact, a knowledgeable critic of his contemporary dramatic world. His passing reference to *Valentine and Orson*, a tremendously popular romance in the sixteenth century, gives us some glimpse of that engagement. Sidney's discourse on drama generally provides descriptions of specific plots, characters, and scenes. It is not surprising, then, that the records of early English stage performances show that Sidney's allusions should be taken quite literally: the story of *Valentine and Orson* was indeed adapted for performance several times before the close of the sixteenth century. The Stationers' Register shows that "An enterlude of Valentyne and Orsson, plaid by hir maiesties Players" was licensed to Thomas Gosson and Raffe Hancock in May 1595, and Henslowe records in his diary that he paid five pounds to Anthony Munday and Richard Hathwaye for "a Boocke called vallentyne & orsen," in 1598. Finally, in 1600, "A famous history called Valentine and Orsson played by her maiesties Players" was licensed to William White. Printed versions of these plays are lost and we have no record of their performance beyond these entries (Dickson 287-88).

The sixteenth-century performance history of the story of *Valentine and Orson* also dates to before the opening of the commercial theater in London. At coronation festivities in Cheapside for King Edward VI in 1547, an observer reported that:

Before the entry of the conduit, stood two persons resembling Valentine and wild Urson, the one clothed with moss and ivy-leaves, having in his hand a great club of yew; the other armed as a knight; and they pronounced their speeches. (*Accounts* 45-46)

Valentine and Orson tells the story of two brothers separated at birth: Valentine, who is raised at court to be a nobleman and chivalrous knight, and Orson, who is snatched away by a wild animal and carried to the woods where he is raised by a bear. Later in the story, Valentine encounters his lost brother and civilizes him with kind and gentle discourse. They become fast friends, Orson is baptized, and the two spend their days battling against the Saracens and pursuing knightly adventures. In the 1547 scene described above, the two actors seem to be representing the moment in the story when savage Orson, clothed in moss and ivy, clashes with the civilized Valentine. Perhaps the "speeches" they "pronounced" showed how the urbane Valentine was able to lead his lost brother out

of the wilderness. The record of this pageant suggests that even early on, *Valentine and Orson* was not merely a popular story in print, but one that audiences embraced in dramatic performance.

After Edward's coronation and throughout the century, this romance and others flourished both in print and in performance. Other examples of plays drawn from the annals of romance narrative filled the repertoires of English theater companies: stories taken from the cycles of Arthurian legend were typical (*The Life [and death] of Arthur, King of England, The Misfortunes of Arthur, Uther Pendragon*) as were plays that shared titles with other popular romances (*Guy, Earl of Warwick, Huon of Bordeaux*, and *Oriando Furioso*). Bibliographers of drama in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries compiled lists of these titles that have remained largely unrecognized. I have compiled an appendix that gives the titles and dates, when known, for these plays as well as the origins of the stories. Many plays from the 1570s and 1580s were adapted directly from romance. Most of these early plays have been lost, but accounts from the Court's Revels office preserve the titles of several plays that were most likely dramatic romances, including: *Cloridon and Radiamanta* (1572), *The Red Knight* (1576), *The Historie of the Solitarie Knight* (1577), *The Irtisse Knyght* (1577), and *The Knight of the Burning Rock* (1579).⁷ The last of these, according to records from the Office of the Revels, required the construction of an elaborate, three-dimensional stage "rock" and stage effects that included smoke, an elevating chair, and spirits rising from the stage.⁸

Was *Valentine and Orson* among these early plays performed for the court or the public? Although we have no record of a staged production before 1595, a document from the Revels Office suggests the possibility that *Valentine and Orson* (and Sidney's magical horse) was a part of the court's entertainments in the early 1580s. According to a list of payments made by the Office between 1581 and 1582, Elizabeth's court produced some "v [five] Playes twoe Maskes & one fightinge at Barriers with diuerse Devises" (Feuillerat Table II). Along with payments made to mercers, weavers, and other "artificers," the report includes wages paid to one John Rose for constructing "a Mount with a Castle vpon the toppe of it a Dragon & a Artificiall Tree" and "a artificiall Lyon & a horse made of wood." There is no doubt that *Valentine and Orson* was one of many plays that could have utilized a wooden horse, castle, or dragon (we have no records that show which plays employed these set pieces and stage properties). But this document gives further indication that plays and entertainments filled with romance motifs entertained the court audience in the years Sidney formulated and wrote his *Defense*.

Beyond these documents of early performances, we find the influence of dramatic romance in other critics of the stage. Stephen Gosson and George Whetstone both specifically cite the dramatic romance in their

critiques. In *Plays Confuted in Five Actions* (1582), Gosson complains that popular prose and verse romances, such as "... the Aethiopian historie, Amadis of Fraunce, the Rounde table" have been "throughly ransackt, to furnish the Playe houses in London" (D5^v). In a preface to his 1578 play *Promos and Cassandra*, George Whetstone describes characteristic English drama in terms similar to Sidney. He maintains that the English playwright of his day,

is most vaine, indiscreete, and out of order: he fyrst groundes his worke, on impossibilities: then in three howers ronnes he throwe the worlde: marryes, gets Children, makes Children men, men to conquer kingdomes, murder Monsters, and bringeth Gods from Heauen, and fetcheth Duels from Hel. (A2^v)

Gosson offers some indication of narratives that fueled theatrical plots, while Whetstone serves as another neoclassically minded writer who was, even before Sidney, discouraged by the lack of "order" in the English theater.

By the 1610s the dramatic romance had developed into one of the staple genres of the thriving commercial theater in England. When Thomas Heywood's *Foure Prentises of London, With the Conquest of Jerusalem*, popular on stage in the 1590s, first appeared in print in 1615, its author prefaced it with a revealing apology.

It comes short of that accuratenesse both in Plot and Stile that these more. Censorious dayes with greater curiosity acquire [require], I must thus excuse. That as *Playes* were then some fifteene or sixteene yeares agoe it was in the fashion. (A2^{r-v})

Although apologetic in his rhetoric, Heywood is also disdainful of his current "more Censorious" time, as might be indicated by his use of "curiosity." It can mean simply "attention to detail" ("Curiosity" I.1), but according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) the word also connotes "care or attention carried to excess or unduly bestowed upon matters of inferior moment" (def. I.4). In this sense of the word, a passage from William Cornwallis's 1600 essays is remarkably close to Heywood's passage above: "We of these latter times, full of a nice curiositie, mislike all the performances of our fore-fathers" (P6^r). Heywood suggests that the playgoers of this later time are more concerned with verisimilitude or "accurateness" in "plot and stile" (that they are more Sidneian) than those who first watched his play some years ago. A version of the *Foure Prentises* appeared on stage as early as 1594 when both Henslowe and the Stationers' Register document a play (now lost) featuring the central character in Heywood's *Foure Prentises*: "Godfrey of Bulloigne, with the Conquest of Jerusalem." *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1609),

Francis Beaumont's send-up of *The Foure Prentises* (and other plays "in the fashion"), shows us that, although "short" of current dramatic standards, by 1615 the romance was well enough established as a theatrical genre to be the subject of rich parody. Furthermore, Heywood, Whetstone, and Gosson all allude to the indecorousness of these plays and their lack of unity, suggesting that these formal transgressions became a hallmark of the genre.

Likewise, Ben Jonson, perhaps one of the "Censorious" Heywood alludes to, wryly describes plays like the *Foure Prentises* in his *Magnetic Lady* (1632):

So, if a child could be born, in a play, and grow up to a man i'the first scene, before he went off the stage: and then after to come forth a squire, and be made a knight: and that knight to travel between the Acts, and do wonders i'the Holy Land, or elsewhere; kill paynims [pagans], wild boars, dun cows, and other monsters. (Act I, Chorus I.15-21)⁹

For Jonson, the English stage had progressed no further from the outrageous spectacles Sidney catalogued some fifty years before this play. And once again, Jonson's denunciation of the stage invokes the romance plot for the way that it violates classical representational boundaries. Not only does the plot of the romance require the play to ignore the unities, it also gives the playwright liberty to employ spectacular devices (animals, characters in foreign dress, "monsters") that compromise the play's verisimilitude. Though these plays have remained obscure in the study and production history of English drama, they were popular or "fashionable" (to use Heywood's term) well into the seventeenth century, perhaps for the very reasons that Jonson and others found them so loathsome.

Two of earliest dramatic romances that do still exist in print give us a picture of what these plays may have been like: *Clyomon and Clamydes* (1583) and *Common Conditions* (1576).¹⁰ The anonymous *Historie of the two valiant Knights, Syr Clyomon . . . And Clamydes* was first published in 1599. The only other information about its early performance history is also on the title page, which informs the reader that the play has "bene sundry times Acted by her Maiesties Players," suggesting an earlier performance history.¹¹ The play is based on a fourteenth-century French romance, *Perceforest*, which itself derives from the Alexander cycle of medieval romance. The action of the play begins in Northern Europe when the wandering knight Clyomon (the prince of Denmark) dupes Clamydes (the prince of "Swavia") out of his title and inheritance. To avenge this dishonor, Clamydes challenges Clyomon to a duel at the court of Alexander. The two knights travel separately to the court in Macedonia, where they are to face off in the king's annual tournament. Along the way, various dangers waylay each knight: a conniving

enchanter, a "Forrest of Marvels," "The Isle of Strange Marshes," and a deadly serpent. The theatrical performance of *Clyomon and Clamydes* thus would have translated to the stage many elements from romance narratives: errant knights, heroic battles, magical spectacles, strange lands and people, and an episodic plot.

The structuring device of the play's action is the journey to Alexander's court in Greece, making travel central to the plot. The play emphasizes this motif of travel with the repetition of words such as "wandering" and "native" that highlight the sense of dislocation inherent to romance. In the play's opening lines, the weary Clamydes steps foot from the ocean onto a new land. Note that the alliteration in the first line both draws attention to the character's dislocation and also harkens back to alliterative medieval versification, marking the play from the start as part of an older tradition.

As to the wearie wandring wights, whom waltring waves environ

No greater joy of joyes may be, then when from out the Ocean

They may behold the Altitude of Billowes to abate,

For to observe the Longitude of Seas in former rate:

And having then the latitude of Sea-rooms for to passe,

Their joy is greater through the grieft, then erst before it was. (1.1-6)¹²

Clamydes's remarks on the joys of passing from sea to land in these opening lines ironically predict continual motion for the characters in the play between land and sea, stasis and travel. Stage directions tell us that both of the title characters are "booted," a sign that they are travelers and a visual cue to the audience that the scene of the play cannot be static. Alan Des- sen and Leslie Thomson note that "to enter booted is to imply a recently completed journey or one about to be undertaken and by extension to suggest weariness or haste" (35). But this continual fluctuation of the romance plot also causes the characters in the play to mourn their waywardness. After being captured and imprisoned by the enchanter, Bryan Sance Foy, Clamydes laments, "Ah fatal hap, where am I wretch, in what distressed cace,/ Bereft of Tyre, head and sheeld, not knowing in what place/ My body is, ah heavenly gods, was ere such strangenes scene?" (10.872-74). Clamydes's complaint reminds us of the problem of enactment Sidney feared would plague drama that so frequently changes geographic scenes: "the player, when he cometh in, must ever begin with telling where he is, or else the tale will not be conceived" (243). Members of the audience viewing the wanderings of these knights might find themselves asking similar questions about the staging of the play, "where am I," "was ere such strangenes scene?"

An earlier dramatic romance, *Common Conditions* (entered into the Stationers' Register in 1576), shares with *Clyomon and Clamydes* these frequent shifts in geography. The play portrays the fate of the nobleman

Galiarbus, who with his two children has been banished from court by the king of Arabia. The three relations are separated in Arabia and travel to Phrygia and Thrace. The play opens with Galiarbus's daughter, Clarisa, his son, Sedmond, and their servant wandering in a wood, "forst . . . to trace from natue soyle" (296).¹³ While in the woods, the sister and brother are separated and Sedmond, Galiarbus's son, declares: "For now I will betake my selfe a wandryng knight to bee./Into some straunge & forayne land their cumly guise to see" (476-77). In the previous scene, the lost Clarisa and her trickster servant, the eponymous Conditions, had decided to leave Arabia, as well: "For seeing wee are so ny the sea that wee may pas in one day/Cleane ouer the sea to Phrygia" (440-41). Years before Shakespeare's *Pericles*, a play that also covers the geography of the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean Sea, the play's scenes move from land to sea and from country to country, touching Arabia, Thrace, and Phrygia. Even from this brief discussion, we can see that Gosson could have had plays such as *Clyomon and Clamydes* and *Common Conditions* in mind when he wrote "Some-time you shall see nothing but the adventures of an amorous knight, passing from countrie to countrie for the loue of his lady, encountering many a terrible monster made of broune paper . . ." to which he adds "What learne you by that?" (*Playes Confuted in Fyue Actions* C6).

In the context of the dramatic tradition I have outlined here, Sidney's objections to the stage deserve new consideration.¹⁴ Although moral apprehensions stoke Gosson's rejection of stage spectacle, Sidney's worries are ostensibly artistic or formal. And unlike Gosson, who is skeptical that any good can come from the English stage, Sidney holds high regard for drama. One of Sidney's central premises in the *Defense* is that poetry (in all of its forms) is superior to historiography or philosophy in teaching virtue. On this count, he even admits that the romance *Amadis of Gaul*, though it "wanteth much of a perfect poesy" (227), may teach something to the right audience. Why, then, did Sidney believe these dramatic adaptations of romance to be so deficient? We know from the records of performances from the period that Sidney faced new genres that did not adhere to the classical doctrine of Aristotle, but also a public that wanted to see plays, like *Common Conditions* or, later, *The Foure Prentises of London*, plays that adapted "Asia and Afric" into their plots. In turning to romance, the theater capitalized on precisely those features of English drama that Sidney saw as faulty: lack of unity, mixing of genres, representation of outlandish events and "gross absurdities."

"VERY DEFECTUOUS IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES": SIDNEY'S UNITIES

The first of Sidney's three objections to the English stage is that it does not follow the model for dramatic practice laid down by Aristotle in the

Poetics.¹⁵ As a result, Sidney writes, plays of his time produce "gross absurdities" (244). He contends "Our tragedies and comedies" observe "rules neither of honest civility nor skilful poetry" (243). So, while Sidney admires Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton's *Gorboduc* (1561) for "climbing to the height of Seneca's style" and being "full of notable morality," he also calls it "very defectuous in the circumstances . . . For it is faulty both in place and time, the two necessary companions of all corporal actions" and therefore it "might not remain as an exact model of all tragedies" (243). Sidney elaborates on the appropriate "circumstances" for drama by turning to Aristotle: "For where the stage should always represent but one place, and the uttermost time presupposed in it should be, both by Aristotle's precept and common reason, but one day, there is [in *Gorboduc*] both many days, and many places, inartificially imagined" (243).¹⁶

Sidney's annoyance with plays that are "inartificially imagined," conceived without skill or art, recalls both Aristotle and Horace, who believed the poet should artfully construct the plot to meet the demands of the form, not piece the story together incrementally or episodically. Episodic plots, Aristotle says flatly, "are composed by bad poets on their own account" (Gilbert 81). Aristotle advocated for unity in both epic and drama. He argues in the *Poetics* simply that poetry should provide "one imitation of one thing." In this comment, Aristotle is specifically addressing plot, which he says,

being an imitation of an action, should be concerned with one thing and that a whole, and that the parts of the action should be so put together that if one part is shifted or taken away the whole is deranged and disjointed. (Gilbert 81)

Aristotle's commentary on the unity of plot or action (in chap. 8 of the *Poetics*) laid the foundation for later theorists to deduce the tripartite rules of unity (action, place, and time). For Aristotle, the labor of the poet involves arranging and compressing, as necessary, the story so as to avoid the disfigurement of plot that Aristotle fears. Sidney therefore criticizes playwrights who do not know that "tragedy is tied to the laws of poesy, and not of history; not bound to follow the story, but having liberty either to feign a quite new matter or to frame the history to the most tragical conveniency" (244). The playwright who rejects these "laws of poesy" is closer to the historian who slavishly ties himself to the chronicling of history than to the poet who has the "liberty" to recreate the story to suit his artistic needs.

Sidney's argument, however, is not grounded entirely on an appeal to the authority of the ancients. He is equally troubled that the "defectuous circumstances" in these plays, their violations of time and place, cannot accommodate "corporal actions" and therefore confound the senses of

the audience. For Sidney, the movements of the actors' bodies must coincide with what the audience experiences. The act of translating plot into physical representation thus requires that time and space to be limited. In Sidney's account, this is rarely the case with English drama, in which even "common reason" reveals gross shortcomings. His satirical rendering of a stage plot highlights, for him, the deficiency of typical English dramatic plots:

for ordinary it is that two young princes fall in love; after many traverses, she is got with child, delivered of a fair boy; he is lost, groweth a man, falls in love, and is ready to get another child; and all this in two hours' space: which, how absurd it is in sense, even sense may imagine, and art hath taught, and all ancient examples justified. (243)

Sidney wittily intends both dominant meanings of "sense": the physical senses ("how absurd it is in sense") and cognitive ("even sense may imagine"). As he does throughout this section on drama, Sidney reminds the reader that drama is an enacted form, and for it to be properly mimetic, it must attend to "corporal actions" in ways that other forms of poetry do not. One can see the problems with English drama on this account when he broadens his indictment to include plays beyond *Gorboduc*, this time detailing violations in representing "place":

But if it be so in *Gorboduc*, how much more in all the rest, where you shall have Asia of the one side, and Afric of the other, and so many other under-kingdoms, that the player, when he cometh in, must ever begin with telling where he is, or else the tale will not be conceived? (243)

He goes on to describe once again the kinds of dramatic spectacle one might see on the English stage: in the same play the stage will stand for "a garden," a rock for a shipwreck, a cave from which a "hideous monster with fire and smoke" emerges, and finally, a battlefield on which "two armies fly in, represented with four swords and bucklers" (243). Such action violates the stricture that the stage should "but represent one place," but it also taxes the viewer's credulity when "four swords and bucklers" must stand synecdochically for "two armies." With this, Sidney concludes his *argumentum ad absurdum* against drama by emphasizing the discrepancy between the signifying performance and the signified reality. As playwrights attempt to enact more ambitious representations, the actors' "corporal actions" are incapable of representing the increasingly ambitious demands of the stage.

Sidney's concern that the audience's "senses" not be offended by implausible representations in dramatic action recalls the Italian criticics that he no doubt turned to (and sometimes cites) in formulating his

arguments.¹⁷ Lodovico Castelvetro's 1571 translation and commentary on the *Poetics* anticipates Sidney's emphasis on the role of the audience's "senses." It is simply "not possible," Castelvetro contends, "to make the audience suppose that several days and nights have passed when they have the evidence of their senses that only a few hours have gone by" (Gilbert 310, n.15). Similarly, J. C. Scaliger wrote in 1561, "Since the whole play is represented on the stage in six or eight hours, it is not in accordance with the exact appearance of truth that within that brief space of time a tempest should arise and a shipwreck occur, out of sight of land" (qtd. in Spingarn 96).¹⁸ Such drama lacks "the exact appearance of truth" and like Sidney, for whom both "sense" (physical and mental) and classical authority dictate the rules of dramatic unity, Scaliger worries that the audience's belief will be pressed beyond its limits by the physical impossibilities of drama that represents action over "many places and many times." The physical limitations that govern the body in dramatic space simply do not allow for these sorts of stories and representations.

Sidney thus reflects the arguments of Castelvetro and the other Italian neoclassicists when he suggests that the dramatist use the classical dramatic convention of the reporter, or "Nuntius," whom he says the playwright should use to report action that cannot be acted on stage (244). Castelvetro also says that the dramatist can range beyond the boundaries of the play's action through the use of a messenger. But Castelvetro admits that even this practice is not entirely suitable to drama, "because when a messenger or a prophet is introduced, one passes into the field of the epic, and into the narrative method" (Gilbert 355). Castelvetro reminds us of the fundamental generic distinction between drama and narrative in ancient theory. When Sidney later comments on the mixing of tragedy and comedy, he alludes to what must have been a much less radical mixing of genres. Thus, while Sidney the romancer sees no problem in narrating the events that transpire in his *Arcadia*, Sidney the theorist could not consent to the violations that representing these stories would require. Indeed, perhaps the greatest concern Sidney had with romance's infiltration of dramatic genre was its breakdown of the distinction between "reporting" and "representing."

"ASIA OF THE ONE SIDE, AND AFRIC OF THE OTHER": THE EXTRAVAGANCE OF DRAMATIC ROMANCE

An interesting counterpart to Sidney's *Defense* is the prologue to John Lyly's 1592 play *Midas*. In it, Lyly apologizes for the mixedness of his play and English drama as a whole:

Traficke and trauell hath wouen the nature of all Nations into ours, and made this land like Arras, full of deuisse, which was Broade-cloth,

full of workemanshippe. Time hath confounded our mindes, our mindes the matter, but all commeth to this passe, that what heretofore hath beene serued in seuerall dishes for a feaste, is now minced in a charger for a Gallimaufrey. If wee present a mingle-mangle, our fault is to be excused, because the whole worlde is become an Hodge-podge. (A2^{r-v})

The metaphors Lyly uses here are strong: England has become like a rich but exotic tapestry fabricated from all the nations of the world. According to the *OED*, arras cloth often depicted "figures and scenes" (def. 1.) That is, like a play or paintings, they were representational. Lyly contrasts the "device" of the tapestry with the "workemanshippe" of broad cloth (a "plain-weave" black cloth ["broad cloth"]). The metaphors here not only contrast the foreign (arras derives its name from a town in Artois) with the domestic, the exotic with the plain, but unity with variety. Arras is unlike monochrome broad cloth because it contains designs and often images. Arras requires "device," a complicated conceit, while broad cloth is simple. He also picks up this contrast of unity and variety with his food metaphors. What Lyly calls a "feast" is a meal served in separate dishes, recalling perhaps the Aristotelian demand that the parts of poetry work together and complement one another, that they should not be mashed together in a "hodge-podge." What is most remarkable about this apology is that Lyly attributes the changes in dramatic form to the advent of "traffic" (commerce) and travel. The opening of England's borders to the rest of the world, it seems, necessitates fundamental changes to dramatic practice. While Lyly asks his reader to excuse these flaws, he also seems to accept them as part of the reality of both his contemporary theatrical culture and the expanding horizons of England.

Like Lyly, Sidney responded to the dramatic practice of his time when he urged a stricter adaptation of dramatic rules. Though derived from Aristotle's ancient poetics, the theory of unity was at least as much a product of the sixteenth century as it was of the ancient world. Lyly further contextualizes for us Sidney's allusions to the exotic geographies of Africa, Asia, Peru and Calicut (an important trading outlet in the South Indian kingdom of Vijayanagar). These geographic allusions point to the desire among playwrights and poets in the period to turn to romance as a means of "representing" the "many places and many times" of an expanding world. Sidney's allusion to romance in this discussion of dramatic unity merits further inquiry for its geographic emphasis: "As, for example, I may speak (though I am here) of Peru, and in speech digress from that to the description of Calicut; but in action I cannot represent it without Pacolet's horse" (244). At one level, Calicut and Peru simply represent to Sidney and his reader opposite ends of the map: the most remote eastern and western geographic points that Sidney can conjure. Both places were familiar to Europeans by the late sixteenth century. In

A *Treatyse of the Newe India* (1553), Richard Eden includes an extensive description of Calicut, a city he introduces with the heading "the most famous market towne of India" (16). Eden's descriptions highlight the region's bountiful and exotic commodities. Eden also describes Peru in his 1555 translation of Peter Martyr's *Decades of the Newe World* as the "rychest lande in golde, syluer, perles, precious stones, and spyces, that euer was founde yet to this day" (316).¹⁹ What is remarkable about Sidney's invocation of Peru and Calicut is their very specificity. Sidney chose two geographic areas that, although they had only recently entered into European awareness, had already become important sources of trade, income (particularly for the Spanish and Portuguese), and fiction.

The reference to Pacolet's horse is important because, like many creatures and devices in romances, it presents its reader with a fantasy of unproblematic global travel.²⁰ According to the story, Pacolet was "full of greate wytte and understondyng, the whiche at the scole of telletee [Toledo] had lerned so muche of the arte of Nygromancye that above al other he was perfyte" (N4^r). Pacolet uses his knowledge of magic to build his magical horse "by enchauntement." The description of the horse also notes that "in the heade there was artyfycyell a pyne that was in suche wyse set, that euery tyme that he mounted upon the horse for to goe somwhere, he torned the pyne towarde the place that he wolde go to, and anone he founde him in the place without harme or daunger" (N4^r). Pacolet's horse is contrasted throughout the story to more conventional means of travel, particularly ships (which are featured in several woodcuts in the English edition). Rather than the weeks or months it would take a voyager by land or sea to reach his destination, the horse provides a fantasy of almost instant transport to exotic realms. The magical flying creature, in an era of expanding global exploration and commerce, is the fantastical version of the many merchant ships that reached out to the corners of the world. The "artyfycyell" placed "pyne" in the horse's head, which the narrator mentions each time a character mounts the horse for a journey, suggests the compass's needle or pin, making the connection between the wooden horse and sea travel even more apparent. Sidney seems keenly aware of this connection, as Pacolet's horse for him bridges the seemingly unimaginable gap between Peru and Calicut.

"YOUR THOUGHTS TO HELPE POORE ART": DEKKER'S OLD FORTUNATUS AND THE AUDIENCE FOR ROMANCE

At the opening of a later dramatic romance, Thomas Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* (1600), the Chorus gives a teasing nod to Sidney's rejection of romance:

And for this smal Circumference must stand,
For the imagind Sur-face of much land,

Of many kingdomes, and since many a mile,
Should here be measurd out: our muse intreats,
Your thoughts to helpe poore Art, and to allow,
That I may serue as Chorus to her scenes,
She begs your pardon, for shee send me forth,
Not when the lawes of Poesy doe call,
But as the storie needes. Your gracious eye
Giues life to *Fortunatus* historie. (Prologue 14–24)

By utilizing the classical device of the dramatic chorus, Dekker seems to be putting himself in the theatrical tradition that Sidney calls on the English theater to adapt. But this shift from "the lawes of poesye" (identical to Sidney's phrase) to "as the storie needes" signals an important departure from the way that Sidney and other neoclassical writers imagined the chorus to function. During the course of *Old Fortunatus*, the chorus does not merely narrate those moments that defy representation, as Sidney would have it. Rather, the chorus serves the "storie." By announcing this, Dekker refutes Sidney's dictate that the dramatist is beholden to the "laws of poesye" and therefore "not bound to follow the story" (244). Further, the chorus positions the "smal Circumference" of the stage and its actors as only a part of the action—it calls on the audience to complete its illusion ("Your thoughts to helpe poore Art"), specifically the many geographic shifts that the play requires. The plot of Dekker's play does indeed demand frequent intervention from the chorus: characters travel from Turkey to Babylon, from Cyprus to England and back. And as in *Valentine and Orson*, the characters make these journeys with the help of magic. In this case an enchanted felt "wishing cap" transports its wearer anywhere in the world with a mere thought. Thus, even as Dekker acknowledges Sidney's neoclassical mandate, he overtly moves away from the tradition of the unities in creating a story about the vagaries of global travel and commerce.

In addition to its shifts in geography and magical elements, this kind of engagement with the processes of stage representation and the forms of drama is characteristic of *Old Fortunatus* as a dramatic romance. Coming, as it does, in the midst of this tradition, the prologue offers further evidence of the significance and pervasiveness the genre had in sixteenth century theatrical culture. "Romance" has almost exclusively been used in dramatic criticism as a category for Shakespearean drama. The origins of that designation in Dowden's nineteenth-century "mind and art" criticism mark its limitations in describing not only Shakespearean drama, but also the plays that circulated through English playhouses for decades. We see in Sidney's criticism and the dramatic performances of the time an attempt to accommodate this genre that was not part of the ancient generic taxonomy. Plays such as *Old Fortunatus* and *The Four Prentises of London* also show that playwrights were as actively engaged by questions of representation and genre as the critics.

The stark contrast between neoclassical theory and early modern dramatic practice illustrates for us an important insight to the formation of new genres in the period. In *Defense*, Sidney attempts to uphold generic categories, to preserve the difference between epic and tragedy, narrative and enactment, or even historiography and poetry. He argues vehemently for the preservation of Aristotelian and neo-Aristotelian rules in dramatic poetry and the genres that those rules support. But he also admits to the power of the poet, who distinguishes himself in his ability to fashion new matter and "forms": "Only the poet . . . doth grow in effect another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature" (216). What Sidney advocates for (particularly in dramatic poetry) is restraint in exercising these abilities. The poet should feign a situation to the most "tragical conveniency," that is, use his art to create a story that is believable enough to both delight and edify, for Sidney the two ends of all poetry. When he says that actors should "report" rather than "represent" that which cannot be framed within the time and space of the stage (Peru and Calicut), Sidney does not reject outright the attempt to represent exotic geography in drama, but he does require that dramatists use the proper classical conventions. But rather than "report" events, dramatists turned to romance as a solution to the problem of telling stories that take place in both many places and over many times (as Sidney suggests with his citation of "Pacolet's horse"). As Sidney and Lyly both sensed, England's expanded horizons were exercising pressure on the matter of the theater in particular plays, as well as on dramatic practice and the very categories of dramatic representation itself.

APPENDIX 1: TABLE SHOWING TITLES AND DATES OF REPRESENTATIVE DRAMATIC ROMANCES

The following table collates play titles taken from several sources: Harbage, Greg, Fleay, Ellison, Foakes, Cooper (*The English Romance*), Hays, and Littleton. I also extensively utilized two electronic resources to identify possible origins for the titles of these plays: Literature Online and the TEAMS Middle English Text archive.²¹ This list is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to give a sense of the extent of the tradition of dramatic romance in the period.

Table 3.1 Titles and Dates of Representative Dramatic Romances

Title	Origin	Year	Author	Source/Status
Clorion and Radiamanna	Characters featured in Ariosto's <i>Orlando Furioso</i>	1572	Unknown	Revels (Lost)
Paris and Vienna	Late medieval French romance by the same title (Caxton printed translation in 1485)	1572	Unknown	Revels (Lost)
Chariclea (Theagenes and Chariclea)	Heliodorus's <i>Aethiopica</i>	1572	Unknown	Harbage (Lost)
Herpetalus the Blue Knight and Perobia	Unknown	1574	Unknown	Revels (Lost)
Common Conditions	"The most famous historie of Galliarbus Duke of Arabia" named on title page—an unknown and possibly apocryphal source	1576	Anon.	Extant
The Red Knight	Possibly Medieval English <i>Sir Percival of Galles</i>	1576	Unknown	Harbage/Schoenbaum (Lost)
The Irish Knight	The Irish Knight could possibly be Sir Marhaus from the Arthurian Cycles	1577	Unknown	Revels (Lost)
The History of the Solitary Knight	Many Middle English romances feature the figure of the solitary knight. See Herzman	1577	Unknown	Revels (Lost)
Queen of Ethiopia	Heliodorus's <i>Aethiopica</i> (?) Possibly the same play as Chariclea (1572)	1578	Unknown	Harbage (Lost)
The Knight in the Burning Rock	Unknown	1579	Unknown	Revels (Lost)
The Soldan and the Duke of . . .	Possibly <i>The Siege of Milan, The Sultan of Babylon</i> , or one of the many medieval romances featuring the figure of a Sultan	1580	Unknown	Harbage/Schoenbaum (Lost)
Clyomon and Clamydes	<i>Perceforest</i> , a French Romance	1583 (Printed 1599)	Anon.	Extant

(continued)

Table 3.1 continued

Artodante and Genevra	<i>Orlando Furioso</i>	1583	Unknown	Harbage/Schoenbaum (Lost)
Destruction of Jerusalem	<i>Siege of Jerusalem</i> —medieval romance	1584 (records exist of two separate performances in 1584)	Unknown	Harbage (Lost)
Misfortunes of Arthur	Arthurian Legend	1587	Hughes	Extant
The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune	Unknown	1589	Anon.	Extant
Orlando Furioso	Ariosto	1591 (Printed 1594 and 1599)	Greene	Extant
Trus and Vespasian	<i>Siege of Jerusalem</i> —medieval romance (perhaps same as <i>Mandeville's Travels</i>)	1592 and 1619	Unknown	Harbage (Lost)
Sir John Mandeville	<i>Mandeville's Travels</i>	1592	Unknown	Henslowe (Lost)
Huon of Bordeaux	Popular medieval romance. Early sixteenth-century English translation by John Berners	1593	Unknown	Henslowe (Lost)
I Godfrey of Bulloigne, with the Conquest of Jerusalem (Possibly an earlier version of Heywood's Four Penitces)	Many medieval and early modern sources with stories of Godfrey	1594	Unknown	Henslowe and Stationers' Register 1594 (Lost)
2 Godfrey of Bulloigne	Chaucer's <i>Knights Tale</i>	1594	Unknown	Henslowe (Lost)
Palamon and Arcite		1594	Unknown	Henslowe (Lost)

(continued)

Table 3.1 continued

Valentine and Orson	Fifteenth-century French romance	1595, 1598, 1600	Anon.	Henslowe and Stationers' Register (Lost)
Chiron of England	Arthurian Legend (Christopher Middleton wrote 1597 narrative, <i>The Famous Historie of Chiron of England</i>)	1596	Unknown	Henslowe (Lost)
Uther Pendragon	Arthurian Legend	1597	Unknown	Henslowe (Lost)
Arthur's Show	Arthurian Legend	c. 1597	Unknown	Mentioned in 2 Henry IV (Lost)
Mucedorus	Possibly Sidney's <i>Arcadia</i> , which also includes a character named Mucedorus	1598 (and sixteen subsequent editions through 1668)	Anon.	Extant
Arthur, the Life (and death) of, King of England	Arthurian Legend	1598	Hathway	Henslowe (Lost)
Jerusalem	Possibly <i>Siege of Jerusalem</i> (see 1584 above) or Godfrey of Bulloigne material	1599	Unknown	Harbage (Lost)
Tristram de Lyons	Middle English Romance, possibly Malory	1599	Anon.	Henslowe (Lost)
The Seven Wise Masters	Version of <i>The Seven Sages of Rome</i> , a popular medieval Romance	1600	Chertle, Day, Dekker, and Haughton	Henslowe (Lost)
Old Fortunatus	German Romance <i>Fortunatus</i>	1600	Dekker	Extant

(continued)

Conquest of the West Indies	Unknown	1601	Day, Houghton, slowe (Lost)	Harbage/Hen-
The Four Sons of Aymon	Medieval romance of the same title—Caxton printed English translation in 1489	1603	Robert Shaw (?)	Harbage (Lost)
Trial of Chivalry, with Cavaliero Dick Bowyer	Unknown	1604	Anon	Extant
Sir Giles Goosecap, Knight	Unknown	Printed 1606	Anon (attributed to Chap-man)	Extant
The Knight of the Burning Peste	Parody of Heywood's <i>Four Prentises of London</i>	1609	Beaumont	Extant
Tom a Lincoln	Richard Johnson romance of the same title	1608-1615	Heywood (?)	Extant in MS
Four Prentises of London with the Conquest of Jerusalem	<i>Godfrey of Bulloigne</i>	Printed 1615 and 1630	Heywood	Extant
Guy, Earl of Warwick	<i>Guy of Warwick</i> Tradition	Performances recorded on title in 1618 and 1631 "B. J.?" page to (Printed 1661, but by Day or Dekker unclear whether this is the same play)	Ascribed	Extant
Baiting of the Jealous Knight (Fair Foul One)	Unknown	1623	Smith	Harbage (Lost)
Fairy Knight	<i>Sir Degare</i> , a middle English romance, features a Fairy Knight, as does <i>Tom a Lincoln</i>	1624	Dekker and Ford	Revels (Lost)
Invisible Knight	Unknown	1633	Unknown	Mentioned in <i>A Bird in the Hand</i> (1633) (Lost)
Seven Champions of Christendom	Multiple sources	1638	Kirke	Extant
Sr. George for England	Before 1642	Unknown	Harbage, Cited in Warburton	
Knight of the Golden Shield	Version of <i>Chyomon and Clamydes</i> (?)	n.d.	Unknown	List of Printed Plays from Goffe, <i>Careless Shepherdess</i> (1656) (Lost)
The Birth of Merlin	Arthurian Legend—related to <i>Uther Pendragon</i> (1597) (?)	1662	Rowley (ascribed on title page to Shake-speare and Rowley)	Extant

Table 3.1 continued

Conquest of the West Indies	Unknown	1601	Day, Houghton, slowe (Lost)	Harbage/Hen-
The Four Sons of Aymon	Medieval romance of the same title—Caxton printed English translation in 1489	1603	Robert Shaw (?)	Harbage (Lost)
Trial of Chivalry, with Cavaliero Dick Bowyer	Unknown	1604	Anon	Extant
Sir Giles Goosecap, Knight	Unknown	Printed 1606	Anon (attributed to Chap-man)	Extant
The Knight of the Burning Peste	Parody of Heywood's <i>Four Prentises of London</i>	1609	Beaumont	Extant
Tom a Lincoln	Richard Johnson romance of the same title	1608-1615	Heywood (?)	Extant in MS
Four Prentises of London with the Conquest of Jerusalem	<i>Godfrey of Bulloigne</i>	Printed 1615 and 1630	Heywood	Extant
Guy, Earl of Warwick	<i>Guy of Warwick</i> Tradition	Performances recorded on title in 1618 and 1631 "B. J.?" page to (Printed 1661, but by Day or Dekker unclear whether this is the same play)	Ascribed	Extant
Baiting of the Jealous Knight (Fair Foul One)	Unknown	1623	Smith	Harbage (Lost)
Fairy Knight	<i>Sir Degare</i> , a middle English romance, features a Fairy Knight, as does <i>Tom a Lincoln</i>	1624	Dekker and Ford	Revels (Lost)
Invisible Knight	Unknown	1633	Unknown	Mentioned in <i>A Bird in the Hand</i> (1633) (Lost)
Seven Champions of Christendom	Multiple sources	1638	Kirke	Extant
Sr. George for England	Before 1642	Unknown	Harbage, Cited in Warburton	
Knight of the Golden Shield	Version of <i>Chyomon and Clamydes</i> (?)	n.d.	Unknown	List of Printed Plays from Goffe, <i>Careless Shepherdess</i> (1656) (Lost)
The Birth of Merlin	Arthurian Legend—related to <i>Uther Pendragon</i> (1597) (?)	1662	Rowley (ascribed on title page to Shake-speare and Rowley)	Extant

Table 3.1 continued

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Margreta de Grazia, Barbara Fuchs, Barbara Mowat, the members of the University of Pennsylvania's medieval/Renaissance reading group, and this volume's editors for their thoughtful critiques and suggestions on drafts of this essay.

NOTES

1. For a detailed account of the publication history and popularity of *Valentine and Orson*, see Dickson (Appendix II) and Cooper's "The Strange History" (1999).
2. Mowat analyzes these "early dramatic romances" to consider how Shakespeare's later plays might be "deliberate transformations of very old forms" (143). Mowat thus argues for the importance of these plays in light of the Shakespeare's plays: "the rewards for examining this admittedly scanty collection of less-than-stellar early dramatized romances are, for the student of Shakespeare's late plays, considerable" (136). Likewise, Christopher Cobb identifies plays such as *Chyomom and Clamydes* and *Macedornas* as part of an early tradition of "dramatic romance" to show how Shakespeare sought to "reform the staging of romance" (62) in his later plays. In this chapter, I follow the influence of these plays outside of the Shakespearean canon.
3. Margreta de Grazia credits Dowden with the creation of the category of romance and further explores Dowden's impact on the editorial tradition in *Shakespeare Verbatim* (2.5 n. 37, 149 n. 42). Barbara Mowat offers an excellent summary of the editorial practices that led to Dowden's use of the word "romance" to describe these plays. Gordon McMullan gives a thorough treatment of Dowden's biographical criticism and its role in the creation of a notion of a Shakespearean "late style." See also O'Connell and Wells, who both briefly acknowledge an early, non-Shakespearean tradition of dramatic romance, but characteristically emphasize Shakespeare in their treatment of the genre.
4. In her study of romance, Barbara Fuchs, for instance, concludes that "dramatic romance" is a "highly anomalous category" (94). Fuchs agrees that the critical emphasis on the category of Shakespearean romance has "the unfortunate consequence of obscuring the many genres with a claim to being considered English Renaissance romances" (93-94).
5. There is evidence that Sidney's treatise was known even in its own time. John Florio's 1591 collection of proverbs and popular phrases, *Florios Secund Frutes*, contains a clear reference to the *Defense*, referring to plays that are "not right comedies . . . nor right tragedies" (23). Though not published until 1595 (under its alternative title, *An Apology for Poetry*), Sidney's treatise circulated in manuscripts as early as 1580, in which form Florio may well have seen it. For a discussion of its composition date and print history, see Duncan-Jones (371). The *Defense* is now often in collections of essays and documents in theatrical history. See, for example, Pollard.
6. Eliot's essay remains one of only a few thorough examinations of Sidney's treatment of drama in the *Defense*. More recent, Sidney figures in discussions of dramatic genre in Howard and Orgel.
7. For an early twentieth-century study of stage romances played at court, see Ellison.

8. See Feuillerat (303, 306-8). Astington uses these details from the court records to give a speculative description of the staging of this play (102-3).
9. Jonson also famously denounced audiences for favoring the "mouldy" and "stale" *Pericles* (1938).
10. Of these, only *Common Conditions* was printed during this period from 1570-1585. *Chyomom and Clamydes* and a third early stage romance, *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, were printed in 1599 and 1589, respectively.
11. This seems to set the earliest date of the play at 1583, the year of the founding of the Queen's company. Editors and theater historians, however, have typically dated the play to the 1570s. See Littleton (30), for a complete discussion of the dating of the play, though she says "the whole matter is admittedly conjectural."
12. All quotations from *Chyomom and Clamydes* refer to Littleton's edition.
13. Parenthetical citations for *Common Conditions* refer to line numbers in the Elizabethan Club edition.
14. Other critics have noted the correlation between Sidney's comments on drama and obscure plays such as *Chyomom and Clamydes*. See Ellison (132-33), Wells (52-53) and O'Connell (218), though O'Connell dismissively calls these early romances a "brief vogue" (n. 6).
15. Sidney also proffers two other loosely connected objections to English drama: it is indecorous in its mixing of kings and clowns (tragedy and comedy) and its comedies confuse delight with laughter. All citations of the *Poetics* refer to Gilbert.
16. Although Sidney credits Aristotle with the formulation of the "precept" of unity of time, most scholars agree that Aristotelian prescriptions on unity begin and end with the unity of action, discussed below. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle does point out that tragedy "attempts to keep within a single revolution of the sun," but he does not tie this observation to any requirement that the action represented on the stage take place over such a period of time (Gilbert 75). For further discussion, see Spingarn (89-401).
17. For a discussion of Sidney's indebtedness to the Italian critics of the sixteenth century, see Myrick and Spingarn.
18. It is unclear whether Scaliger is referring to actual plays that were "six or eight hours" long, or if he is suggesting an ideal for the length of the play. Sixteenth-century commentators on the *Poetics* in Italy had some disagreement about the meaning of Aristotle's phrase "within a single revolution of the sun." For further discussion, see Herrick (91).
19. Martyr's text was widely circulated and translated into several languages—Sidney almost surely would have been familiar with it.
20. Pacolet's horse is one of many such devices in romance. Ariosto's Hippogryph is another flying horse in the *Orlando Furioso*. Fortunatus's "wishing cap" (discussed further in the chapter) also allows its wearer to quickly travel across vast spaces.
21. I am also grateful for Jonathan Hsy's help in locating Middle English sources for these plays.

WORKS CITED

Accounts of Fifty-Five Royal Processions and Entertainments in the City of London. Ed. John Gough Nichols. London, 1837.

Astington, John. *English Court Theatre 1558-1642*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999.

- Beaumont, Francis. *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Ed. Michael Hattaway. London: Black, 2000.
- Common Conditions. Ed. Tucker Brooke. [Elizabethan Club Reprints No. 1.] New Haven: Yale UP, 1915.
- Cobb, Christopher. *The Staging of Romance in Late Shakespeare: Text and Theatrical Technique*. Newark, Del.: U of Delaware P, 2007.
- Cooper, Helen. *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004.
- . "The Strange History of *Valentine and Orson*." *Tradition and Transformation in Medieval Romance*. Ed. Rosalind Field. Woodbridge, England: Brewer, 1999. 153–68.
- Cornwallis, William. *Essays*. London, 1600.
- de Grazia, Margreta. *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus*. Oxford: Clarendon-Oxford UP, 1991.
- Dekker, Thomas. *Old Fortunatus*. 1600. *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, vol. 1. Ed. Fredson Bowers. 4 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1953.
- Dessen, Alan C., and Leslie Thomson. *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580–1642*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999.
- Dickson, Arthur. *Valentine and Orson: A Study in Late Medieval Romance*. New York: Columbia UP, 1929.
- Downen, Edward. *Shakespeare: A Critical Study of His Mind and Art*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 1962.
- Duncan-Jones, Katherine. "Introduction and Notes." *Philip Sidney: The Major Works*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.
- Eden, Richard. *A Treatise of the New India*. 1553. *The First Three English Books on America*. Ed. Edward Arber. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1971. 3–43.
- Eliot, T. S. "An Apology for the Countess of Pembroke." *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1986. 29–44.
- Ellison, Lee Monroe. *The Early Romantic Drama at the English Court*. Menasha, WI: Banta-Collegiate, 1917.
- Feuillerat, Albert, and Great Britain. *Documents Relating to the Office of the Revellers in the Time of Queen Elizabeth*. Materials for the Study of the Old English Drama 21. Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1963.
- Fleay, Frederick Gard. *A Chronicle History of the London Stage, 1559–1642*. Burt Franklin Bibliography and Reference Series 51. New York: Franklin, 1964.
- Florio, John. *Second Fruits*. 1591. Gainesville, FL: Scholars', 1953.
- Foakes, R. A., ed. *Henslowe's Diary*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002.
- Fuchs, Barbara. *Romance: New Critical Idiom*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Gilbert, Allan H. *Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden*. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1962.
- Gosson, Stephen. *Plays Confuted in Five Actions Proving That They Are Not to Be Suffered in a Christian Common Weale, by the Waye Both the Cautils of Thomas Lodge, and the Play of Plays, Written in Their Defence, and Other Obiections of Players Frenches, Are Truly Set Downe and Directlye Answered*. London, 1582.
- Greg, W.W. *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration*. 4 vols. London: Biographical Society, 1970.
- Hamilton, A. C. *Sir Philip Sidney: A Study of His Life and Works*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977.
- Harbage, Alfred, S. Schoenbaum, and Sylvia Stoler Wagonheim. *Annals of English Drama, 975–1700: An Analytical Record of All Plays, Extant or Lost, Chronologically Arranged and Indexed by Authors, Titles, Dramatic Companies & C.* 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 1989.
- Hays, Michael. "A Bibliography of Dramatic Adaptations of Medieval Romances and Renaissance Chivalric Romances First Available in English through 1616." *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 28 (1985): 87–109.
- Herrick, Marvyn T. *Italian Tragedy in the Renaissance*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1965.
- Herzman, Robert B., Graham Drake, and Eve Salisbury, eds. "Introduction." *Four Romances of England*. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1999.
- Heywood, Thomas. *The Four Prentises of London; with, the Corquest of Ierusalem*. London, 1615.
- Howard, Jean. "Shakespeare and Genre." *A Companion to Shakespeare*. Ed. David Scott Kastan. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
- The Hystory of the two Valyaunte Brethren Valentine and Orson Sommes unto the Emperour of Grece*. London, n.d. (1565?).
- Jonson, Ben. *The Magnetic Lady*. Ed. Peter Happé. *The Revels Plays*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000.
- . "Ode to Himself." *Ben Jonson*, vol. 6. Ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson. 11 vols. Oxford: Clarendon. 1938. 492.
- Littleton, Betty J., ed. *Clyomon and Clamydes: A Critical Edition*. The Hague: Mouton, 1968.
- Lily, John. *Midas*. London, 1592.
- Martyr, Peter. *The Decades of the Neue Worlde or West India Conteynyng the Navigations and Conquestes of the Spanyardes, with the Particular Description of the Moste Ryche and Large Landes and Landes Lately Founde in the West Ocean Perteynyng to the Inheritaunce of the Kinges of Spayne*. . . . Trans. Richard Eden. London, 1555.
- McMullan, Gordon. *Shakespeare and the Idea of Late Writing: Authorship in the Proximity of Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007.
- Mowat, Barbara A. "What's in a Name?: Tragicomedy, Romance, or Late Comedy." *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works*. Vol. 4. *The Poems, Problem Comedies, Late Plays*. Ed. Richard Dutton and Jean Howard. 4 vols. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003. 129–49.
- Myrick, Kenneth. *Sir Phillip Sidney as a Literary Craftsman*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1935; Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1965.
- Norton, Thomas, and Thomas Sackville. *Gorboduc, or, Ferrex and Porrex*. Regents Renaissance Drama Series. London: Arnold, 1970.
- O'Connell, Michael. "The Experiment of Romance." *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy*. Ed. Alexander Leggatt. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001. 215–29.
- Orgel, Stephen. "Shakespeare and the Kinds of Drama." *The Authentic Shakespeare and Other Problems of the Early Modern Stage*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Oxford English Dictionary Online. 2nd ed. Oxford English Dictionary. 1 May 2007. <<http://dictionary.oed.com/>>.
- Pollard, Tanya, ed. *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.
- Sidney, Sir Philip. *The Defense of Poesy*. *Sir Philip Sidney: The Major Works*. Ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002. 212–50.
- Spingarn, J. E. *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia UP, 1924.
- Wells, Stanley. "Shakespeare and Romance." *Later Shakespeare*. Ed. John R. Brown and Bernard Harris. London: Arnold, 1965. 49–80.
- Whetstone, George. *The Right Excellent and Famous Historie, of Promos and Cassandra: Deuided into Two Commicall Discourses*. Old English Drama Students' Facsimile Edition. Amersham, England, 1913.